



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE www.usip.org

SPECIAL REPORT

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ABOUT THE REPORT

The United States Institute of Peace hosted a day-long workshop on June 20, 2001 to enable faith-based NGOs to share their experiences in international peacebuilding. The holding of this workshop reflected both the increasing involvement of international faith-based NGOs in attempting to promote peace in the countries where they operate, as well as the desire of many other faith-based NGOs to engage in peacebuilding projects. The workshop permitted the more experienced NGOs to share their experiences with those NGOs who have less experience in this arena. Representatives from 40 faith-based NGOs attended.

The principal purpose of the Institute's year-old Religion and Peacemaking Initiative is to help U.S. faith-based organizations to become more active and effective as international peacebuilders. This workshop thus served the initiative's central purpose.

This report has been prepared by David Smock, director of the Religion and Peacemaking Initiative.

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Institute of Peace, which does not advocate specific policies.

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Faith-Based NGOs and International Peacebuilding

Briefly...

- Faith-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are increasingly active and increasingly effective in international peacebuilding.
- Faith-based organizations have a special role to play in zones of religious conflict, but their peacebuilding programs do not need to be confined to addressing religious conflict.
- Although in some cases peacebuilding projects of faith-based organizations resemble very closely peacebuilding by secular NGOs, in most instances the various religious orientations of these faith-based organizations shape the peacebuilding they undertake.
- The peacebuilding agendas of these organizations are diverse and range from high-level mediation to training and peacebuilding-through-development at grassroots levels.
- Very often peace can be promoted most efficiently by introducing peacebuilding components into more traditional relief and development activities.

Introduction

The 100 persons who attended the workshop on international peacebuilding by faith-based NGOs and the 40 faith-based NGOs they represent employ a variety of approaches to international peacebuilding. Peacebuilding entails not only helping to stop violence but also transforming relationships in order to contribute to a more peaceful future. Some, like the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), focus on promoting interfaith collaboration. American Jewish World Service, World Vision, and Catholic Relief Services build peacebuilding components into humanitarian assistance and development programs. The Plowshares Institute focuses on training in peacebuilding and conflict resolution from a religious perspective. St. Egidio and the All Africa Conference of Churches have mediated between warring forces and have negotiated peace agreements that ended wars.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, nonpartisan federal institution created by Congress to promote the prevention, management, and peaceful resolution of international conflicts. Established in 1984, the Institute meets its congressional mandate through an array of programs, including research grants, fellowships, professional training programs, conferences and workshops, library services, publications, and other educational activities. The Institute's Board of Directors is appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate.

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Although in some cases peacebuilding projects of these faith-based organizations resemble very closely peacebuilding by secular NGOs, in most instances the diverse religious orientations of these faith-based organizations shape the peacebuilding they undertake. For instance, in the mediation processes that the All Africa Conference of Churches orchestrated to end the civil war in Sudan temporarily in 1972, the mediators offered prayers at critical junctures and invoked instructive Christian and Islamic texts.

These organizations take seriously the peacebuilding mandates of their faiths. For example, the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) advocates nonviolence and trains others in the methodologies of nonviolence because of FOR's religiously based pacifist conviction. And organizations like United Religions Initiatives and WCRP give priority to promoting reconciliation among religious groups that are in conflict.

The overarching purpose of the meeting was to share experiences, to extract lessons regarding the effectiveness of various approaches, and to help organizations develop strategies for being more effective in the future. It enabled participants to hear from those who have had particularly rich experiences in international peacebuilding. The workshop was also planned to make participants aware of the range of peacebuilding activities already being undertaken by faith-based organizations, and in turn to open up new options for those who have been less active. Another purpose was to enhance collaboration among participating organizations, including interfaith collaboration.

The workshop started with profiles of three organizations that have wide experience in international peacebuilding. These profiles were followed by discussions of specific approaches to peacebuilding: training, conflict prevention, nonviolent methodologies, mediation, interfaith dialogue, promotion of reconciliation, promoting peace through development, and peace education in the United States. This sequence of topics also provides the organizational structure for this report.

From the discussion it became clear that, although in some cases the faith identity of an NGO may create obstacles to involvement in zones of religious conflict (for instance a Christian NGO working in Northern Sudan), an NGO's religious orientation more often opens doors because there are sister religious organizations with whom it can collaborate. Almost all faith-based NGOs serve people without regard to their religious affiliations and most faith-based NGOs also recruit staff from a variety of religious backgrounds.

The faith convictions that motivate these NGOs lead them into peacebuilding. As William Recant of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee noted, "As people of faith, we have to be pursuers of peace." Landrum Bolling of Mercy Corps asserted that those who go into international relief and development work need to see it as a kind of ministry, not with an evangelizing mission, but as fulfilling the spiritual purposes of one's faith. He went on to point out that faith-based NGOs don't necessarily do the job better than secular NGOs, but they can become connected with and inspire local religious communities, which in turn enhances their effectiveness.

Faith-based NGOs face particular sensitivity when they function in zones of religious conflict. But, as WCRP's William Vendley noted, conflict fomented by a religious community can best be contested by a creative minority from that same faith community, which in some cases can be faith-based NGOs. He went on to assert that some conflicts derive at least in part from too little religion rather than too much, from spirituality that has been enfeebled by such forces as communist rule in Yugoslavia.

The participants at the workshop concluded that there is much more openness now than in the past on the part of governments, United Nations organizations, and other international organizations to initiatives taken by faith-based organizations. But this openness should not be taken for license to operate in isolation; faith-based groups need to forge partnerships with secular NGOs, the diplomatic community, international organizations, and even international military structures that play critical roles in places like Bosnia and Kosovo.

Training

Plowshares Institute, led by Robert Evans and Alice Frazer Evans, has been conducting faith-based training in several countries for nearly 30 years. The purpose of their peace-building training is to equip participants with skills of conflict transformation from a spiritual and moral perspective. Using as a foundation their extensive work in South Africa, based at the Centre for Conflict Resolution at the University of Cape Town, they joined their colleague Ron Kraybill of Eastern Mennonite University to develop a training manual, leader's guide, and video titled *Peace Skills for Community Mediators*. In South Africa the Plowshares Institute joined with four other South African NGOs to train 1400 grassroots leaders. The purpose was to change the country's ethos from confrontation to collaboration and effective communication.

The first step of the training process identifies trusted local leaders who can benefit from training in how to analyze conflicts, figure out how to see the conflict as a potential for systematic change, and learn how to form relationships for conflict transformation. The Plowshares approach typically brings together those on opposing sides, for example, different racial, ethnic, and political groups. Prior to the 1994 national elections, Plowshares brought together South African police and anti-apartheid political activists the police had imprisoned and sometimes tortured. By bringing together those in conflict, the training breaks down stereotypes and helps overcome barriers to collaboration. A standard technique is cross-role playing, with those on opposing sides adopting and advocating their opponents' points of view.

The Plowshares approach elicits often forgotten traditional community consensus-building processes. It also builds skills in listening, problem analysis, and problem solving, making use of local cultural resources and focusing on local problems in case study format. In multi-faith contexts the trainers use sacred texts; Muslim, Jewish, and Christian participants work collaboratively on the Koran, the Hebrew scripture, and the New Testament. In these situations, the spiritual dimension is central to the training process. The overarching purpose is to promote empowerment and recognition of the worth of those considered to be the enemy, as well as equipping the participants to solve their own problems.

In Indonesia the Evanses recently brought together religious leaders, journalists, politicians, and military leaders to enable them to move beyond the stereotypes that shaped their perceptions of each other. Religious leaders often fear that their traditions will be disdained. If they are assured that their traditions will be respected and made safe, they do not feel threatened and are open to transforming negative stereotypes of others.

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Conflict Prevention

World Vision, an ecumenical Christian relief and development organization active in 90 countries, has moved in recent years to promote conflict prevention and peacebuilding. As described by Michelle Garred, World Vision has recognized that progress on relief and development is often undermined by the renewal of conflicts. For instance, a major development project in Indonesia had to be abandoned because of an outbreak of violent conflict there. Moreover, World Vision recognizes that relief and development activities have on occasion contributed unwittingly to conflict. As a consequence, it is both taking very seriously the "Do No Harm" approach advocated by Mary Anderson and is seeking ways to prevent and resolve conflicts. Most of this work entails introducing peacebuilding components into relief and development projects. Nevertheless, World Vision is being cautious because of its awareness that it has much to learn about conflict prevention and resolution.

World Vision attempts to address the emergence of conflict, the escalation of conflict, and the reemergence of conflict. It does so primarily at the community level rather

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than at a regional or national level. Emphases include both conflict prevention in settings at risk of increasing violence and peacebuilding in post-conflict contexts. In pre-conflict settings, World Vision's development strategies contribute to the reduction of violence in three ways: (1) poverty reduction and the reduction of economic disparities between rich and poor; (2) civil society development, including appropriate participatory processes for community decision making and conflict resolution; and (3) enhancing respect for human rights.

World Vision's research reveals that participatory processes to identify community needs and to promote community development can help prevent violent conflict. These planning processes contribute to peace through bringing community leaders together across ethnic/religious divisions and through intermixing groups that oppose each other. When a larger geographic area is involved in the planning process, the impact on peace is usually greater, since larger areas usually encompass more diverse populations. World Vision's experience is that intensive community development programs are likely to: decrease ethnic and religious prejudice; increase respect for the dignity and rights of other groups; encourage wider social identities; and enhance a community's ability to resolve local disputes peacefully. Conflict prevention is thus indirect but intentional. The primary purpose is community planning and development but the indirect benefit is conflict prevention. In some cases, however, like its church-based peace training in Rwanda, World Vision's approach to peacebuilding is more explicit and direct, because its explicit purpose is to contribute to peace.

While World Vision prefers to focus on local and regional rather than national conflicts and to concentrate on grassroots projects rather than policy advocacy, there are exceptions to this general rule. For instance, World Vision helped craft the U.S. legislation on "conflict diamonds" intended to reduce the money that flows from diamond mining in places like Angola and Sierra Leone to rebel groups in those countries.

Nonviolent Methodologies

The Fellowship of Reconciliation, founded in 1914, originally rooted its advocacy of nonviolence in the Christian faith, but later it became an interfaith organization with branches in 40 countries. As explained by Richard Deats, FOR realized that Christians have no monopoly on peacebuilding or nonviolence; effective nonviolent peacemakers can be found within Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and other faiths. FOR gained much of its theological and methodological inspiration from Gandhi and later from Martin Luther King. In contrast to the approach advocated by Gene Sharp and the film *A Force More Powerful*, FOR's approach to nonviolence is explicitly rooted in religious conviction. It views religion as having potentially transformative power within society. The FOR philosophy is based on an alternative view of power and an alternative view of how to change history.

In 1984 the Little Sisters of Jesus in the Philippines, a Catholic order, sent an appeal to International FOR to provide training in the Philippines. They worried that the country was headed for civil war between the Marcos dictatorship and communist rebels. The Little Sisters of Jesus turned to the International FOR because of its history in training in the theory and practice of active nonviolence as an alternative to civil war and political violence. International FOR organized nine weeks of training for leaders from Philippine civil society, including many religious leaders. Subsequently the People Power Revolution, led by Corazon Aquino and her allies, peacefully toppled the Marcos regime in 1985/86.

Since that time there has been an exponential growth in nonviolent movements, which have overthrown many repressive regimes, including the Pinochet regime in Chile, others in Latin America, communist rule in Poland and elsewhere in the Soviet bloc, and most recently the Milosevic regime in Serbia.

In three volumes Gene Sharp, in 1973, articulated 198 different methods of nonviolent political action. Since then many more methods of nonviolent action have been developed as people have invented new and unique ways to stand up for justice without resorting to violence. More and more people are realizing that violence is not essential to effecting societal change, even in repressive societies. But nonviolence, Deats asserted, is still in its infancy and nonviolent strategists know much more about bringing down an oppressor than building just, peaceful, and free societies.

Mediation

Burgess Carr from Liberia described the wide variety of roles that he, a religious leader, has played as a mediator and provider of good offices in situations of civil war in Africa. He did this first with the World Council of Churches (WCC), later as the general secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), and more recently as a staff member in the national offices of the Episcopal church in New York. In 1968 the WCC became involved in the Nigerian civil war in response to pleas from Sir Francis Ibiham, former governor of Eastern Nigeria and in 1968 one of the presidents of the WCC. In his petition to WCC, Ibiham charged that the Muslim North in Nigeria was attempting to dominate the Christian East, and that is what motivated the East to attempt to secede and form the separate state of Biafra. The WCC sent a three-person delegation to meet with the consultative committee established by the Organization of African Unity to try to bring an end to the civil war. Carr in turn was drafted by members of the consultative committee to carry messages back and forth among committee members and between committee members and such key Nigerians as President Yakubu Gowon, former president Nnamdi Azikiwe, Sir Louis Mbanefo, and General Odumegwu Ojukwu, leader of breakaway Biafra. At the end of the war Carr helped the AACC convene a meeting of church leaders from both sides of the war-torn country to try to promote reconciliation, and these religious leaders in turn met with President Gowon.

Carr was also the moderator of the peace negotiations that produced a peace agreement bringing temporary halt to the Sudan civil war in 1972. During the mediation process a draft constitution was prepared that guaranteed the semi-autonomy of the South. The mediators conducted parallel conversations with the two parties and then brought them together in Addis Ababa to reach a final accord. The mediators, led by Carr, made very explicit use of religious language and texts from the Koran and Bible. Their prayers alternately sought the intervention of God and Allah.

Later, as an official of the Episcopal church in the United States, Carr unsuccessfully sought to head off full-scale civil war in Liberia between President Samuel Doe's government and the rebels led by Charles Taylor.

Carr was sought after as a peacemaker in part because of his wide contacts in Africa and the access he had to African leaders. But his stature as a religious leader dedicated to peace and his adept use of religious language and concepts also contributed to his success at high-level intervention.

Interfaith Dialogue and Reconciliation

The World Conference on Religion and Peace, led by William Vendley, is a multireligious organization that seeks to promote dialogue and joint action across lines of religious division. WCRP promotes dialogue based upon the mutual respect for the primary language of each member religious community, while also seeking to discern the deeply held cares and concerns that the communities commonly embrace. Such major concerns as abuse of children, human rights violations, unequal economic development, and armed conflict are shared by the member religious communities. After

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Collaborative work for justice and peace is a fundamental commitment of virtually all religious communities. Moreover, religious communities generally have well articulated and differentiated structures that provide a basis for collaboration.

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identifying these shared concerns, WCRP then uses these as terms of reference to organize collaborative action.

Collaborative work for justice and peace is a fundamental commitment of virtually all religious communities. Moreover, religious communities generally have well articulated and differentiated structures that provide a basis for collaboration. Whenever possible WCRP honors the structures that are already in place, rather than devising new structures. But WCRP also recognizes that many religious communities have social assets and traditions to address conflict transformation that are frequently underutilized. Such religious assets as schools, publishing houses, and convening capacity can be mobilized to effectively address situations of armed conflict. Vendley explained how WCRP tries to find new ways to enable its member communities to express their own religious traditions and to capitalize on their own peacemaking genius.

Vendley illustrated this approach by describing the Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone, whose work WCRP has facilitated in both assisting with the mediation that helped end the civil war in Sierra Leone and helping implement the resulting peace agreement through such acts as obtaining the release of significant numbers of child soldiers. The Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone is now repositioning itself to work regionally, reaching across political boundaries to religious counterparts in Liberia and Guinea. This regional work in West Africa demonstrates the impressive capacity of interfaith groups to work internationally.

United Religions Initiatives (URI), as described by its executive director, Charles Gibbs, seeks to promote enduring daily interfaith cooperation, to end religiously motivated violence, and to create cultures of peace, justice, and healing. It seeks first to assure its members from a broad array of faith traditions that their respective traditions will be respected. And then out of their diversity the members work to develop a shared view of a future that they would live into collaboratively. In so doing, they seek to turn the Other (that is, a member of a different faith) into a companion and to see that person as an asset not a liability. The principal method is to have members work together, usually at local levels, to address shared problems. They identify ideas about which they are passionate and that can be clustered together into an action plan, addressed by religiously diverse teams. Principal authority is vested in what URI calls cooperation circles. On a global scale URI promotes dialogue to develop models for peace they would like to see emerge in the 21st century.

Questioners challenged Gibbs about: (1) the danger of pushing people to see all religions as the same; (2) concern that the URI approach may engender fear among those who want to affirm the particularity of their faith, who fear syncretism, and who don't see common ground with other faiths; (3) opposition of those convinced that they hear a divine call to proselytize and who are more concerned about spreading their faith than about solving some shared economic or political problem; and (4) the danger of emphasizing dialogue at the expense of the justice issues that sometimes divide faith groups and breed distrust. In response, Gibbs pointed out that URI honors the distinctiveness of all faiths and has no intention of eroding the particularities of specific faith traditions. URI recognizes the right of people to share and promote their faith but it also recognizes the destructiveness of proselytizing when it is conducted insensitively. Moreover, justice is central to URI concerns and the action programs adopted by cooperation circles often focus on such justice issues as economic inequality.

David Steele of the Center for Strategic and International Studies has conducted more than 35 conflict resolution seminars for religious groups in various parts of the former Yugoslavia. Steele started his work by utilizing the more-or-less standard problem-solving approach to conflict resolution, but found that he needed to give greater attention to building relationships, particularly across lines of religious division. Steele enables participants to work through their suffering, largely through storytelling and then asking how the person's religious faith has helped him or her cope with this suffering. This is done in small groups to enable the Other to be humanized. The participants then share their

fears and needs with each other by trying to put themselves in the shoes of those on the other side. Next there is confession of personal sin and acknowledgment of wrongdoing on the part of one's group. This is done by preparing a list of wrongs that one's own group has committed and sharing this list with those in the opposing group. The participants then face the challenge of forgiving those on the other side and making decisions to move beyond hatred and revenge. Finally, the participants are asked to jointly work together for justice by addressing high-priority needs. This entails identifying concrete projects to be undertaken collaboratively, that is, on an interethnic/interreligious basis. The purpose of this process is to achieve reconciliation and restore right relationships. Beyond this effort to advance interpersonal and intergroup reconciliation, Steele is also promoting local institutional development by helping to create new NGOs in Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia dedicated to expanding this work of interreligious reconciliation.

According to Steele, the critical elements in the reconciliation process include an empathic identification with all sufferers and the opportunity to express acceptance of one's own suffering and that of others. Individuals need a chance to tell their stories and know that their pasts are acknowledged. Empathetic listening is essential. But injustices cannot be overlooked or belittled in the process. Central to the reconciliation process is the acknowledgment of the terrible wrongs that have been committed, and an effective grief process that enables one to move beyond victimization to a true spirit of forgiveness. While individual reconciliation is critical, reconciliation must also involve whole communities and the nation.

Elham Atashi of George Mason University took a more pessimistic view of the reconciliation process, reporting that she had just returned from a trip to the Middle East that was intended to convene reconciliation workshops, but that no one was prepared to attend. Faith in dialogue as a process has been seriously undermined by recent events in the Middle East, with many believing that imbalances of power and structural injustices must be addressed before any meaningful dialogue is possible. Approaches to reconciliation can be complex and controversial and Atashi asserted that international approaches often neglect the spiritual make-up and needs of local populations. Foreign approaches can be most helpful by strengthening indigenous processes of reconciliation and forgiveness. She noted that human suffering cannot be reversed and efforts at reconciliation cannot change the past or enable people to forget it. History is about remembering the cruelty of the past and ensuring that it does not reoccur.

In Islam, as explained by Atashi, reconciliation has specific meanings, including mercy, pity, compassion, and forgiveness, and it necessitates prescribed rituals. The process is spiritual and Allah is the ultimate reconciler. People are not able to achieve reconciliation on their own, but they are able to contribute to the process. A person can move on a journey toward forgiveness and restoring the dignity of those on both sides. Faith-based NGOs can work collaboratively with local religious groups to promote reconciliation, respecting local faith traditions and empowering local groups. By scrupulously avoiding any hint of religious superiority, faith-based NGOs can help repair broken relationships using culturally appropriate processes. Local norms, cultures, and religions need to be seen not as problems but as possible solutions to conflicts and as means toward reconciliation.

Building Peace through Development

As explained by Landrum Bolling, many of the faith-based NGOs now engaged in peacebuilding activities came to this through their earlier and continuing involvement with relief and development work. They view peacebuilding as an extension of a continuum. Relief and development work must be continued. In fact, it is through the framework of relief and development that important contributions can be made to peace. This usually happens because those previously in conflict have to work cooperatively to advance their economic well-being.

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While the purpose is to plan for reconstruction, the interethnic character of the process makes a significant contribution to peacebuilding.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC) has helped organize former enemies in Kosovo, including Albanian Muslims, Serb Orthodox, Jews, and Protestants to work together over the past two years to rebuild seven Albanian mosques destroyed in the war. In the Middle East, AJJDC has discovered that when it is possible to overcome the reluctance of Jews and Arabs to sit together to jointly plan development projects, much can be achieved. Such joint efforts build a common language that bridge differences and dispel fears. Interethnic and interfaith relations can often be improved at the community level before improvements occur among elites and politicians. Moreover, interfaith collaboration can be equally powerful when it occurs among the international NGOs that are initiating projects.

The American Jewish World Service (AJWS), as described by its president, Ruth Messenger, supports grassroots development projects in the non-Jewish world. When possible, AJWS undertakes projects cooperatively with other faith-based and secular institutions. For example, AJWS teamed with the Christian organization Mercy Corps to assist Muslims in Turkey following the earthquake there. The overriding purpose of AJWS is to assist local organizations with financial aid and technical assistance in order to advance peace through projects that promote economic and social development. By supporting women in Gaza to obtain micro-credit, AJWS contributes to economic development that is essential to the promotion of peace in the Middle East. Moreover, the Gaza residents who receive the help know it is coming from a Jewish organization. AJWS supports a women's group in Bombay that works on literacy, women's rights, and legal aid while also organizing interreligious and interethnic dialogue. In Senegal, AJWS partners with a local NGO that works with a leading imam to discourage female genital mutilation. This project is one of the very few that bridges the gap between separatist Casamance and the rest of Senegal. An agricultural project in 87 villages in El Salvador brings together ex-combatants from both sides of the earlier civil war. This project also develops zones of peace and provides training in conflict resolution. These projects illustrate the many ways in which AJWS uses support for economic and social development projects to promote peace.

Similarly, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) conceptualizes peacebuilding within the context of its relief and development agenda. Following the genocide in Rwanda, which had devastating effects on all CRS's projects in Rwanda, CRS was forced to rethink its organizational philosophy. CRS decided it was more than a relief and development agency that focused only on poverty reduction. Grounded in Catholic social teaching, CRS priorities are now more focused on the promotion of peace and justice and particularly on addressing the root causes of religious and ethnic conflict. The agency's strategy emphasizes collaboration with local partners, dialogue, peace with justice, and reconciliation. Overall CRS is sponsoring 78 peacebuilding projects in 43 countries, including projects on education, training, interreligious dialogue, development and reconstruction, trauma work, micro-enterprise, citizen diplomacy, and post-conflict reconstruction.

Examples from two countries in which CRS operates illustrate their efforts. Since 1996 CRS has worked in Mindinao in southern Philippines to organize such projects. They have helped establish a bakery that brings Christians and Muslims together as co-workers. For several years CRS has co-sponsored interreligious dialogue in southern Philippines aimed at bishops and ullama. In July 2001, at the Mindinao Peace Institute, 170 religious leaders gathered for training in interreligious interaction. Notably, many of the communities in which CRS has been working have remained peaceful while other communities have suffered interreligious turbulence.

In 14 municipalities in Bosnia CRS has succeeded in developing multi-ethnic working groups to do joint activity planning. While the purpose is to plan for reconstruction, the interethnic character of the process makes a significant contribution to peacebuilding. This in turn lays the groundwork for social reconstruction and eventually the peaceful return of refugees.

As an identifiable Catholic organization, it is not always easy for CRS to serve as a bridge among religious groups. However, CRS attempts to live out diversity and religious tolerance within its institutional life. In the two countries just mentioned, CRS staff and partners reflect the religious diversity found in the contexts in which they work.

CRS peacebuilding initiatives address all levels and stages of a conflict situation. For instance, as a contribution to conflict prevention, CRS also builds networks of local leaders who can sound an alert when conflict is likely to break out in locations where CRS is working.

Peace Education in the U.S.

The workshop stimulated a lively debate on alternative approaches to peace education in the United States by faith-based NGOs. Judith McDaniel of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) presented an activist/advocacy approach, including public demonstrations and civil disobedience, to urge policy changes by the American government. This approach is based on her conviction that some of the responsibility for international conflict resides in U.S. policies and that these policies need to change in order to promote international peace. Other Quakers proposed behind-the-scenes work to bring opposing sides together. For example, one participant proposed that Quakers meet with the National Rifle Association to negotiate over differences in their approaches to the UN conference on small arms proliferation. Others cited the approach of Seeds of Peace in bringing together young people from opposite sides in the Middle East conflict. This program provides opportunities for young people to share their differences and begin to comprehend the suffering of those on both sides. Another participant advocated a pastoral approach of working to overcome differences, as opposed to the more adversarial approach used by AFSC.

Conclusion

Faith-based NGOs are increasingly active and increasingly effective in international peacebuilding. Moreover, their efforts are increasingly appreciated by other international actors in zones of conflict. Faith-based organizations have a special role to play in zones of religious conflict, but their peacebuilding programs do not need to be confined to countering religious conflict.

The peacebuilding agendas of these organizations are diverse and range from high-level mediation to training and peace-through-development at grassroots levels. While a direct approach to peacemaking is often effective, very often peace can be promoted most efficiently by introducing peacebuilding components into relief and development activities.

While the peacebuilding programs of some organizations like the Fellowship of Reconciliation date back almost a century, most programs are relatively new and are often-times experimental. Given the newness of these programs, there is still much to learn. Many organizations are conducting helpful evaluations of their work and the more fundamental research being undertaken by World Vision and others will be particularly valuable in giving guidance for the future.

While a direct approach to peacemaking is often effective, very often peace can be promoted most efficiently by introducing peacebuilding components into relief and development activities.

List of Participating Organizations

Non-governmental Organizations

Agenda for Reconciliation
American Friends Service Committee
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
American Jewish World Service
American Muslim Council
Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America
Catholic Relief Services
Center for Strategic and International Studies
Christian Peacemaker's Team
Colombia Human Rights Committee
Conflict Consultants
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
Fellowship of Reconciliation
Foundation for Interreligious Diplomacy
Friends Committee for National Legislation
Global Peace Services
Institute for Global Engagement
Institute for Human Rights and Responsibility
International Center for Religion and Diplomacy
Joan Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice
Lutheran World Relief
Mennonite Central Committee
Mercy Corps International
Moral Rearmament
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
Nonviolence International
Peace Action Maine
Peace Discovery Initiatives
Prison Fellowship International
Plowshares Institute
Search for Common Ground
Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding
United Methodist Committee on Relief
United Methodist Women's Division

United Religions Initiative
World Conference on Religion and Peace
World Vision

Other Organizations

American University
Eastern Mennonite University
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
George Mason University
Georgetown University
Interdenominational Theological Seminary
Maryknoll
State Department
Union Theological Seminary
United Methodist Church
United States Institute of Peace
University of Kentucky
University of Rhode Island
Washington National Cathedral

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SPECIAL REPORT 76

Of Related Interest

Many other publications from the United States Institute of Peace address issues that relate directly to NGOs or peacebuilding.

Recent Institute reports include:

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