



**FUNDING IN
CONFLICT-AFFECTED
ENVIRONMENTS**

PHILANTHROPY *for*
SOCIAL JUSTICE *and* PEACE

www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org
www.psjp.org

The Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace (www.psjp.org) seeks to maximize the contribution that philanthropy can make to social justice and peacebuilding. This Study focuses on peacebuilding, but recognizes the importance of rights and social justice underpinning sustainable peace. The recommendations have been informed by the members of the Working Group and the members of the Foundations for Peace Network – independent locally-based funders working in contested societies (www.foundationsforpeace.com). Learning was also gleaned from interviews carried out with a number of grant-makers and peacebuilding practitioners, including the Social Change Initiative, Northern Ireland (www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org) which is supporting this Study.

INTRODUCTION – PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

This Study is designed to answer the question – how can independent philanthropy fund activities and initiatives in conflict-affected areas in order to promote and support peacebuilding? Evidence shows that grant-making Trusts and Foundations do make a positive contribution, although many are still wary of working in situations of violent conflict fearing that interventions can have negative as well as positive consequences. It is with this in mind that the Study looks at the importance of conflict sensitivity for independent donors, in addition to detailing how donors can support peacebuilding through different stages of conflict and peace processes.

What is required is thoughtful and committed philanthropy with the motivation and courage to fund in difficult circumstances and the potential to –

- **Help empower beleaguered communities:** *Sustained violence is disempowering, particularly where the prospects of peace seem elusive. Despite this local communities and groups are often well placed to engage with parties to the conflict with a view to finding pathways out of violence. Local activists can be the R&D of future peacebuilding and need to be supported as such.*
- **Strengthen civil society initiatives:** *While civil society itself can be a contested arena, community-based organizations and NGOs are important vehicles for Human Rights, Women's Rights, socio-economic development, addressing the needs of victims/survivors and maintaining relationships across political division.*
- **Build partnerships/platforms for change:** *Donor funding priorities may focus on specific themes, interests and regions, but independent funders are well-placed to work with a range of partners – local, national, regional and international. Broader networking between those involved with, and in, areas of conflict can build relationships and understanding. A funding interest in the arts, for example, can take account of conflict and peacebuilding issues, as can primary donor involvement with the welfare of children, health, local development, etc.*
- **Offer new insights and paradigms:** *Finding ways out of violent conflict requires new thinking and strategies. Where funders are experienced in working in various conflict areas they are well placed to identify and share models of good practice in peacebuilding.*

- **Create spaces:** *Independent funders can encourage reflection, exchanges and strategy building in areas of conflict.*

METHODOLOGY

The information and insights contained in this Study are drawn from a number of sources:

- Interviews with a range of independent Trusts, Foundations and community philanthropy organizations.
- Interviews with NGOs and civil society organizations with extensive experience of addressing issues of peacebuilding in areas of violent conflict.
- A focus group session held in London with both peacebuilding NGOs and staff members of grant-making Foundations.
- Commissioned research to draw together literature on peacebuilding as well as on peace/conflict analysis and framing.
- A survey conducted by Barry Knight (Centris Consulting) with a sample of grant-making foundations experienced in this area of work.
- Information provided by a range of academic and NGO reports on peacebuilding.
- Case Studies developed with local community philanthropy organizations (members of the Foundations for Peace Network) working in contested and divided societies.
- Comments on the draft Study by a number of informed funder and NGO respondents.

The Study author - Avila Kilmurray - and the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace express appreciation for the generosity of all those involved in sharing time, thought and information, although the conclusions drawn are the author's own. What is clear is that there is no single route map. The relevance of the approaches suggested depends on each unique set of circumstances that exist in any specific conflict situation. Funding in conflict-affected environments must, of necessity, go beyond the technicalities of grant-making to consider the power struggles that lie at the heart of contested societies. This goes to the essence of thoughtful and committed philanthropic engagement.

SECTION 1 - UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT: DO NO HARM

1.1. WHY FUND IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT?

“More than 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by fragility and conflict. Poverty rates in these countries average 54%, in contrast to 22% for low-income countries as a whole. Most fragile and conflict affected countries face particularly severe development challenges such as weak infrastructural capacity, poor governance, political instability and frequently, continuing violence or the legacy effects of past severe conflict.”

World Bank Fragile States Report (2012)

“The economic and financial cost of conflict and violence in 2014 has been estimated to be US\$14.3 trillion, or 13.4% of the global economy. Yet it is the human cost that is most devastating, rendering conflict the biggest obstacle to human development. . . Every day in 2014 conflicts and violence forced approximately 42,500 people to flee their homes and seek safety either internally or across borders. . . Nearly 1.4 billion people live in fragile situations, and the population is projected to grow to 1.9 billion by 2030. . .”

Report of UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon for the World Humanitarian Summit (2016)

In our inter-dependent world nobody can ignore the causes, implications and consequences of violent conflict. Contemporary conflicts take many forms but we know that sustained violence results in death, poverty, human insecurity and increasing numbers of refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs). The impact of violence is not evenly shared, and its causes are multi-faceted. These may be deeply rooted in a sense of communal injustice, but also encompass issues of identity, ideology and religion, as well as struggles over control of resources, territory and power.

“The proximate cause of conflict may be an outbreak of public disorder or a protest over a particular incident, but the root cause may be, for example, socio-economic inequities and inequalities, systematic ethnic discrimination, denial of human rights, disputes over political participation or long-standing grievances over land and other resource allocation.”

Kofi Annan, Former UN Secretary-General (2001)

It is sometimes claimed that the financial contribution of philanthropy to peacebuilding is miniscule compared to the funding available through international agencies and states, but there is good

evidence for the important role of independent philanthropy in addressing aspects of peacebuilding as indicated in the Rockefeller Brothers' Fund Peacebuilding Guidelines:

'Numerous and diverse factors drive contemporary conflicts, from strained relations between governments and groups of people to threats that transcend borders such as environmental crises, the flow of weapons, and violent extremism. In today's interdependent world, regional or local conflicts often have consequences that undermine the security and well-being of distant communities. Transforming conflict to build just and durable peace requires the global community to think differently about how it responds to the complex nature of 21st century challenges. . . The Fund's Peacebuilding program aspires to strengthen grassroots constituencies for peace and to connect them with policymaking on the regional and international levels. It aims to understand the conditions that lead to violence and the processes that support durable peace in order to identify innovative solutions to the most pressing drivers of insecurity. . .

Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Independent funders adopt a range of approaches to support understanding and activities in the peacebuilding field – approaches that are particularly valuable when they include grant-making administered in a responsive, timely and flexible manner. The allocation of even modest amounts of money can offer valuable 'acupuncture' grants that are the basis of building relationships with community-based and civil society organizations working for solidarity and peace in conflict areas. The fact that such relationships are also informed by taking the time to listen to the views of people working at the local level is invaluable.

The 'Tips for Funders Working in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings', drawn together by the Peace and Security Funders Group, summarizes issues that funders need to consider -

TIPS FOR FUNDERS WORKING IN CONFLICT AND POST CONFLICT SETTINGS

Tip 1 Do your Research: Prior to engaging in a conflict or post conflict setting, funders must understand the context, the drivers of conflict, key conflict issues, potential spoilers and potential constituencies for peace.

Tip 2 Be Prepared to take Risks: Conflict and post conflict settings are inherently risky. Funders must be willing to assume some degree of risk when engaging in these settings. While the risk of failure is real, the rewards may be great; funders that are flexible, creative and willing to take risks can play an important role in conflict prevention and mitigation, and peacebuilding.

Tip 3 Focus on Conflict Prevention: Though it's difficult to measure – and therefore fund – focusing on prevention is critical.

Tip 4 Know your Partner: Establishing relationships and partnerships with grantees and other key stakeholders is important. By staying connected with partners and grantees, funders are able to stay on top of the situation and build networks for peace.

Tip 5 Support Indigenous Efforts: Funders should support locally led initiatives and connect these to national and international efforts.

Tip 6 Provide Core Support: To help ensure the long-term viability of civil society, funders should consider providing grantees with core support, rather than project-based support. Core support allows grantees to be flexible in volatile, rapidly changing contexts.

Tip 7 Be a Connector: By leveraging their ability to connect local actors with national and international players, funders can help build networks of peace.

Tip 8 Stay the Course: Peacebuilding work is long-term and requires long-term commitment. When engaging in a conflict area, funders should think about long-term strategies for building and maintaining peace.

Peace & Security Funders' Group (2015) www.peaceandsecurity.org

Many of these issues will be considered in more detail throughout this Study.

1.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF NAMING WHAT WE ARE DOING

Words and terminology are important when working on issues of violence, conflict and peace. Sensitivity to language is particularly important in contested societies where words can categorize people and/or marginalize them, as well as framing popular understanding of the nature of the conflict itself. In certain situations even the term 'peacebuilding' carries pejorative overtones, suggesting that justifiable grievances might be overlooked when the prize is the ending of violence. Sensitivity to the use and abuse of language and terminology is critical.

In the interests of clarity, distinctions are drawn between Peacekeeping; Peace-making and Peacebuilding – with arguably ‘peacebuilding’ (or ‘conflict transformation’) being the primary focus of philanthropic interest –

- **Peacekeeping** – Third party intervention (generally by military forces) to assist in minimizing violent conflict and/or transitioning out of violence.
- **Peace-making** – Diplomatic and political efforts to end violence between the combatant parties/groups/forces, to move them towards non-violent dialogue and to conclude a peace agreement.
- **Peacebuilding** – Supporting the achievement of sustainable peace through the prevention of a recurrence of violence by addressing root causes as well as the effects of conflict.
- **Conflict Transformation** – Seeking to develop the capacity of local groups/actors to achieve a transformation of interests to support structural change rather than focusing on the delivery of settlements.

“Conflict transformation integrates the emotional and psychological with the substantive concerns of people in conflict, the underlying belief being that more than real politik and statist diplomacy is needed to build a society supportive of sustainable transformation.”

Professor John Paul Lederach (1997)

(Peacebuilding) “Activities designed to prevent conflict through addressing structural and proximate causes of violence, promoting sustainable peace, delegitimizing violence as a dispute resolution strategy, building capacity within society to peacefully manage disputes, and reducing vulnerability to triggers that may spark violence.”

OECD Definition of Peacebuilding

Although peacebuilding can sometimes be seen as happening in the aftermath of the cessation of violence and peace agreements, this Study sees it as a theme throughout the various phases of violent conflict as well as supporting peace processes in any post-conflict scenario.

Other terminology common in the peace and security field include -

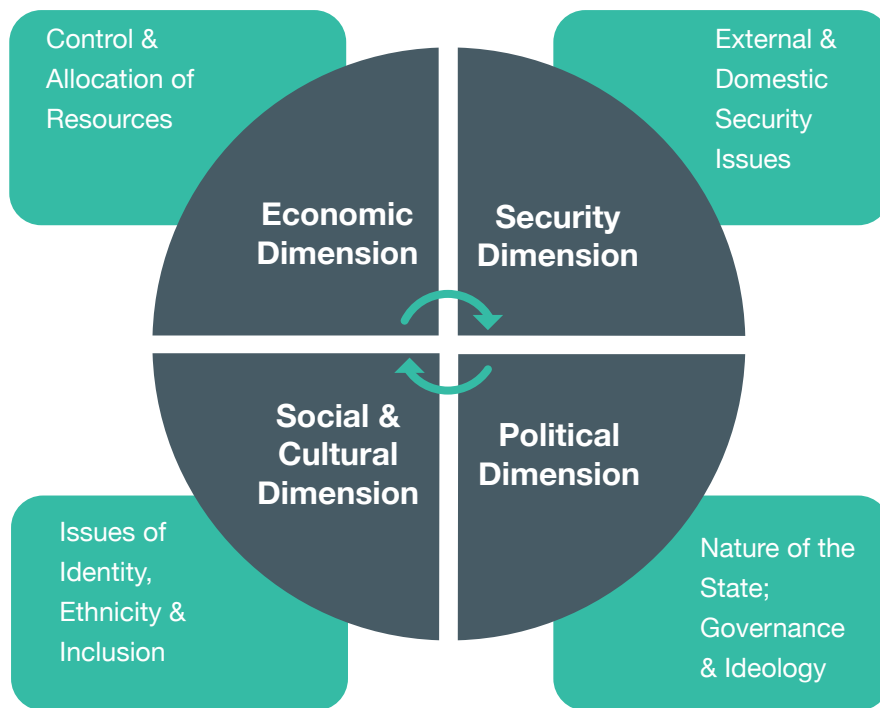
- **Track I Diplomacy:** Official negotiations between political and military elites and interests.
- **Track II Diplomacy:** Non official mediation that can involve civil society actors, including communication (often behind the scene) between political elites and combatant groups.
- **Track III Diplomacy:** Humanitarian and development assistance which may, or may not, have explicit peacebuilding objectives, but impacts on the context within which peace negotiations are occurring.

Mention is also made of Track 1.5 Diplomacy – where the diplomacy is conducted by ex-political figures that have direct access to decision makers and insurgency groups. While these interventions

are usually applied to violent conflict described as ‘war’, even this term can be controversial. Liberation struggles, aggravated criminality, separatism, struggles for democracy, gangsterism and terrorism are all terms used inter-changeably in depicting the same struggle. There is an honourable tradition of private Foundations supporting Track II diplomacy efforts in often difficult situations.

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT

A study by Goodhand (2006) identified five causal dimensions that pattern violent conflict -



The fifth contextual dimension is that of the environment and location of the conflict, which can often be along geo-political fault-lines (such as Ukraine) or conflicts in borderlands of states (such as Southern Thailand).

Faced with the endemic violence affecting many countries that it works with, the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) developed a [Chronic Violence Learning Project](#) –

“The Chronic Violence Framework enables us to perceive the interlinked nature of a challenge currently seen as a collection of disparate problems labelled domestic, youth, gang, school, criminal or political, each with its own solution. . . This framework shifts our perspective to a notion of violence as a systemic phenomenon with multiple causes and effects. . . Thematically and institutionally isolated – siloed – approaches give way to more holistic approaches. . .”

Tani Adams: Chronic Violence and the Challenge to Grassroots Organizations in
<http://www.iaf.gov/resources/publications/grassroots-development-journal/2014>

The approach was developed with the participation of grassroots activists in Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico and seeks to shift the major objective of traditional funding

programmes from reducing or eliminating specific kinds of violence (such as gang violence) towards the broader goal of ‘enabling’ groups vulnerable to multiple forms of violence to ‘thrive’ by developing resilience.

While the IAF framework may be more applicable to non-politically motivated violence it underlines the need for a **Conflict Analysis** to be carried out to identify the main factors (and the linkages between them) in any specific conflict in order to prioritize the key dynamics and stakeholders, together with possible openings for peacebuilding. A Conflict Analysis can be used to frame philanthropic programmes of intervention. The Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (2012) developed a framework for funders to think through a peace and conflict lens (Guide to Conflict Sensitivity – www.conflictsensitivity.org). Questions are posed on ascertaining (i) Conflict Profile – the nature of the conflict; (ii) Conflict Causes; (iii) Conflict Actors – their motivations/interests; and (iv) Conflict Dynamics – current conflict trends, windows of opportunity and problems. This tool suggests combining conflict analysis with **Conflict Mapping** which identifies the main groups involved in the conflict, their respective interests and the relationship between them. These important exercises are termed **Peace and Conflict Assessments**.

Research undertaken by Bush (2006), and updated for this Study, highlighted how the best intentioned funding initiatives can have very different outcomes when located in areas of conflict –

“Imagine a municipal water project that seeks to improve access to clean water in an area where there have been tensions between communities. We could say that this initiative has had a positive peacebuilding impact if (a) it helped to bring members of the communities together because of their shared interest in clean water and the benefits this has for public health and general quality of life; (b) it created the communication channels and opportunities for diverse members of different communities to work together on issues beyond water management; (c) it increased inclusion and participation of both women and men from violence-affected groups in decision-making at the community level on issues they consider a priority; and (d) professional or interpersonal relationships began to grow across community lines and perhaps encouraged communities to work together in other areas of activities. That same water project could have a conflict-creating impact if, for example, one community starts to think that the other community is benefiting more than its own – or worse, if it believes that the other community will benefit by ‘stealing’ its water. Or, conflict may be created (or worsened) if some members of the population are excluded from decision-making, participation, and so on (women, marginalised social, economic, ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural groups).”

Hands-On PCIA – A Handbook for Peace and Conflict Assessment (2006), K. Bush.

Bush argues that any project or funded intervention in a conflict-prone region will invariably have an impact on the peace and conflict environment, with the potential to be either positive or negative, notwithstanding the original funder intention. The trick is for funders to take local advice to help them think through the implications of their intervention and to ask questions about the potential impact of the project to be supported in terms of peacebuilding.

A participative approach to conflict analysis can help build relationships with local actors and activists, as well as identifying the important ‘connectors’ at community level that can support peacebuilding (as well as those with a vested interest in conflict). Given the changing nature of violence, conflict analysis needs to be updated in line with the changing circumstances experienced. If this investment seems onerous it needs to be placed in the context of conclusions drawn by the Global Peace Index, 2014 –

“The economic impact of containing and dealing with the consequences of violence in 2013 was significant, amounting to US\$9.8 trillion p.a. or 11.3% of global GDP. This amount is equivalent to around US\$1,350 per person, or twice the size of Africa’s economy.”

Global Peace Index 2014: Measuring Peace and Assessing Country Risk.

The economic impact does not take account of the much greater impact of human suffering and lost opportunity.

1.4. WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD

With a baseline of ‘Do no harm’, funders and peacebuilding NGOs involved in consultations for this Study indicated the importance of a number of propositions when potential donors are designing programmes in, and for, conflict areas –

➤ Taking the Time to Listen

“There is a responsibility for foreigners to quiet their voice. Calm down and visit and get to know the people. Don’t run in with your own agenda.”

Monk on the Thai-Burma Border, cited in Anderson, M., Brown, D. & Jean, I. (2012) Time to Listen – Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid: Collaborative Learning Projects, Cambridge, Mass. USA.

Anderson, Brown & Jean were primarily examining the management of development aid, but the plea to take the time to listen is equally relevant to funding programmes in situations of conflict. Invariably, externally designed explanations and solutions are not the answer. Although local people may be diplomatic, particularly to potential funders, all too often eyes glaze over when outsiders come with answers rather than questions. The second big turn off is when donors prefer to fund ‘experts’ and ‘technical assistance programmes’ based in their home countries in order to ‘solve the problem’. External expertise may certainly be helpful, but it must be married to the insights of the many local activists that are already working on developing peacebuilding opportunities and options. Taking the time to listen suggests respect. Early investment in active consultation and participatory listening strategies can take a number of forms. One international funder located an experienced Programme Officer in the priority conflict area prior to developing a grant portfolio in order to provide the information required to guide their possible added value contribution. It is also essential to identify trusted local partners as informants, with these being drawn from a range of backgrounds

and perspectives in order to reflect the complexity of views within contested societies. Questions need to be posed about the opportunities for peacebuilding as well as the nature of ongoing grievances that continue to fuel violence. The importance of adopting a participative listening approach is underlined by an experience in the unsettled region of Southern Thailand in 2010. A desk scan of local media coverage on the on-going conflict reviewed over 6,000 news pieces written over four years. When examined it was found that they had been written by 30 reporters relying on the same 20 to 30 sources of information; most being government officials. This had perpetuated an imbalanced public perception of the conflict, which limited potential peacebuilding opportunities.

Where 'active listening' consultation is undertaken, it is essential to ensure that the local 'voice' is inclusive and reaches beyond traditional community leaders and political representatives who may not always reflect the views of marginalized, and/or silenced sectors of society, such as women, minority ethnic groups, young people, etc. Gathering these 'non-traditional' views often requires patience -

"There was a workshop . . .with the self-help community women from one of the areas where we're supporting these fellowship awardees. At the start the fellowship awardees did not trust us, there would be silence in the room. We'd keep talking and there'd be a stony silence and that was a very difficult thing to break for us because we're very fast and talk too much. They were just watching and observing first – we thought maybe they don't understand, and maybe, we wondered, if they had the capacity to grasp what we were saying. Whereas it was their wisdom in watching us, observing us, and assuring themselves that these people are genuine, we have confidence, so that trust building was something we had to do. . .The community women are no longer quiet, they're building up their lobbying and campaigning for whatever they need. . ."

Indira Jena, Nirnaya Women's Fund, India.

Given high levels of mistrust, suspicion and rumour funders need to be very clear as to why questions are being asked and how the information will be used. Assurances of confidentiality need to be honoured in order to ensure the security of key informants. Lack of clarity can lead to misinterpretation and fuels suspicion, particularly in frontline communities.

Funders experienced in working in areas of conflict stress the importance of avoiding pre-determined assumptions about the nature of the violence and the roles of respective combatant groups. Care has to be exercised when it is the donor practice to develop relationships with a government or state agencies (often on the basis of leveraging matching funds) as this may be interpreted as political alignment; so too can donor association with an external government that is perceived to be a party to the conflict.

➤ *Checking out potential Partnership*

A White Paper on Peacebuilding (2015) re-iterated the perception of ‘paternalistic’ approaches of ‘outsiders’ seeking to influence peacebuilding dynamics on the ground -

“‘Outsiders’ is generally understood as foreign donors, international organizations or international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), that want to affect political dynamics in a specific region or context. This is especially the case in Central Asia, Central Africa, and South America where stronger, more centralized governments have pushed back on UN activities labelled as ‘peacebuilding’. These observations contribute to a growing evidence base that shows a disconnection between peacebuilding at the grass-roots level and action by international organizations and bilateral donors. They also reveal the complexity behind the terms ‘ownership’ or ‘participation’ in a peacebuilding process. . .”

White Paper on Peacebuilding (2015) Geneva Peacebuilding Platform.

While external funders will always be ‘outsiders’ they can make this a strength by being prepared to build equitable partnerships at local level and formulate probing questions with the help of experienced advisors. As noted by the Peace & Security Funders’ Group, the selection of appropriate partners is important and is likely to ‘badge’ the donor interest and perspective.

In addition to local partners from within the area of conflict, expertise can be drawn from peacebuilding NGOs, and thought leaders, with experience in specific regions. The work of Conciliation Resources (UK) and Saferworld (www.c-r.org and www.saferworld.org.uk) is a case in point, when they demonstrated how proactive local discussion focusing on how to build peace (including addressing root causes of violence), rather than solely discussing the nature of the conflict, was productive. Their People’s Peace-making Perspectives project found that a more future looking approach motivated participants and identified peacebuilding opportunities, thus contributing to the overall process.

Partnership with other independent funders is also useful, particularly where Foundations and donors are engaging in conflict areas for the first time. Funder partnerships can be formed on the basis of shared interest in a region, a particular conflict situation or a specific project.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung and the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund (BST) are continuing their joint funding initiative to support confidence building activities of non-state actors in the South Caucasus and its neighbouring regions. Projects relating to Turkish-Armenian rapprochement are also supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Partners are convinced that civil society can make a valuable contribution to the process of confidence building, mutual understanding and reconciliation between populations in territories involved in (armed) conflicts. This initiative is designed to encourage grantees to investigate new ways, methods and approaches to generating mutual understanding.

www.bosch-stiftung.de/content/language2/html/35312.asp.

➤ *The Frustration of Donor 'Fads'*

The donor tendency to celebrate and congregate around new conceptual frames and/or 'innovative' approaches was flagged up as a major concern (as well as annoyance) to peacebuilding activists working in situations of endemic violence. Not only does the 'fad' syndrome undermine any sense of local decision-making, but it can ignore the long-term nature of peacebuilding which requires a certain level of consistency. An example cited was how certain funders all shifted to a focus on 'storytelling' - an approach that did not always mesh with peacebuilding priorities identified by peacebuilding practitioners. There was also a view that donors often fail to communicate their priorities effectively, leaving civil society organisations to interpret donor intent. Geographically removed community-based peacebuilding organizations can find themselves additionally disadvantaged due to limited personal contact with potential funders or lacking a shared language with donor programme staff.

A number of examples were provided where terminology can get in the way of understanding. These included funders terming individuals working for transformational change in areas of conflict as 'social entrepreneurs' rather than 'peacebuilders'; or adopting what was called a 'prontoprint' approach – finding something that works and seeking to roll it out on a larger scale irrespective of context. Activists also expressed concerns about the drift of funders towards operational programmes of their own rather than responsive grant-making and about what is often dubbed 'strategic' philanthropy as compared to responsive philanthropy. One veteran funder of peacebuilding was a firm advocate for the latter, arguing that "Philanthropy is there to assist in those areas that others will not engage with. . .It is to do things that others can't. ." He described the importance of working with local groups and NGOs in a responsive and collaborative manner.

Reference was made to cases where the donor 'fad' syndrome influences the selection of conflicts that attract resources. Key to this is often contemporary media coverage or sense of new opportunity. This has to be balanced with recognition of the reality that there are decided benefits to continuing investment in a known situation. Another pressure and/or opportunity can be the donor pooling of resources through philanthropic 'baskets' of funds. Again there are benefits and dangers. On the one hand there is the potential for greater impact and donor solidarity which may be of particular interest to first-time funders; as against this there is the danger of distorting local peacebuilding which may have a limited ability to absorb largescale funds. Closely linked to the syndrome of donor 'fad', is the issue of donor 'fatigue', with interest and resources shifting to the next crisis point when conflict situations become too complex or exhausting.

➤ **Be Participative in Framing Approaches**

“A local CBO (community-based organization) funded through foreign donor funds has been surveying the surrounding communities in preparation for upcoming ‘peace committees’. We have no idea what these are and what they will do. We are not sure if this is something we need, we are just waiting to see what will come out of these surveys. I am baffled about how projects like this are decided on”.

Woman interviewed in a village in Sri Lanka, cited in Time to Listen – Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid (2012): Anderson, M., Brown, D. & Jean, I.

The ‘peace committees’ referred to may well have been a good idea, but clearly there was neither adequate understanding nor ownership by local communities. Similarly, it is not uncommon to hear community activists engaged in peacebuilding being told to gather up equal numbers of children from different identities before projects are funded to work with them. An overly stringent emphasis on ‘peace and reconciliation’ by the EU programme of the same name, duly branded with stars and doves, resulted in graffiti being painted up in Belfast (Northern Ireland) – ‘Shove your doves!’; while ‘cross-community’ work resulted in locals talking about ‘very cross communities’. Similarly, it was reported that large donor-appreciation signs posted up across Palestine were re-cycled to make excellent chicken coops. Another issue raised is donor pressure on NGOs and community-based organizations to partner with state initiatives in situations where state forces are party to the conflict. In short, even the best intentioned peacebuilding programmes, when designed externally, can result in unforeseen consequences and reactions when implemented. Effective and respectful partnership between funders/donors and locally based organizations and informants can circumvent many of these problems.

One approach to participation and collaboration is where partnerships are forged between external donors and funder organizations located and working in contested societies. Local Community Foundations, Women’s Funds, Environmental Funds, YouthBanks and Human Rights funds that have their feet on the ground and are sustainable are examples of informed organizations that can either offer advice or act as grant-making intermediaries around agreed priorities. These local partnerships can also enhance the local/national acceptability of externally funded programmes.

➤ **Be Prepared to Take Calculated Risks**

An interesting discussion took place between three peacebuilding activists when asked to comment on relations with donors –

Activist A “I have been trying to figure out a response to what holds donors back in conflict situations which does not apply to other areas of work that could be seen as equally difficult. I would love to ask donors whether or not there is a fear around engaging with conflict, especially current conflict situations rather than dealing with the consequences of conflict. It may be that they feel too close to the problem or fear that their intervention may add to

negative consequences – even death. In other situations, such as health or environment, the issues may also involve life and death, but in a more indirect manner. . .”

Activist B “I think it is also about the chaos and unpredictability of conflict situations – so we have developed our own conceptual triangle and one of the things that we talk about is resilience. Often what people are doing is building resilience to cope with extremely challenging and unpredictable situations. If you don’t have that resilience the situation will be even worse, but I think you need to be quite sophisticated to pick up on that argument, although once you have grasped it, it makes sense. Are you going to leave people defenceless in the face of conflict or are you going to give them tools to be able to resist what is happening to them?”

Activist C “Interestingly in the NGO field we tend not to use the language of life and death – the issue inspires us, it motivates us, but we actually rarely talk about it. There is a bit of conditioning going on if you’re listening to mainstream donors and we have got pushed into ways of describing things that have lost their immediacy. . .”

It was acknowledged that civil society activists do not always effectively communicate the importance and opportunities of addressing big issues that have such an impact on people’s lives. Peacebuilding can be difficult to communicate in simple terms, and donors that are confused about possible outcomes can easily be sceptical of the need to build on existing work. There are also those donors and Foundations that really want to make a positive contribution but are unsure about what they can usefully do. It was felt to be useful if funders would consider convening potential grantees to engage in an honest exchange of views about possible priorities.

Where grant-making programmes do entail elements of risk and uncertainty then it is important to be prepared for Board questions -

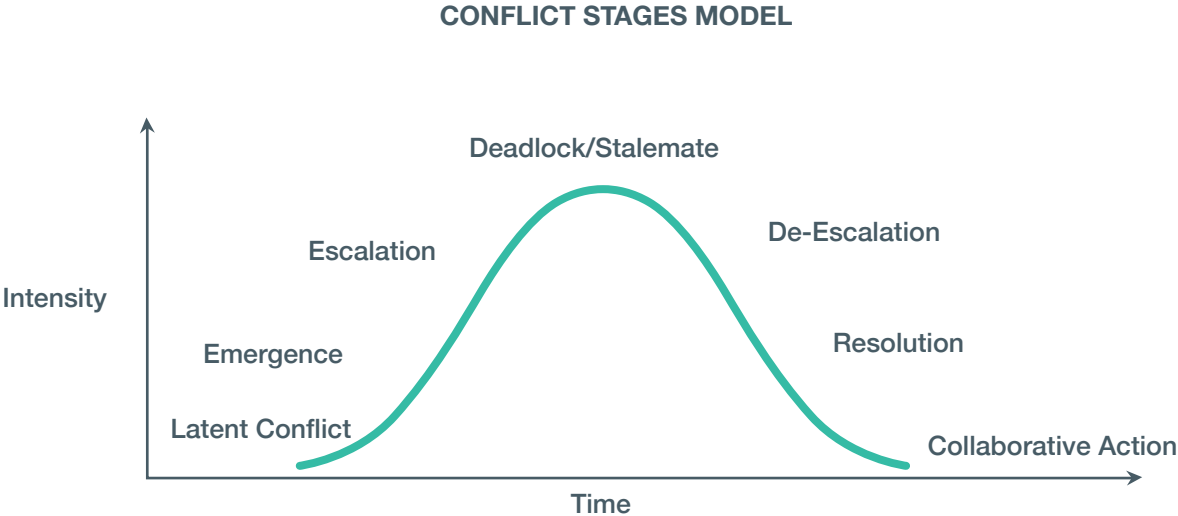
- Why is this area of work more important than another priority given the additional element of risk; and what is the nature of those risks both in terms of the funding programme and to the Foundation itself?
- What is it that we are trying to achieve through the funding programme and what do we bring as a donor that offers added value to what is already available?
- What other donors are involved in this area and what is the nature of their programmes?
How will we know if we have made a positive impact?

At least one major funder prepares a detailed Question and Answer Paper for the information of its Board members prior to any discussion about new areas of work; whilst a number of Foundations organise Board/staff visits to a contested region to enhance the understanding of the issues involved. This can be particularly important where very real concerns exist about reputational risk as a result of involvement in politically sensitive situations. The peace and conflict assessments referred to earlier, together with a robust risk and opportunity analysis, can help inform decision-making.

SECTION 2 – SUPPORTING PEACEBUILDING AND POSITIVE CHANGE

2.1. GRANTMAKING IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF WAR AND PEACE

Although an over-simplification of events on the ground it can be helpful to think of the peace-war-peace continuum in terms of successive phases and stages –



None of the phases identified in the diagram are either unidimensional or linear in nature, and more often than not progress is a case of one step forward, two steps back, with the impacts being felt at multiple levels and across multiple issues. Even where a transition from violence is managed it is not unknown for continuing political uncertainty to result in further violence, particularly if the underlying structural causes of the original conflict remain unaddressed. Despite its weaknesses, the Conflict Stages Model offers a framing for funders to consider how their contribution might usefully help progress the path to peace. Programmes appropriate to the post-conflict transition phase will be very different from what is achievable at the height of violent conflict. Similarly, it may be necessary to identify local partners that can offer an added value dimension at different stages of the conflict-to-peace spectrum.

2.2. CAN VIOLENCE BE NIPPED IN THE BUD?

“Grievances born out of horizontal inequalities can express themselves, sometimes violently, in terms of cultural difference. . .(and) horizontal inequalities tend to create inflammable situations”.

Sogge, D. (2013) Inequalities and Organized Violence: NOREF Policy Brief, Norway

While conflict occurs in a wide diversity of circumstances, with very different root causes and actors, the shift from 'latent' to 'overt' violence is more often than not the result of a sense of clustered injustice - where social injustice, marginalization/exclusion and perceived lack of politically responsive options collide. This mix is particularly potent where the perception of injustice coincides with ethnic, religious, linguistic, caste, identity and/or regional boundaries. Poor, corrupt and oppressive governance, together with perceived state bias against specific groups over an extended period of time, fuels the potential for violent conflict where other strategies are unproductive. The Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice & Peace poses the questions –

- What are the issues of social injustice that are most pressing and how do they contribute as triggers and drivers of violent conflict?
- Who are the most marginalized, silenced and disadvantaged and how can they be empowered through activism around social justice issues?
- What power-holders/systems/institutions impact on structural inequalities and how can they be shifted?
- What are the possible starting points to open up opportunities for structural transformation?

Independent funders can work with local civil society organizations to make clustered injustice visible - opening doors to international institutional and media/public attention. Independent philanthropy is well-placed to support disempowered groups to identify and adopt change strategies that are non-violent in nature.

In 2007-2008 post-election violence in Kenya claimed the lives of over 1,000 individuals and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. Mobile phones were used to spread rumours that augmented the violence. In 2010 Sisi ni Amani Kenya ('We are Peace in Kenya') was founded to amplify the voice of grassroots peace activists. Outreach was undertaken which resulted in a network of over 65,000 people who joined a platform freely accessible through their mobile phones. When the 2013 elections were held regular messages were sent through the platform to encourage voting and to counter any misinformation. When small-scale violence occurred messages were sent to remind young people of the consequences of getting caught up in the conflict. The organizers crafted SMS using the communication techniques adopted by Ikea and Coca Cola. Over the weeks of the election, 682,227 messages were sent – in a survey of 8,000 subscribers, 92% felt that the messages had a positive influence in preventing violence.

R.Brown, SMS for Peace: Preventing Electoral Violence in Kenya with Mobile Phones – Alliance for Peacebuilding (<http://buildingpeaceforum.com>) 2013.

Where funders support non-violent change advocates there is always the risk that they will be accused of 'stirring up' divisive issues. In a number of instances governments have introduced legislation that

makes it illegal to 'bring the state into disrepute'. Support for early alternatives to violence does, however, enable philanthropic investment in preventative action.

The Manusher Jonno Foundation was concerned that the rights of the poverty-prone Saontal ethnic minority communities living in the northern part of Bangladesh were being ignored. Funding was provided to a local partner NGO to identify areas of intervention in promoting social justice and peace. A programme of focus group discussions were conducted with people from indigenous and Bengali communities and with activists from village-based 'Gono Gobeshona Dal' (GGD) local research teams. These established the participants' perceptions about social justice, the issues they associated with injustices, the nature and process of perceived victimization and activities undertaken to address injustices. Among concerns expressed were the expropriation of land by the local majority community; feeling threatened and insecure because of evictions and violence; lack of access to the labour market; local decision-making processes and lack of assistance from formal and informal institutions; and social exclusion because the majority Muslim community excludes the indigenous peoples. Subsequent funding was provided by the Foundation to support the 'Setubandhan' (building bridges) initiative to sustain a village movement to protect and promote the rights of vulnerable communities, create space for tolerance and respect for diversity and evolve an approach that could be replicable elsewhere.

www.manushejonno.org

2.3. AT THE HEART OF THE INFERNO: FUNDING DURING A VIOLENT CONFLICT.

While opportunities for peacebuilding may seem remote at the height of violence, much donor credibility is built through being prepared to fund initiatives during periods of crisis. Foundation support for the anti-apartheid struggle before political change in South Africa is a case in point. Such work is invariably most effective when it is quiet and supportive rather than headline grabbing, branded or invasive.

In order to clarify the rationale for their grant-making, foundations need to agree and communicate a clear value base as to why they are prioritizing work when violence is ongoing. Commitment to creating pathways to peace and protecting human rights are often standard baselines, although there is often good reason to consider funding applications from communities that are experiencing the impact of the violence, even if peacebuilding is still aspirational. An established statement of values provides a framework for funders to think through how grantees relate to this ethos. Working with appropriate local partners can help ground the ethos in a nuanced understanding of opportunities and challenges on the peacebuilding pathway in what are often rapidly changing conditions.

Specific funding opportunities over the course of violent conflict might include –



➤ *Some Contextual Considerations*

“Direct violence, added on to the latent structural violence, creates a situation in which everyone perceives themselves as oppressed and worse off than they were before.”

Professor John Paul Lederach

Violent conflict can effectively eliminate any sense of complexity through simplifying issues into ‘us’ and ‘them’, and by silencing other voices. People are either designated, or see themselves, as being on one side of the conflict or the other, and questioning voices (that are extremely important in conflict situations) are increasingly silenced or intimidated to ‘decide what side they are on’. This process feeds into further division and stereotyping of ‘the other’, which undermines the potential for cross-community contact and communication even around social justice issues. Thus Women’s Groups, sharing issues of gender rights, may still be challenged to state where they stand on the political ‘big questions’. As the violence itself becomes the dominant societal concern, consideration of social justice and development issues can be crowded out, with opportunities for non-violent activism restricted and human rights being decried as tactical support for combatant groups (on either side in the conflict).

Although each conflict situation has its own unique set of circumstances and characteristics, a number of common features can be identified -

POLITICAL DYNAMICS

- Attention fixed on the violence rather than on underlying structural injustices.
- Political attention focused on 'victory over' rather than 'accommodation with' and leadership framed by intransigence.
- Respect for human rights seen as expendable.
- Groups/communities defined as either 'loyal' or 'disloyal' to various state or combatant actors, with potential peacebuilding seen as threatening to 'victory' or 'the cause'.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

- The impact of violence resulting in a demonization of the 'other side' through stereotyping.
- Multiple layers of victimization - the original victims of perceived injustice; victims of violence perpetrated by the combatants; internal community violence against those perceived to be 'disloyal' or 'collaborators'; and violence against opponents by state/combatant groups.
- The physical insecurity and displacement of communities and groups (the impact on women, children, etc.).

The challenge for funders is to identify partners and programmes that can be progressive (or restrain destructive behaviours) over the course of violent conflict. While taking their priorities from local people, independent external funders are well placed to pose challenging questions that local insiders may find it difficult to raise given issues of security or being overly close to the politics of the situation.

➤ *Indicative Funding Strategies and Approaches*

There are a number of key questions that funders may want to pose when seeking to identify strategies and approaches –

- Will the activities/intervention result in increased tensions or have they the potential to build bridges between groups in the conflict area by creating space?
- Will beneficiaries be put in greater risk, or be specifically targeted, as a result of the project?
- Will the indicative support (directly or indirectly) groups promoting genuine dialogue and participation or be counter-productive?
- Will the work to be supported highlight social justice and human rights issues that may have been side lined due to the violence?
- Will the initiative be seen as being aligned with established power holders as compared to disempowered/marginalized groups and communities; and/or does it disproportionately benefit specific ethnocentric communities rather than more inclusive groups?

An informative study by Peace Nexus (www.peacenexus.org) prepared for the UN Peacebuilding Fund ('Programming for Catalytic Effects in Peacebuilding – A Guide') poses further questions under (i) How to Kick Start Peacebuilding; (ii) Taking Effects to Scale; (iii) Expanding Peace Constituencies; (iv) Creating and Supporting Structures; and (v) Producing Linkages. One key point made is the importance of addressing the concerns of 'conflict drivers' that have been either neglected or are hard to reach.

Funding strategies and programmes need to be realistic given the nature and phase of the conflict. It can be important to build local capacities and confidence in order to lay a sound basis for future peacebuilding efforts rather than setting the bar too high in expectation of short-term outcomes. Responding to locally identified issues will lay the basis for future relationships, but in addition there are specific priorities - (i) Humanizing the impact of the conflict where possible; (ii) Identifying approaches to ameliorate and/or de-escalate the impact of the conflict; (iii) Documentation of the impact of the conflict (specifically human rights abuses); and (iv) Creating space to explore alternatives to violence and changes to promote long-term peacebuilding.

➤ *Humanising the Conflict: -*

All too often the experience of long-term violence results in the adoption of political 'sides' that lay the basis for dehumanizing stereotypes of 'the other'. This process can be augmented by appeals to historical division and grievance. In order to counter this tendency funded programmes can help capture and share the narratives of how local communities and groups experience and understand the conflict, while still being conscious of potential disproportionate balances of power between protagonists. Indicative programmes might address this issue as well as the human impact of the violence on people's lives and livelihoods. Funding can help –

- Community income-generating initiatives for individuals, groups and communities whose sources of income have been devastated due to the violence. Even in situations of extreme violence, local people still engage in enterprises which can be supported by micro grants and/or revolving loan funds.
- Provide support for those that have been injured or bereaved in the conflict. There is a real danger that if the needs of victims are ignored their justifiable grievances will be used as an obstacle to peacebuilding. Over the course of the conflict there are physical, material and psychological challenges to people that have either lost, or are left caring for, a family member injured in the violence. Every effort should be made to avoid any 'hierarchy of victims' (i.e. the innocent, the complicit or the acceptable/unacceptable) in the provision of services.
- Initiatives that identify the needs of politically motivated prisoners and their families in order to ensure fair treatment, appropriate legal services and family support services. Prisons can either further radicalise combatants or be a focus for debating alternatives to violence depending on the approach taken. It is important that the family members of prisoners are seen as individuals with their own needs resulting from the conflict.

- Work that documents community experience of the conflict from a range of perspectives enabling it to be shared and to challenge single-identity stereotypes. This can involve multi-media formats where bringing people together is difficult.

“The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust made grants to support the Northern Ireland peace process in its broadest sense over four decades. It funds a small group of respected journalists and academics to research and publish a book ‘Lost Lives’, which chronicles the details of all those who died in the conflict. The information in the book has been widely cited by politicians and church representatives as well as acting as a permanent, inclusive memorial to those that died. It made a unique and durable contribution to the task of humanizing and remembering the many personal tragedies of the conflict”.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

➤ **De-Escalating the Impact of Conflict: -**

Violence escalates over time, with atrocity fuelling atrocity and conflicting community narratives giving tacit permission to ‘their own side’, while attributing blame to ‘the other side. In these circumstances measures taken to ameliorate and/or de-escalate the impact of the conflict are important -

- Initiatives that consciously seek to build cross-community and group networks of local activists around common interests and concerns. Women’s groups are often to the forefront of these efforts, but social and economic issues can attract a range of stakeholders, such as churches, employers, trade unions, etc. Even the impact of natural disasters can be used to bring people together across antagonistic divides.
- Interventions with the potential to build relationships and trust across divisive interfaces, that could include regular cross-community contact, localized negotiation and preventing the circulation of rumours. Where such contact includes individuals with access to combatant groups, it can also be useful for back channel soundings and negotiation around short-term (eg. the exchange of hostages) or longer-term issues.
- Interventions that encourage combatant groups (on all sides) to accept measures of de-escalation, such as negotiating humanitarian access or local agreements on not using particular weapons, targeting civilians, etc.

Clearly the timing of such interventions is informed by the nature and stage of local circumstances and the space for people to take forward actions that will not generate dangerous backlash.

The city of Mitrovica in northern Kosovo remains a hotspot of ethnic tension. After the war ended in 1999, it was split into an almost exclusively Albanian area south of the river Ibar and a predominantly Serbian area to the north. Relations between the two ethnic groups are dominated by stereotypes and historic conflicts. In this tense atmosphere, the Mitrovica Rock School serves as an inter-ethnic platform, with various programmes enabling young people from both sides of the city to come together. An annual summer school is held in Skopje, during which approx. 40 young musicians from north and south Mitrovica form mixed bands and give a large open air concert. These bands remain together once the young people have gone back to Mitrovica.

www.bosch-stiftung.de/content/language2/html/35312.asp

In January 2009 the Alvaralice Foundation convened in Cali (Colombia) the International Symposium 'Microfinance as a Tool for Peacebuilding'. This symposium set the tone for an unprecedented conversation connecting two established topics in social and economic development: peace and microfinance. It had a participation of 80 international and 100 national panellists.

www.alvaralice.org/wsite/en/strategic-axles/reflection-and-dialogue/item/240

➤ **Documentation of the Impact of Violence:-**

One of the challenges associated with many peace processes is the ability to deal effectively with the legacies of past violence. Initiatives that document the impact of violence (and particularly human rights abuses) over the course of the conflict are particularly important in ensuring that there is a commitment that they will never happen again. Funder support can include –

- Programmes which proactively address human rights abuses, cases of torture, disappearances, etc. (irrespective of the alleged abuser) through documentation of cases; training of human rights advocates; provision of essential support services to victims, etc. and, where necessary, legal support.
- Travel grants to enable local human rights defenders contact international agencies/ NGOs/institutions to focus wider attention on the nature and impact of the violence in order to hold all combatant groups, including the state, to account.
- Media initiatives that present a more balanced representation of the causes and impact of the violence, and go beyond the accepted macro political voices.
- Initiatives that specifically address the often less visible human rights abuses of women, children, indigenous peoples, and other groups within society, that arise either directly or indirectly from the conflict.

Evidence suggests that there is a real danger that rights issues are seen as either expendable or tactical given both the nature of the war and the priority to end violence, however this is not a simple issue as noted by many negotiators involved in peace-making'.

➤ **Creating Space:-**

Long-term violence often closes down the safe space to question and to discuss options other than those dictated by the combatants. This serves to reduce participation in reviewing alternatives to violence and options for the future. Useful interventions can include -

- Opportunities that allow people to come together from differing political perspectives to share their hopes and fears. This can be facilitated by funding people that have lived through violence in other post-conflict societies to share their experience.
- Support for questioning voices by funding creative approaches using drama and the arts which have the potential to raise sensitive issues in a less alienating manner. Support should also be made available to activists with the credibility and standing to raise difficult and challenging questions within their own community.
- Reflective conferences, Working Groups, local Workshops that encourage thinking beyond the politics of the current conflict and that are inclusive of a wide range of local viewpoints and stakeholders (including those communities/groups most affected by the conflict).
- Training and confidence building for civil society activists to engage in discussion about alternatives to violence and aspirations for post-conflict society, with particular emphasis on groups such as women or youth that might otherwise be excluded.
- Investment in back channel (Track II) mechanisms that can support examination of options for peace-making and peacebuilding. These may often be taken forward by non-state actors, such as civil society leaders, religious leaders and NGOs.

Foundations supported the work of the Opsahl Commission in Northern Ireland in 1992 as an independent citizens' inquiry to inquire into possible paths out of the conflict – this offered an inclusive forum for people to express themselves after 25 years of violence, including the voices of otherwise excluded groups.

Violence often focuses attention on political and combatant groups, however it is also important that non-combatants are given a voice on conflict related challenges and opportunities.

➤ **Partnership with Local Agencies and Ensuring Partner Care**

“What happens is nobody in government is prepared to risk going to these remote villages because of the likely attack or kidnap by the Maoists. . .so the money goes back to central government unutilized. So we said ‘How do we deal with this?’ We extend fellowships to the community women in these areas because hailing from the same community they have an acceptance and they also have the necessary skills and experience and confidence to travel. . .”

Nirnaya Women's Fund, India

This description of the experience of an Indian Women's Fund makes the point that a locally-based independent foundation has the ability to reach out to marginalized groups and communities that external donors will find difficult to achieve. Partnership between external foundations and internal funders or local NGOs can be particularly effective in not only delivering funding, but also designing an added value peacebuilding dimension, through networking and convening. Any such partnership arrangements need a shared value base and understanding of strategic priorities.

Where external donors work directly with local grantees and partners it is important that they have due regard to their safety and security. Clearly health and safety considerations require this when they have their own staff in place in areas of conflict, but it is also an issue where there is a funding relationship with local projects that can under-estimate the risks taken. One foundation always asks their grantees – 'What else do you need beyond the money?' This can be as simple as fitting a security door or locks to an office; on other occasions it might involve access to road worthy transport or other facilities that mitigate the dangers. Apart from physical risk it is important that external funding does not endanger grantees as 'agents' of outside interests. This can be mitigated by agreed clarity about the purpose of the grant and what is expected (particularly in terms of reported information). Another foundation recommends putting local partners in touch with risk assessment organizations in order to provide advice. Over periods of prolonged conflict people living with the abnormalities of violence may not even recognize their own vulnerabilities as their sense of commitment drives them forward.

Then there is the need for donors to recognize the highly volatile circumstances that they are working in when they frame their strategies. Donor flexibility and willingness to re-negotiate agreed expectations are important in order to take account of conflict-related issues. The Asia Foundation notes how these conditions are often ignored by international aid agencies –

'In the absence of a peace process, international aid is highly restricted and usually avoids conflict-related issues. . .The vast majority of donor aid to sub-national conflict areas without a peace process in progress is 'business as usual' for donors. With no formal peace process, 86% of funding supports economic development or service delivery programs, including 56% for economic infrastructure or production sectors. . .Peace and conflict programs are extremely small in areas with no peace process. . .'

The Asia Foundation (2013) The Contested Corners of Asia, Parks, Colletta & Oppenheim.

It is not good enough to act as if a conflict simply does not exist; indeed, one experienced independent foundation made the point that donor resources can disempower local agencies and feed corruption if not linked to a strategic peacebuilding vision.

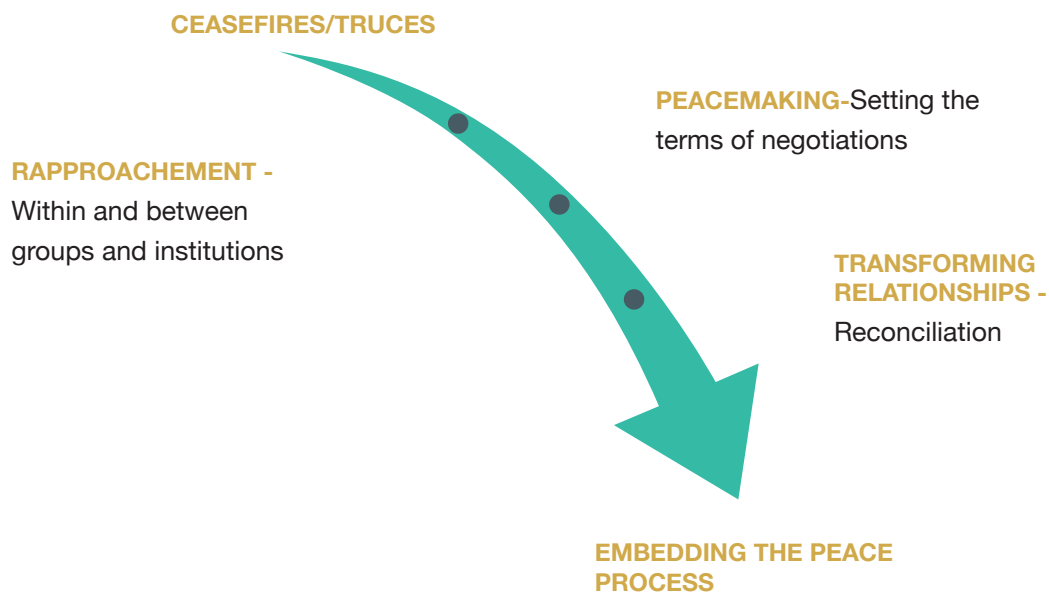
2.4. DONOR SUPPORT IN PERIODS OF TRANSITION FROM VIOLENCE

'It is the period between the end of the old order and the coming into being of the new enduring social contract that we refer to as the transition.'

Hayson & Kane (2013) Understanding the Transition: A Challenge and Opportunity for Mediators, NYC Center on International Cooperation.

If philanthropic involvement during the course of violent conflict can be a relatively lonely place, funders run the risk of being knocked off their proverbial perch in the rush when a ceasefire is declared, or change is in the air. However, even at this stage donor short-term commitment to the 'We want to make a difference' syndrome is likely to be disappointed. More often than not the transition from violence is a long term process, with as many twists and turns as the conflict itself. In this context the investment of 'patient capital' in peacebuilding is crucial.

The process of transition from violence can encompass the following elements –



Peacebuilding theorist and practitioner, John Paul Lederach, argues that peacebuilding is more sustainable if it is inclusive and draws from all levels of society rather than being 'owned' solely by the key parties to the conflict, i.e., state representatives and combatant groups. This interdependent model accepts the centrality of political negotiation but argues that this cannot be the exclusive deliverer of peace. Lederach represented this proposition in the diagram below which highlights the multi-layered relationships essential for an inclusive process:

Types of Actors

Approaches to Building Peace

Level 1: Top Leadership

Military/political/religious leaders with high visibility

Focus on high-level negotiations
Emphasises cease-fire
Led by highly visible, single mediator

Level 2: Middle-Range Leadership

Leaders respected in sectors
Ethnic/religious leaders
Academics/intellectuals
Humanitarian leaders (NGOs)

Problem-solving workshops
Training in conflict resolution
Pease commissions
Insider-partial teams

Level 3: Grassroots Leadership

Local leaders
Leaders of indigenous NGOs
Community developers
Local health officials
Refugee camp leaders

Local peace commissions
Grassroots training
Prejudice reduction
Psychosocial work in postwar trauma

Affected Population

Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1977), 39.

The horizontal and vertical relationships suggested aim to (i) Increase recognition that peacebuilding requires multiple activities, at multiple levels, rather than being confined to the participants at the apex of the pyramid; (ii) Emphasize the need for mutual understanding at each level of the pyramid; and (iii) Build relationships before, during and after formal peace agreements between people who are not like-minded or like-situated within society.

Inclusive peacebuilding also requires the question – What voices are absent from negotiations? UN Security Council Resolution 1325 recognizes that this is often the case with women, but it can also apply to minority ethnic and indigenous groups amongst others. Consequently, issues such as rape as a weapon of war can go unremarked and focus on human rights abuses and violations can be selective in nature. The role of victims and survivors of violence in the peacebuilding process is another area fraught with sensitivities; but needs to be addressed both as a matter of justice, but also because it can be used by ‘spoilers’ to the process as a potent trigger for ongoing division. Given that transition from violence is invariably long-term in nature means that smarter grant-making, characterized by flexibility and adaptability, can be more effective than too much money, allocated too fast, with attendant unachievable expectations.

One of the advantages of independent philanthropy is that it has the opportunity to develop programming that can work across development and political silos, offering a cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches.

➤ *Suggested Strategies and Approaches*

While the transition from violence offers a more welcoming context, peace-making and peacebuilding suggests that the 'rules of the game' are changing, causing uncertainty and apprehension across society. Consequently, it may be necessary to defend the peacebuilding space, with one experienced foundation adopting a number of principles to guide its investment in capacity-building and stakeholder engagement. These include -

- Multi-partiality – maintaining good working relationships with all stakeholders and adopting an independent stance.
- Recognizing the importance of domestic (local) ownership of the process.
- Confidentiality.
- Critical interaction – which adheres to Human Rights and non-violent principles, but does not publicly condemn the actions of the parties to the conflict, but instead engages in constructive criticism through dialogue.

An emphasis is also placed on a problem solving, with related training in negotiation and conflict resolution skills, alongside peer learning from other societies emerging from violent conflict. The need to continuously re-define the parameters of intervention in line with changing circumstances is acknowledged.

The range of contributions that independent philanthropy can support during the transition from violence might include - (i) Support for the peace negotiation process; (ii) Creating space for change, including new societal arrangements; (iii) Promoting public participation and confidence in the process.

➤ *Support for Peace Negotiations:-*

Many of the parties to peace negotiations will not be established political representatives and may benefit from skills development in the area of political strategy and negotiation. This is particularly important where there is a danger of group representatives feeling undermined by disproportionate levels of expertise. Financial support can help –

- Provide information on specific aspects of negotiation, such as human rights; reform of security forces; reform of the judiciary; truth recovery and other areas of transitional justice.
- Facilitate peer learning between negotiators (and members of their support teams) with individuals who were involved in peace settlements in other contested societies. This expertise can go beyond the political, the Ford Foundation, for example, funded a hydrologist to advise Palestinian negotiators on the technicalities of water rights when in negotiation with Israel.
- Support complementary mechanisms to the formal negotiations (the International Contact Group that worked on the Mindanao settlement in the Philippines is a case in point).
- Offer skills training and strategic planning for those parties to negotiations relatively inexperienced in formal politics to ensure their effective participation.

➤ **Ensuring Space to Change, including New Societal Arrangements:-**

Peacebuilding offers the space to explore a wider range of options for the future. This can cause discomfort and sensitivities as space needs to be created to allow individuals to change as well as to think through new societal structures and arrangements. Work in this broader area can proceed alongside more formal peace-making. Independent funding can -

- Support initiatives that facilitate combatants to move away from militarism and community control. Aspects of transitional justice, such as restorative justice, can be introduced. Ex-combatants may also need to design commemorative events for those that died in order to bring closure to bereaved families and create space for peacebuilding.
- Develop innovative civil society initiatives that facilitate inter-community and inter-group work across societal divisions that can be modelled through joint governance arrangements (e.g. managing committees or advisory panels) which include members of previously opposing groups in an inclusive manner.
- Develop advocacy around broadening civic participation in peace negotiations by training and supporting civil society actors for participation in structures to ‘shadow’ the formal negotiations.
- Support peer learning from other post-conflict societies in dealing with the legacies of the past and the challenges of reconciliation, with potential support for civil society initiatives in this area.
- Fund work to ensure systemic and cultural inclusiveness, such as recognition of different languages and cultural identities/symbols, as well as systemic changes with regard to acceptance of human rights standards; reform of institutions such as the judiciary, the army and policing; and building the capacity of institutions to function in an equitable and effective manner.

The Atlantic Philanthropies largest grant in its memory portfolio – close to US\$4.5 million – helped to provide South Africa’s new Constitutional Court, which was also funded by the Ford, Kellogg and C.S. Mott Foundations. The Atlantic Philanthropies also supported the Nelson Mandela Gateway at Robben Island and the District Six Museum dedicated to preserving the history and memory of the forced removal, under apartheid, of 60,000 residents from a racially mixed sector of Cape Town.

➤ **Promoting Public Participation and Confidence in the Process:-**

While peace negotiations are welcome there can be a danger that the public (including civil society activists) feel excluded from the process resulting in uncertainty and concern that broader issues of social justice and rights may not be given due consideration. Similarly, when peace-making is

protracted and there is little indication of progress it is important to take action to generate public confidence to counter negative voices. Independent funding can be invested to help -

- Support initiatives that open up discussions around peacebuilding to a broader range of interests in society (and particularly potentially marginalized groups), through mechanisms such as public enquiries, citizens' juries, civil society assemblies, etc. These activities can parallel and inform the formal peace-making processes.
- Promote projects that provide the public with factual information on the terms of the peace settlement, and related issues, in accessible language and through multi-media communication.
- Support work with the media to create space for a diversity of views on the past and the future as well as under-writing approaches to opinion polling that emphasize consensus and compromise rather than the extremes.
- Develop initiatives that respond to community concerns about security and public safety, such as the negotiation and operation of community zones of peace. In addition, enable the celebration of the 'small wins' that can build community confidence in peacebuilding.
- Enable key local stakeholders to brainstorm possible 'spoiler' issues, such as contested symbols; groups that profit from the war-time economy; possible splits within combatant groups, etc., in order to identify solutions.

"When you give people the space to open up conversations people will engage. They'll say what they think; they'll say why they thought it. You don't have to be confrontational to talk through how that might look to somebody else. . . We then create safe spaces for groups to come together and we facilitate workshops like 'Who is winning the peace?' (That's about perception). But we do a range of topics, policing, community policing, community responsibilities; all those kind of things. It's the first opportunity those groups have got to meet people from the other side. We create very informal environments, no use of jargon; we talk to people very honestly. They get a huge amount out of it. . . It was the first opportunity quite often for people to even think about these issues, and to think that they had some power in that, which was incredibly important for them."

Monina O'Prey, Programme Manager, Peace Impact Programme, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (2013)

Underlying the indicative actions that funders can support are a number of questions that frame their funding strategy -

- What interventions will support peacebuilding and the maintenance of peace rather than a return to violence?
- What support is needed to produce a sustainable (and inclusive) social compact in a divided society?
- How can organizations outside the established political structures create space for relationship building and inclusive negotiations?
- How can dialogue be supported with those who hold power when, in effect, dialogue is often framed within the terms of those who hold power?

- What is needed to ensure that the achievements of ordinary people who live together despite their differences are communicated as effectively as those who advocate conflict and division?

Local programmes of work developed in response to these and other questions need to take account of the broader political and community contexts –

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT:

- Is there sufficient technical support & expertise to ensure that peace-making can be effective in practice?
- How will the root causes of the conflict be named and addressed?
- Have approaches been designed to build public confidence in the process?
- Is the process inclusive of all parties to the conflict?
- Can the process be strengthened by the inclusion of voices outside the main parties to the conflict?

THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT:

- Are issues of concern to marginalized groups (women, youth, minorities, etc.) and local communities affected by the violence on the agenda?
- Are there mechanisms in place to allow for civil society and community input into the public debate?
- Are there effective channels of communication to ensure public confidence in, and sense of ownership of, the process?

Progress during periods of post-conflict negotiation can be supported when niche opportunities are identified, funded and implemented in a speedy and flexible manner. Responsive independent funding can make a major contribution if it is sufficiently accessible and reactive.

After the tentative opening of the Green Line border in Nicosia, Cyprus, women from women's groups on both the Greek and the Turkish sides mounted a protest at the midnight curfew that was placed on the border opening. They left one shoe each at the Green Line with the slogan 'We are not Cinderellas'. They used the opportunity to take direct action to show that they wanted more contact and communication in support of political negotiations. A follow up capacity-building conference, drawing on experience from other divided societies, was arranged to build on the contacts established.

2.5. THE CHALLENGE OF SUSTAINING PEACE

'After a war, re-constructing buildings is the easy bit. Re-building the fabric of society is more difficult. What is most challenging to deal with, and least attended to, are the deep wounds left in the hearts and minds of those who live on. If these wounds are left untreated, they fester into further horror. That's why serious skill and serious money must be invested in this healing; why human security is the issue of the time and why war prevention is the coming science.'

Elworthy & Rifkind, (2005) Hearts and Minds: Human Security Approaches to Political Violence, Demos, London, supported by the Barrow Cadbury Trust.

A World Bank study (2003) noted that 44% of all countries revert to violence within five years of a negotiated peace settlement. Many other settlements result in limited sense of community ownership and even a winner-loser syndrome that can seed future violence. Independent philanthropy can take account of how it can support work that can underpin the peace, with a number of important areas identified as –

- Repatriation, reintegration and reconciliation.
- Human rights, including property and identity.
- Public safety and security, including demobilization, policing and human rights.
- Infrastructure recovery, including water, sanitation, shelter and transportation.
- Food security and agricultural rehabilitation, including land tenure designation and registration.
- Urgent health, education and basic social welfare requirements, including employment and income generation.
- Operative governance structures, including rule of law and civil society institutions; and
- Elections, including voter registration.

(FRIDE, (2006) – Working Paper, 22, 'Recovering from Armed Conflict')

The Diana, Princess of Wales Foundation made a priority of tackling the issue of land mines, whilst another foundation funded the training of forensic scientists in Argentina to make a contribution to one of the unresolved legacies of that conflict – identification of the remains of 'the disappeared'. The Asia Foundation has carried out a number of programmes focusing on improving relations between security forces and communities in conflict affected areas of Asia. This was also established by one funder as a priority in Northern Ireland –

"After the peace agreement in Northern Ireland there was a major deficit of trust between the police and local communities. An independent funder supported a local NGO to create space for a confidential dialogue process between former paramilitaries and members of the newly reformed Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). This helped to begin the process of re-building relationships and clarifying expectations about the new arrangements for policing".

Independent Funder.

There are a number of standard challenges that can undermine the sustainability of peacebuilding and the stability of political settlements –

POLITICAL CHALLENGES

- Continuing societal divisions due to lack of community trust and divisive political representation.
- Resistance to dealing with truth, justice and legacy issues resulting from inability to agree the root causes of the conflict.
- Difficulty in delivering required institutional reforms such as policing, etc.
- Difficulties in moving from reliance on armed force to democratic and accountable politics.

COMMUNITY LEVEL CHALLENGES

- Concern and anger by victims of violence that their losses are being ignored.
- Tensions over re-integration of ex-combatants and IDPs (Internally displaced persons) within local communities that have experienced change.
- Fear of loss of group identity, symbols, status and position in society, together with suspicion that one side got greater benefit out of the peace settlement than the other.

Local civil society initiatives need continued support to identify mechanisms to address these, and other, tensions.

“Inequalities, social justice and peace are tied together. Up to now we as grant-makers have looked at everything with tunnel vision. We have a lot to learn from each other. This is a very important moment in society – for the rights based organizations to look at the causes and intersections of social justice and conflict”.

Sithie Tiruchelvam, Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust, Sri Lanka.

➤ Possible Areas of Support

Sithie Tiruchelvam’s experience in Sri Lanka highlights the multi-faceted nature of the challenges in post conflict societies. Foundations interested in mental health, child development, or other issues, cannot ignore the context of past conflict, particularly where this has been protracted in nature. While reconstruction can attract major bilateral funding, there are still roles for independent funders that can build on action piloted during the transition from violence -

- Support for self-help and civil society initiatives to promote the re-integration and re-settlement of political ex-prisoners, ex-combatants and their families, including programmes to develop their role as advocates of the peace process.

- Resources for independent facilitative processes to speed the demobilization of armed groups and the decommissioning of weapons in an orderly manner, potentially drawing on examples from other contested societies.
- Funding advocacy and support work with victims and survivors of the conflict, including IDPs (Internally Displaced People) that have been displaced; this may well include the difficult issues such as land rights and right of return for refugees, but can also put in place mechanisms to address issues of trauma.

When managing measures under the EU PEACE programmes, the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland worked with political ex-prisoners to address issues of integration. A Political Ex-Prisoner Advisory Grant Panel was set up with representatives from the five main paramilitary organizations (Republican and Loyalist). Participation in the Panel allowed prisoners to offer expert advice to the funder, but also to meet with each other and exchange information in the case of breaches of the ceasefire, as well as developing longer term relationships.

'Then, Now, The Future – Learning as We Go, 1979-2012', Community Foundation for Northern Ireland. www.communityfoundationni.org.

- Developing initiatives that work towards societal reconciliation and the re-integration of communities divided by years of conflict (these can include use of the arts, oral histories, etc.).
- Promoting work with young people to engage with new concepts of citizenship – particularly a framing of citizenship that is inclusive in nature and takes account of rights and social justice issues.
- Providing challenge grants and technical support to build sustainable community philanthropy (Women's Funds, Community Foundations, Human Rights Funds, etc.) that can continue to take forward aspects of peacebuilding by providing grants to local programmes of work over the longer-term.
- Supporting an independent media to ensure fair representation and citizen participation.
- Underwriting the costs of civil society initiatives that can monitor the peace process and take action if it is in danger of being undermined.

Investment in peacebuilding should aim to build internal capacity and resources to enable sustainable locally-controlled programmes for the longer-term strategic objective of sustainability of the peace.

Independent media plays a critical role in ensuring fairness and legitimacy of elections as well as increasing citizen confidence and participation in the democratic process that is so important to underpin peacebuilding. An example of venture philanthropy, the Media Development Investment Fund (MDIF) has invested US\$133.6 million in 108 independent news businesses in 38 countries since 1996. It invests in independent media in those countries where it is potentially under attack from state authorities.

www.mdif.org

The 2015 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, composed of the employers' association, UTICA; the trade union federation, UGTT; the Tunisian Human Rights League, CTDH; and the Tunisian Order of Lawyers, 'for its decisive contribution to the building of a pluralist democracy in Tunisia', and for its mediating role across political and religious divides in the aftermath of the 2011 Jasmine Revolution.

2.6 WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

UN Women (2012) examined the participation of women in 31 major peace processes over the period 1992-2011. The facts speak for themselves –

- 4% of signatories to peace agreements were women
- 2.4% of the mediators involved in peace settlements were women
- 3.7% of witnesses to peace agreements were women
- 9% of negotiators of peace agreements were women
- 92 (16%) of the 585 peace agreements concluded since 1990 made one or more references to women and gender.

The reality is that women are active at all stages of peacebuilding, but their work is often unacknowledged and their presence in formal peace-making limited. The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 addresses this issue, arguing that women and girls' experience of armed conflict is different from those of men; a difference based on their gender and status in society. The UN has adopted a target which states that a minimum of 15% of all peacebuilding support funds should support activities with the principle objective of addressing women's needs, empowerment and gender equality.

'The peace process in Burundi saw a range of initiatives aimed at the inclusion of women, including UNIFEM convening the All Party Women's Peace Conference with two representatives from each of the warring factions and the seven women observers to the process, and an "equality-friendly" mediator in the form of Nelson Mandela. . . More than half the recommendations formulated by the All Party Women's Peace Conference were adopted including measures on sexual violence and provisions for participation.'

Christine Bell (2013) NOREF Policy Brief on Women and Peace Processes.

UNSCR 1325, and related recommendations, emphasize four pillars of support that can usefully inform independent funders –

➤ **Prevention, Security and Rights:-**

Suggesting the need for special measures to ensure that protection is afforded to women and girls in conflict and post-conflict societies; while the primary demand is on states and the international community, independent donors can contribute by –

- Supporting services and provision for women and girls in refugee camps (or as IDPs) to counter the danger of sexual abuse, forced marriage and trafficking.
- Ensuring that hygiene, toilet and water facilities are accessible for women in order to prevent assault/kidnap which is more likely to occur if these facilities are at a distance or in unsafe areas.
- Helping to document incidences of rape (particularly as a weapon of war), sexual assault and physical attack. Increases in the level and severity of domestic violence have been noted in post-conflict societies, with one funder supporting an integrated programme of support for victims of domestic violence alongside treatment for the perpetrators affected by PTSD.
- Supporting actions taken to hold abusers to account in cases of rape and sexual assault.

➤ **Participation and Representation: -**

Actions to increase women’s participation in both formal political decision-making and in the informal sphere of policy influence are essential if women are to be seen as more than victims, carers or passive observers. Independent funders can support -

- Training for women as community leaders, political activists and civil society advocates, together with peer exchanges, to learn from women activists working in other divided societies.
- Investment in a community infrastructure of women’s groups, centres and networks that offer support and a voice for women to articulate key issues, concerns and aspirations.
- Initiatives to reflect women’s voices through the media, social media, and other forms of communication.
- The establishment of structures and practices that enhance women’s involvement and representation in the formal political process and related forms of decision-making.

The Reconstruction Women’s Fund was the first local women’s foundation in Serbia working closely with related women’s organizations, such as Women in Black. The Fund brings together the three approaches of pacifism and anti-militarist efforts, feminist academic work and local activism, including taking part in demonstrations demanding rights and justice. Its mission is to support women’s emancipatory social and political roles, from backing women’s NGOs and empowering networking, cooperation and solidarity to reacting to situations of urgent need with rapid response grants issued within 72 hours.

www.rwfund.org

➤ **Protection, Economic and Social Rights:-**

This pillar calls for the strengthening of effort to secure the safety, physical and mental health, well-being, economic security and dignity of women and girls in conflict and post conflict societies. Alongside the safeguarding of the rights of women and girls, attention is focused on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into legal and institutional reforms. Independent philanthropy can support this by –

- Funding networks of women coming together around shared issues in order to drive social, political, cultural and institutional change.
- Promoting advocacy both by, and on behalf of, women and girls that have been disadvantaged, either directly or indirectly, as a result of the conflict (including due to displacement, intimidation or attacks of a sexual nature).
- Supporting affirmative action to ensure access to education for girls whose education has been adversely impacted over the course of the conflict.
- Offering small grants and/or micro loan schemes for women that have experienced economic disadvantage as a result of the conflict in order to help them establish income generating initiatives.

“Project staff and local partner organizations collected testimonials from mothers in both the south and the north (of Sri Lanka) to contribute to the ‘Herstories’ archival project. In Sri Lankan culture ‘mothers are the guardians of their family history. They are the pillars of strength on which a family is built’. Given their role in society, approximately 270 women participated in the project through letter writing, photo essays, videos, memory mapping, and other forms of story telling to create a living history that reflects the shared suffering and diverse identities and histories within the country. In their stories, which have been translated into English, Sinhala and Tamil, mothers talked about their experiences during the war, as well as their hopes for the future. . .”

Case Study cited in McKone, K., 2015, Reconciliation in Practice (Peaceworks), US Institute of Peace

➤ **Relief, Reconstruction and Recovery: -**

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 requires the application of a gender perspective to reconstruction and peacebuilding programmes designed and implemented by local, national and international agencies in recognition of the fact that women take on additional responsibilities when family and community members are killed, injured or go missing during the conflict. Independent funders can also adopt a gender perspective in their grant-making programmes which can –

- Ensure that women’s experience is reflected in any history of the conflict as well as identifying strategies to highlight their experience in any legacy of the past.
- Support the inclusion of women in the design and implementation of programmes of relief, reconstruction and recovery.

‘Research found that women are more likely than men to adopt a broad definition of peace which includes the household level and focuses on the attainment of individual rights and freedoms such as education, healthcare and freedom from violence. In contrast, men have a greater tendency to associate peace with the absence of formal conflict and the stability of formal structures such as governance and infrastructure.’

S. Smee (ed) (2012) From the Ground Up: women’s Role in Local Peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone.

A number of common features have been identified that promote the involvement of women in peacebuilding - (i) empowering women through access to justice; (ii) creating safe spaces for women's participation; (iii) recognizing the diversity of women's experience; (iv) ensuring peacebuilding strategies value women's contribution; and (v) providing long term support and investment in women's participation. Models of what have worked in other post conflict societies can be instructive, as when women activists in Somalia formed a 'Sixth Clan' (to add to the five main clans that were attending the negotiations) and were successful in gaining access to the negotiating table; in Northern Ireland women formed the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition that contested and won the right to have elected representatives at the peace talks. A timely grant from the Global Fund for Women, as well as other independent donors, helped this achievement.

"People have waged peace in the midst of war in diverse situations throughout the world. Crafting a viable peace is the work of many hands, involving different sections of society and spanning generations. Peace-making thus requires a marathon mentality. . .In working for peace, process and outcome walk hand in hand. Unless people own the process and help shape sustainable outcomes, it will indeed be difficult to provide human security or a meaningful future. . .It may be only where people and their communities put their hands to the task of building a more inclusive peace that the possibility of a human security addressing common concerns becomes less distant."

Ed Garcia, (2002) Foreword to Accord – Owning the Process: Public Participation in Peace-making, Conciliation Resources (UK).

SECTION 3 – CRAFTING THE GRANT PORTFOLIO

A variety of approaches have been adopted by independent funders with experience of working in conflict environments. NGO voices from the peacebuilding field also can provide useful feedback to funders who invariably are at one remove from the beneficiaries of their grant-making decisions. While there are few right or wrong answers, this section summarizes some of the points raised with regard to funding practice.

“This is how the verb ‘to participate’ is conjugated: I participate. You participate. They decide”.

Grassroots Development Worker, Ecuador cited in Time to Listen – Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid (2012) Anderson, Brown & Jean.

➤ **ADDED VALUE –**

Independent funders can bring more than money to the table when supporting peacebuilding and activists working in conflict situations. Funders have networks and connections that reach into policy-making, research and other arenas. Their voice is important when backed by resources and influence. All these assets should be mobilized in support of their partners in conflict prone areas.

➤ **ADMINISTRATION OF GRANTS –**

Every funder has its own system of administration which is often organizationally separate from grant decision-making and management. It is important that grant administration is aware of the differences and difficulties of working in the shifting circumstances of violently contested societies. What may be perfectly reasonable to expect in the home country may have to be amended in order to make the grant work for projects funded in the area of peacebuilding.

➤ **BENEFICIARIES –**

Funders should carry out periodic reviews on the composition of their grant beneficiaries in order to be aware of the likely impact of grant allocations in terms of the different groups and ‘sides’ within the conflict area. Other considerations might include the impact of funding decisions on women as compared to men, and who makes the decisions in the organizations funded? People within divided societies are acutely aware of the resources allocated to the various ‘sides’ of the conflict.

➤ **BRANDING –**

While international aid agencies invariably require the branding of their funded projects, this is not always the best approach for independent funders to adopt. It is more important that

local partners receive the credibility for work carried out. This can also avert politically motivated accusations that the local civil society and community-based organizations have been bought off, or are foreign agents. Reference has already been made to the importance of ‘quiet money’.

➤ **CLARITY –**

Having taken the time to consult with, and listen, to local voices in areas of conflict, as well as other informed stakeholders, it is important that funders develop a clear programme rationale and framework that is underpinned by stated values. This provides a basis for engagement with potential partners as well as avoiding misrepresentation.

➤ **CORE COSTS –**

Many funders prefer to fund direct activities and/or project work rather than investing in the core costs of partner organizations. The reality is that much good peacebuilding work is rooted in building up long term relationships and trust through personal contact and engagement. This requires continuity and the possibility of working supportively with individuals and groups. This can rarely be achieved through short-term funded projects that have limited potential to build on the relationships established. Peacebuilding organizations need reasonable core costs funded to allow them to implement effective programmes of work and retain experienced personnel.

➤ **DEPENDENCY –**

All too often there are accusations that the model of international aid serves to build dependency as it is focused on need and delivery. While there are emergency needs that such aid will need to prioritize, it is important that independent philanthropy builds on local assets, strengths and opportunities, seeing local organizations and activists as partners rather than simply grant recipients. This changes the power dynamics in the relationship and can prevent what one European foundation referred to ‘guilt tripping’ (in a country with past colonial links). It’s insistence on grantee independence countered the more traditional dependency relationship.

➤ **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT –**

Funders need to be conscious of potential difficulties in financial management of grants, preparing their letters of offer or contracts accordingly. Financial reporting requirements should be proportionate to the size of the grant, and where necessary support arrangements should be put in place (including possible financial management training for funded groups). Depending on the country there may well be legal restrictions on the acceptance of external funding. In-country intermediary organizations may be available to help with grant management for less well-resourced community-based groups. Good on-going relationships between funders and local partners, that build a sense of trust and mutual responsibility,

provide a better basis for open and honest financial management reporting than detailed reporting requirements.

➤ **GRANT AWARDS –**

Notwithstanding the major needs in societies experiencing war and persistent violence, the important contribution of independent philanthropy is its ability to offer flexible funding that can include relatively small grants as well as more sizeable commitments. It is often the small grant, delivered in a timely manner that enables progress during times of potential change. Even where the grant investment is more substantial, independent funders have the ability to agree to vary the terms of the award depending on the changing nature of the challenges and opportunities that the context throws up. This requires Grant Programme Managers to maintain on-going contact with their locally based partners and to appreciate the changing conditions faced by the latter. It also needs responsiveness by donors to ensure that decision-making and administrative procedures can take account of the need for flexibility of approach.

➤ **GROW RATHER THAN INNOVATE –**

Although many funders like to invest in innovative approaches, the reality is that it can be more productive to invest in the development of those structures and organizations that already exist, particularly where organizations have local credibility. There are too many examples of donor funds creating ‘briefcase NGOs’ that result in community scepticism about the NGO sector generally. There is also a very real danger that such organizations focus primarily on donor rather than local needs. Where civil society infrastructure is weak, it is possible for independent funding to support it with training, peer learning and technical assistance. Again, it changes the power dynamics if local organizations are co-designers of their own programmes of learning and are involved in the identification of appropriate technical assistance.

➤ **INDEPENDENCE –**

Independent donors have the benefit of independent decision-making which is a virtue in circumstances where government may be party to the conflict. Funders can use their independence to invest in peacebuilding initiatives that may be seen as pilot strategies. Independent action does, however, have to be balanced by the potential benefits of donor coordination in situations of violent conflict. Such coordination can give a sense of security to funders who may be concerned about being the lone funder in sensitive circumstances. It can also allow funders to complement each other’s priorities and interests in a mutually reinforcing manner.

➤ **LANGUAGE –**

Situations of violent conflict leave people incredibly sensitive to the use of language and the implicit nuances and messages that may be communicated. As noted before ‘peacebuilding’ is a term that can be unacceptable where it is viewed as justifying an imbalance of power or acceptance of oppression. Equally, the donor demand for ‘peace and reconciliation’ may be a step too far for communities that are still struggling to come to terms with the divisive legacies of the past. It is important for funders to ascertain the sensitivities around language and terminology in the areas that they hope to work in. The use of colours, symbols and depictions of society must also be treated with care – if all the photographs used in donor materials represent communities on one side of the conflict, then the message communicated may be one of preference.

➤ **LOCAL CONNECTIONS –**

The importance of good, inclusive local connections as a baseline for properly grounded peacebuilding work has been stressed throughout this Study. Local connections are needed both to inform programming as well as to help identify potential grantees. One long established peacebuilding organization, Peace Direct, goes further than this, asserting – ‘We believe that local people have the power to find their own solutions to conflict. Our mission is to help them to make this happen’ (www.peacedirect.org). It is also important to check out what local funders are working in violently contested societies. If there are complementary missions, and appropriate capacity, partnership arrangements may be possible. This recognizes the fact that it is local organizations that will have long-term commitment and sustainability.

➤ **LOCATION –**

Funders committed to peacebuilding adopt different approaches on the question as to whether they should locate/recruit staff directly in societies experiencing conflict or whether programmes can be implemented from their home base. Different approaches have been adopted, from establishing in-country offices to setting up regional foundation hubs; and from having in-country expert advisors on a consultancy basis to working through local partner organizations. If the in-country office option is selected then it is important that trusts and foundations are not guilty of the behaviour that draws criticisms of international aid agencies, i.e. unacceptable display of wealth, cultural insensitivities, the ‘poaching’ of staff from local NGOs and high staff turn-over. Reference was made by one community-based activist group to ‘settler donors’. The combination of foundation staff building up knowledge and relationships by spending periods of time in selected locations (and travelling outside the main urban centres), but in the interim relying on local informants, seems a good compromise. One large donor works from its home office in Europe, but relies on ‘secret visits’ by key advisors to maintain a ‘light footprint’. A women’s fund uses an ‘Endorsement Process’, which relies on the networks developed by local advisers and former grantees.

➤ **OPPORTUNITIES –**

By necessity the international aid model is all too often rooted in deficit funding – responding to essential needs and focusing on the delivery of goods and services. Independent philanthropy has the freedom to take a more positive approach, emphasizing the resilience and resourcefulness of local people and communities, even in the most difficult of circumstances. Consequently, funding programmes should be framed to build on opportunities identified through local knowledge. This represents a paradigm shift from grant application processes that traditionally ask applicants to identify the need, thereby casting them as more disadvantaged than others. If the funder approach shifts to exploring with local people the positive opportunities, then it underlines active change-maker investment.

➤ **PARTNERSHIP WORKING –**

Partnership working is very important when focusing on peacebuilding. Communication and sharing information with other funders, that hold similar values, working in a specific area can help with analysis of the challenges and opportunities of the situation. It can provide layered information, whether it is political analysis, security data, community level informants, or thematic insights (such as Human Rights, Women's Issues, health, etc.). Partnership working can also bring together donors with an interest in different aspects of work in a specific contested area. Finally, there is the need for partnership working with locally based organizations if any long-term impact is to be achieved.

➤ **PEACEBUILDING EXPERTISE –**

There are many NGOs with proven expertise in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, often drawn from their involvement in a number of conflict situations. These skills and analysis can be complementary to, rather than a substitute for, local expertise. The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (2015) argues for an increase in south-south transfer of learning and expertise. It also concludes that 'Assistance to building peace is about supporting local actors building peace by lending expertise and advice to locally-shaped and guided plans and processes. Peacebuilding is not a 'mission' or a 'programme'. . .' There are a number of membership platforms for specialist peacebuilding organizations, such as EPLO (European Peace Liaison Office), whilst there are a small number of independent Foundations (such as the Berghof foundation) that have expertise through long term commitment to peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The Peace & Security Funders' Group in the USA, is an important source of support, information and networking.

The Berghof Foundation recognizes that sustained conflict transformation is always the result of a collaborative effort. For this reason, it prioritises an approach to work closely with like-minded partners to inspire the constructive engagement of others. It aspires to create spaces for conflict transformation which integrates knowledge, skills and resources in a shared process of reflective learning. It also seeks to create the conditions for conflict stakeholders and actors to safely and constructively engage with one another. Consequently, it offers knowledge, skills and resources to build individual and institutional capacities through a targeted grant programme.

www.berghof-foundation.org/about-us/how-we-work.

➤ **POWER –**

Observers of peacebuilding practice often make the point that there is a serious imbalance of power between insiders and outsiders involved in conflict areas. Outsiders control the bulk of the resources available for both peacebuilding and development and also take it upon themselves to provide a prognosis of the problems and to control decision-making as to the nature of the peacebuilding and peace-making processes to be supported. They also enjoy considerable flexibility in choosing among local implementing partners. This is most clearly the case with external national and multi-national powers, but is an observation that can also be applied to some external independent donors. The implications of these power imbalances need to be acknowledged and taken into account during the design of peacebuilding programmes and related grant-making.

➤ **RISK-TAKING –**

The idea of risk-taking can be off-putting for independent trusts and foundations given that they are trustees of charitable assets. The reality, however, is that it tends to be their local partners and grantees that are on the frontline of risk. The investment of the necessary time and attention to preparatory work that delivers trusted relationships and appropriate information serves to limit the level of risk-taking. It is also important to remember that, in any situation of violent conflict, there are more people that are trying to get on with their lives and survive than those that are directly engaged in violence. Steps can be taken to mitigate the risks involved in peacebuilding, notwithstanding the fact that in complex circumstances, people must be allowed to make mistakes and to try again.

➤ **SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS –**

It is important that funders are conscious of the security and safety of their locally based partners and that they ask questions to ensure that this issue is addressed. Donors need to be sensitive about imposing any external requirements that might place their local partner organizations at risk (eg. What information is recorded and who has access to it – one funder now uses encrypted emails when communicating with their grantees in sensitive areas). A number of global developments are impacting on funder work in conflict areas - the increased 'securitization' of the framing of violent conflict; restrictive national legislation and

trans-national regulations; and concerns about charitable funds being used by non-state combatant organizations. These are challenges that need to be addressed on a case by case basis, but where liaison with appropriate funder consortiums may help.

➤ **SUSTAINABILITY –**

A responsible donor will consider sustainability issues from the start of a programme of investment. This can entail putting in place appropriate capacity-building and training for local organizations (with an emphasis on capacity-building to address local issues and challenges rather than to simply meet donor needs) and/or to seek to identify sources of longer-term asset mobilization. Encouragement and support for community based philanthropy through the establishment of local community foundations, women's funds or similar institutions is one option. Another is to lobby for mainstream funding for civil society and community-based initiatives; whilst a third is to introduce grantee organizations to other funders.

➤ **TIME COMMITMENT –**

Ideally when a funder prioritizes involvement in a specific conflict area, or more generally in peacebuilding, they accept this as a long-term rather than a short term commitment given the necessary time and energy required to make local connections and acquire knowledge. This sense of commitment from external donors is important for local organizations that value interest as much as resources. External donors can open doors and effect introductions for their local partners; they can also act as a listening ear when things are difficult. This all takes a time commitment. For funders that have more specialist interest (eg. health issues, education, etc.) and do not want to become so deeply involved, there is the option for them to partner with colleague donors that have a broader commitment to peacebuilding.

SECTION 4 - HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE CONTRIBUTING TO POSITIVE CHANGE?

This Section could have been titled – How do we know we are making a difference? The reality is that direct causal attribution is seldom possible in the area of peacebuilding investment. At best, most funders settle for the knowledge that they are contributing to making a difference in very complex circumstances given that sustainable peacebuilding requires transformation across multiple fronts and at multiple levels. Notwithstanding these challenges there are an increasing number of initiatives that seek to ‘measure the unmeasurable’, in the words of one such initiative (‘Corazzoli, V. & White, J. , 2013 – ‘Measuring the Unmeasurable: Solutions to Measurement Challenges in Fragile and Conflict Affected Environments’, DFID – <http://dmeforpeace.org/learn/measuring-unmeasurable-solutions-measurement-challenges-fragile-and-conflict-affected-environs>).

Given the complexity of peacebuilding, one approach suggests that donors should plan for evaluation of clusters of work rather than focusing on individual project activities. The ability to use a range of methodologies that complement each other has also been recommended. Adopting a broader framing, an OECD (2008) Guidance Document on the evaluation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities sets out a number of questions to frame the evaluation approach –

- What is happening in the conflict area? At what stage is the conflict cycle? Watch out especially for potential conflict triggers (elections, controversial celebrations or commemorations, etc.). Are there any other logistical issues that need to be taken into consideration (security restrictions, major holidays, etc.)?
- Would an evaluation at this point in time be disruptive to the policy, project or programme itself? For example, would it provoke political reaction that could undermine the intervention by inadvertently feeding information to one or other of the parties to the conflict?
- Would an evaluation put the intervention stakeholders at personal or political risk?
- Has the effort been in place long enough to provide useful experience and learning? Is the assessment of outputs, outcomes and impacts based on a realistic time scale?

In addition, funders should ensure that, as far as possible, the evaluation process should be participative, as a collective exercise in reflection and learning, rather than an ‘extractive industry’.

➤ *Possible Questions*

Drawing on the OECD guidance, and issues suggested by community-based foundations that are members of the Foundations for Peace Network, there are a number of questions that might inform peacebuilding evaluations –

QUESTIONS RELATING TO EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTION:

- How has the situation changed over time and what is the contribution of the intervention to these changes?
- Has the intervention achieved its stated/implicit purpose, or can it be reasonably expected to do so on the basis of its outputs?
- Does the effort prompt people increasingly to resist violence and provocations to violence by improving non-violent forms of conflict resolution and power management?
- Does the effort result in a real improvement in relations among groups in conflict?
- Do the stakeholders affected have a significant impact on the conflict and was gender (and other relevant inequalities) taken into consideration?
- Has the intervention led to policy changes? By whom? How do these relate to the conflict?
- What major factors are contributing to achievement or non-achievement of objectives?

QUESTIONS POSED BY FOUNDATIONS FOR PEACE NETWORK MEMBERS:

- How has the intervention increased the participation and confidence of previously excluded/marginalized groups?
- How has the intervention bridged opposing and different groups through communication, contact and joint working?
- How has the intervention provided 'safe space' for meetings and exchange of views about the conflict and related social justice issues?
- What inter-community networks and collaborative initiatives have developed? Who has been part of them and how have they contributed towards peacebuilding?
- What has been the learning within local groups and organizations concerning the causes, nature and possible resolution of violent conflict.
- What relationships have been established between local groups/communities and decision-makers (state and non-state) and how has this impacted on peacebuilding opportunities?

Given the sensitivities around the collection, and use of, information in conflict areas it is important that local stakeholders should be involved in identifying the questions to be asked, the manner in which they are posed and how the information will be used and retained. A number of funders make the point that people often say what they think the donors will want to hear, or else say as little as possible that might be construed as critical.

The Conflict Sensitivity Consortium Guide to Conflict Sensitivity emphasizes the importance of applying sensitivity in the selection of evaluation approaches and personnel involved –

- If using an external evaluator be aware that their presence can both raise expectations in the community or potentially add to conflict/tensions depending on how they are viewed by the local community.
- Ensure that the role of the evaluator is clear to communities and other stakeholders.
- Ensure that the outcome of the evaluation is fed back to the community and all stakeholders and that they have the opportunity to comment on the findings.
- Include an explicit focus on assessing conflict sensitivity (peacebuilding) in the evaluator's terms of reference.

➤ *Developing a Broader Understanding of Effectiveness*

The 'Reflecting on Peace Practice', developed by the Collaborative for Development Action, suggested that any evaluation of peacebuilding should look for examples where activities funded contributed to –

1. Stopping a key driving factor of the war or conflict;
2. Creating a momentum for peace by enabling participants and communities to develop their own peace initiatives in relation to critical elements of context analysis;
3. Establishing new or reforming existing political institutions to handle grievances;
4. Empowering people to resist violence and provocation to violence; and
5. Enhancing the sense of both public and private security.

In addition, there is still the critical question as to how one can evaluate 'the dog that didn't bark', i.e. the prevention of violence in certain circumstances. Notwithstanding the difficulties, it is important to identify methodologies (whether assessments or evaluation) that can examine whether there is a certain change, or effect, in the situation of conflict that specific funded activity, or bundle of activities, have made a contribution to.

The Asia Foundation addressed this issue, and while acknowledging that monitoring results in conflict zones is exceptionally difficult, indicated that it worked to a number of guiding principles – (i) focus on the outcome level rather than an over-emphasis on basic outputs; and (ii) the use of qualitative indicators to provide 'nuance, context and depth of understanding that quantitative indicators alone cannot provide about conflict and post conflict situations . . . (including) conducting routine "Locality Case Studies" (that) can assess how local communities are responding to programs, and adapt activities based on changing circumstances.' The ability to learn from evaluation, and to adapt corresponding programmes of work, is critically important.

Work carried out by CARE International (www.careinternational.org.uk) offers a useful discussion on 'Guidance for Designing, Monitoring and Evaluating Peacebuilding Projects: Using Theories of Change (June 2012). This references an earlier publication published by Search for Common Ground (www.sfcg.org) - Church, C. & Rogers, M. (2006) 'Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Activities'.

➤ *Accountability, Monitoring and Transparency*

“You can’t prevent the birds of sorrow from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from building nests in your hair”.

Chinese Proverb.

There are probably more ‘nests’ in the area of monitoring and accountability than to be found in a rookery, if local comment on donor reporting requirements are to be believed. Disproportionate requirements, driven by a one-size fits all mentality, have created an audit mind-set that is often at odds with commendable programme aspirations. Unfortunately, all too often, it is the bruising experience of audit requirements that is remembered by local project implementers and activists. However, this is an area where independent philanthropy can create a different dynamic resulting in a positive relationship with their grantees.

That said, philanthropic foundations are accountable to their boards and need to be in compliance with charitable regulations, tax and relevant laws. Balancing this is the need for donors to treat funded grantees with the same sense of respect as they would expect for themselves. A Joint Working Group of the Council on Foundations and the European Foundation Centre (2007) suggested seven principles of accountability as –

- Integrity – operating in an honest fashion; staying true to mission and being transparent with stakeholders.
- Understanding – research and understand the societal context in which grant-making is taking place; tapping into experience and local knowledge.
- Respect – avoiding cultural arrogance; be modest in approach – ‘When visiting international grantees/partners always keep in mind that you are a guest in someone else’s country’.
- Responsiveness – listen carefully and resist the temptation to impose the funder models; build a relationship of trust.
- Fairness – be reasonable and flexible; remember grantees may be dealing with multiple funder demands.
- Cooperation and collaboration – build synergies as a way of increasing learning.
- Effectiveness – plan for longer term sustainability; engage in peer learning.

It is particularly important to apply these principles in the context of conflict-affected areas and to ensure that foundation members of staff responsible for monitoring, finance and administrative follow-up, have an understanding of both the principles and their application in practice.

“We work in an authoritarian environment in which it is difficult for civil society to flourish – the more so because the Bedouin communities we work with are themselves a marginalized minority. In this situation issues of accountability are both critical and contentious. We have to operate within the legal constraints of a system apparently designed to hamstring rather than facilitate civic participation; this makes it enormously hard to work as transparently as we’d like. We are accountable to the Egyptian authorities and have to be seen to comply with their requirements; for example, obtaining endorsement of grant-making decisions from the Ministry officials. However, to gain the trust of our communities it is essential that we are seen as wholly independent of the system. This is a delicate tightrope to walk. . .”

Hilary Gilbert – Community Foundation for South Sinai, Egypt.

Given the heightened level of rumour and suspicion in contested societies, it is important to agree an acceptable level of transparency in order to encourage trust from all sections of the community.

➤ **The Principle of Mutual Accountability**

If mutual accountability is understood as the process whereby two (or multiple) partners agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other, and to other stakeholders, then its operation in practice tends to be honoured more in breach than in observation given imbalances in power. Two veteran activists in the community philanthropy field (which often exists in the space between large external funders and local communities) comment on their experience –

“My experience has been that the hierarchy between external donors, who give large sums of money, and recipient organizations is too pronounced. Lack of trust, respect and often high handedness on the part of the donor does not allow that both sides are engaged for the same cause.”

Rita Thapa – Founder member of Tewa Fund, Nepal.

“I think of ‘mutual accountability’ in two senses as it relates to our experience in Palestine. First, the relationship between the community and the community foundation. Theoretically, the community foundation is both ‘of’ the community and ‘for’ the community (not true of external donors). This means that the community is at the table. Accountability is not between insiders and outsiders, but among insiders with different perspectives. Accountability and community building and institution building and capacity building and trust building become intertwined and mutually reinforcing. I say ‘theoretically’ because there is still a gap, perhaps in most places between those who benefit from grants (we are all beneficiaries but we don’t all get grants). Narrowing that gap is an objective of a community foundation, not just a means to an end. That’s unique in community foundations. Secondly, in Palestine, we work towards mutual accountability with ‘external’ donors by making advocacy to reform international aid a core objective. In aid dependent societies, dependence on international aid undermines the potential relationship between communities and community philanthropic organizations. So addressing the problem (aid dependence) directly makes sense to us. . .”

Nora Lester Murad – Founder member of Dalia Association, Palestine.

These views reflect the experience of funding organizations working in contested societies that are both grant-makers and grant seekers, thus bringing a dual perspective as well as the confidence ‘to speak truth to power’. Many other grantees may just remain silent in deference to their funders.

The Dalia Association has taken an interesting step in modelling mutual accountability in practice. In its ‘The Village Decides’ participatory grants initiative – within which village residents take decisions on the allocation of small grants for community-based action in their community - local accountability is integral to the model with the villagers electing their own Monitoring and Accountability Committee to report back on a regular basis to the Dalia Association as the funder. Grandma Mahomed will want to know where every shekel is spent!

Work undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute (2008) identified three core elements as contributing to a process of mutual accountability – (i) Taking the time to generate a shared agenda; (ii) Agreeing, monitoring and reviewing mutual commitments; and (iii) Providing the time and space for dialogue and negotiation among the stakeholders. In short, all elements that build mutual trust among partners – whether funders or funded.

➤ *Managing the Risks*

Although time invested in conflict-sensitive programme planning should help to mitigate risks of working in violently contested societies, it is still important to be aware of potential risks to both the reputation of the funder/donor and to the substantive work itself. Leaving things to chance and good faith can result in the ‘frog-in-the-pot’ syndrome, with complacency resulting in being boiled alive. A UK DFID (Department for International Development) Briefing identifies seven main areas of risk, which include –

- Country-related risk (which might encompass legal restrictions);
- Partner risks (related to the safety and reliability of local partners);
- Programme/project risks (concerning the ability of project partners to deliver agreed projects in uncertain circumstances);
- Reputational risk (to the funder);
- Political risks (with regard to the ongoing conflict)
- Security risks (both to funder staff and local partners); and
- Fiduciary risks (in terms of funding).

Any contextual analysis carried out as part of the strategic planning process can usefully take account of these potential vulnerabilities, with related scenario planning identifying organizational responses.

As already referred to where there are concerns over reputational risk then clarity about the values and mission of the donor programme is critical. It can set out minimum standards for work in conflict affected areas, such as rejection of physical force and intimidation; the need to abide by human rights standards; safety of staff and programme partners, etc. As with other strategic issues donor values and standards should be discussed with local partners to ensure that they are clearly understood in a manner that is context sensitive.

➤ *A Final Word*

“Let us teach both ourselves and others that politics does not have to be the art of the possible. . .but that it also can be the art of the impossible, that is, the art of making both ourselves and the world better”.

Vaclav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia, 1990.

Funding peacebuilding occurs in the context of politics and power. While it may not be an easy option for a philanthropic foundation or donor, the stakes involved are high and the potential gains and opportunities are immense. There is also the moral imperative of standing with, and supporting, some of the most courageous and motivated activists in our times. Notwithstanding the difficulties, there are few more important challenges than the contributory role that independent philanthropy can play in transitioning societies out of violent conflict and ensuring that greater social justice, equality and human rights underpin the sustainability of peacebuilding efforts.

There are roles for the many diverse funders and donors in the peacebuilding script. Those interested in particular countries or regions can join with funders that focus on specific themes, such as women’s issues; health; education or the environment. International donors can partner with local community-based funders, or indeed, NGOs. Donors can bring together grantee organizations in an imaginative portfolio to match community-based activist groups with skilled conflict resolution/peacebuilding NGOs. The possibilities are limitless if there is the will and imagination to make a difference.

It may appear that given the sums of money involved in multi-lateral and bilateral peacebuilding and development aid programmes to conflict affected areas is of such a scale that the funding from independent philanthropy is just a drop in the ocean and consequently not required. Nothing is further from the truth. It is the flexibility, nimbleness and ability to build relations of trust that effective independent philanthropy models that can help create the conditions for more sustainable peacebuilding outcomes. The experience of independent foundations and committed donors to date highlights the positive contribution that can be made in promoting peace.

SECTION 5 – SUMMARY NOTES

PUTTING PREPARATIONS IN PLACE -

- Analysis and strategic planning are essential ingredients for effective action. Take the time to engage in conflict-sensitive planning and to listen to informed local voices in order to ensure that programming is context specific. Speak with other funders and relevant organizations that are knowledgeable about the area.
- When carrying out background analysis make sure to pay attention to learning from the global South as well as the North. All too often key informants come from North America and/or Europe – there is much learning to be gleaned on a South-South basis.
- Recognize that peacebuilding and conflict transformation often requires a long-term commitment; take this into account in programme planning.
- Visit, meet and listen to local community-based practitioners in priority areas of conflict. If possible, bring some Board members to get an understanding of the issues. Assess the potential to support local initiatives and plan to travel outside the main capital city.
- Recognize the nature of risk-taking that you might be required to embrace, and while taking appropriate measures to manage identified risks, acknowledge that your in-country partners invariably bear the brunt of risk-taking.

IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES -

- Consider various approaches for increased donor transparency, accountability and mechanisms for mutual accountability in ways that will be empowering rather than disempowering to local partners.
- Continuously monitor the opportunities to invest in peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives as the violence moves through various phases. Accept that this will not be a linear progression and that peacebuilding often occurs on the basis of one-step forward, two steps back. Be prepared to act rapidly and flexibly where there are signs of movement out of violence in order to be able to respond to, and support, positive developments.
- Think about the added value non-financial dimension that independent funders can bring to people working in conflict areas. Peer exchanges with activists, negotiators and peacebuilders from other societies emerging from conflict can be very important and validating for those who are going through the process. Independent funders and donors often have access to media, policy makers and international agencies that they can put local partners in contact with.

- Be prepared to support peacebuilding activities that engage all actors from across the political spectrum, including potential ‘spoilers’. It is particularly important to support work with groups that are marginalized or excluded, however they are dubbed or named. This is an area that independent philanthropy may be freer to address than governments or international agencies.
- Remember and support the contribution of potentially excluded sections of the community, like women or young people, to peacebuilding efforts. If they do not appear amongst the groups that are funded ask yourself, why not? Ensure women’s participation as beneficiaries and as implementers at all levels.

MOVING ON

- Be realistic about the evaluation and measurement of the impact of grant-making given the uncertain nature of the context. Look for assessment approaches that accept a contributory analysis rather than seeking attribution. Make sure that any assessment exercises are participatory in nature.
- Share your learning with other interested funders and stakeholders. When you are considering exiting from programming in a certain area, encourage initiatives aimed at creating local mechanisms for local/regional resource mobilization to support the financial sustainability and independence of local community-based and civil society organizations. One approach that might be considered is the establishment/organizational support for community philanthropy institutions.
- Working in the area of conflict and peacebuilding can be difficult – recognize and celebrate the achievements of your programmes and your partners, while being realistic about learning from challenges.

THE FRAMING CONTEXT -

- Perhaps most important of all – be clear about your values, mission and strategic objectives. Be prepared to communicate and explain them to counter any misunderstanding or misinterpretation both internally within your organization and externally.

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ABOUT SCI AND PHILANTHROPY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE

The Social Change Initiative is an international not-for-profit organization based in Northern Ireland. Its mission is to improve the effectiveness of activism for progressive social change, particularly in divided societies, and to influence the way this work is funded and supported. The Social Change Initiative seeks to capture, distil, disseminate and apply lessons from philanthropy and activism in the fields of reconciliation, human rights and refugee/migrant rights.

Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace is a global network of philanthropy practitioners working to increase the impact of grant-making for social justice and peace. It does this by:

(i) developing tools and practices to advance this field of work; (ii) shifting the narrative in philanthropy to place social justice and peace at the centre; and (iii) supporting a community of practice for practitioners across the globe.

The emphasis in the growing Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace network is on making connections, building relationships, creating conditions for learning and innovation and building a collective voice for advancing this work.