Incorporating integrity in post-war reconstruction

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Increased critical awareness of post-war reconstruction has recently sparked a major advocacy drive for improved competence, accountability and corruption control within mainstream policy and practice.

Using the umbrella concept of ‘integrity’, the London-based NGO, Tiri, has been taking the lead in this agenda since its inception in 2003. Through its Network for Integrity in Reconstruction (NIR) – involving two years of field research and capacity development in partnership with local organisations in eight key post-war countries – Tiri has empirically established how integrity can directly create more effective and efficacious reconstruction, while examining in depth the formidable challenges to such reform in the post-war environment. For these reasons, among others, the drive to incorporate integrity in post-war reconstruction consciously links with, and adds unique value to, traditional notions of best practice, ranging from the SPHERE minimum standards to the more recent Humanitarian Accountability Project.

So far, Tiri’s innovative policy network has received funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, the Open Society Institute and the Canadian International Development Agency, in addition to support from other major donors, UN agencies, and governmental agencies.

Between March and July 2007, Professor Sultan Barakat and Dr David Connolly completed a two-pronged project with Tiri.

1. Reviewing the NIR findings
The first component involved the provision of strategic advice through the writing of a research paper that designed a tailored model of post-war reconstruction. The paper was based on a comparative review of the NIR case study findings. This initial component allowed for the refinement of the recommendations from the range of NIR
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continued from the front cover

case studies – Afghanistan, Bosnia, East Timor, Kosovo, Lebanon, Mozambique, Palestinian Territories, and Sierra Leone. The review provided an opportunity for the PRDU to impart its unique insight and develop further its knowledge of these contexts.

Tiri’s final report on its NIR, and the separate PRDU review paper are published at: www.tiri.org

2. Delivering a Policy Lab

The second component of the project involved the design and delivery of an eight-day intensive Policy Lab that examined post-war reconstruction, integrity, and how their incorporation can be achieved.

The Policy Lab, facilitated by Sultan Barakat with the assistance of David Connolly, was organised by Tiri and held at the Central European University in July 2007. The Lab ran alongside three other groups that focused on law, fiscal transparency and natural resources. Several plenary sessions involving over 60 scholars, policymakers and practitioners then brought the four specialist areas together through wider debates and presentations on integrity reform.

Keynote speakers included the founding chairman of the Open Society Institute, George Soros, and the Director of the Centre for the Study of African Economies at Oxford University, Professor Paul Collier.

2007 marked the third year of Tiri’s short course on integrity but this was the first time that the area of post-war reconstruction had been included.

The development of local capacities is at the centre of Tiri’s work so the PRDU Lab was participant-driven, with 12 attendees from Afghanistan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Canada, Eritrea, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Palestinian Territories, Sierra Leone, and Uganda. Participants were also privileged to have the Rt. Hon. Clare Short present. She brought her unique experience and critical insight to the debates, based on her former role as the Secretary of State for International Development.

The Lab examined a number of case studies and resulted in the following outcomes:

1) a shared definition of integrity in post-war reconstruction;
2) a model of integrity in post-war reconstruction that includes the variable roles of individuals, organisations and their contexts;
3) an analysis of how such reform can occur through the standard programme cycle.

It is planned that these conclusions will help shape Phase II of the NIR from 2007, and the next integrity course in July 2008.

A detailed overview of the main course, ‘Integrity Reform and Strategic Corruption Control’, and the PRDU Lab can be found at: sunlearning.ceu.hu

Hellos and goodbyes

Two new Research Fellows have been appointed at the PRDU to work on various projects with Sultan Barakat.

Dr Richard Barltop’s main areas of interest are conflict resolution, humanitarian action, and international relations. He wrote his doctorate in International Relations at Oxford University, on the role of mediation and relief in Sudan’s civil wars between 1983 and 2005, and has worked for the UN in Iraq, Libya, Somalia and Sudan. Richard is currently writing two studies for the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva, on the relationship between peace processes, arms control and disarmament. He has an MPhil in Modern Middle Eastern Studies and a BA in Classics, from Oxford, and is fluent in Arabic and French.

Dr David Connolly studied conflict management and political science at Queen’s University, Belfast, and Kingston (Ontario), before coming to York in 2000 to undertake doctoral research. At the PRDU he has completed numerous research projects and gained field experience in Afghanistan, Indonesia and Northern Ireland. Specialist interests include accountability and legitimacy in reconstruction, community-driven development, and mediation by NGOs. David will convene the annual Chevening Programme on Conflict Resolution in January 2008, and will continue to teach on the Masters in Post-war Recovery Studies.

These appointments follow the departure of Dr Richard Jones, who has taken up a post at the Department for International Development (DFID), and the recent retirement of Dr Margaret Chard.

Sultan Barakat adds: “I have known Richard and Margaret for more than seven years, first as MA students, then as doctoral students, and for the past four years as Research Fellows. They have both shown a great deal of dedication to the PRDU and, through their hard work and expertise, helped to shape the Unit into what it is today. I send them my very best wishes for the future.”
PRDU News

Fragile State Development Consortium

Addressing the many challenges and dimensions of social development needs in conflict-affected countries requires interventions that are carefully targeted and based on flexible methods. To ensure the provision of efficient and effective consultancy services within such conditions, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU), and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) established a Social Development Framework Agreement. DFID, who run a series of Framework Agreements covering a range of areas, use these pre-tendered arrangements to quickly and fairly acquire quality professionals and services.

The PRDU is part of a Consortium which has been selected to run the Social Development Framework Agreement in conflict-affected countries. Under the lead partner, COWI A/S (Denmark), the PRDU will participate alongside: Maxwell Stamp PLC (UK); Cowater Inc. (Canada); Channel Research (Belgium); and Birmingham University (UK). This combined experience includes provision of technical assessments, programme design/implementation, training, technical assistance and policy work in conflict-affected environments; and extensive social development work on a global level with leading development agencies including DFID, the World Bank and Danida.

The Consortium has been praised for its: composition; ability to work at policy level as well as a practical implementation level (and to link the two); understanding of processes of participation and the dynamics of power within conflict settings; desire to work with existing structures and build upon local networks and capacity.

The Consortium’s diverse experience will help provide flexible and timely inputs and the ability to mobilise, support and supervise consultants to work in conflict-affected countries. To ensure the access and availability of the needed skills, more than 100 highly qualified consultants (in-house and external) have been identified as part of the framework contract, as well as databases within the Consortium of more than 6000 CVs. “In addition to its core staff, the PRDU will be drawing on its wide network of associates and alumni”, said Sultan Barakat, who encourages all those who are interested to contact him directly.

External examiners praise MA

Once again the PRDU’s MA in Post-war Recovery Studies has drawn praise from the course’s external examiners. The hard work of the staff and students resulted in another fine set of results for the 2005-06 cohort, celebrated (despite the weather) at the graduation ceremony on the 13 July 2007. Elena Ahmed, Helen Murray, Nicholas Pounds and Steven Zyczk were all awarded distinctions and we congratulate them on their achievement. Other graduands were Rachel Baxter, Jennifer Dixon, Farhadullah, Erica Favretti, Laura Hutchings, Ketevan Khurtsia, Mariko Kimura, Daniel Levinge, Kristina Masala, David Miller, Sachiyo Nomura, Marvori Odilkhorova, Raba’ah Otoom, Ferdinand Paredes, Philippe Patry, Colin Rogers, Emal Stanizai, Anna Thornton, Charlotte Trayers and Georgina Yates.

Extracts from external examiners’ reports:
“The MA in Post-war Recovery Studies is an excellent programme which clearly delivers the intended teaching and learning outcomes.”

“I think this is because they go the extra mile in individual supervision, and especially through field work”.

York establishes new Human Rights Centre

A new Centre for Applied Human Rights is being established at the University of York. A defining feature of the Centre will be its work with human rights defenders. Generous external funding will allow defenders at risk to come to York for two weeks or a year, to undertake a short course in English or an established MA.

The Centre will also run an MA in Applied Human Rights from September 2008, attract PhD students, manage a number of research projects and undertake consultancies. It will establish a close-working relationship with the PRDU, sharing interests in the intersections between conflict/post-conflict situations, development and human rights.

The Director of the new Centre is Professor Paul Gready (left), who has 15 years of experience as an academic and practitioner. His main areas of expertise are human rights and development and transitional justice.

Milan partnership

Professor Sultan Barakat has initiated a long-term partnership with the Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale (ISPI) in Milan, to deliver joint postgraduate teaching opportunities and academic exchanges.

Based at the Palazzo Clerici (above), ISPI is one of the most prestigious Italian institutes. It currently provides a Master’s Degree in International Affairs (with specialisations in Development, Emergencies, and Diplomacy) and numerous short courses.

The new partnership is facilitated by the PRDU associate Mr Gianni Rufini, and has so far seen teaching contributions from Sultan Barakat, Alp Özerdem and David Connolly lecturing in Milan, with reciprocal visits from ISPI planned for January/February 2008.
The PRDU continues to host the highly prestigious Chevening course on conflict resolution, which is sponsored by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). We now look forward to meeting our third class of senior fellows, who will join the Unit in January 2008 for 12 weeks. Selected by the FCO, participants come at a formative stage in their careers with senior-level experience and outstanding professional achievements. Since 2006, two groups of 12 fellows have completed the course, bringing together the relevant though often separated worlds of academia, civil service, civil society, government, journalism, the military, nongovernmental organisations, and the UN.

Based at the University of York, the course equips the senior fellows with an advanced understanding of conflict causation, maintenance and amelioration. Employing participatory teaching methodologies, the course is practitioner-orientated and places an emphasis on skills to manage conflict in developing world contexts. It is designed to enable participants to reflect upon, and experiment with, the integration of conflict management theory and practice through discussion and group presentations, to observe best practice in a number of different settings, and to consider conflict and its amelioration at a range of levels. The emphasis on post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding locates conflict resolution in wider processes of development and thus provides extra ‘added-value’.

During the 12 weeks, the senior fellows cover eight interlinked topics and dimensions of conflict resolution. Group discussions begin with a short presentation by a specialist from the field or academia. In 2007, the course drew upon the expertise of 19 visiting specialists, including: Professor Cynthia Cockburn (City University London and international consultant); Dr Ben Hoffman (Senior Fellow at The Fletcher School, and former Director of the Conflict Resolution Program at the Carter Centre); Dr Judith Large (Director of the Conflict Resolution Programme at Crisis Management Initiative); Mr Dan Smith (Secretary General (Director of the Conflict Resolution Programme at the Carter Centre); Dr Judith Large (Director of the Conflict Resolution Programme at Crisis Management Initiative); Mr Dan Smith (Secretary General of International Alert); Mr Matthias Stiefel (President and Founder of WSP International/Interpeace); and senior representatives of the International Crisis Group, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, and Independent

Participants on the Chevening Conflict Resolution Course 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Professional Background</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Rashad SHIRINOV</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>Chairman of Youth Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NGO) and university lecturer; OSCE election experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Zauma LAHTAW</td>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>Senior representative of ‘Shalom Foundation’ – indigenous NGO involved in peace dialogue in Burma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Win (Naing) KYAW</td>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>Grassroots development leader (and former army Lt.); background in security, law, public administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Veasna TOEUR</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>National Environment Specialist; extensive UNDP and international NGO experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Seyoum TESFAY</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>University lecturer and lawyer; studied law in the US, and at the UN university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Dipendra TAMANG</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Director of a national youth-based NGO; ex-programme officer at the National Democratic Institute in Nepal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Dev SUBEDI</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Colonel (Army); background in Political Science and the law of armed conflict; policy making role in army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Shailendra THAPA</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Lt Colonel (Army); peacekeeping experience in Lebanon, Yugoslavia and DRC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Eda GUEVARA</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Director within the Department of National Defense; experience in anti-terrorism legislation/policy, and DDR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ed QUITORIANO</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Managing Director, international development consulting firm; consultancy work for international NGOs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Levi MAZANGU</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>National NGO Coordinator training communities in conflict resolution and peace building in southern Sudan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr/Mrs Areej ODEH</td>
<td>West Bank/Gaza Strip</td>
<td>Head of Legal Department, Ramallah and Abirch Governorate; lawyer and lecturer.</td>
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A brief introduction to the murky world of international diplomacy

Former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan, Mr Craig Murray, delivered an evening lecture at the PRDU in February 2007 for staff and postgraduate students in the Department. Drawing upon a 20-year career as a fearless diplomat, Craig traversed and adroitly brought together a number of critical and timely issues that included: the use of rendition and its implications for human rights; the rise of private security companies in post-conflict recovery; and how exactly natural resources have shaped interstate relations since 2001. Through his candid presentation, and with the assistance of some tough questions from the floor, those in attendance were treated to a first-hand account of how official diplomacy operates in the modern world. In particular, Craig focused upon his interventions in Cyprus and Sierra Leone in order to draw nuanced lessons about leadership and negotiation when it comes to managing violent conflict and delivering peace agreements.

More recently, Craig received world-wide media attention, and was eventually removed as ambassador in 2004, for his open opposition to the Karimov regime and its human rights record in Uzbekistan. His decision to break protocol sparked considerable controversy and debate. He was praised by some, including Harold Pinter and John Pilger, as ‘a man of conscience and principle’. Others unreservedly concluded that he was a ‘loose cannon with questionable motivation’.

With all the elements of a Graham Greene novel, Craig’s experiences – both high-ranking and high-living – are retold in his 2006 book: Murder in Samarkand: A British Ambassador’s Controversial Defiance of Tyranny in the War on Terror (Edinburgh, Mainstream).

For Peace Guerillas

Ben Hoffman – who did his PhD at the PRDU – is one of the Chevening course’s visiting specialists with over 30 years of experience in violence prevention and peacebuilding. Ben has recently written and published The Peace Guerilla Handbook – a pocket-sized, 88-page book aimed at anyone charged with the task of preventing political violence or with building peace. It puts flesh on the bones of commonly recited ‘best practices’ for peacebuilding, and calls upon the peacebuilder to apply unconventional methodologies in an ever-vigilant effort to remove violence and to build the conditions in society that will make positive peace sustainable. To order a copy visit: www.newnathforkhumanity.com and click on ‘Intellectual Action’.

Events at the PRDU

Craig Murray treated a large audience to a first-hand account of how official diplomacy operates in the modern world.

Dr David Connolly was invited to present a paper at the multi-disciplinary Northern Colloquium in December 2006, which was convened by the UK Forum for International Education and Training and Voice International. Focusing on the rise of Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs) since the 1990s, participants provided a balanced critique of this common aid modality, drawing upon case studies in Central Asia and East Africa. The one-day event involved over 20 academics, consultants, NGO representatives and independent specialists.

In terms of ‘destroyed’ rather than the flawed notion of ‘failed’ states, Dr Connolly challenged that SWAPs are not a sufficiently ambitious response to the complex needs created by protracted and large-scale war. Instead, the case study of the innovative multi-sector National Solidarity Programme (NSP) in Afghanistan was presented to illustrate why a more strategic model of aid is required, and how it can operate on the ground. Building upon the PRDU’s mid-term evaluation of the NSP in 2006, the paper argued that such multi-sector initiatives are particularly advantageous through their pursuit of simultaneous state reconstruction and grassroots capacity development, joined-up government, and country-wide implementation.

More details on the colloquium can be found at: www.voice-international.net/
In May 2007, the PRDU was commissioned to conduct a desk-based study on the UK-based approaches to international relief. Professor Sultan Barakat authored two interlinked papers covering: i) the operational context for humanitarian work in the UK and internationally; and ii) the approaches humanitarian agencies take to their work, and recent changes in those approaches.

The consultancy was completed for the Disaster Relief Project, which was devised as a first step in learning about the range of disaster-relief activities in UK higher education (HE). The project runs from October 2006–October 2007, and is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), and is based at the University of Gloucestershire in partnership with Universities UK and GuildHE.

In July 2007 the Project published a “Report and proposals”. Its main proposal was the creation and funding of a national scheme to provide a much-needed mechanism for the UK HE and humanitarian agencies to work together. Funded by the UK HE funding councils, the proposed scheme would comprise:

- Building collaborative relationships and formal partnerships with the major stakeholders, particularly the humanitarian agencies;
- The creation of mini-hubs of academic (and non-academic) expertise through which specific needs for expertise could be identified by the humanitarian agencies. These would be underpinned by membership databases and training.
- The support mechanism of a website and other means of disseminating information which could be open to the whole of the HE (and humanitarian) community. This would comprise mapping of knowledge, models of good practice, links to relief news and contextual information, “how to” guides and sources of funding.

All this could be managed by a central unit, at national level, which would provide oversight and maintenance of the scheme, and would act as the national linking mechanism between the UK HE sector and humanitarian agencies.

Sultan Barakat’s two papers are designed as a comprehensive background study to the Project, and are referred to throughout the July Report. The first one critically examines how governmental, multilateral and nongovernmental organisations respond to disasters, with focus on the relief phase. International-led efforts have remained fluid over the last 20 years, but two distinctive, though not mutually exclusive processes of change are identified and examined. As the ‘first agenda of reform’, it is argued that there has been a gradual shift to make disaster relief more developmental. Although influential, it is also clear that the traditional reactive approach has remained indispensable for donors, policymakers and practitioners, and it has thus retained global relevance. Based on the latter acceptance, the ‘second agenda of reform’ consists of the concerted drive to make relief more professional since the start of the post-Cold War era.

Against the backdrop of these two trends, the second paper concentrates on UK-based institutions and organisations. Accordingly, the three main governmental mechanisms (Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Ministry of Defence) are examined alongside the contribution of bilateral aid and international agreements. It finds that there is increasing recognition of the need for a cross-Whitehall approach in the UK’s response to the broader challenges of achieving the Millennium Development Goals in times of insecurity and poverty. It also notes the significant changes in the government’s relationship with the private sector and UK-based NGOs, and raises the limited role of UK higher education institutions.

In furthering the understanding of the international disaster relief architecture, the wider multilateral roles played by the UN, the Red Cross movement and ECHO are reviewed.

To view and respond to the Report – and full versions of Sultan Barakat’s two papers which can be seen in Appendices 1 and 2 – visit the Disaster Relief Project web page: www.glos.ac.uk/faculties/lets/sciences/ukdrp.cfm
Boycotting democracy in Palestine?

In July and August 2007, Dr Michael Kearney undertook research in the occupied Palestinian territories as part of an ongoing project being undertaken with Professor Sultan Barakat. The aim is to identify the human rights consequences of the decision of the international community, (including the EU and its member states – the main donor of development and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian Authority), to boycott the government following the 2006 elections in which Hamas won a majority of seats in the Palestinian National Assembly.

Due to the boycott the government was unable to fund the continued functioning of the already fragile Palestinian educational, judicial, and health infrastructure. Thousands of civil servants went without pay for months, resulting in strikes and unrest, and seriously debilitating the same democratic institutions that the international community had spent recent years helping to develop. This instability further contributed to armed violence between Palestinian militias, notably resulting in Hamas’s military takeover of the Gaza Strip.

Dr Kearney was hosted by al Haq, a Palestinian non-governmental human rights organisation based in Ramallah, and met with individuals from Palestinian and international NGO’s, the World Bank, UNRWA, the Palestinian Authority, and UNOCHA. Initial findings suggest that the boycott has severely undermined the standing of the international community in Palestinian eyes, although its impact on Palestinians’ rights to education, health, water, and work, have been tempered by the temporary diversion of international humanitarian aid. In particular, the discourse of human rights and democracy which has long been central to international involvement in the occupied territories, has been somewhat discredited by the perception of the EU as a partisan actor, willing to use the provision of developmental and donor aid as a tool by which to influence, limit, and direct the political choices of the Palestinian people.

Northern Ireland’s post-conflict mental health

The PRDU was commissioned to conduct a community-wide needs assessment in the local government ward of Whiterock, West Belfast. The study, carried out by Dr David Connolly, was funded by the Community Relations Council (N.I.) and completed for the local NGO, Corpus Christi Services.

The research aimed to investigate: existing levels of vulnerability in the Hull community, and how they affected the residents' ability to cope with the floods, during and after impact; the existence and effectiveness of mitigating measures; and the response from the local authorities. It is hoped the outcome of this research will inform existing policies on flood responses, as well as forming the basis of a larger research proposal to be developed later.

Data was gathered through a series of semi-structured interviews targeting residents, local businesses, and the local authority. The team visited two of the most severely affected areas – Hessle, on the southern edge of the city; and Newland Avenue, in the city centre (pictured) – and gained a deeper insight at a meeting between the residents and loss-adjusters. The frustration of those forced into temporary accommodation was played out with angry outbursts and emotional questioning.

Feedback from the interviews revealed some 15,900 homes flooded in the city centre, 4,000 in Hessle. The general inference was that city centre residents were already more vulnerable; perhaps reflecting a larger population, higher concentration of marginalised communities, and the associated lack of social cohesion. In Hessle, residents relied on kinship to cope with the aftermath of the floods. But throughout Hull, those few hours of intense rainfall are having a long-lasting impact.

UK flooding and the 'forgotten city'

June’s unexpected and intense rainfall across the UK brought PRDU’s focus a little closer to home – Yorkshire was devastated by the deluge. Hull was dubbed the ‘forgotten city’ by a councillor aggrieved that it had received inadequate attention from the media and central government.

Despite an estimated 20,000 damaged homes, the city’s plight went almost unnoticed outside the community. The lack of preparedness, the inadequate response, and the retrospective media attention, attracted the interest of the PRDU and gave rise to the basis of a research rationale – developed by Sultan Barakat and Alp Özerdem with the assistance of Yezenash Ayalew and Ghassan Elkahlout.

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MA Field Visit to Lebanon

Personal perspectives from two students on the MA Field Visit to Lebanon (December 2006) follow a brief introduction (below).

Lebanon suffered severe damage and dislocation in the July 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah war and, with the relief phase giving way to the reconstruction phase, it offered a valuable case study for the class.

There is a tendency for educational fieldtrips to become ‘bottle of water and digital camera’ voyeurism, whereby visitors only touch the surface of the host country. Such ‘tourism’ is even more distasteful in a post-conflict or post-war setting.

The PRDU field visit is organised to be far removed from conflict tourism. Specific research tasks necessitate the students to work as small groups in local communities. This year, MA students were tasked to conduct research on livelihoods, shelter and public utilities in a reconstruction context. One group of students stayed in Beirut (with Dr Michael Kearney), another travelled south to Tyre (with Dr Roger Mac Ginty), while a third group travelled east to Baalbeck (with Dr Alp Özerdem).

By interviewing parliamentarians, academics and personnel from international organisations, INGOs and NGOs, the students were able to build up a comprehensive picture of the war damage in Lebanon and efforts being made to deal with it. One of the most interesting aspects of reconstruction in Lebanon is the extent to which non-western actors (whether linked to Arab states or local political groupings) are playing a major role in the reconstruction activity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Designed by Sultan Barakat, the field visit was made possible through generous logistical support from the American University of Science & Technology (AUST), especially Hiam Sakr (University President), Nabeel Haidar (Provost and Chief Academic Officer), and Dr Bassam Hamdar. Sincerest gratitude to Dr Ranny El Lakiss from The Lebanesne Organisation for Study and Training (LOST), Dee Goluba (Mercy Corps), and all their staff who generously donated time and showed amazing enthusiasm. AUST students provided invaluable assistance by acting as translators and helping York students understand the labyrinthine world of Lebanese politics. Current University of York PhD student Christine Harniik worked extremely hard in organising many meetings and using her extensive contacts in the humanitarian sector to make this a fascinating and very successful field visit.

The aim of the Field Visit to Lebanon was to document and reflect understanding and critique of the handling of three prescribed areas in a society emerging from an armed conflict. These three areas were: reconstruction and return of displaced populations; economic regeneration; and provision of public goods and services. The overall group was divided into three sub-teams, each focused on one location but all three subject areas. The whole group was to be a collective resource and each individual a contributor to the whole, widening the potential for gathering information.

Pre-trip research and information exchange included reviews of literature pertinent to Lebanon, and up-to-date country information in the public domain.

On-trip research and information gathering began with two days of tailor-made briefings in Beirut by experts from political, academic and business backgrounds, plus representatives of international and non-governmental organisations. These briefings, and the opportunity to question the experts, helped contextualise the need for reconstruction in a wider sense than just post the 2006 war, which began to be seen more as an ‘episode’ in a continuum of conflict and recovery. A site visit to the shattered suburb of Dahieh set the enormity of the ‘episode’ in perspective.

The journey to and around South Lebanon gave opportunities for observing infrastructure, including recent war damage and speed of repair, a highly visible display of coping mechanisms. Being on the ground gave depth to the earlier research and briefings, especially because of the comprehensive programme of visits and interview opportunities facilitated by the PRDU’s partner in Lebanon, the American University of Science and Technology. This special relationship ensured a degree of penetration into layers of civil society that would have been impossible to achieve independently.

All-in-all, this was a remarkable learning opportunity and experience.

Mike Murphy
United Kingdom

Prior to arriving in Lebanon I had been expecting to find myself in an environment of the aftermath of war – destruction, sense of insecurity, lack of food. These are the common ideas we tend to acquire, especially with the influence of news reports on the plight of people and their locales in zones of serious armed conflicts. My perception began to transform after landing in Beirut, but I was still hoping to prove the hypothesis that war-affected places are destroyed, insecure and lack resources.

My perception completely changed when we arrived in Baalbeck, where roads had been paved and debris removed. People were back to a ‘normal’ lifestyle. I was particularly impressed by the hard work carried out by the population in a matter of four months. There were almost no signs of bombings, just memories and photos.

A huge amount of money, mainly from Iran and Syria, had been poured into the physical reconstruction and economic recovery, of Baalbeck. Affected people had received cash aid from Hezbollah. After numerous discussions with the local municipality, and conversations with residents and children, I was amazed by how politicized people were. They all sang the same song: “Hezbollah is the supporter and the protector; the government is non-existent.”

I left Lebanon still wondering about the mystery behind the ‘aid shield’ of Hezbollah. Was it genuine altruism, or a hidden political motive to win the hearts and minds of the people? Either way, it has been useful experience for me to travel to a post-conflict society.

Marziya Baydulloeva
Tajikistan
Community reintegration in Liberia

Liberia, located in West Africa, which had experienced 14 years of brutal conflict until 2003, was where my placement took place. I was hosted by Christian Children’s Fund, an international organisation specialised in child protection issues around the world. My main task was to research on the outcome and impact of the reintegration programme for child soldiers.

There, I was assigned to the USAID-funded project to support reintegration of war-affected children and communities. While the project has social and economic reintegration aspects, I was specially focussing on how child soldiers were socially reintegrated into communities. For data collection, I mainly relied on a desk review of relevant documents such as baseline surveys and progress reports from the fields, and my own interviews and observations from visits to the areas where the project was being implemented. Interaction with local beneficiaries and national social workers provided me a great insight.

The DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration) process started in December 2003 for 103,000 former combatants, of which more than 10,000 are child soldiers. Porters, messengers, cooks, and wives of commanders are included in addition to combatants.

Overall, the social reintegration of child soldiers in Liberia seemed to be successful, owing to the roles of the receiving community and family. Although deprived and distressed, the community have resilience and social cohesion (so called ‘social capital’) with which they can face the post-war struggle. Despite the atrocities committed during the conflict, the community have held reconciliation (or healing) ceremonies, and gradually accepted child soldiers back as members of their society, believing them to be “their” children. Whilst child soldiering is still a problem in the world, here I learned the important implication of social capital to the social reintegration of child soldiers.

It was, indeed, a great experience – working in the field of reintegration of child soldiers, getting to know the Liberian context, becoming familiar with a child-focused organisation, and putting into practice the theories we have been taught.

Mai Terawaki Japan
There are few incivilities in wartime more repugnant than the use of children in military roles, but steps are being taken to address it. My eight-week placement as a Child Protection Officer with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Sudan presented an exciting opportunity to work with a UN agency in a dynamic operation focusing on the demobilisation and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups. My remit included liaising between the UN and state-led DDR Commissions, supporting counterparts with needs assessments, facilitating demobilisation, coordinating family tracing and reunification, developing and implementing community-based reintegration services, establishing a social safety-net for children affected by war, providing support to partners’ database management, and participating in advocacy to a variety of stakeholders.

The placement in south-east Sudan enabled me to draw upon much of the theoretical and practical material acquired during the taught phase of the MA course. It proved a useful consolidation exercise whereby I was able to take conceptual frameworks and position them against realities on the ground. The placement also contributed to my dissertation research and is intrinsically linked to the work I will continue to do upon completion of the postgraduate degree. Crucially, the placement afforded me access to a huge cross-section of resource persons, and I was able to benefit from institutional workshops, including a training course on Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS).

Demobilisation of children in Sudan is not new. Past experiences provide valuable lessons and argue for a process of reintegration that is inclusive and community-based, but also one that meets the needs of individual children. The advent of IDDRS and the recent Paris Commitments provide new benchmarks by which to measure DDR programming, and help to inform UNICEF’s strategy for Child DDR in 2007. However, of the many lessons learned, few are more striking than the imperative of national ownership and political will. The reality of a disjointed and artificial Sudan under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement is an obvious wedge between the North & South DDR Commissions. Political sensitivity and distrust slow the process of demobilisation and place UNICEF in the difficult position of urging greater collaboration without overstepping mandate and becoming embroiled in brokering state relationships. Situations such as these raise important questions about the need and purpose of having state-led DDR processes, and whether the break down of government DDR structures would inevitably be followed by a cessation of DDR. For children, that would be an unacceptable result.

Patrick Halton United Kingdom

My placement was in the Psychosocial Unit of Sewalanka Foundation, a Sri Lankan NGO who were working on a new project to build psychosocial centres in six tsunami-affected districts. Two years after the tsunami, displaced Sri Lankans had just moved from temporary shelters into permanent housing.

The ‘Our Home’ project is a simple title without connotation, to counter existing stigma about psychosocial interventions in Sri Lanka. The six centres plan to have a conference room, a children’s play therapy area, a room for one-on-one counselling, a library for information sharing, and an outdoor area for gardening.

I acted as a consultant for the project in its planning, construction, and staff-training phases, using prior experience working at a similar community-based organisation, and participated in project mobilisation via organisational and field visits. Additionally, I facilitated at a 10-day training of 25 psychosocial officers, the future staff of the ‘Our Home’ project, leading varied workshops – active listening and communication; monitoring and evaluation; psychosocial wellness; and team building, trust building, and community building.

For research purposes, I examined the effects of community building as a simple, yet effective, means of helping residents to heal in a post-disaster situation. I investigated the dynamics of brand new post-tsunami housing communities, where families were thrown together at random with no effort made to keep former village structures intact – an interesting social and anthropological experiment, demanding specific strategies to counteract any negative implications of the arbitrarily-assembled communities, and get them on the road to becoming strong and united community units.

The ‘Our Home’ project has great potential to elicit social cohesion in a post-disaster environment where a fragile new community may fail without a central focus to bring it together.

Jessica Spain USA
Women’s rights in Afghanistan

The schism between tradition and modernity, especially concerning women’s rights, has implications for post-war recovery in many contexts across the globe. An interest in this issue led me to a work placement in the women’s protection unit at the Afghanistan Human Rights Commission in Kabul.

My principle aim was to expand my knowledge of Afghanistan – to better understand the conflict and culture. I also wanted to have insight into the complex issues surrounding traditions and Islam in development, and gender liberalism as part of liberal interventionism.

My tasks included an appraisal of the Commission’s three-year women’s rights strategy – commenting and making recommendations on the clarity of ideas, coherence of programming, and effectiveness of implementation. I also assisted with the planning and content of educational workshops.

My personal research involved gathering a small bank of case studies, personal life histories of the women who sought assistance from the Commission, and conducting interviews with development practitioners, government officials, Mullahs, and civil society activists. I consider the knowledge and perspective I gained on my placement to be tough but invaluable, both personally and professionally.

I must thank my Afghan friends at the Norwegian Church Aid for greatly enriching my trip both logistically and socially. It remains to be said that in Afghanistan, the role of women and their position in the society are inextricably interlinked with the national destiny.

Louise Dear United Kingdom

Researching economic regeneration in Mindanao, the Philippines

I worked for Action for Economic Reform (AER) in Manila, and the Coalition of Social Development Organizations-South Cotabato (CSDO-SC) on the island of Mindanao – an area with abundant natural resources, yet high levels of poverty. Organisations such as AER lobby for changes to the economic structures in order to try and create a dynamic national economy characterised by equitable distribution of income, sustainable development, robust and fair trade relations, and democratic governance.

During my research I met with numerous organisations and leaders, from the United Nation’s World Food Programme, to the Tribal Leaders Development Foundation Inc., to the Vice-Governor of Sarangani Province. Overall, my placement was an incredibly eye-opening experience. Key problems I found were: the lack of connection between donor requirements and the needs of beneficiaries; lack of forethought; an inability to recognise opportunities; lack of coordination between organisations; and insufficient security measures to allow access to those in need.

I compiled my research into articles which I submitted to AER after the completion of my placement. These were to be published in a worldwide business newspaper. I also gave a speech on the research at CSDO’s annual conference in front of representatives from their 27 partner organisations.

Clare O’Reilly United Kingdom

Experiencing the politics of Kosovo

Kosovo, has been under international administration for the last seven years, and is now at a crucial point of its history. For many Kosovo Albanians the struggle for independence has been very long, and it is in this year that the Security Council are due to make a decision which will impact on the entire Balkans. The supervised independence suggested in Ahtisaari’s proposal has been thoroughly debated in the Assembly of Kosovo under the watchful eyes of the international community.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is United Nations Mission in Kosovo’s fourth pillar, responsible for institution building. Under OSCE’s Department for Good Governance and Democratic Institutions I was able to conduct my work placement. More specifically, I joined the Central Assembly Unit and, as a temporary member, I was involved in looking at the Legislative Agenda of the Assembly of Kosovo and at their report on law implementation. OSCE also allowed me flexibility to conduct my dissertation research, which involved interviewing MPs and international actors on their opinion on competency transferral. Interacting daily with Kosovo MPs produced many challenges and rewards. Despite the steep learning curve at the beginning, and the still uncovered legal territory, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work at this political and legal level.

After six weeks of highly charged political atmosphere on the streets of Pristina I left the ‘capital’ to join OSCE’s northern and eastern offices in Mitrovica and Gjilan. During the remaining three weeks of my internship I focused on understanding the local perception of the Kosovo relationship with the international community. Meeting local politicians and interacting with locals, the ethnic tension which was a mere ‘vibe’ in the ‘capital’ became inescapable at the quotidian level. Leaving Kosovo soil, I had not only gained on a professional and cultural level, but also on a very personal one through the wonderful friends I met and still have there.

Karolina Olofsson Sweden
I graduated in 2007 from Durham University with a BA (Hons) in Physics and Politics. My final year dissertation on the 1990s conflicts in Rwanda and Somalia furthered my interest in dealing with the aftermath of war. I volunteered and fundraised extensively throughout university, spending one summer working on a post-tsunami reconstruction project in Sri Lanka. A recent internship with Oxfam has been fascinating, and has increased my desire to work for an international aid organisation.

Katie ALLEN
United Kingdom
Background in physics and politics

I graduated from the University of York with a BA in Politics in June. My interest in development, and post-war recovery in particular, stemmed from travel (prior to and during my degree) around Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and parts of Africa and South America. This initial interest was accentuated by the reading and research I did for my final year dissertation on reconciliation and social rebuilding in Mostar, and a particularly good undergraduate module on humanitarian action in war-torn areas.

Maxine CAHAL
United Kingdom
Background in politics

My interest in development took me to India (in 2004) where I volunteered with Chinmaya Organisation for Rural Development on a project for women’s and youth empowerment, healthcare and income generation in the villages of Himachal Pradesh. I then went to Durham University where I graduated with a BA (Hons) in Philosophy, Politics and Economics in July 2007. During that time I went to Sri Lanka to help rebuild houses after the Tsunami. I hope to further my understanding of power dynamics in post-war situations.

Sarah DEWHURST
United Kingdom
Background in politics and voluntary work

I graduated in 2007 from Durham University with a BA (Hons), and also hold a Post Graduate Diploma (Project Planning & Management). I worked as a teacher for three years, and with the International Red Cross Movement for 12 years, before joining UNDP on secondment to the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda as Peace Building and Conflict Management Coordinator. I joined this course to acquire skills and knowledge that will enable me to meaningfully contribute to the ongoing post-conflict recovery in Uganda.

Samson BARRIGYE
Uganda
Background in development, disaster management, and humanitarian assistance

I have worked for a number of NGOs in the field of rural development. After 9/11, I was appointed to posts within the Afghan Government, before accepting an offer to be Managing Director of the Afghan Development Association (ADA). Lately, I was seconded from the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development – where I still hold my job as a Senior Aide to the Minister – as the Deputy to the Minister of State in Parliamentary Affairs in “Afghanistan-Pakistan Peace Jirga Affairs”.

Malaiz DAUD
Afghanistan (Alhajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)
Background in project management and rural development

In 1998, after 10 years service in the British Army as a Bomb Disposal Officer, I joined the HALO Trust (a humanitarian demining organisation). In 2001, I joined the UN Mine Action Service and have seen service in Kosovo, the Lebanon, Sudan and Somalia. I have taken unpaid leave from my current position of the Mine Action Operations Advisor for the UNDP Rule of Law and Security programme in Somalia, to expand my knowledge of post-conflict interventions at the PRDU.

Mark FRANKISH
United Kingdom
Background in British military

In 2006 I graduated from the University of Bologna in International and Diplomatic Science with a degree in Development Studies. In 2005 I took an internship in an asylum seekers’ centre, working with immigrants and refugees, and I have campaigned extensively for several INGOs. Since last year I have been working as a project manager for an international food machinery company. I have come to the PRDU to gain further development skills, and to build a career in the post-war reconstruction sector.

Sara CAGGIATI
Italy
Background in international politics and project management

In 2001 I graduated from the Political Science Faculty of Florence. I then spent more than three years in Honduras working in the field of relief, recovery and development, first for UNDP, then for an Italian NGO (COOPI). Following that I worked for the UN peacekeeping Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) as Electoral Support Officer for the 2005 elections. From November 2006 to August 2007 I worked for the UN peacekeeping Mission in East Timor (UNMIT) as Voter and Civic Education Adviser.

Barbara DE ANNA
Italy
Background in international affairs

After having served 11 years with the New Zealand Defence Force, where I worked within the UN and Multi National environments, I have been working in the Humanitarian Mine Action Industry for the last six years. Working in diverse countries such as Croatia, Kuwait, Kosovo, Iraq, Sudan, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka, I have come to appreciate the impacts of reconstruction and development on post-conflict societies, and I wish to further my knowledge through this Masters programme.

William FRYER
New Zealand
Background in the military and humanitarian mine action
I graduated from University College Dublin in 2005 with a degree in History and Sociology. My final year dissertation was on Irish peacekeepers operating in conflict zones. I chose to join the PRDU because I have a strong inclination towards political matters of conflict and conflict resolution, and believe that this course will give me the tools required to work with, and help, war-torn societies.

Fresh from graduating – BA honours in Politics and History at the University of York – I became keen to follow up on my interest in humanitarianism which was sparked by an undergraduate module on issues concerning humanitarian assistance. In particular, the module broadened my interest in the dilemmas and concerns arising from the growing number of refugees and IDPs in the world. This MA will give me invaluable experience, and a theoretical and practical understanding of these problems.

I graduated from the University of York, through which I became deeply interested in conflict issues. I have been in the Territorial Army for nearly four years, and have aspirations to join the regular force after my studies. I think this course will compliment my service and give me a much greater understanding of the cooperation required to sustain post-war recovery, and the importance of the humanitarian and political aspects of the recovery of war-torn societies. I have lived in the UAE for 14 years.

I graduated from the University of Potsdam in 2007 with an MA in Political & Public Administration, after studying at the University of Konstanz and the Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Lyon. Research on international relations and development policy, and my thesis on state-building international relations and development Politiques de Lyon. Research on after studying at the University of International Relations and Development, in the hope of finding a new career in this field.

I recently completed a BA in History at the University of York, through which I became deeply interested in conflict issues. I have been in the Territorial Army for nearly four years, and have aspirations to join the regular force after my studies. I think this course will compliment my service and give me a much greater understanding of the cooperation required to sustain post-war recovery, and the importance of the humanitarian and political aspects of the recovery of war-torn societies. I have lived in the UAE for 14 years.

I graduated from Kyoto University with a BA in Law, having mainly studied International Law and Politics. Before coming to the UK I did volunteer work for an NGO in Northern Thailand which supports hill tribes. My major interest is education for children in war-torn societies, especially counselling and education towards reconciliation.

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I graduated with a BA in Peace Studies from Whitworth University in 2006. Concurrent to this, I experienced: a UNHCR camp in Kakuma, Kenya, participating in a Peace Education Programme; a month in South Africa studying the aftermath of Apartheid; an Interfaith Peace Delegation to Israel and the West Bank during which we met with Israeli and Palestinian NGOs working toward peace. Since graduating, I worked as a consultant for the US Navy specialising in facilities and logistics coordination.
MA Student Profiles 2007–08

Sudakshini PERERA
United Kingdom
Background in politics

I travelled to my home country (Sri Lanka) in July 2005 to work in a tsunami refugee camp in Cosgoda, and witnessed the political difficulties societies face when trying to rebuild their lives after disasters. I also spent some time in Israel and the Palestinian territories working on a European Commission-sponsored project aiming to promote a culture of peace through art. Having graduated from Durham University with a BA in Politics in June 2007, I have just finished a three-month internship with UNICEF UK.

Robert PERKINS
United Kingdom
Background in history and politics

In 2007 I graduated from the University of York with a BA (Hons) in History and Politics. Part of my undergraduate work covered an introduction into the political and moral dilemmas of humanitarian action. My greatest academic interests include the political and diplomatic resolution of conflict, the ethics of humanitarian intervention, and the integration of human rights discourse into humanitarian work. I feel that this course is a wonderful opportunity for me to develop some practical, field-based experience.

Alexander RAMANOV
Tajikistan
(Altajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)
Background in law

Having graduated in Law from the Tajik State University in 2001, I took part in a Summer School on Human Rights conducted by the local NGO Bureau on Human Rights and Rule of Law. After six months of volunteering I became Director of their Khujand Branch. I then worked for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as Senior Advisor on Human Dimension. In the course of two years I consulted more than 2,600 citizens and took part in 15 judicial trials.

Rory SHANKS
United Kingdom
Background in management & British military

Having just completed a BSc in Management from the University of York, my interest in post-war recovery stems from my involvement in the British Army for the past five years, both regular and territorial. My hope is to transfer some of the skills and concepts learnt on the course to the developing role of Civil-Military Co-operation (CIMIC) in areas of conflict and disaster. I am also interested in the relationships between military and non-military organisations in the post-war recovery sphere.

Gulandom SHARIFOVA
Tajikistan
(Altajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)
Background in international relations

After graduating from the International Relations Department of Tajik State National University in June 2006, I joined the Moscow State University for the Humanities as an Assistant to the Director of the Centre interuniversitaire Moscou-Québec. In February 2007 I started working with the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (UNDP/TMAC), the only half governmental and half international programme which specifically deals with demining activities, assistance to mine victims, and mine risk education in Tajikistan.

Neil SNAITH
United Kingdom
Background in history

I am looking forward to a career in public service and feel that the Masters Course in Post-war Recovery Studies at the PRDU will offer the ideal opportunity to pursue an intellectually and personally satisfying vocation. My attraction to this field of study was sparked in the late 1990s when working alongside Albanians, Croatians, and Serbians following the tragic disintegration of Yugoslavia. After completing a BA in History at London Metropolitan University, I moved back to my home city, York.

Amy THORNTON
United Kingdom
Background in history

Having studied conflict throughout the ages in my History degree at York, I realised that academic study too often stops at the peace treaty and fails to follow the stories of those left in the affected areas. This MA seemed an ideal way to further my interest in this area (particularly the repatriation of refugees, and the reintegration of child soldiers), providing the practical study that history so often lacks. I hope my time at the PRDU will provide me with the building blocks required to follow a career in the international aid sector.

Tom STRATTON
United Kingdom
Background in history and politics

I graduated with a History and Politics degree from York in 2007, where I took a keen interest in development politics. My fascination with this subject began with a project in western Uganda in 2004, where I spent four months teaching in an area that had recently been cleared of Congolese rebels. I feel the MA will provide me with greater understanding of a challenging and relevant area of international politics, and hope it enables me to be of direct benefit to those people suffering as a result of conflict.

Hector VIVERO
Mexico
(Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar)
Background in development studies

I majored in Development Studies at the University of California Berkeley, during which time I taught two student-led classes about development issues in Latin America, led a group of volunteers in Peru on a microfinance project, and was awarded with the prestigious Haas Scholars research grant. After graduation, I founded the development organisation Green Poverty Alleviation which is dedicated to implement development projects in underprivileged communities throughout Latin America.
Below are brief research outlines from six more members of our thriving PhD community.

**Mariko YAGI**

Japan

*Background in international law*

After graduating from Sophia University in 2006 with a BA in International Laws, I worked for Amnesty International Japan. As a campaign coordinator, I organised a speaking tour focused on human rights violations committed during the 11-year-conflict in Nepal, featuring a leading human rights activist and a local journalist. I also launched a campaign against Guantanamo Bay and coordinated a two-day film festival with 10 movies on a variety of human rights issues around the world.

**Risa YOKOYAMA**

Japan

*Background in law*

In 2002, I graduated from Keio University in Japan with a BA in Law (Department of Political Science), where I studied International Relations and assistance provided by the UN and Japan. During my final year I focused on analysing Afghanistan during the Taliban regime. After working for Fuji Xerox for five years, I decided to study post-war reconstruction (with particular interests in Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast). Whilst at the PRDU I hope to obtain a deep understanding and develop practical skills within this field.

**Zafar YULDOSHEV**

Tajikistan

(Altajir/OSI/FCO Scholar)

*Background in economics*

I graduated from the Tajik Agrarian University in November 2002, and was awarded a diploma with honour – specialisation in economics and management in the agricultural sphere. Since graduating I have worked in a number of national and international NGOs. Recently I joined the UNDP Communities Programme as a Programme Analyst, focusing on food security, rehabilitation of the infrastructure, enhancing the agro-governance, and improving the living standards of the rural population.

**Victor ASIEDU**

Ghana

I have come to the PRDU as a PhD student to research into the UN Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programmes of ex-combatants in Liberia and Sierra Leone. With 10 years military service in the Ghana Army, I served with a number of UN and sub-regional peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, Sierra Leone and Liberia. My interest in DDR programmes developed when I commanded a company that provided security for military observers directly involved in DDR in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and I attended workshops to enhance my knowledge.

**Véronique BARBELET**

France

Currently entering my third year as a PhD student, my research focuses on possible effects that humanitarian dialogues with armed groups may have on the peaceful transformation of conflict. It aims to: understand humanitarian dialogue as a specific type of humanitarian action; examine the legal framework regarding armed groups and their accountability towards Human Rights; show how humanitarian dialogues could help to bring conflicting parties to the negotiating table. My main case study is the second civil war in Sudan (1983–2005).

**Richard BOWD**

United Kingdom

I am conducting research into the social reintegration of ex-combatants in Rwanda, and the implications this has for social capital and reconciliation. This has involved conducting elite interviews, life history analysis and PRA techniques in Rwanda. I am now entering my final year in which I will finish my analysis and write-up. I chose York for three main reasons: my supervisor, Dr Özerdem, whose work influenced my masters’ dissertation research; the global reputation of York in the academic community.

**Adewale OSOFISAN**

Nigeria

My PhD examines the role of regionalism in post-conflict political reconstruction using Liberia and Sierra Leone as case studies. My experience with issues relating to states, conflict, governance and development informed my interest in post-conflict societies, and how regional intervention can shape political outcomes at the aftermath of peace settlements. Bridging the gap between theory and practice is a key element of research in the PRDU and this has helped to further my understanding of the related concepts my research is currently investigating.

**Sukanya PODDER**

India

My doctoral research explores how faulty DDR programming – with scant emphasis on, and little resources for, the reintegration phase – can be the key to understanding the ineffectiveness of the international community’s overwhelmingly normative response to the child soldier problem. By problematising the issue of re-recruitment of demobilised child soldiers, in cases where DDR processes for child combatants has taken place and is underway, my focus will be on tapping the loopholes in DDR planning and programming for child soldiers at each stage.

**Simon ROBINS**

United Kingdom

Since 2003 I have been running field offices in East Timor, Uganda and Nepal for the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross). Their mandate is to protect and assist victims of conflict and to attempt to ensure the respect of International Humanitarian Law. My work with persons Missing in conflict, and their families, has emphasised the need for protection in conflict. Accordingly, my research seeks to investigate several contexts where persons are Missing, to understand the needs of families of the Missing, and to make a comparative study of mechanisms to address these.
This year’s MA Field Visit (December 2008) will be to Jordan, based at the Regional Human Security Centre (RHSC) in Amman. The RHSC was first established in July 2000 at the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, with core funding and programme support provided by the Government of Canada. The Centre ran successfully until the end of 2005 when, due to unforeseen circumstances, it entered a period of hibernation.

In March 2007, the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) in Amman tasked Professor Sultan Barakat to undertake a strategic review of the Centre, so as to establish why it entered its state of hibernation, and how it can move forward sustainably. Sultan was assisted by Darren Atkinson, who undertook his placement at the Centre.

This review was successfully completed, and the Centre has now been physically refurbished and is in a position to begin fulfilling its research objectives, focused on four knowledge clusters: sovereignty and civil society, armed conflict, migration, and reconstruction and development. These four areas are designed to provide a full understanding of the issues surrounding human security. The aim for the RHSC is to provide the research focus required to propel human security into the public and political consciousness across the region – from North Africa to West Asia via the Middle East.

Amman, with its geographical location in the heart of the region, continues to be the perfect base for a dedicated human security centre. Jordan, as an active member of the ‘Human Security Network’, is also suited to this task due to its political and economic stability. The importance of the financial and political support provided by the Government of Jordan (through the Higher Council for Science and Technology) cannot be overestimated. The Jordanian political structure is also characterised by its willingness to open dialogue with all regional partners including Israel – something that is vital for the success of the Centre.

Amman is also unique because of the high concentration of international humanitarian and development agencies responding to needs in Iraq and Palestine. At the same time it is estimated that there are some 700,000–800,000 Iraqi refugees currently living in Jordan, accounting for more than 10 per cent of the total population. For Jordan, with its limited natural resources and small size, the arrival of Iraqis has exacerbated economic and environmental problems, placed a further burden on strained social services, and heightened internal security concerns. For Iraqis, life in Jordan is characterised by economic and political vulnerabilities, even with the generosity shown by the Government of Jordan. The majority of Iraqis live in urban centres in private accommodation, rather than collective centres or refugee camps, but despite their degree of physical integration within Jordanian society many issues still exist regarding residency, eligibility to work and availability of employment, depleting or exhausted savings, and access to affordable healthcare. Also, despite the positive developments made concerning access to education for Iraqi children, much confusion and uncertainty remains amongst Iraqis regarding their entitlements.

The issue of Iraqis in Jordan has significant implications for human security within Jordan specifically, and the Middle East more generally, and presents the RHSC with an important research challenge. It is crucial to undertake research that highlights the needs of the Iraqi nationals living in Jordan and the provisions currently in place; and identifies the opportunities, challenges and limitations faced in providing such support. The Centre will also seek to increase dialogue amongst all stakeholders – relevant government departments, UN agencies, and the wider NGO community – in order to facilitate pro-active programme coordination, information-sharing and policy dialogue, thereby enhancing the quality, effectiveness, and transparency of the work of those involved so that they can better realise their mandated objectives. By undertaking research of this nature, it is the Centre’s vision to become the portal of knowledge on the most common issues that threaten the human security of the people of the region.

Considering the state of affairs in the wider Middle East and North Africa, with conflicts and political turmoil affecting the region from Mauritania to Afghanistan, and in particular following 9/11, there is a clear and discerning need for a regional research and dissemination centre that focuses on the concept of human security. In fact, in many ways the idea for establishing the Centre back in 2000 was way ahead of its time.