PRDU team begin evaluation in Afghanistan

In late August (2014), an evaluation team from PRDU travelled to Kabul, Afghanistan. The team consisted of Kenneth Bush (Executive Director of the PRDU), Tom Waldman (PRDU Lecturer) and Alexandra Lewis (PRDU Research Fellow).

As reported in Revival 31 (August 2014), PRDU is working closely with a local research partner, Tadbeer Consulting, on a World Bank-funded evaluation of the largest development programme in Afghanistan, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). This US$ 1 billion programme has funded community-created and community-implemented development projects in every district of the country.

The NSP is a massive – if not audacious – programme in terms of geographical scope, project diversity, and socio-political-security complexity. The evaluation seeks to apply methodologically rigorous research tools to better understand the extent to which the programme has ‘worked’ – in terms of tangible and sustained improvement in socio-economic welfare, social cohesion, and governance within rural communities in Afghanistan. And, if it did work, why and how did it work? And, if it did not work, why did it not work?

The NSP offers tantalising possibilities as a model for nurturing a broad-based and participatory model of development in war-affected regions, which challenges the one-dimensional representation of Afghanistan as a war-ravaged, fragile, state with little to offer the theories and practices of post-war recovery.

(continued on page 7 ▶)
Editorial: it’s crazy out there
A couple of recent things on the TV news have made my jaw drop more than usual, and made me wonder (not for the first time) exactly which side of the asylum door I’m standing.

First there was the moving art installation Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red at the Tower of London. A thought-provoking 888,246 ceramic poppies progressively filled the Tower’s moat, each representing a British military fatality during the First World War. And who was given the honour of ‘planting’ the final poppy on 11 November? A fully-uniformed 13-year-old army cadet!

More recently I was watching, with horror, footage of the end of the Sydney siege. Then followed a commercial break during which the manufacturers of XBox were trying to persuade us to buy their latest product ... by showing a video game whose graphic imagery could have come straight from the very news item I had just been witnessing! I see online that sales of the Call of Duty video game franchise are now close to the 200 million mark!

The PRDU have launched a film series (see page 4) which aims to offer students a window into conflict- and disaster-affected societies through the work of various filmmakers. I wonder if they will show Kathryn Bigelow’s The Hurt Locker, which begins with a quotation from American journalist Chris Hedges: “War is a drug”? Sadly, it would seem, the world is full of addicts.

Given all this (and much, much more), how can we make the world a saner place? A competition launched by CIAN (the Canadian International Institute of Applied Negotiation) via the release of a song, Crazy Out There, asks just that. Lyrics by PRDU Associate, Dr Ben Hoffman, together with an ‘earworm’ of a tune and a punchy video, set the scene for your involvement. Do follow the above link and send them your ideas – the world needs you!

Gini M Ward

Leading expert on the Afghan Taliban visits PRDU

In October, the PRDU welcomed Alex Strick van Linschoten, one of the world’s foremost experts on the Taliban, to present an evening lecture at the University.

A graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Alex Strick van Linschoten has spent many years living and working in Afghanistan. He began travelling there in December 2004, moved to Kabul in early 2007 and then remained in Kandahar from 2008–11. Previously he co-edited a book written by former Taliban envoy to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, published by Hurst and Columbia University Press to critical acclaim in winter 2010; a history of the relationship between the Taliban and al-Qaeda entitled An Enemy We Created: The Myth of the Taliban – Al-Qaeda Merger, 1970–2010; and a volume of poetry written by Taliban members, published by Hurst (UK) entitled Poetry of the Taliban.

Alex’s lecture took the audience on a guided tour of the Taliban’s self-perception as expressed through their publications and writings, mapping the evolution of the movement and its leaders over the past three and a half decades.

Accompanied by a number of striking and evocative photos, Alex focused on how the Taliban’s earlier emphasis on the religious aspects of the movement have been largely superseded by power-political concerns. He took those present on a tour of the Taliban’s statements, highlighting the way religious rhetoric was increasingly downplayed (or sometimes even forgotten). The visual presentation was accompanied by quotations from the speeches and writings of Taliban senior leadership figures.

The talk prompted a stimulating question and answer session which involved discussions on the nature of the links between al-Qaeda and the Taliban, Iran’s associations with the movement, and the extent of their foreign backing and support.

Alex is currently working on a PhD at the War Studies Department of King’s College London, looking at the identity of the Taliban movement as expressed through their own writings and statements pre-2001. He is also overseeing a large project dealing with archival primary sources by the Afghan Taliban (together with Felix Kuehn and Anand Gopal), and recently launched a publishing house dedicated to providing access to primary sources from Afghanistan and Pakistan. More information is available at first-draftpublishing.com.

The lecture attracted an audience of more than 100 people from the University, and the City of York.
Afghanistan simulation:
Students step into the shoes of power-brokers

On Friday 17 October, the MA in Post-war Recovery Studies (PRS) students engaged in a simulation exercise on the current conflicts in Afghanistan. Each student was assigned an actor to represent and given a week to research their political, foreign and national interests, as well as those of their allies and opponents.

On the day of the exercise, representatives from around the world, local Taliban leaders, human rights agencies, and the media gathered ‘in Afghanistan’ for negotiated peace talks. A commentator from Al Jazeera kept all parties informed throughout with breaking news updates, including the kidnapping of the son of a prominent Taliban leader, and the capture of two British and US civilians (played wonderfully by our own instructors). Reaction to the exercise was incredible, with students unanimously agreeing that it was both great fun and a valuable learning opportunity.

It was a good exercise for me to understand, especially, the power-sharing relationships in Afghanistan between the US, UK and European Union; and also China, Pakistan, India and Iran.
Ayami Kanazawa

As an educational tool, the simulation was a great success for all parties involved. I am sad to report that, unfortunately, peace was not to be had that day, but the students were able to step into the shoes of the leaders who influence not only their future careers, but current research and practice in the field of post-conflict recovery.

Representing Human Rights Watch, I found the simulation so realistic. It was a great exercise in how ideals can be sidelined by practicalities, and a real experience in how to deal with your agenda being jeopardised by external forces.
Charlotte Dickenson

New intern welcomed

Genevieve Davies, who recently completed her MA at the PRDU, has joined the Unit as a Research Intern. Her dissertation examined the role and relevance of transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict Nepal. During her studies she has also worked in Ghana and Northern India.

Genevieve’s research interests focus on West Africa and South Asia, and include: transitional justice and the exploration of transformative justice as a new agenda for practice; the role of gender in post-war contexts; and the protection of economic, social and cultural rights of vulnerable communities.

On course for Summit

Janaka Jayawickrama, Programme Director of the MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs (MIHA), has been appointed as an Advisor on community engagement to the UN World Humanitarian Summit, which will be held in 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey.

In this capacity, Janaka will be contributing to strengthen the voices of disaster and conflict communities in the thematic areas of the Summit, namely: humanitarian effectiveness; reducing vulnerability and managing risks; transformation through innovation; serving the needs of people in conflict; and the power of business in emergencies.

The Summit is the largest ever convened and will set a new agenda for global humanitarian action.

Conference update

Jacob Eriksson has had a busy conference season. At the 4th conference of the World Congress of Middle East Studies (WOCMES) in Ankara, Turkey, he presented a paper on Israeli security policy entitled, Security, territory, and peace: a re-assessment, arguing for territorial withdrawal for peace and long-term security.

At the Conflict Research Society (CRS) conference in Leeds, he presented a critical analysis of US mediation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, focusing on the Annapolis process in 2007–08.

Finally, at the 3rd annual conference of the European Association of Israel Studies (EAIS), he gave a paper entitled, Track II mediation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: 20 years of frustration.

These papers are part of ongoing research projects and are being developed into publications.
War in Reel Time

The PRDU recently held the first screening in its new film series Representations and Responses to War in Reel Time. Film nights will showcase a wide range of fictional films and documentaries that address issues of conflict, war, disasters and recovery.

The series began with the showing of films set during or after wars in the Balkans to help prepare the MA students in Post-war Recovery Studies for their field trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina in November–December 2014. First was Pretty Village, Pretty Flame – Srđan Dragojević’s 1996 black comedy about the Bosnian war that was seen by an estimated 8% of the population of Serbia at the time of its release. Next up will be Before the Rain – Milcho Manchevski’s 1994 film which, although set in Macedonia, addresses themes of identity and conflict that are common to the region.

While great attention is paid to the genre of conventional war films, much less is said and written about films that explore how societies attempt to get back on their feet in the aftermath of conflict. Films about conflict and recovery are not just a good pedagogical tool that can offer a lively engagement with big themes – they can often, by focussing on the personal, the individual and the cultural, remind us of the importance of agency and human experience during and after conflict.

The PRDU film series therefore aims to offer a window into conflict- and disaster-affected societies through film. It will show how conflict and recovery are represented in Hollywood movies and other national cinemas. It will also explore how local filmmakers in conflict zones deal with issues of war and peace, and in doing so emphasise that societies dealing with conflict are sites of cultural production and not just sites of suffering.

All film nights are free. Screenings are followed by a discussion, and anyone interested is very welcome to attend. Please check out our Facebook and Twitter accounts for updates on the next screening.

MIHA update

New Teaching Fellow appointed

We are pleased to announce that Dr Jo Rose has taken up the post of Teaching Fellow on our MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs (MIHA).

Jo has worked intensively in complex political emergencies including Liberia, Somalia and Sudan. Throughout her career she has worked within, and between, academia and policy and practice in disasters, conflicts and uneven development. She completed her doctorate in Humanitarian Assistance at the University of Northumbria, Newcastle, in 2013.

Jo has taught graduate courses on humanitarian assistance, research methods, project management, needs assessments, monitoring and evaluation, and sustainable development.

A much-published researcher, she is currently exploring an approach that enables communities to manage and implement humanitarian projects in chronic emergencies, with an aim of promoting community resilience.

New skills at your fingertips

Our part-time distance learning MSc is delivered in collaboration with the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG), one of the world’s leading teams of independent researchers and information professionals working on humanitarian issues. It consists of six modules, all written by senior practitioners and policy experts.

Students have access to dynamic learning technology, and the opportunity to participate in online lectures and seminars.

We are seeking applicants with at least a 2:1 university degree, and/or extensive relevant professional experience. If you are interested, please contact Emma Piercy, MIHA Administrator: emma.piercy@york.ac.uk

A still from the ‘Pretty Village, Pretty Flame’ promotional trailer. (image: courtesy of www.imbd.com)
The evolution of the PRDU School of Research
The first PhD students, Dr Ben Hoffman and Dr Alpaslan Özerdem, graduated from the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit in 1998. Since then, a unique approach to doctoral training has evolved at PRDU. It is one which prepares our students to conduct research in conflict and disaster zones in ways that are sensitive to the methodological, logistical, political and ethical challenges of working within areas characterised by volatility, unpredictability, and risk.

In the early days of PRDU, the training of our students drew on the field experiences of the original faculty, Dr Sultan Barakat and Charles Cockburn. However, over time these individual experiences accumulated into a large pool of institutional expertise, grounded in the practical challenges of maintaining theoretical rigor and researcher integrity within real world conditions that never seemed to find their way into the pristine laboratory conditions reflected in the pages of the methodology text books in the social sciences. This includes: the ethical dilemmas related to power imbalances and risk in war zones; negotiating the fine line between collecting information and collecting intelligence; the fashioning of ‘good enough’ sampling methodologies when research subjects move or become inaccessible; the need to fashion pragmatic fixes to the logistical obstacles that inevitably rear up in the field; the fluidity of facts among both the powerful and the powerless; the temptations of ventriloquism; navigating within a landscape of parasitic research; and, as Antonius Robben puts it, the ethnographic seduction of working in war zones.

Doctoral Training for the Conduct of Research in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States
In October 2014, the PRDU consolidated its specialised methodological expertise with the launch of the Doctoral Training Programme in Post-war Recovery Studies. While this training programme complements existing University of York training in social science research, it is tailored to the unique challenges of working in fragile and conflict-affected states. The training ensures that students develop the skills and knowledge to deal with the changing and dynamic nature of the field of post-war recovery studies. The key components include:

- Preparing for research in conflict- and disaster-affected environments;
- Research practicalities and methods;
- Interpreting and using primary and secondary data;
- Perceptions, power and politics: marginalisation and vulnerability in conflict- and disaster-affected environments; and,
- ‘Real world’ research: evaluations, consultancies and action research.

The training is delivered by PRDU teaching and research staff over two semesters. Introduced as a pilot programme in 2014/15, it is open in the first year of operation to students from the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), Department of Politics and Centre for Applied Human Rights (CAHR). In 2015/16, the training will be offered to all PhD students within the University of York who are conducting research in disaster and conflict zones. And, in the following year, the training programme will be offered nationally. In the fourth year of the training programme (early 2017), it will be offered online to both researchers and PhD students considering research in disaster and conflict zones.

In October 2014 the PRDU launched an exciting new Doctoral Training Programme in Post-war Recovery Studies, tailored to the unique challenges of working in fragile and conflict-affected states. In this first ‘pilot’ year it is only open to a set group of University of York students, but in its second year that will spread to encompass the whole of the University. It will then be rolled out nationally in 2016, and offered online the following year.

This specialised training will ensure that students are equipped to deal with the changing and dynamic nature of post-conflict studies. (photo: Jamal Abbasi, PRDU alumnus)
Originally from Iraq, **Alharith A. G. Baban** holds a BA in Diplomatic Studies and an MA in International Relations from the University of Jordan. After the Iraq War, Alharith served as a political advisor to a member of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). In 2005, he was appointed as a diplomat in the Embassy of Iraq in Pretoria (South Africa), heading the political and diplomatic section. In 2007, he served as a diplomat in the Embassy of Iraq in London, responsible for diplomatic affairs and relations with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. After communicating with the relevant authorities, Baban was asked by the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish the Consulate General of Iraq in Manchester. This was opened in November 2009 and Baban was appointed to serve as the Consul.

Baban’s research focuses on the evaluation of international intervention in the post-Cold War era. The research will critically examine the methods by which the international relations literature evaluates international intervention for humanitarian purposes. Engaging international development and human security literature, the research will suggest that international intervention should be evaluated based on key applied criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

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**Emma Piercy** has worked at the PRDU since 2012 as the Programme Administrator on the MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs. Emma studied Politics and International Relations at Northumbria University and through the Open University.

The purpose of Emma’s thesis is to identify the effect that the nature of war termination has on the development of a post-war education system. Examining both the positive and negative faces of education, Emma will explore the case studies of Nepal and Sri Lanka.

This research will test the contention that where there is military victory by one group over another, the post-war educational dispensation reinforces the social, political and economic gain of the winners over the losers, thereby sustaining and exacerbating tensions and divisions and strengthens/consolidates the power of the victor over the vanquished. Conversely, when a war is terminated through mediation and negotiation there is a much greater likelihood that post-war education will contribute to social cohesion.

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“Having worked for the UN for nine years before taking up my PhD, I was keen to reflect on issues and problems that I had faced as a practitioner working in the area of post-conflict reconstruction. Being a researcher at the PRDU helped me open my mind and examine these issues from different perspectives – I now realize how little I know!”

*Dr Shipra Narang-Suri*

Both Emma Piercy and May Elin Jonsson are conducting research into post-war education.

(continued on page 7)
Five-star research

The title of Peter Halls’ PhD is Spatial Methodologies for Post-War Reconstruction, which is derived from a research agenda paper he wrote with Sultan Barakat and Adrijanca Car (University of Salzburg) in 2002. In this potentially enormous field, Peter is honing in on planning applications. He is particularly keen to involve the diaspora in planning and decision-making, and has a strong interest in Public Participation GIS, which facilitates online activities and contributions. One example of PPGIS is a Kenyan mobile application, Usahidi (Swahili for testimony), which supports crowdmapping – a facility for members of the public to contribute updates and locations to a report of a situation, as used in Kiev to report regime response to protests at the beginning of 2014.

In a conflict context, crowdmapping is one means of gathering damage and condition reports onto a map so that patterns can be analysed and solutions proposed.

Peter envisages such information feeding a larger planning system in which locals, experts and diaspora can propose and test (model) solutions with the system, seamlessly bringing together all the users’ opinions and enabling a user to change their position in order to obtain a better ‘fit’.

Historically, such planning has been performed by experts and then applied, or not, over the top of the people involved. Peter’s concept developed during work in Croatia in the 1990s and early 2000s through discussions with Croats involved in their recovery efforts, and in response to their desire to involve those displaced outside of Croatia in the planning process.

The historic settlement of Pocitelj in Bosnia-Herzegovina has formed part of Peter Halls’ crowdmapping research.

Ehsan is one of almost 50 Afghan graduates of the PRS programme. Working so closely with him and his team was a glimpse into the way in which well-trained Afghans are leading the way forward in the country.

The PRDU is humbled to be working with such competent and motivated colleagues.
Rachel Eckersley
United Kingdom
Background in history

I have recently completed my undergraduate degree in History at Durham University. During my time in Durham I focused much of my attention on subject matters that covered areas of recent conflict and history across Africa. As a result of studying the causes and developments of such conflicts, my interests progressed further to include the processes of post-conflict recovery and peace-building. I hope to expand my knowledge with the PRDU and I am particularly looking forward to the practical elements of the course.

Amber Gibson
United States
Background in social services, counselling and development

For the past 10 years I have had the distinct privilege of assisting individuals rebuild their lives after being touched by trauma. I have served as a Rape Crisis counsellor, a post-Hurricane Katrina relief worker, and for the past three years have provided individual and group counselling to those with addiction and mental health disorders. In May 2013, I graduated with a BA in Human Services and am now excited to further my education and skill set at the University of York. At the PRDU, I look forward to working with both students and professors to better comprehend the complexities of the recovery process in order to make me a stronger professional in the field.

Sean Darby
United Kingdom
Background in politics and international relations

I graduated from the University of York in 2014 with a BA in Politics and International Relations. Before this I spent a year travelling through Africa, and during this time I worked for a small charity that looked to help street children in Tanzania. During my undergraduate degree I focused on how liberal state building can be combined with capacity building. Using the knowledge and experience gained from this course I want to pursue a career in development, returning to Africa to work in a post-conflict society.

Charlotte Dickenson
United Kingdom
Background in history and politics

I graduated with a BA in History and Politics in 2013, specialising in the use of media in divided societies, external intervention into violent conflicts, and the role of women in warfare. For the past year I have worked for a multinational company, providing research and analytical support on several project and mobilisation initiatives. I have also spent time in Cyprus and Serbia, where I met with other project leaders to discuss the prospects for sustainable peace. I am hoping that my studies with the PRDU will bring together my practical experiences in project work, with my passion for development and peace.

Gregory Beattie
United Kingdom
Background in environmental science

I graduated from the University of York in 2013 with a BSc in Environmental Science. During my studies I realised the importance of food, water and sanitation in degenerate environments, through both theoretical study and practical application, such as a three-month internship in the clinical waste management sector. Whilst studying, I saw the need for a holistic approach to pre-, during and post-conflict limitation and – where possible – prevention due to diminishing natural resources throughout the world, particularly in the Middle East. During time spent travelling in the Balkans, I had a direct insight into the importance of successful post-war recovery.

Aziz Ansari
United Kingdom
Background in management and business

I graduated in 1999, and in the last 12–13 years I have been working as an interpreter and advisor for various national and international organisations in the UK and abroad, such as UNHCR, NATO, Home Office and Ministry of Justice. I have also been involved in voluntary work in the UK. We have set up two successful charities in East Yorkshire that help ethnic minorities with various issues. This MA in Post-war Recovery Studies will teach me the necessary skills in assessing the needs of the people in post-war countries, and will help me to prepare myself to be a part of post-conflict recovery and the healing process.

Amber Gibson
United States
Background in social services, counselling and development

For the past 10 years I have had the distinct privilege of assisting individuals rebuild their lives after being touched by trauma. I have served as a Rape Crisis counsellor, a post-Hurricane Katrina relief worker, and for the past three years have provided individual and group counselling to those with addiction and mental health disorders. In May 2013, I graduated with a BA in Human Services and am now excited to further my education and skill set at the University of York. At the PRDU, I look forward to working with both students and professors to better comprehend the complexities of the recovery process in order to make me a stronger professional in the field.
I have been working for nearly six years at an engineering company that manufactures social infrastructure, armaments and other equipment. I have engaged in government projects, and faced many practical problems in the execution of these projects, including conflicts and riots. These experiences have made me aware of global issues, particularly peacebuilding. By choosing to do the MA in Post-war Recovery Studies I hope to develop my knowledge through its practical and interdisciplinary approach to peacebuilding.

I graduated from the University of Keele in 2014 where I read International Relations. Outside of my degree I did my best to attain relevant work experience in conflict mediation and peacekeeping. I was an intern for the OSCE in Albania and held further internships in Georgia with the European Union Monitoring Mission and Saferworld. The privilege of working in these areas showed me how governments and civil society create sustainable approaches to domestic recovery and reconstruction efforts. I am confident that the PRDU will foster my passion for a field I have appreciated on a professional, personal and academic level.

Before I came to the University of York I studied International Relations at Nihon University. At that time, my research topic was human security. I also joined a volunteer club for children’s school lunches in African countries through the Table For Two (TFT) project. Throughout these experiences, my final dissertation was on education in peacebuilding. During this process, I decided to keep studying these fields to get more knowledge and to attain practical skills for my future career. For these reasons, I chose to take this MA course at York.

After completing a BA in law, I continued my pragmatic career in the Japanese court as a court clerk for more than eight years. From my valuable experience in the court, I started to consider the possibility and necessity to make a contribution to peacebuilding, by constructing a bridge between law and conflict resolution, particularly in the field of refugee issues. My biggest interests are reconciliation in post-war regions and legal aid for refugees. This MA will not only provide theoretical lectures but also require practical participation; thus it should serve to link my previous and future practices.

After studying ethnic minority issues at Kyoto University in Japan, I joined a Japanese governmental development organisation and worked in Iraq for three years as a representative to accelerate Iraqi reconstruction. Through the experience, my personal interest is in conflict prevention. At the PRDU, I hope to be able to acquire theoretical knowledge and more practical skills.
I have recently graduated from the University of East Anglia with a BA in International Relations with Modern History. During this time research has led me to appreciate the complexity of contemporary conflicts in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. I have developed a strong interest in the causes of violence and the importance of civil society in the process of conflict resolution, trends which seem increasingly topical. Through my time with the PRDU I hope to broaden my understanding of security within post-war recovery, acquire important work experience, and develop professional skills.

I graduated in 2014 with a BA in Politics and Economics from the University of York. During my undergraduate degree I worked as a Research Officer for a local NGO, focusing on the main obstacles to development for one of the world’s poorest communities. This, combined with my studies, focused my interest in not only development but conflict and peace building processes. Therefore, I hope to further my insight into both the theoretical and practical elements of recovery and development during my MA.

I graduated from the University of Victoria, Wellington in 2011 with a BA in International Relations and History. For the last three years I have been teaching English in Kurdistan in a community that has for decades been plagued by violence and instability. Alongside this I have volunteered with Syrian populations in local Kurdish refugee camps. My experiences have shown me the fragility of regions in post-conflict periods. I am pursuing a Masters in Post-war Recovery in the hope of eventually working with refugees and transnational communities, and exploring the role they can play in recovery processes.

I graduated from the University of East Anglia in 2014 with a BA in International Relations and Politics. I became interested in Post-war Recovery studies after completing a module in International Security and Terrorism. I enrolled at the PRDU in order to extend my knowledge on violent conflicts, and to gain practical skills. I am particularly interested in the role that natural resources play in aggravating conflict. As a former chair of the British Transport Police Youth Board, I have worked on counter-terrorism strategies. I have also interned at the Jamaican High Commission, where I developed an extensive understanding of the position of small States in the international system.

I graduated from the University of Leeds in 2013 with a BA in International Relations and Politics. I have always been drawn towards conflict studies and have a particular interest in Middle East relations. I also recently commissioned into the Army Reserve as an officer, and so have an interest in the role the British government plays in post-conflict development.
I graduated from the University of Southern California in 2005 with a Master’s degree in Urban Planning. Since that time, I have worked in Los Angeles in the public and private sectors as a city planner and land use consultant, helping to shape the development of the city. I’m interested in putting my past experience and education to work in post-conflict nations and communities, where my experience working within communities to facilitate communications between multiple stakeholders will be valuable in the peacebuilding process. The program offers an opportunity to expand my world-view and to be of service to communities and people in desperate need of vital assistance.

During my degree at Nottingham University I specialised in African history, particularly the French-Algerian war, and my interest in statebuilding and post-war recovery emerged. I have since worked for various NGOs, including fieldwork in East Africa, and developed specific research interests in the affects of conflict in Central Africa. I am keen to conduct research into responses to sexual gender-based violence in conflict, and issues of gender in peacebuilding – particularly in relation to the Democratic Republic of Congo. I am looking forward to gaining the knowledge and skills I need to pursue a career in programme management and funding on behalf of conflict-affected communities.

After completing a BA in International Relations at Ritsumeikan University in September 2013, I went back to my hometown, Hiroshima, to work for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. This experience deepened my understanding of the need to consider ‘peace’ not as an abstract concept, but as a concrete tool with which to shape our world today. In addition to this, a two-year internship at an NGO helping former child soldiers in Uganda to return to their towns, and gain economic stability, awakened my interest in the recovery process of local citizens at grass root levels. I would now like to find out how I can contribute further to the recovery process of local societies.

Choose our MA and discover ...

... a melting-pot of ideas
Our MA in Post-war Recovery Studies brings together experienced humanitarian professionals and less experienced students, thus creating opportunities to mix time-served wisdom with new theories.

... world-class teaching
Classes are taught by world renowned academics, policy makers and practitioners.

... that practice makes perfect
Every year, in late November, students undertake a field trip to a post-war region.

... a gateway to the future?
In March, all students undertake a 6-8 week work placement, based within an international or national organisation.

The induction of the 2014–15 class in Post-war Recovery Studies included a ‘ghost walk’ of their newly adopted city, one October evening. Conveniently timed to follow a reception at the King’s Manor, and the onset of night, students weaved their way through the ‘snickleways of auld York’ to be regaled with grisly tales of horror and treachery – all of which was taken in the light-hearted spirit in which it was intended.

A number of students (and staff) demonstrated noteworthy acting skills in the more participatory components of the ghost walk. The night was an opportunity to learn more about York, and to get orientated in this great, historic, walled city. It was a fun night – and thanks go to Erica Cushworth (PRDU Administrator) and Sally Clark (PRDU Office Manager) for their work in making both the reception and the ghost walk such a welcoming experience.

... a lasting legacy of words
Each student prepares a dissertation between May and September, under faculty supervision.

... a family of alumni
With over 400 graduates from 60 different countries, the MA alumni have gone on to varied and exciting careers.

Follow in their footsteps
The course is open to all those with a good first degree (2:1 or above) and / or field experience.

Please contact:
Sally Clark, PRDU Administrator
sally.clark@york.ac.uk
tel: +44 1904 322640
Discovering the bitter lemons of Cyprus

The work placement took me to the Eastern Mediterranean island of Cyprus; an island well-known for its idyllic shores and year-round sunshine. Take a step back in time, however, and a different picture is revealed. In July of this year Greek-Cypriots commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the tragic events of 1974, which saw mainland Turkish troops invade and occupy swathes of land in the northern region. Subsequently, the Island’s two predominant populations, the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities, have remained divided along the United Nation’s ‘Green Line’ – an area of neutral territory. Attempts to resolve the ‘Cyprus problem’ have continued to plague many political leaders.

For the two-month period, I was fortunate to work with a small Turkish-Cypriot NGO called The Management Centre of the Mediterranean (MC-Med), based within their Civil Society and Reconciliation programme. Upon arrival I was informed that I would be working on two development projects, primarily funded by the European Union (EU) and supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The first was a cultural project known as ‘Knit Art Karpaz’, which aims to provide rural women in the northern region with a new sustainable livelihood. The one-year project enables a small group of women to learn how to make delicate handicrafts, as well as how to sell them to the public in order to reap economic reward for their creations.

The second project was a bi-communal women’s project, known as ‘Women Advocates for Peace & Human Rights’ (WAP-HR). The purpose of this particular project was to deliver workshops to rural women living on both sides of the divide, covering topics from conflict resolution to advocacy and leadership.

Both projects provided me with a first-hand insight into the delivery of development projects, along with the issues and challenges that arise from them. No one day was ever the same and it was a privilege to be able to work with a variety of people from different backgrounds, gaining a holistic overview of the conflict from those with first-hand experience.

I was able to apply taught theory from the MA course during my time in the field; notably from Module 4. Alongside the Project Coordinator, I helped to propose a new project concept called ‘MEGAFAON’ for a new challenge initiative known as ‘Mahallae’. ‘MEGAFAON’ aimed to capture women’s views and opinions across Cyprus via an online platform, covering a variety of issues related to the Cyprus problem. This concept aimed to bring together greater numbers of women from either side of the divide, as well as providing voices to women, who are often excluded from peace talks.

Despite the absence of visible violence, it is striking that conflict issues continue to haunt the Island 40 years on. Struggles over property entitlement, sites of important cultural heritage, as well as the heavy militarisation in the north, along with the missing person’s case, reflect the protracted nature of this ‘frozen’ conflict. Cyprus has a long way to go in terms of finding a durable solution, yet there is still much the international community can draw from this often-ignored conflict.
I am currently working in humanitarian project management in Yemen, having been employed in humanitarian affairs in various capacities for the majority of my professional career. I have always been interested in pursuing this passion in an academic capacity, and am confident that the MiHA programme will be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. With ever increasing humanitarian crises perpetuated by, amongst other things, climate change, wars, forced migration and political strife, I strongly believe that this course will enhance my analytical skills, equip me with further knowledge, and allow me to conduct research which responds directly to the challenges thrown up by such crises.

I have always had an interest in humanitarian affairs, although my experience is very low in this field of work. I volunteered abroad when I was 19 and worked for two charities in London as a fundraiser which, despite being rewarding, was not the aspect of charity work I was interested in. I completed a degree in acting in 2011 and now work as a foreign language English teacher in Hong Kong, having previously worked in Beijing.

I decided to seek a formal education in Humanitarian Affairs because I intend to pursue a career in the humanitarian sector, and want to return to the UK next year with the qualifications to make this a reality.

I am currently the Reporting Officer for UNHCR in Syria and have worked in Damascus since 2011 in status determination, protection and reporting. Prior to this, I worked as a lawyer representing asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. I have also worked in the European Court of Human Rights as a lawyer responsible for all interim measures applications coming from the UK and Ireland; and as an editor and writer for the legal publishers LexisNexis Butterworths where I largely commented on the implementation of EU directives. My education includes an LLB in Law, an LLM in International Human Rights Law and a qualification to practice at the Bar of England and Wales.

I graduated from the University of Malawi with a Bachelor of Social Science degree, and from the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa (with a semester spent at the International Peace Research Institute – PRIO) with a Master of Arts in International Studies specialising in International Political Economy and Conflict Dynamics.

I currently work and live in South Sudan with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Before this, I provided consultancy services to several local and international organisations in Malawi, with the bulk of the time spent at UNICEF Malawi as a Health Systems Strengthening consultant.
I hold an MSc in Animal Nutrition and Production, a BSc in Agriculture (Animal Science), and a Diploma in Education. I have served as a humanitarian worker across continents, and have found this to be challenging, uplifting and rewarding. As man-made disasters become more frequent and increasingly complex, humanitarian workers will require unique skills to adequately and appropriately tackle the challenges. Without programmes like MIHA, interventions will continue to fall short of addressing emergencies and disasters in a sustainable manner. Pursuing this course will equip me with the skills and tools required, and help me manage my own vulnerabilities.

Alix Nijimbere
Burundi
Background in humanitarian affairs

I started work in the humanitarian field as an International Volunteer with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Eastern Chad. I was in charge of communication and advocacy. I subsequently worked for UNICEF as an Education Cluster Coordinator following the 2011 crisis in the Ivory Coast. I have also worked for Oxfam GB in Sierra Leone during the cholera outbreak in 2012, where I held the position of Humanitarian Advocacy and Media Advisor. I since returned to Burundi, where I have been working for the past year as UNHCR’s Senior Associate Public Information and External Relations Officer. In this position I also assume the role of spokesperson for the operation in Burundi.

I currently work in Peru as the Program Assistant for the American Red Cross Delegation. The focus of our work is building resilience in communities that are at high threat from natural disaster – the four countries in which we work (Peru, Chile, Ecuador and Colombia) are all situated within the Pacific Ring of Fire. Previously, I was a volunteer for the Peruvian Red Cross in an HIV campaign in the Amazon Jungle, and following that I spent three months interning with Peruvian Red Cross/ICRC, establishing a protocol for Re-establishing Family Links (RFL) during disasters. I’ve never studied at this level before, and am very excited about learning new skills which I can then apply in my work.

Marie-Angèle Renou
Ivory Coast
Background in post-conflict humanitarian affairs

I worked for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) in West Africa (Ivory Coast). I was based in the field, and here I learnt to deal with emergencies and post-conflict situations.

I chose the MIHA course to acquire and develop knowledge in the international humanitarian sector. I would like to strengthen my knowledge in international humanitarian affairs in order to rebuild my career in this sector.

Rhodes Ndlovu
Zimbabwe
Background in agriculture, education and humanitarian work

My passion for humanitarian causes began when I worked with an organisation called Passport. I spent several consecutive summers volunteering in various US cities, working with homeless men and women, as well as working closely with at-risk youth to facilitate afterschool programs and rebuild infrastructure such as parks and playgrounds. After moving to Canada, I became a volunteer for Journalists for Human Rights, and co-founded and wrote for an online human rights magazine, which gave me a glimpse into international human rights policy and procedure. I am currently tutoring in ESL (English as a Second Language), literature and composition skills for newcomers to Canada.

Andrea Townsend
USA
Background in humanitarian work and human rights

I have an MA in Communication Management. A few years ago I worked in Dharamsala for the Tibetan Government-in-Exile as a Communications Consultant within the Department of Information & International Relations. I was recruited by the Central Tibetan Administration to work in an editorial capacity on their Environment and Development Report 2000. Working directly with His Holiness the Dalai Lama provided a powerful lesson in identifying and managing the problems associated with perception, profile and international positioning. I am hoping this course will help frame my development as an effective independent thinker in the field of humanitarian studies.

Helen Osborn
United Kingdom
Background in humanitarian work with communities

I am currently tutoring in ESL (English as a Second Language), literature and composition skills for newcomers to Canada.

Marie-Angèle Renou
Ivory Coast
Background in post-conflict humanitarian affairs

My passion for humanitarian causes began when I worked with an organisation called Passport. I spent several consecutive summers volunteering in various US cities, working with homeless men and women, as well as working closely with at-risk youth to facilitate afterschool programs and rebuild infrastructure such as parks and playgrounds. After moving to Canada, I became a volunteer for Journalists for Human Rights, and co-founded and wrote for an online human rights magazine, which gave me a glimpse into international human rights policy and procedure. I am currently tutoring in ESL (English as a Second Language), literature and composition skills for newcomers to Canada.

Nicholas Schofield
United Kingdom
Background in communication management

I have an MA in Communication Management. A few years ago I worked in Dharamsala for the Tibetan Government-in-Exile as a Communications Consultant within the Department of Information & International Relations. I was recruited by the Central Tibetan Administration to work in an editorial capacity on their Environment and Development Report 2000. Working directly with His Holiness the Dalai Lama provided a powerful lesson in identifying and managing the problems associated with perception, profile and international positioning. I am hoping this course will help frame my development as an effective independent thinker in the field of humanitarian studies.
**What influences British policymaking?**

“Impressive” PRDU book uncovers the uptake of statebuilding research


The book has been well-received, including within UK policy circles, as captured in this review by DFID’s Head of Conflict Research, Iain King:

“The mixed record of statebuilding over the past decade has generated a clamour for evidence on what works best. Ironically, there has been very little evidence on whether evidence is actually used in policymaking – until now.

Rigorously researched, well-written and thoughtfully put together, this impressive book offers insight and analysis on the genesis of policymaking. It will become a must-read for practitioners and researchers alike.”

The book is divided into three main sections. The first section provides an introduction and background to the main subjects explored throughout, such as statebuilding, fragility and the UK’s approach to research management.

The second section contains the bulk of the empirical research conducted during the course of the project. It presents findings derived from the different methodological approaches adopted throughout the course of the research, including: an in-depth issue-based examination of the use of political settlements research; country-level case studies in Afghanistan, Nepal and Sierra Leone; and a ‘backward-tracking’ study of the use of Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone.

The third and final section pulls the analysis together and seeks to synthesise findings. It outlines and assesses some of the most prominent findings of the research with respect to the different dimensions of influence and uptake and, where relevant, associated recommendations or suggestions for improvement are presented.

The book then outlines the ‘cumulative influence’ framework for understanding research utilisation. As the body of research and evidence on a particular subject coalesces, strengthens and grows, the increased influence of research is likely to follow suit (although often with a substantial time-lag and in an iterative, non-linear fashion), as manifested in its ultimate uptake in policy.

A particularly striking finding of the book is the overall evidence of extensive statebuilding research use and influence in British policy, and this appears to have increased and improved over time. Yet the book also emphasises the varied types and levels of influence which depend on such diverse factors as the country context, political situation, levels of instability, attributes of the research, precise policy issue at hand, and even the character of personnel at any given time.

The book draws attention to prominent critical issues that remain to be fully addressed by both researchers and policymakers. It suggests that, given the powerful role of chance and contingency, enhancing uptake should be about identifying and targeting discrete areas for improvement which build on existing strengths, encourage dynamic cultures of research use, and promote understanding between the producers and consumers of research.

These measures are discussed in the course of this book and include: designing realistic institutional incentives; developing staff skills and experience in handling and appraising research; improving the research component of inductions and pre-deployment briefings for officials taking up positions in country offices; revamping knowledge management structures, research repositories and institutional memory; enhancing efficient and effective intermediary services; supporting and promoting formal and informal knowledge-policy networks; building local research capacity; providing opportunities for secondments and exchanges across the research and policy worlds; optimising the substance and presentation of research; and strengthening the awareness and communication of existing research activities throughout government.
PRDU Lecturer Dr Tom Waldman recently published an article in the September issue of Chatham House’s journal *International Affairs*. Based on interviews conducted with policymakers and researchers in Kabul and London, Dr Waldman examines the evolution of western policy towards the idea of pursuing negotiations with the Taliban, or ‘reconciliation’, in Afghanistan and the role that research and expert opinion played in that process. The article emerged out of the larger PRDU research project entitled, ‘The Influence of DfID-Sponsored State Building-Oriented Research on British Policy in Fragile, Post-Conflict Environments’.

Has the shape of Kuwait’s reconstruction delivered long-term benefits? (photo: Ra’ed Qutena, flickr.com)

The reconstruction of Kuwait, following its occupation by Saddam Hussein’s Iraq in 1990, constitutes a significant, rarely studied episode of post-war recovery. The passing of more than 20 years since Kuwait’s liberation allows this paper – by Sultan Barakat and PRDU alumnus John Skelton – to reflect, from a long-term perspective, on the decisions which were taken following liberation and how these have impacted on the country’s subsequent political, social and economic trajectory.

The timeliness of such an examination has been highlighted by the contemporary ongoing political crisis in Kuwait in the context of the Arab Spring, at the centre of which stands a widely-perceived, long-standing deficit of the Al Sabah regime’s political legitimacy. The paper argues that had Kuwait’s reconstruction assumed a different shape, it is conceivable that the country would have experienced a profoundly different development trajectory over the following two decades.

The authors contend that Kuwait’s contemporary political and socio-economic crises have their roots in a post-war reconstruction model which delivered substantial success in physical and rapid macro-economic recovery, but which did not fully realise opportunities to establish an accountable and trusted governance system, promote reconciliation and equality between divided groups, and encourage sustainable social and economic development.

The paper argues that the opportunity to deliver long-term benefits was undermined by a non-holistic post-war vision dominated by notions of regime security, which in turn necessitated renewed post-war business-as-usual authoritarianism, exclusionary nationalist policies and the recreation of the pre-war power-for-welfare political trade-off.