An overview of post-war peacebuilding

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"It is now highly feasible to take care of everybody on Earth at a higher stranded of living than any have ever known. It is no longer has to be you or me. Selfishness is unnecessary. War is obsolete. It is a matter of converting our high technology from Weaponry or Livingry"

R. Buckminster Fuller

Abstract

Building lasting peace in post war societies is among the most frightening of challenges for global peace. Peacebuilding requires both continued international support and national efforts across the wide range of activities; demobilizing combatants; assisting the return of refugees and displaced persons; supporting justice and security sector reform; enhancing human rights protections and fostering reconciliation after past violence. Peacebuilding commonly follows the 'post-war' phase of involvement and generally practitioners of peacebuilding field have enthusiastic attention to how ceasefires, once achieved, may be transformed into sustained peace. So the central focus of this article is to analyse the aspects of peacebuilding and it has been analysed recent conceptual developments in post war peacebuilding.

Introduction

Peacebuilding is the development of positive personal and group relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national, and racial boundaries. It aims to resolve inequality in non-violent conduct and to transform the structural environment that makes war. Peacebuilding can be defined in many different ways. Scholars and field practitioners have developed different conceptions of peacebuilding with the timeline it is associated, as well as the tasks it involved and it is most often used to describe work that has peace enhancing outcomes, and it attaches great importance to how things happen. It involves a full range of approaches, processes and stages needed to transform towards more sustainable and peaceful relationships, jus governance modes and fair structures.

Johan Galtung has defined peacebuilding as "Peacebuilding is the process of creating self-supporting structures that "remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur." Conflict resolution mechanisms "should be built into the structure and be present there as a reservoir for the system itself to draw upon, just as a healthy body has the ability to generate its own antibodies and does not need ad-hoc administration of medicine."

According to John Paul Lederach "Peacebuilding is understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow formal peace accords. Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct."

According to the United Nations: Peacebuilding Support Office "Peacebuilding is rather the continuum of strategy, processes and activities aimed at sustaining peace over the long-term with a clear focus on reducing chances for the relapse into conflict. It is useful to see peacebuilding as a broader policy framework that strengthens the synergy among the related efforts of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, recovery and development, as part of a collective and sustained effort to build lasting peace. This office works specifically with peacebuilding in the context of post-conflict reconstruction."

Though peacebulding has lot of definitions as above the term "Peacebuilding" first emerged in 1970s through the work of Johan Galtung who called for the creation of peacebuilding structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the "root causes" of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace management and conflict resolution. Since then, the term Peacebuilding has covered a multidimensional exercise and tasks ranging from the disarming of warring factions to the rebuilding of political, economic, judicial and civil society institutions. In 1992, the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined peacebuilding in his Agenda for Peace as "action to identify and support structures which tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid relapse in to conflict". Peacebuilding therefore became identical with post-conflict peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding generally involves humanitarian assist, instead of that it is planned to provide the immediate means of survival for populations at risk, the main categories of

intervention are: Peacemaking and peace keeping. Peacemaking involves interventions designed to end hostilities and bring about an agreement using diplomatic, political and military means as necessary. The focus lies in the diplomatic effort to end the violence between the conflicting parties, to move them towards nonviolent dialogue and eventually reach a peace agreement. Peacekeeping means monitoring and enforcing an agreement even by using force as necessary. Peacekeeping operations not only provide security, but also facilitate other non-military initiatives.

Dimensions of peacebuilding

Peacebuilding aims at creating an environment contributing to long lasting peace, and to prevent conflict from reemerging. Therefore conflictive parties must restore the cycle of violence and devastation with a cycle of peace. The creation of such an environment has the three essential dimensions; the structural dimension, relational dimension and the personal dimension. Each of these dimensions relies on different strategies and techniques as described below.

The structural dimension

"The mechanisms that peace is based on should be built into the structure and be present as a reservoir for the system itself to draw up... More specifically, structures must be found that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur."

Johan Galtung, 1976.

The structural dimension of peacebuilding focuses on the contexts that foster violent conflict. Many note that long lasting peace must be built on social, economic, and political fundamentals that serve the needs of the people. In many cases, conflicts occur out of common roots and these root causes are typically complex. If these root causes are not addressed, there can be no lasting peace. Thus, in order to establish long lasting peace, parties must adress the structural causes of the conflict and initiate social structural change.

According to Johan Galtung's triangle of violence there are three main forms of violence in a society. Direct violence, Structural violence and cultural violence are these three

main violence categories and structural dimension of peacebuilding focuses on structural violence category which the root causes of a conflict. It is considered that a long lasting peacebuilding process should address these three forms of violence mainly structural.
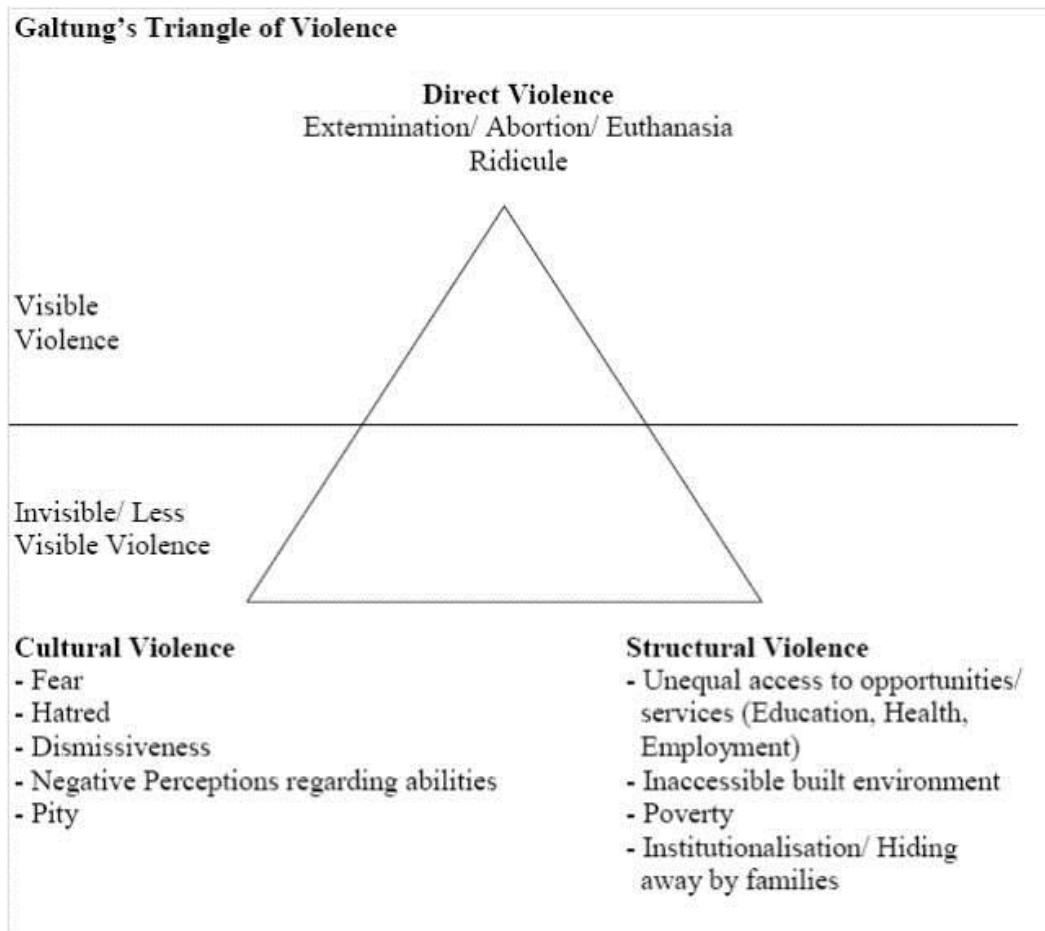
Title: Johan Galtung Triangle of violence

Figure 1. Disability and the triangle of violence (adapted from Johan Galtung, 1990)

Source: https://www.google.lk/search?q=johan+galtung+triangle+of+violence&biw

The relational dimension

A second important element of building peace is reducing the effects of war related hostility through the repair and transformation of damaged relationships. The relational dimension of peacebuilding focuses its attention on reconciliation, forgiveness, building trust, and future vision. It seeks to reduce weakly running communication and make the most of mutual understanding and its focus lies in reducing the negative effects of war through repairing and transforming damaged relationships. One of the essential requirements for this relational transformation is effective communication in order to achieve strong relationships.

The personal dimension

The personal dimension focuses on preferred changes at the individual level. If individuals are not capable to undertake a healing process, there may be social, political, and economic consequences. After an experience of violence, an individual is probable to feel helpless and out of control in an unpredictable context. So building peace must pay attention to the psychological layers of the conflict. If the psychological aspects of experienced violence and its negative consequence are ignored, sufferers are at danger for becoming perpetrators of future violence. Sufferer empowerment helpful to fracture this cycle and Peacebuilding initiatives should therefore provide or support appropriate programs for different levels and areas of the society.

Social actors of a peacebuidling process

Peacebuilding actions involve all levels of society, target all aspects of the state structure and require a variety of actors for the implementation. While external actors can facilitate peacebuilding, it must be motivated by internal forces which cannot be imposed from outside.

Title: Type of actors in a peacebuilding process
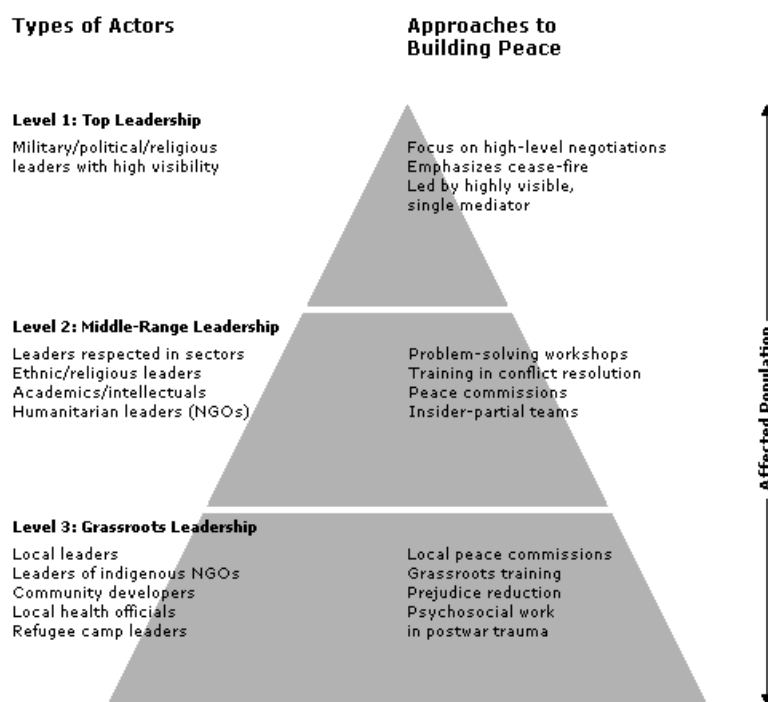
Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

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In most post war contexts there are many actors who contribute to peacebuilding. Johan Galtung has defined them as actors of peacebuilding and he has emphasized that this three social layers should work together to achieve long lasting peace. In its simplest sense Peacebuilding is multi-dimensional and multi-layered and, at its very basic level, must address the people, in conjunction and in comparable with the political and socio-economic aspects of reconstruction.

One of the main three components of peacebuilding process includes reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation. Rehabilitation usually means quashes the devastating effects of an injury. Injury would include physical, psychological and social trauma. The aim of rehabilitation would be reinstate health and wellbeing that has been lost by war. Psychotherapy, counselling are some common psychological forms of treatment that could be used in psychosocial rehabilitation. Rehabilitation programmes should include education, vocational training, income generating projects, housing that is tailored to the needs of the survivors. Close connection, collaboration with Governmental and non-government organisations involved in relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development work will be very productive.

A region that experiences protracted conflict will also often suffer from underdevelopments, damaged property. Wars retard a country's development process, and also destroy its developmental basis. In addition to the massive loss of lives, war leads to material   physical losses, such as devastation of roads and damage to social infrastructures. Transportation and communication systems, banking, healthcare, education, and agriculture are often spoiled. So rebuilding infrastructure is important. If postwar reconstruction is to be truly successful, it must also engage reconstructing infrastructure while developing an environment that fosters reconciliation, forgiveness, the transformation of relationships, and ultimately peaceful co-existence.

Preferably reconciliation put off, once and for all, the use of the past of a conflict. It unites peace, fracture the cycle of violence and makes stronger newly established institutions. As a backward looking operation, reconciliation brings about the personal healing of survivors, the damages of past injustices, the rebuilding of non-violent relationships between individuals and communities, and the recognition by the previous parties to a conflict of a general vision and understanding of the past. In its forward-looking dimension, reconciliation

means enabling victims and perpetrators to get on with life and, at the level of society, the establishment of a cultured political dialogue.

Challenges in peacebuilding

Usually Peacebuilidng projects face number of challenges and among the challenges; Lack of a shared vision for change among key parties with civil society, Lack of conflict analysis, Lack of trust between parties, Too many plans, and weak arrangement of contributors behind a national plan, Lack of agreement on the need to address changing short term and long term concerns, unrealistic timeframes for reform, weak capacity to implement plans and limited effectiveness of capacity development approaches, insufficient flexibility, speed and predictability of transition financing, and limited effectiveness of existing instruments are prominent.

Conclusion

Peacebuilding in a post-war context has been an increasingly important part to creating a long lasting peace. Peacebuilding, although it can be done at any time, peacebuilding attempts usually follow peacekeeping and peacemaking. Unlike peacekeeping which can be implemented relatively quickly, and peacemaking, which can occur over a period of a few months, peacebuilding usually takes a number of years. So peacebuilding is a very long and slow process and taken collectively, integrated and long term approaches in post-war involvements help to alter solutions. Anyhow Peacebuilding in post war societies assist ways to better understand among the conflictive parties and think at the local context and builds mutually reinforcing environment.

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