In July 1999, the PRDU assessed the potential for post-war reconstruction in South Lebanon, in a report commissioned by the Lebanese government and the United Nations Development Programme. Regional Socio-Economic Development Programme for South Lebanon was completed by the PRDU (led by Professor Sultan Barakat), the Institute of Urban Planning of the Region of Île-de-France, TEAM International, Consultation and Research Institute, and ECODIT. Compiled in the final months before Israel withdrew from its self-declared ‘security zone’ in South Lebanon in May 2000, the report heralded a long-term, integrated development strategy aimed at increasing the interest of institutional partners and investors in the region and its people.

Seven years on, and careful consideration and renewed commitment are required yet again in the south and across the country. As part of its ongoing involvement with reconstruction and development in the region, the PRDU will be taking its MA group to Lebanon on a Field Visit in December. In partnership with The American University of Science and Technology (AUST), many UN Agencies, and National/Local NGOs, the group will see at first hand the challenges facing South Lebanon today.
Guatemala – 10 years after the Peace Accords

Each year, to mark United Nations Day (24 October), the PRDU holds an Open Day, the highlight of which is a speech from an international authority on post-war recovery. This year the Ambassador of Guatemala in the UK, His Excellency Edmundo Urrutia, was invited to reflect on what has been achieved in his country during the 10 years since the Peace Accord was signed in December 1996, and to outline the challenges still facing Guatemala today.

An important characteristic of these Peace Accords is their wide scope. They aimed to remove the economic, social and religious causes of the armed conflict by addressing: human rights; the displaced population; an historical clarification: identity and rights of the indigenous population; socio-economic aspects; strengthening of civilian power and the role of the armed forces in a democratic society.

"Guatemala underwent political, social and economic reforms. Besides political freedom, the revolution gave birth to social security, workers’ rights, women’s rights, public education and health, public infrastructure and, especially, land reform."

However, the Cold War and the American-led purge of anything remotely Communist resulted in a CIA-backed invasion of Guatemala in 1954 and, according to Mr Urrutia, “the reverse of most of the reforms and the repression of the popular movement. Every political force that demanded change to overcome inequality, fought for workers’ rights, for a fairer distribution of wealth and for the establishment of real democracy was labelled as Communist. The State became a mere instrument in the control of the economic and military elites. There was a high level of economic growth but the model benefited only a few actors – landlords, military officers, entrepreneurs and the financial sectors. Neither the peasants nor the urban poor improved.”

Thus the seeds were sown for guerilla warfare in Guatemala, and 36 years of armed conflict that left hundreds of thousands of citizens dead and disappeared, more than a million displaced, thousands in exile, a culture of violence and fear, weak State structures, and a weak and corrupt justice system and security institutions.

To turn around such a legacy is an immense and complex task, and as Ambassador Urrutia commented: “After 10 years of efforts to implement the Peace Accords, Guatemala is experiencing serious levels of social and economic violence, in some areas worse than those during the armed conflict. It is a paradox, which poses interesting questions about the political and social strategies implemented in a post-conflict society. Certain levels of violence are inevitable (in such situations), but to some degree the strategies have not addressed the principal causes in order to prevent the spiral of violence that Guatemala is facing.”

The current government is reforming the National Civilian Police, the judicial system and the prison system in a bid to bring the security situation in Guatemala under control. But, 10 years on, the country’s ‘Peace’ is still a violent one.

Human Rights focus for Research Fellow

Bringing his expertise to PRDU research will be Dr Michael Kearney, who joined the Department of Politics as the RCUK (Research Council of the UK) Fellow in Law and Human Rights in October 2006. Dr Kearney’s interests span human rights law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law. He has worked with NGOs in post-accord environments, and undertaken field research in Northern Ireland. In Palestine, as a legal researcher with the human rights organisation Al-Haq, he focused on the consequences – under international human rights law and humanitarian law – of Israel’s construction of the Wall in the West Bank.

Dr Kearney’s research has been published in journals such as the Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights and he is currently preparing his doctoral thesis for publication. He is participating in the development of a new MA in International Human Rights Law (Theory and Practice) which is to be offered by the Department of Politics from September 2007.

Promotion to Senior Lecturer

We would like to congratulate Dr Roger Mac Ginty on his well-deserved promotion to Senior Lecturer in October 2006. Since joining the PRDU in 2000 he has made a significant contribution to the development of the PRDU teaching programme and research. Roger teaches on the MAs in Post-war Recovery Studies and Conflict, Governance & Development, as well as an undergraduate module in the Department of Politics on International Relations after the Cold War. He also convenes, with Sultan Barakat, on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office-sponsored Chevening Senior Fellows course on Conflict Resolution (see Page 16). His latest book No War, No Peace has just been published (see Page 8).
Graduation Ceremony 2006

A number of graduands returned to York for the graduation ceremony which took place on 13 July 2006.

Congratulations to Rachel Brock, Elizabeth Kavch and Konstantia Nikopoulou who were all awarded distinctions. Other students graduating this year were: Carlo Benedetti, Roberto Bernardo, Marco Bril, Benjamin Burrows, Azuza Chiba, Steve Cumming, Lara Cunanan, Paolo Fabbri, Palwasha Hassan, Catherine Mahony, Mina Manome, Paul Marks, Wardak Mirwais, Waheed Omer, Nicklas Pommer, Peter Quinney, Simonetta Rossi, Jamal Sitepu and Tigest Tejiwe.

Regarding the standard of the students’ written work, one of the external examiners stated:

“In terms of academic quality, the dissertations I have seen have been highly impressive. The vast majority have been well researched with a good balance between theoretical and empirical focus. It is clear that students have been well guided in terms of how to structure their work and several of the dissertations had an impressive range of primary sources which provided depth to the arguments put forward. Overall, I thought these dissertations were written and marked to a very high standard, which reflects the range of academic interests of the students and the diversity of the curriculum offered by the PRDU.”

The MA course continues to attract an eclectic, international mix from practical and academic backgrounds, with 23 new students (see Pages 9–11).

PRDU advises UNDP missions in Darfur, Nepal and Uganda

The PRDU has been acting in an advisory role on three UNDP projects in Sudan, Nepal and Uganda. Missions in the first two countries had specific objectives which were addressed in final reports prepared by the PRDU. The work in Uganda, which is ongoing, is a major evaluation of a UNDP recovery programme.

Uganda – Dr Richard Jones is team leader for a major evaluation of UNDP’s Transition to Recovery Programme (TRP) for Northern Uganda. Implemented in November 2004, the TRP aimed to address the humanitarian and development challenges through a package of interventions in three areas: promotion of livelihoods for the IDPs; capacity-building for the OPM and lower structures; reintegrating adult ex-combatants or reporters. Dr Jones is currently evaluating the impact of the various projects at locations throughout northern Uganda. He will shortly return to Kampala to assess the institutional arrangements of the programme. The evaluation will inform the development of a fully fledged early recovery programme that in the light of the Juba Peace Talks will become one of UNDP’s largest programmes in Uganda.

Darfur – In August 2006, Professor Sultan Barakat was invited to advise the UNDP’s Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery on future strategy following the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), in a joint effort to coordinate the work of UNDP with that of the World Bank. Professor Barakat’s report reviews the post-DPA political context, identifies the specific challenges to state-building, and sets out a general review of the optimal role and definition of good governance in the aftermath of protracted armed conflict. The latter half of his report then examines the three possible state-building scenarios in Darfur: the creation of a Darfur region composed of three states; the retention of the status quo of three states; and, more realistically, the indefinite co-existence of three states under the TDRA. Based on these scenarios, recommendations are provided as to how the UNDP should engage with the relevant local institutions. To complement this ‘top-down’ approach, the final section poses a simultaneous strategy for community-driven recovery.

Nepal – In March 2006, Sultan Barakat advised UNDP’s Nepal office on ways to tackle the need for reconstruction in the current phase, and how UNDP and the Government of Nepal could work in partnership. Nepal faces instability from two fronts: the Maoists insurgency and the uncertain political climate. Much investment has gone into supporting the establishment of Village Development Councils (VDCs), but the conflict has rendered the majority of these ineffective. In 2002, UNDP established the Support to Peace and Development Initiatives (SPDI) which have succeeded in building the capacity of a number of COs (Community Organisations). Professor Barakat’s report outlines a six-step strategy by which UNDP can complement existing VDCs and other COs, and build on the capacities established by the SPDI. The aim is to make sure that communities most affected by the conflict have the opportunity to drive their own recovery.

PRDU News

PRDU completes Afghan mid-term evaluation

As reported in revival issue 21, the PRDU was chosen by the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, and the World Bank, to undertake the mid-term evaluation of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) – considered the flagship post-war reconstruction programme in Afghanistan, with millions of beneficiaries outside the capital, Kabul. The evaluation was conducted from July 2005 to May 2006. On the following pages you will find a brief summary of the evaluation report by the PRDU team, portraying a reconstruction programme that is helping to get a society in conflict back to development (see Pages 4–6).
PRDU Research – NSP, Afghanistan

Mid-term evaluation finds hope in rural Afghanistan

Contemporary media reporting of ‘Post Taliban’ Afghanistan depicts a country ravaged by persistent conflict; of experienced and capable Taliban fighters drawing NATO forces into an increasingly bloody conflict; and of a resurgent Taliban gaining in strength and bringing a fledgling democracy to its knees. Not a day goes by without new reports of suicide bombings, assassinations and mounting civilian and military casualties. It is this backcloth of unrelenting conflict that lends credence to the West’s traditional perception of Afghans as bloodthirsty warriors perpetually at war which influenced the rationale behind both the Russian invasion in 1980 and the West’s intervention in 2001. This media perception of a barbarous nation rejecting a path to development has become omnipresent.

While not wishing to deny the existence of serious security problems in Southern Afghanistan nor the resoluteness of the Taliban insurgence, this article presents a different image of Afghanistan. It portrays a people desperate for a chance to live a peaceful existence and to achieve the most basic living standards for its future generations. A people tired of war and factionalism intent on choosing freedom and a path to development.

This is the story of a development programme which, against all the odds, has given hope to rural communities throughout Afghanistan. It focuses on the findings of a recent evaluation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s National Solidarity Programme (NSP) funded by the World Bank at the behest of the Japanese, Canadian, British, American and Dutch governments, and delivered by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development with the technical assistance of GTZ-IS and local and international non-governmental organisations.

The NSP is Afghanistan’s largest post-war reconstruction programme. Its goal is to reduce poverty through empowering communities with regard to improved governance, and social, human, and economic capital.

It attempts to achieve this goal through pursuing two main objectives: (1) to lay the foundations for the strengthening of community level governance, and (2) to support community-managed sub-projects aimed at reconstruction and development initiatives that improve access of rural communities to social and productive infrastructure and services. Since its inception in September 2003 the NSP has:

- encompassed 193 districts in all 34 provinces in Afghanistan reaching 22,500 rural communities covering 38,000 rural settlements and benefiting 10.5 million people;
- established 10,000 directly elected Community Development Councils (CDCs);
- initiated 14,000 projects in 8,000 communities disbursing block grants for community development projects amounting to US$ 214.6 million; and,
- successfully completed in excess of 4,000 sub projects.

The task of the PRDU team was to evaluate the strengths and limitations of the NSP, 18 months into its implementation and to make recommendations for Phase 2 of the programme focusing on:

Determination of Research Locations

(P) Primary research locations (full survey, including household survey)
(S) Secondary research locations (partial surveys of varying levels but no household survey)
because of poor road networks, we were to security problems and limited access and operational delivery.

management, coordination of national level programme conducted an exhaustive investigation. In addition, a further assessment team survey to together with a quantitative household village level community power analysis, and district level institutional analysis, Afghan regional assessment teams. The PRDU trained and led five NSP in future Afghan governance. The PRDU research – NSP, Afghanistan.

devising a long-term strategy for the delivery at the community level; and, conducting programme management and coordination; evaluating the capacity of CDCs to isolate an NSP-effect.

FINDINGS

Contrary to recent media reports, the evaluation identifies significant evidence of: increased public faith in the system of government (national solidarity); improved community relations (community solidarity); and, the empowerment of CDCs. We sought responses from householders on a number of key issues: community experiences of the war and the immediate post-war period including economic conditions and pre-NSP forms of governance; how Afghans experienced the process of setting up the CDC and the planning process; the extent and quality of their participation in processes of governance and project implementation; their perceptions of wider national governance including recovery and development plans; and, their outlook for the future.

Community and national solidarity

The NSP has had a significant impact in increasing both community solidarity (86 per cent thought it had brought greater unity) and national solidarity (77 per cent considered the government to be interested in their community compared to 26 per cent of those not involved in the NSP). As one respondent put it:

"the NSP unites communities as it brings us together to solve our problems and plan for our future; for the first time the government has shown that it cares about us so we must now show our loyalty to our government."

However, genuine knowledge of government policy and development plans is limited and no greater in CDC than non-CDC communities. Remarkably, the CDCs have already secured the trust and acceptance of the majority of community members, with 58 per cent of those questioned viewing the CDC as the core institution of community level governance. Moreover, where existing traditional leaders retain the respect of the community a gradual transition and assimilation of the two forms of governance – CDC and Shora – is taking place. A key strength of the NSP has been the capacity of CDCs to act as instruments of peace-building, playing an important role in conflict resolution and reducing the power of warlords and corrupt elites over rural communities. There is also evidence that the NSP has facilitated other community-led initiatives that could not otherwise have been undertaken. Additional infrastructure is often added to the project which enhances the value of the NSP, demonstrates community ownership and initiative, and provides evidence of sustainable development. Moreover, there is also evidence of neighbouring CDCs combining available resources in order to be able to facilitate a bigger project (such as a road).

A key strength of the NSP has been the capacity of CDCs to act as instruments of peace-building, playing an important role in conflict resolution and reducing the power of warlords and corrupt elites over rural communities.

Community participation

With regard to community participation in decision-making, collective community action has been greatly enhanced through the creation of CDCs. As one respondent observes:

"the main benefits of the NSP are that people are coming together for the first time for many years to solve community problems and as a result we are improving our community with the project."

Public participation in discussing community priorities ranges between 50 and 90 per cent in CDC communities, compared to the matched communities where 28 per cent described only limited consultation and the majority had no participation. Eighty per cent of Afghans in CDC communities participated in project implementation, but only half that number (all men) did any community work in the matched communities. Moreover, although women have a relatively high level of participation in priority setting, for cultural reasons they did not participate in the work, which was mainly manual labour for infrastructure.

continued on Page 6
A Community Development Council in deliberation.

Unsurprisingly, the ability of the majority of community members to participate in the management or scrutiny of project implementation is constrained by both lack of knowledge and basic education. For example, 77 per cent of women and 36 per cent of men had no idea how CDC finances were being managed. Others had a general idea, but only 19 per cent (all men), could explain the financial arrangements. This suggests that the consolidation of CDCs as fully democratic institutions will require formal linkages between the NSP and a national programme for adult education as well as its continuing cooperation with the Ministry of Education in extending the school network. Nonetheless, the NSP has introduced new skills into the community which, while requiring consolidation, contribute to community confidence building especially when it comes to approaching other donors for assistance and using the CDC as a problem-solving forum.

But what of the quality of the development projects themselves? The projects in the sites visited were generally well designed and constructed appropriately. In particular, projects which bring multiple benefits are especially noteworthy such as culverts, roads, protection walls and intakes and boring wells. These tended to benefit all community members regardless of economic status or participation in the CDC process.

Projects which bring multiple benefits – such as culverts, roads, protection walls and intakes and boring wells – are especially noteworthy.

Direct and indirect economic benefits Sixty-five per cent of community members stated that they had directly and indirectly benefited from NSP projects in terms of both improvements to their living conditions and, in some cases, increased economic opportunities. Many needs, especially for sustainable livelihoods, remain and need to be addressed through the development of formal linkages with other national level development programmes. The relationship between NSP projects and poverty reduction at the community level varies from one community to another. Certain of the NSP sites visited were featured by several discernible poverty reduction benefits which included the ability to: grow more produce, especially cash crops such as sugar and cotton, and sell the surplus; adopt year round cultivation and generate more income which is then spent within the community. The communities also benefit from: cheaper goods due to improved transport; reduced transport costs; greater levels of protection against natural disaster; better communication; and, higher levels of education. Some limited benefit can also be perceived in poppy eradication objectives at the local level through alternative livelihood promotion.

65 per cent of community members stated they had directly and indirectly benefited from NSP projects.

PARTING SHOTS

Inclusive cost-benefit analysis of the NSP reveals significant gains to the Afghan people in relation to institution-building (limited democratisation) and capacity-building (mainly skills development) and social solidarity at the national and community levels, and to a lesser degree at the provincial and district levels. Impressive benefits have also been derived economically from improved infrastructure and through community confidence-building. Certain gains in gender equality have also been achieved in certain regions. The NSP is now recognized both by the people of Afghanistan and the international community as the central policy instrument for Afghan state building and development. Most significantly, in our survey CDC communities expressed more confidence in the future (28 per cent attributed their optimism directly to NSP) than those in the matched communities, although a general trend towards greater optimism was evident. This is not to say that the NSP is not without its problems. Indeed, we have proposed 64 recommendations for enhancing both the quality of community level governance and the delivery of sub projects in Phase 2 of the NSP including the need for: a greater emphasis on building indigenous capacity both within the Afghan civil service and the CDCs; the introduction of a ‘whole government approach’ to the delivery of the NSP both in order to gain greater political legitimacy and to coordinate national development planning and programming more effectively; incentivising CDCs and encouraging income-generating programmes to meet its economic growth strategy; and, simplifying delivery systems at all levels to eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and its associated direct and indirect costs.

Yet, despite the scope and intensity of this development effort, the Western media has continued to dwell on the activities of four to five thousand Taliban insurgents in five out of the 34 Afghan provinces. It is therefore hardly surprising that public opinion polls in Britain, Canada, Japan and the United States should continue to report a growing disenchantment with humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. It is hoped that this brief insight into the work of the NSP has provided the basis for an alternative understanding of the Afghan people. The following extract from an interview conducted with a CDC member conveys the hopes of this young republic:

“The NSP weakens the power of warlords because decision making is now at the grass roots and, because of employment and better livelihoods, people do not want to fight. There have been many years of war but the NSP gives us hope and we know that the world is supporting Afghanistan. We are Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Pashtun, Communist, Mujahedin and we were divided but this programme helps us come together.”

EVALUATION TEAM

Team Leader Professor Sultan Barakat; Specialist in Public Institutions Professor Mark Evans; Specialist in Community Development Dr Arne Strand; Specialist in Infrastructure Projects Engineer Richard Brown; Regional Assessment Team Leaders Dr Margaret Chard, Dr David Connolly, Dr Richard Jones, Mr Waheed Omer, Mr Mirwais Wardak; Regional Assessment Team Members Mr Khushal Akhtar, Mr Malai Zau Dad, Mr Jawed Nader, Ms Marina Nabi, Mr Samiullah Nazemi, Dr Lida Rahimi, Mr Qutabuddin Roydar, Dr Khalid Shariff, Ms Asila Wardak, Mr Idrees Zaman.

Copies of the Evaluation Report are for sale from the PRDU (see Page 16 for details). The Executive Summary only is available as a free download from the PRDU website.
focuses on the role played by American
as a backbone to the analysis. My PhD
in the study while using the war on Iraq
through adopting the political domain
Arabic and English news channels, and
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link between marketing and the media
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I have a BA and an MSc in marketing.
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in the study while using the war on Iraq
as a backbone to the analysis. My PhD
focuses on the role played by American
public diplomacy in the Middle East.

The PRDU continues to have a vibrant
community of research students. The
following have all joined over the last year,
and are supervised by Professor Barakat.

**Kjell BJORK**
Sweden
Background in the Swedish military, and
mine action strategies
Following 10 years of active service
in the Swedish forces, I worked with an
NGO establishing a Mine Action
programme in BiH. During my tenure,
this programme evolved into the
country’s largest Mine Action NGO.
After six years, I left to pursue MA
studies at PRDU. Upon graduation,
I went back to mine action and
established a civilian Explosive
Ordnance Disposal team in Baghdad,
clearing unexploded ordnance south of
the city. Mine action is often seen as a
straightforward technical field, but my
time in Iraq emphasised other sides to it
(like socio-economics) which need to be
explored. My PhD at PRDU will analyse
factors that influence the development
of national mine action strategies in
different countries across the world.

**Rand IRSHAIDAT**
Jordan
Background in marketing
I have a BA and an MSc in marketing.
Although marketing is known to be
implemented in the literature of profit
organisations where concrete needs are
targeted, there is another hidden side
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in the study while using the war on Iraq
as a backbone to the analysis. My PhD
focuses on the role played by American
public diplomacy in the Middle East.

**Jihwan JEON**
Republic of Korea
Background in Social Welfare
I graduated from the University of
Yonsei in 2005, with M.S.W. in Social
Welfare. Before and during my degree
years I worked in a local church, helping
handicapped children, the elderly, and
teenagers. I also volunteered in both the
head office of Korea Food for Hungry
International and a welfare centre
belonging to World Vision. The
experiences helped me to develop my
own interest in refugees in post-conflict
countries. I am currently studying
towards a PhD, preparing fieldwork
to be conducted in Eritrea from March
to August 2007. The field research will
focus on the Eritrean returnees from
Sudan and deportees from Ethiopia.

**Stephen OMOLLO**
Ireland
Background in management of humanitarian assistance and development aid
I am currently working with the
International Federation of Red Cross and
Red Crescent Societies as the head of
regional office for West Africa
(Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia,
Cote d’Ivoire, Benin and Togo). Before
this, I served in the field of humanitarian
relief and development work with the
International Red Cross and Red
Crestnent Movement, a journey that has
taken me to at least 23 countries over a
period of 15 years. In 1991, I graduated
in Banking from the University of
Lucknow, India, and in 2001 I completed
an MA (Management) degree at the
School of Management, University of
Lancaster, UK. I have also completed
a post-graduate diploma degree in
Disaster Management and Humanitarian
Affairs at the Royal College of Surgeons
Dublin, Ireland and an International
Masters in Practicing Management from
INSEAD. My PhD research examines
the role of institutional capacity-building
and its effects in the transition of relief
to development, from a Red Cross
perspective. It aims to develop a greater
level of conceptual clarity and identify
practical strategies to show how
institutional capacity building
and practice can link humanitarian
assistance to longer term development.

**Shirpa NARANG**
India
Background in urban planning, governance and post-conflict recovery
Educated as an urban planner in India,
I worked for UN-HABITAT for the last
nine years, before turning student again.
I have worked in the Balkans, Asia and
Africa, focusing on urban governance,
urban planning & management, and
post-conflict recovery; and covering
training and capacity-building activities
as well as policy support to national and
local governments. As part of my PhD, I
will explore the impact of war, as well as
post-war initiatives in the area of urban
planning and local governance, on the
city of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina;
and the impact of post-war planning and
governance initiatives on long-term
sustainability and reconciliation between
communities. I hope to use this as
an opportunity to reflect on my field
experience and draw some lessons
and directions for the future.

**Sharon RIGGLE**
USA
Background in security policy
I decided to consolidate my experience
and study post-conflict reconciliation
matters in-depth, after years of international
work. I spent 9 years analysing security policy issues, most of that time
in Brussels running a security policy
think-tank that researched and
commented on developments in the EU,
NATO and UN. More recently, I worked
in Serbia for the OSCE, providing
political and strategic advice to its
police reform efforts. While my recent
academic background is in international
relations and European studies (MA,
University of Kent 2003), my BA was in
psychology. I aim to return to my social
science, person-centred background by
combining security issues with human
development, which will manifest
in a PhD focused on the possibilities
of institutionalising mechanisms for
reconciliation by large donor agencies.
I will soon move from being a full-time
student to a part-time one in order to
take up a new post for one year at the
UN Mission in Sudan, as Head of the
Reporting and Analysis Team in the
Political Affairs Division.
Publications

No War, No Peace: The Rejuvenation of Stalled Peace Processes and Peace Accords
Roger Mac Ginty
Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; Price £50.00
ISBN 1 403946 61 2

Many international peace-support interventions have resulted in grudging, dysfunctional peace. Mac Ginty argues that the western fixation with the promotion of a particular type of democratisation results in ‘No War, No Peace’ situations in which the conflict becomes frozen. The book suggests that failure to reflect on the meaning of the term ‘peace’ is one of the failings of international peace-support interventions, which concentrate on technocratic processes without thinking about the political, social, cultural and economic relationships required to sustain post-conflict communities.

Mac Ginty’s book is comparative, drawing on a wide range of examples and fieldwork observations, and is innovative through its proposal of an NGO assessment methodology to review the failings of a peace process or peace accords.

Mid-term Evaluation Report of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), Afghanistan
Team Leader, Professor Sultan Barakat
PRDU, The University of York and Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2006; 348pp; Price £35.00
ISBN 1 900640 40 6

NSP forms the central component of 5 national programmes managed by the MRRD. Its goal is to reduce poverty through empowering communities with regard to improved governance, and social, human, and economic capital. This PRDU evaluation was at the request of MRRD and the World Bank. It argues that Phase 1 of the NSP has been a success and has the potential to become a beacon of good practice amongst community-driven development programmes. With some fundamental refinements – and the evaluation includes 64 recommendations – Phase 2 could yield some outstanding achievements in terms of sustainable institution-building and economic growth. (see revision Pages 4–6)

Disaster Management and Civil Society: Earthquake Relief in Japan, Turkey and India
Alpaslan Ozerdem & Tim Jacoby
I.B. Tauris, 2006; 142pp; Price £45.00
ISBN 1 84511 053 6

Major earthquakes are the archetypal sudden-impact disaster. Such events open a window on society’s inner workings, and this work proves that it can be extraordinarily revealing. I warmly commend this book to readers who study disasters, development, crisis management, the relief system, global security, governance, and international affairs. It is an important work, not least because it tackles the question of how to democratisse responses to catastrophe. In methodological terms, I hope it sets a trend in rehabilitating culture, which does not deserve to be the neglected factor in disaster studies. I have been waiting years for a book like this. (Extract from a review in Development in Practice – Vol.16, No.5, August 2006 – by David Alexander, University of Florence)

Common’s report on Conflict and Development: Peacebuilding and Post-conflict Reconstruction urges donors to make long-term commitments

The United Kingdom House of Commons Select Committees are made up of cross-party Members of Parliament, and their reports feed into Government policy-making. Here PRDU doctoral student Shipra Narang reviews a report which examined the effectiveness and external coherence of the UK government’s peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction policies.

This report begins with an analysis of the link between conflict and development, before exploring the UK government’s approach to conflict in general. It then discusses global peacebuilding efforts and the role of the newly-established UN Peacebuilding Commission, finally concluding with some recommendations that could feed into various government departments, and particularly into the DFID’s Conflict Policy which is currently being formulated.

The report makes the case that unless conflicts are prevented or resolved, poverty reduction efforts will remain ineffective. This is an important argument to encourage DFID, which has the explicit mandate of poverty reduction, to engage more intensively (and with more resources) in the conflict-prone and conflict-affected (CPCA) states.

The recommendations also strongly encourage donors to make long-term aid/development assistance commitments in CPCA states, to ensure that the interventions supported can bring about lasting institutional change.

The need for better coordination across government departments is also emphasised, with military commanders encouraged to consult DFID when planning and implementing Quick Impact Projects, which have become an integral part of the ‘winning hearts and minds’ strategy.

The report emphasises the importance (though perhaps not strongly enough) of integrated interventions that focus on the whole conflict, rather than breaking it down into artificial divisions. In covering a very wide range of issues and concepts the report fails to define any of these precisely and adequately, and is fairly superficial in its treatment of important issues. ‘Reconstruction’, in particular, is a term used loosely, covering security and justice; democratisation and institution building; and physical reconstruction and development. Issues of planning and rebuilding, short- and long-term interventions, and the role of reconstruction in socio-economic recovery are not addressed at all. In this context, the Committee seems to have taken little notice of the written evidence provided to it by various NGOs and experts with first-hand experience in post-conflict reconstruction. Instead, it chooses to rely heavily on the evidence given in person, and on documents submitted by various government departments, including the DFID.

Finally, the fact that peacebuilding and not reconstruction is the key area of interest for the report (despite the title which includes both) is also made clear by inclusion of two sections on global peacebuilding efforts and the role of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and the glaring absence of a similar global review of reconstruction actors and efforts of the UN in that area.

To view the report go to: www.parliament.uk/publications
Fahrunnisa AKBATUR
Turkey
Background in law and gender studies

After graduating from the Faculty of Law, and working as a lawyer (mainly on women’s rights issues within the Ankara Bar Association in relation to civil society groups), I joined UNHCR in 1994. I have worked in Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and will soon join their office in Kosovo. In 1996 I gained an MSc in Gender Studies at the Middle East Technical University. My previous work was related to human rights and the refugee situation, but during my stay in Afghanistan I developed an interest in the recovery of post-conflict societies.

Marziya BAYDULLOEVA
Tajikistan
(Altajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)
Background in disaster risk reduction

In 2001 I graduated from Tajik State National University, the Faculty of Journalism and Interpreting. Since then I have been working with Focus Humanitarian Assistance, and then the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) in Central Asian countries, based in Tajikistan. Our primary goal was to promote disaster risk reduction and safe building strategies, and to build communities’ resistance to disaster. I have gained a lot of practical experience and would now like to link this to theory.

Louise DEAR
United Kingdom
Background in volunteering and activism

In 2006 I graduated from the University of Glasgow with an MA (Hons) in English Literature. I campaign extensively for Amnesty International and I have engaged in civil protests including specifically for Amnesty International and I have engaged in civil protests including the 2005 G8. Teaching in Sri Lanka in 2002 provided my first experience of living and working in a conflict zone. Last year I represented UK students for the British Council in Pakistan. Meeting survivors of the Kashmiri earthquake alongside military, diplomatic and NGO representatives augmented my interest in humanitarian assistance.

Najla AYOUBI
Afghanistan
(Altajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)
Background in law

After graduating in Law I qualified to sit as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Afghanistan, then as General Attorney. Also in Afghanistan I have worked: with the UN Mine Action Program; on Gender & Criminal Justice; as a Public Education and Information Consultant; as a Public Outreach Senior Officer and Senior Media Relations Officer and Spokesperson of the Joint Electoral Management Body Secretariat (JEMBS) and Gender Focal Point. Most recently I was appointed by the President of Afghanistan as a JEMBS Commissioner.

Jean-Baptiste DIAI
Ivory Coast
Background in the Civil Service

In January 2001 I gave up my position of Paymaster in the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Ivory Coast, after 13 years of civil service, to do a degree in Peace Studies at the University of Bradford. Since 1998 I have been active in NGO voluntary work with: Horizon Progress 2000 (Executive Manager) in Ivory Coast; International New Towns Association in The Hague (Netherlands); Peace Brigade International UK 2002; Peace Makers Bradford; and CAPOD Leeds (Regional Campaigner since October 2002).

Patrick HALTON
United Kingdom
Background in humanitarian assistance


Ahmad HASSAN
Afghanistan
Background in international relations and humanitarian assistance

I graduated from the University of Peshawar in 1994 with an MA degree in political science (major in International Relations). After graduation I started working for International humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. I worked for the ICRC until 2001 in fields such as protection, detention, tracing, financial management, administration and logistics. I then joined the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) Afghanistan Programme for which I am currently Programme Manager.

Christopher HAYES
United Kingdom
Background in international development

I left Lancaster University in 1999. After a succession of jobs I joined the British Department For International Development, first working in the World Bank/ IMF team and then the information department. Following a secondment to the World Food Program in Bangladesh, I left DFID and moved to Bangladesh to live with my wife (a senior advisor with the UN) and 6 year old daughter, and pursued a number of short-term contracts before coming to York. Somewhat institutionalised, I hope to broaden my horizons.
Geraldine HILL
United Kingdom
Background in conflict resolution

After completing my BA in Politics at the University of Durham in 2004, I embarked upon work and travel for two years across Asia. During my time in Indonesia, I participated in a Conflict Resolution programme which analysed the country’s diverse ethnic, religious and cultural conflicts. As a language teacher, I strongly value the role of education, and triumph its importance and potential among children and women in post-conflict environments. I hope the MA will allow me to expand my understanding of this field of study.

Robert HOYER
USA
Background in the USA military

Prior to graduating from the University of California, Santa Cruz with a BA in Politics and minor in Legal Studies, I served honourably for nine years in the United States Army. As a non-commissioned officer I have conducted peace-keeping operations with NATO in Sarajevo, support for operations in Africa, and Communications and Information Support for Multi-National Forces, Iraq. I hope to export the knowledge and experience found within this MA to American government operations and policy-shaping institutions.

Kumiko KATAYAMA
Japan
Background in international relations

I graduated from Tsuda University with a degree in International Relations. While working at a foreign-owned enterprise, I participated in voluntary work in AAR, an international NGO focusing on landmine victims. After that, I worked for the Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Team in Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), a governmental organisation in charge of bilateral cooperation for developing countries. My duties were to manage emergency relief and humanitarian aid, and to train team members.

Mike MURPHY
United Kingdom
Background in the British military

In recent years I have been increasingly deployed in the field at the interface between military and civil missions. Experience in the Balkans, Sierra Leone, Iraq and post-tsunami Banda Aceh showed the complexity of relationships between national, international, civil and military agencies and highlighted the opportunities for better focused efforts through cooperation and integration of effort. At PRDU I hope to improve my understanding of the underlying causes of conflict to contribute better to the development of sustainable solutions.

Yuto NAGANO
Japan
Background in international relations

I studied international relations – with a focus on those between Japan, Korea and China – at the University of Kitakyushu in Japan. Since reading about the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegretion (DDR) in Afghanistan and Sierra Leone my main interest now lies with the issue of disarmament, and child-soldiers in particular. I hope to use my year in York to learn more about these complex issues. After I complete the course my aim is to be actively involved in humanitarian assistance groups or organisations.

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Clare O’REILLY
United Kingdom
Background in war studies

In 2005, I graduated from King’s College, London with a degree in War Studies. During this time I worked for the British Red Cross, Refugee Council, and various law firms specialising in corporate and personal immigration matters. I have also lived and worked in Romania for a year teaching English, and have just returned from a 3-month trek through 10 African countries, volunteering in various schools and orphanages. This latter undertaking has helped me gain insight into an area of the world I hope to specialise in with the help of this MA.

Janet Rautio
Norway
Background in political science, psychology and criminology

I graduated from the University of Oslo with a BA in Political Science in 2006. In 2002–03 I combined travels in Asia with studies at the University of Sydney where I completed a policy proposal for the UN on mine clearance in Cambodia. As a member of the Commission on Human Rights, I also attended the Asia-Pacific Model United Nations Conference. More recent experiences with Amnesty, and at the Nobel Peace Center, have further developed my interest in post-war reconstruction, and have led me to come to York.

Karolina OLOFSSON
Sweden
Background in economics and sociology

Half Peruvian and half Swedish, I graduated from the University of York with a BA in Economics and Sociology before moving to Brussels. I worked with Audit communities across Europe, Middle East and Africa and specialised in IT Audit solutions. In the first half of 2006 I travelled in South East Asia and worked in Bangkok for ActionAid. My work consisted of providing project management tools and harmonising internal systems that would assist and strengthen their response to emergency situations.

Abdul Basir ORIA
Afghanistan
(Altajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)
Background in reintegration & project management

My experience in post-conflict recovery and reconstruction projects in Afghanistan began in 1999, working for a local construction company providing rehabilitation support services in Kabul. In 2002, I joined a British government-funded project, providing logistical/reconstruction support to the offices of the Afghan Interim Administration at the Presidential Palace and the Prime Minister’s compound. In late 2004, I joined the International Organisation for Migration on a project reintegrating former combatants into a civil society.
Where are they now? – Minister in the Government of Southern Sudan

Anthony Makana (PRDU graduand 2004) is the Minister of Commerce, Trade and Supply in the Government of Southern Sudan. These extracts from a report he wrote with Elizabeth Baxter (PRDU graduand 2006), whilst she was on placement with him, set out some of the key areas of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and how they are affecting life in Southern Sudan. Many efforts are currently underway to bring about positive change, but the reconstruction challenges are huge and donors have not been forthcoming with their pledges, leaving a large gap in capacity needing to be filled.

Sudan’s 22-year civil war ended in January 2005 with the signing of the CPA between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). This established an autonomous Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) which is responsible for the huge task of post-conflict reconstruction and development in the south. The CPA sets a precedent for resolving conflicts in Africa as it tackles the difficult issues of sharing natural resources and access to political power, and contains an option for the south to secede through a referendum due to be held in 2011. Other key areas of the CPA are:

The Power Sharing Agreement – provides for: a largely autonomous government for Southern Sudan; a share in the Government of National Unity (with a view to making unification attractive to the Southern Sudanese before the 2011 referendum); broader participation in government and the civil service; the restructuring of the critical institutions (e.g. the judiciary); and a new national constitution. It also recognises the right of the Sudanese to elect their representatives in a ‘free and fair’ mid-term election at all levels of government, and emphasises internationally acknowledged human rights and freedoms.

The Wealth Sharing Agreement – provides a framework for resource allocation and sustainable decentralisation, and establishes comparative underdevelopment and war-affected status as the key criteria for prioritisation of public revenue allocations. It assigns a share of all revenue (including oil) to the south, and grants it the right to collect additional domestic revenue, solicit external assistance, and have its own banking system (within the Central Bank of Sudan).

The Security Protocol – outlines a collaborative approach to security issues by providing for two armed forces and joint units that will become the nucleus of a future national army, enabling the parties to gradually scale their forces down. It will also allow the GOSS to mobilise its SPLA army.
An important component of the MA in Post-war Recovery is the practical experience students gain during their 6-8 week placements. It gives them the chance to work for a host organisation of their choice, often in a country or field new to them. Each student gives a placement presentation, assessed as part of the MA. Extracts from some of the 2005/2006 presentations are shown here.

The PRDU would like to express its sincere gratitude to all of the host organisations for their valuable support:

- Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) Kabul, Afghanistan
- DFID London
- FORUT Sri Lanka
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Jordan
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Sierra Leone
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Yemen
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Kabul, Afghanistan
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Switzerland
- International Peace & Prosperity Project (IPPP) Guinea-Bissau
- Islamic Relief Birmingham
- Japanese Emergency NGOs Pakistan
- Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation Kabul, Afghanistan
- Ministry of Trade Government of Southern Sudan
- Oxfam GB Oxford
- Save the Children (UK) London
- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Timor-Leste
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Senegal
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Switzerland
- United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) New York
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Washington, USA
- War Torn Societies Project (WSP) Switzerland

Pilot Case on Conflict Prevention in Guinea-Bissau

The International Peace and Prosperity Project (IPPP) in Guinea-Bissau, a former Portuguese colony in West Africa, came into existence to fill a gap. It was observed that, despite early warning systems on state failures, the international community often did not act quickly, or efficiently, enough, to avoid triggers capable of plunging a country into civil war. To help reduce such violence, a small multinational group of specialists designed (in 2003) an innovative model of intervention based on early, effective, holistic and catalytic responses to threats affecting poor and fragile states.

My work placement in Guinea-Bissau, enabled by IPPP, provided me with a unique opportunity to revisit the project’s planning stages, its first steps, and its current evolution.

Firstly, I had the privilege to be an integral part of a six-person team of experts including Dr Benjamin Hoffman and his son Evan, both former students at the PRDU (Dr Hoffman is a co-founder of the CIAN – see their advert opposite). The team facilitated the action planning session in mid-February 2006. Simple but effective tools such as the ‘Conflict Tree’ and the ‘Force Field Analysis’ enabled 20 senior key stakeholders to identify the country’s core problems, their causes and effects, as well as the forces supportive and hindering potential change.

The group’s division into small working groups further stimulated their input and creativity to determine actions to be undertaken immediately, as well as in the next 3, 6, 12 and 18 months around a common goal – namely a ‘National Action Plan for Peace and Prosperity in Guinea-Bissau’.

Observation and informal exchanges with participants in French also provided valuable insights.

Secondly, during my two-month return as IPPP’s sole field representative, I contributed to increase the collaboration of national and international organisations around the Plan, and to shore up its priorities and local implementation mechanism.

Philippe Patry, Canada

Evaluating former combatant

Afghanistan’s former combatants are struggling to make the transition to civilian life after nearly 25 years of warfare. During my placement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), I was privileged to speak with more than 500 former combatants. Arranged by PRDU alumna Tajma Kurt – who is currently IOM’s DDR programme manager in Afghanistan – the placement allowed me to travel around the northern, western, and central regions of the country while evaluating the social impact of IOM’s former combatant reintegration programme.

Using qualitative, participatory methods, I spoke with former combatants daily in their shops, homes, mosques, and tea houses while attempting to discern the impact of IOM’s programme, the roots of conflict vulnerability, and the likelihood that former combatants would return to fighting if the situation proved inviting.

Broadly speaking, I found former combatants to be tired of warfare, though still somewhat lost in the post-conflict environment. They cherish...
Developing better communication mechanisms within the Sierra Leone Red Cross

My placement was in Sierra Leone with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Sierra Leone is undergoing political, economic, social and cultural transformation, five years after the official end of an 11-year war that turned it into the poorest country in the world for 14 consecutive years.

My task was to help the Sierra Leone Red Cross develop a better communication mechanism so that there is a regular exchange of information, both internally and with partner organisations. I facilitated a number of workshops at the Red Cross HQ and branches to identify the issues that hamper effective information management. I helped develop a plan of action to address the issues that emerged in the discussions, and conducted several training seminars for Red Cross staff and volunteers to help them improve their report writing skills. Parallel to these tasks, I interviewed a number of people in

reintegration in Afghanistan

being at home with their families but struggle with economic woes and their loss of power and status. My work resulted in a 50-page report for IOM and a dissertation exploring the role of honour, pride, shame, and fragmentation in causing conflict and guiding the reintegration of former combatants in Afghanistan and, potentially, elsewhere.

The placement was eye-opening in many ways. It made me increasingly question and reflect upon the lessons of the MA course. Vaunted participatory methods, I realised, may involve the research subjects while simultaneously placing them in a subordinate role that could be disempowering. Macro-level conflict vulnerability analyses, related to greed and grievance, may be unable to explain why individual men and women take up arms.

By challenging aspects of the course content, the work placement did not invalidate the academic material but, rather, exemplified the wisdom of mixing research and practice within the MA programme.

Steve Zyck, USA

Leadership development in Africa

I undertook an eight week internship in Dakar, Senegal, with the joint UNDP/UNESCO project ‘Support to Training in Personal and Leadership Development in Africa’ (SPLD-Africa); followed by a two week placement in Accra, Ghana. My main roles with the project were to:

• undertake a comparative analysis of stock-taking exercises that had been conducted in Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo;
• compile a booklet on “African Young Professionals’ Perspectives on Leadership Concepts”;
• write a project proposal for one of the SPLD-Africa’s partner organisations;
• assist with general day-to-day tasks.

The comparative analysis was the most challenging and interesting task I was faced with, requiring me to read extensively on aspects of leadership in all three countries and make recommendations on the lessons learned that could be put in place to assist in their reconstruction.

The analysis also had to include the possible contribution that a programme on Personal and Leadership Development could make to the creation of social cohesion and healing in such war-torn societies.

My placement was invaluable to my personal and career development, and provided me with an excellent opportunity to practice and improve on my (very basic) French. Above all, as someone who has had little work experience with an international organisation, the placement was a fantastic opportunity for me to bulk up that all-important CV and be exposed to the people and organisations I hope to one day work for.

Anna Thornton, United Kingdom
The essential purpose of the field trip is for students to try out research techniques in a safe but realistic social environment. The class travelled to Belfast for two weeks to scrutinise successes and failures in reconstruction and conflict transformation following the 1998 Belfast, or Good Friday, Agreement. As the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office like to style the UK as an exporter of ‘best practice’ in development, reconstruction and conflict resolution, the fieldtrip examined how the UK dealt with its own problems at home.

We stayed on the Springfield Road, on an inter-face between a Catholic and Protestant area. This location allowed us to observe the reality of segregation whereby different communities take different bus routes, use different shops and leisure facilities. Crucially, it allowed us to see that even though a major peace deal was in place, there was limited inter-community mixing.

The field trip places an emphasis on student participation in research. Rather than ‘conflict tourism’ from a luxury coach, we adopt a radically different approach. The class was broken down into four groups, each concentrating on a specific topic crucial to Northern Ireland’s post-conflict recovery:

**Education** – segregated along religious lines although there is a small integrated schools sector.

**Housing** – provided by the public authorities and segregated into Catholic and Protestant housing estates. Inequalities in the provision of housing were a catalytic factor in the outbreak of Northern Ireland’s civil war in the late 1960s, but the authorities have worked hard to make provision transparent.

**Cultural expression** – sport, language and politico-religious parades have proven to be particularly thorny in terms of ameliorative activities.

**Economic regeneration** – Northern Ireland is integrated into the European economy, has benefited from large amounts of EU and British government assistance, and has a massive public sector and an under-developed private sector.

The field trip ended with a formal feedback session in which each of the groups made a presentation of its research findings back to interviewees and respondents. The student research highlighted a number of issues that are often found in post-conflict areas. Primary among these was the ‘top-down’ nature of much development and reconstruction activity, and the questionable sustainability of a number of initiatives.

**Nick Pounds** writes: It was interesting to re-examine a conflict in which I was last engaged some 20 years ago, but depressing to find that the divisions in society remain deep. Our research was greatly assisted not only by our freedom to travel and communicate, but also by the frankness and generosity of many of the people with whom we dealt, in what must be one of the most studied conflicts of recent times. On the down side, they had heard it all before and at times it seemed they were answering their own presupposed questions.

As a member of the housing group, I was intrigued by the apparent contradictions between people’s aspirations and actions. Whilst there appears to be a genuine desire to end the segregation of living in sectarian enclaves, many still confess to feeling safer behind the ‘peace walls’. For me, it was significant that problems reside mainly in the segregated ghettos, where the population remains vulnerable to manipulation by political and criminal elites.

My own conclusion was that resolution of Northern Ireland’s problems lies in the hands of the middle classes. They have benefited most from investment in reconstruction and yet many seem to have isolated themselves from the political process.

**Colin Roger** writes: The visit was an eye-opener and brought home to me the realities of the news broadcasts. I had grown accustomed to as I grew up in the UK. The trip was a real learning experience as I had to leave my own biases behind and look at the situation through the critical eyes of a detached researcher. I found the experience a refreshing change. I was impressed by the hard work being conducted by community-based organisations, by people who until recently had been sworn enemies and who were now working to ensure a peaceful future for the region. Huge sums of money have entered the region to promote economic regeneration, but I was surprised by the fact that many of those communities most affected by the violence (and who were most likely to become disillusioned with slow rates of progress) seemed to be benefiting the least!

The trip was an important reminder of the importance of clearly identifying those groups or communities most affected by the conflict and ensuring that they are included in making decisions which affect their future.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The visit would not have been possible without the support of: BBC Northern Ireland; Belfast City Council; Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; Cultur Lan; Department of Social Development; East Belfast Youth Forum; Education Unit at Stormont Parliament; Ground Work; Intercomm; Invest NI; Laganside Corporation; Northern Ireland Community Arts Initiative; Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education; Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission; Northern Ireland Tourist Board; Orange Order; PriceWaterhouseCoopers; Queen’s University of Belfast; Sports Council for Northern Ireland; The Arts Council for Northern Ireland; The Irish News; The Northern Ireland Housing Executive; Ulster Museum; Ulster-Scots Agency; Upper Springfield Development Trust; Verbal Arts Centre (Derry); West Belfast Festival.
Rethinking Lebanon’s reconstruction

continued from Page 1

indiscriminate and clumsy destruction in both countries unfolded live and palpably while the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) hesitated and then deliberated before calling for an immediate ceasefire. Consequently, after 33 days, it was relatively unsurprising when Lebanon’s Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, declared that his country was in ruins, with 1,200 dead, 4,000 wounded, 1 million persons uprooted, and financial losses totalling US$4 billion. Although Israel was predictably less affected – with 119 soldiers and 44 civilians killed, and hundreds of houses and buildings destroyed or damaged – it was completely unexpected that in the north 500,000 persons would be displaced, with several industries and the majority of small businesses closed for weeks. With a final touch of irony, it is estimated that Israel’s military spending and lost GDP will exceed Lebanon’s reconstruction bill by US$1 billion (official figures from each government). It is reasonable to conclude that conflict prevention and early warning mechanisms were either inadequate or negligent. Similar viewpoints would not ignore the impact of the so-called new international security framework that so far thrives on belligerence.

International insecurity

The UNSC yet again appeared ineffectual – vested interests, conflicting power relations, and stretched resources among the member states made its responsibility for peace and security difficult to discharge. The questions of whether Israel’s response was proportional and the legitimacy of Hezbollah highlighted the deep international divisions, which of course allowed the attacks to continue.

Nevertheless, criticisms of the UNSC have limits when it comes to appreciating fully how the war was allowed to occur and what can happen next. Running parallel, though mainly above and against, this international community is the American and British-led splinter community inspired by the ‘war on terrorism’. The resultant post-2001 international security framework had a fundamental impact on the invasion of Lebanon, with its broadening of the self-defence principle and the ensuing authorisation of pre-emptive and aggressive wars. While this war was largely unforeseen, on reflection it formed part of a wider pattern in international insecurity. Planning to get beyond the current international insecurity at this stage may seem overly ambitious. At the top, new political leadership, mindsets and a grand vision are all required. Post-war reconstruction has always had far-reaching implications both within and outside the national context: in order to effect this bottom-up change it needs to be rooted firmly within the war-affected communities.

Pretend reconstruction

The war has challenged our understanding of causes and manifestations and it should similarly provoke reflection on how reconstruction ought to occur, and the danger of ignoring post-war politics. In Lebanon previously, and as a wider trend, post-war reconstruction has at times dodged the key intervention dilemmas in favour of seemingly easier and safer approaches. However, this simplifying logic and veneer of recovery inevitably struggles to progress from the rudimentary relief and ‘hard’ security stage, and ultimately becomes a mere interlude within the cycle of violence. Where reconstruction has proved effective, inclusive and comprehensive engagement has occurred. Therefore, rather than loitering in the background, the reconstruction of local governance, livelihoods, and infrastructure ought to be brought to the fore at the individual and community levels, and in relation to its design, management and implementation. This means that one of the initial and pivotal challenges for international humanitarian agencies will be to work with Lebanese NGOs affiliated to the ‘terrorist-labelled’ Hezbollah.

Alongside its resistance wing, Hezbollah has set up various social, economic and cultural NGOs to help the vulnerable within the Shiite community. One example is Jihad Al Binaa (JAB), which was established in 1986 to promote “sustainable development” in the south of the country, Bekaa, and the southern suburbs of Beirut. JAB values its independence, assumes responsibility for assisting the poor through Zakat (voluntary funds), and promotes transparent and accountable humanitarian action. As soon as Hezbollah declared its readiness to pay compensation to all those who lost their homes during the war, JAB moved into the field to conduct needs-assessments and deliver cash assistance to those affected. In stark contrast, the Lebanese government took several weeks after the ceasefire to begin field assessments, despite its comparatively greater institutional capacity and resources.

Whether ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, Hezbollah has become a dominant reconstruction actor; its reservoir of trust and broad support base in the major post-war zones means that its tacit or active cooperation is crucial to gaining and maintaining local access. Not working with Hezbollah will unquestionably jeopardise the mainstreaming and sustainability of reconstruction. Linked to this is the past mistake of ignoring the border areas, which naturally resulted in uneven development and further grievances.

Bringing Hezbollah and its affiliated organisations within the international and national framework for reconstruction does not entail compliance with its ideology and means. However, history has taught us that welcoming and integrating armed groups into non-violent processes can create more pacific and pluralist political parties and organisations. Of course, this brief review of the mainly unforeseeable nature of the war, its interconnectedness with the political world, and the need for real intervention only touches upon the current challenges, both in terms of scope and depth. Nonetheless, it has epitomised the overwhelming need for a measured and prescient approach to post-war reconstruction in Lebanon. By identifying the complexities, we can begin to realise the scale of the response that is actually required.
Chevening Conflict Resolution Course

The PRDU hosted a highly prestigious Foreign and Commonwealth Office sponsored Chevening Senior Fellows course on Conflict Resolution, from January–April 2006. The course was attended by the following:

Dr Krishna Bhattachan (Nepal) who has been engaged in teaching and training, research, rights-based advocacy and consultancy works in her home country.

Ms Georgina de Vannini (Guatemala) who works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, and was a special envoy with the Belize Commission.

Ms Filomena Dos Reis (East Timor) is currently a programme director at the Peace and Democracy Foundation in East Timor, and works in rural areas to provide training in conflict transformation.

Mr Chandra Ghimire (Nepal), a civil servant who has been working for the Peace Secretariat of Nepal since 2004.

Ms Rebecca Htin (Burma/Myanmar) has a background in Public Administration and is currently helping to establish and strengthen local NGOs in her homeland.

Mr Belay Kebede (Ethiopia) has 25 years of experience in corporate law, insurance, banking, human rights, arbitration and other related laws.

Ms Rolinda Kirton (Guyana) has worked with the UN Social Cohesion Project, administered by the UNDP, in building a corps of facilitators to influence good process in diverse sectors of society.

Mr Orlando Márquez (Cuba) is the founder and editor of the Catholic monthly magazine of the Archdiocese of Havana, and is responsible for the Press Office of the Cuban Catholic Bishops Conference.

Mr Arman Musinyan (Armenia), a home-based researcher, and member of the Political Discussion Club which conducts regular round tables on issues of democracy, human rights, institutional reforms and the Karabakh conflict.

Mr Mustafizur Rahman (Bangladesh) has, since 2004, been Director of the UN wing in the Bangladesh Ministeries, taking care of UN matters under the supervision of the Director General (UN).

Ms Marivel Sacendoncillo (Philippines) is a local government expert in poverty reduction, community-based resource management, and the development of institutions, training systems and materials.

Ms Irene Santiago (Philippines) has been deeply involved in the peace process in Mindanao and is Chair and CEO of the Mindanao Commission for Women.

The course was directed by Professor Sultan Barakat, and convened by Roger Mac Ginty, and placed a distinctive ‘PRDU-spin’ on conflict resolution by emphasising the importance of post-war reconstruction. It involved a field trip (to Amsterdam) and many high-profile visiting speakers. Senior Fellows also spent work attachments with host organisations – for which the Mines Advisory Group, Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and the Community Relations Council in Belfast all provided assistance.

Following a successful evaluation, the Senior Fellows course has been extended for another three years.