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STRUCTURE: LENSES FOR THE BIG PICTURE

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RECONSIDERING THE AFFECTED POPULATION

In the introduction to this book I referred to a conversation between two Somali friends over how the house of peace should be built in their war-torn homeland. One argued that the head needed to be established in order for the body to function. The other suggested that the foundation of the house had to be laid if the roof was to be held up.

Their argument, in essence, involved opposing theories about how to understand and approach the building of peace within a population. Using a mixed metaphor, one argued that peace is built from the top down. The second suggested that it is constructed from the bottom up. Both assumed certain things about the process and affected population in the conflict. Before arriving at any conclusions about which approach is appropriate—or, as the case is made in this book, about how they are integrated and related—we must first develop an analytical framework for describing the levels of an affected population.

I have found it helpful to think of leadership in the population affected by a conflict in terms of a pyramid (see figure 2). An analytical perspective, such as the one proposed here, will always rely to some degree on broad generalizations that provide a set of lenses for focusing in on a particular concern, or for considering and relating a set of concepts. In this instance, we are using lenses to capture the

overview of how an entire affected population in a setting of internal armed conflict is represented by leaders and other actors, as well as the roles they play in dealing with the situation. The pyramid permits us to lay out that leadership base in three major categories: top level, middle range, and the grassroots.

We can use the pyramid as a way of describing the numbers within a population in simplified terms. The pinnacle, or top-level leadership, represents the fewest people, in some instances perhaps only a handful of key actors. The grassroots base of the pyramid encompasses the largest number of people, those who represent the population at large. On the left-hand side of the pyramid are the types of leaders and the sectors from which they come at each level. On the right-hand side are the conflict transformation activities that the leaders at each level may undertake. Each of these levels deserves further discussion before we look at the broader implications of the pyramidal model for our conceptual framework.

LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

Level 1: Top-Level Leadership

Level 1 comprises the key political and military leaders in the conflict. In an intrastate struggle, these people are the highest representative leaders of the government and opposition movements, or present themselves as such. They are at the apex of the pyramid, the spokespersons for their constituencies and for the concerns that, they argue, generate and will resolve the conflict. It is crucial to recognize that in most instances they represent a few key actors within the broader setting. Certain features are common to this level of leadership.

First, these leaders are highly visible. A great deal of attention is paid to their movements, statements, and positions. They receive a lot of press coverage and air time. In some instances, in this era of CNN worldwide news, these leaders find themselves elevated from virtual obscurity to international prominence and even celebrity status. One could argue that this media dynamic possesses a symbiotic and dialectic nature that is related to the legitimacy and pursuit of top-level leaders' personal and political ambitions.[1] A legitimate

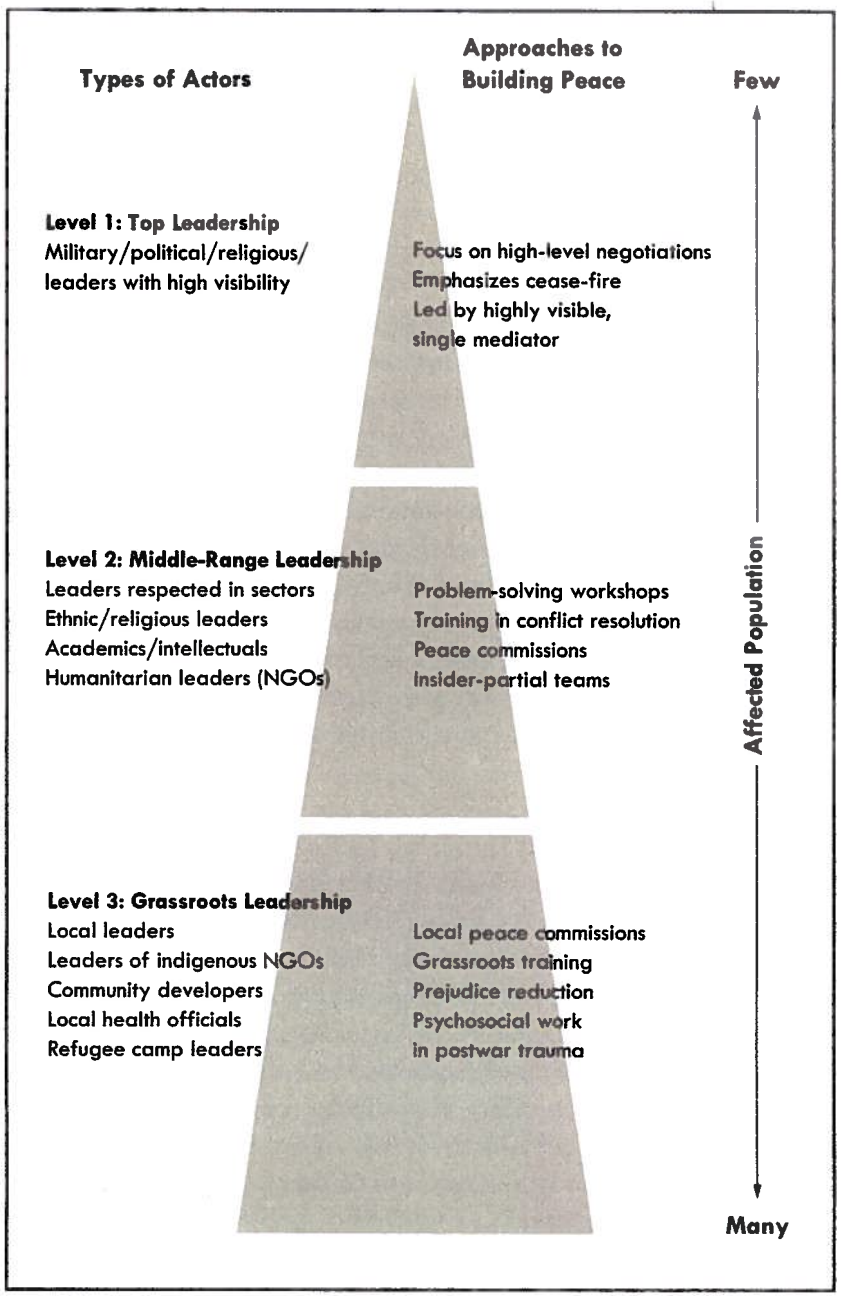

Figure 2. Actors and Approaches to Peacebuilding.

base of representation for a constituency or a set of concerns establishes a leader as such. Publicity and profile are essential for establishing the concerns of that constituency, yet the focus of the publicity is on the leader. Such publicity and profile further consolidate and maintain a leader's base and legitimacy. Visibility and profile thus become essential components descriptive of this level, and they are actively sought by this level, both to represent the concerns of a leader's constituency and to secure his or her own position of influence.

Second, by virtue of their high public profile, these leaders are generally locked into positions taken with regard to the perspectives and issues in conflict. They are under tremendous pressure to maintain a position of strength vis-à-vis their adversaries and their own constituencies. (By "position" we refer here to the almost static viewpoints about solutions that are demanded by each side in order to resolve the conflict.)[2] This, coupled with a high degree of publicity, often constrains the freedom of maneuver of leaders operating at this level. Acceptance of anything less than their publicly stated goals or demands is seen as weakness or loss of face. For the leaders this means that every move represents a high-stakes decision for both their careers and the stated goals of their government or movement.

Finally, these leaders are perceived and characterized as having significant, if not exclusive, power and influence. Certainly, top leaders as individuals do tend to have more influence and power than other individuals. Equally, however, the picture is more complex than initially meets the eye. On the one hand, top leaders benefit from visibility and publicity, and their statements do carry enormous weight, both in the framing of issues and processes and in decision making. On the other hand, in international affairs in general and in protracted settings of conflict in particular, power is primarily perceived in the form of a hierarchy in which top leaders are in a position to make decisions for, and to deliver the support of, their respective constituencies. I say "perceived" because the international community most often seeks out and relates to hierarchical leaders on all sides of an internal conflict as if they had exclusive power, even when, as is often the case, power may be far more diffuse and fractionated. In situations such as Bosnia, Somalia, and Liberia, the

degree to which hierarchical power is operational is decidedly unclear. There are many leaders at different levels of the pyramid who may not fall in line behind the more visible leaders. In these situations, action is often pursued and taken in far more diffuse ways within the society, even though any peace accords that may be negotiated assume hierarchical representation and implementation.

Level 2: Middle-Range Leadership

In the middle range are persons who function in leadership positions within a setting of protracted conflict, but whose position is defined in ways not necessarily connected to or controlled by the authority or structures of the formal government or major opposition movements.

Middle-range leadership can be delineated along several different lines. One approach is to focus on persons who are highly respected as individuals and/or occupy formal positions of leadership in sectors such as education, business, agriculture, or health. A second approach is to consider the primary networks of groups and institutions that may exist within a setting, such as those linking (formally or otherwise) religious groups, academic institutions, or humanitarian organizations. These networks contain individuals who lead or are prominent within a particular institution—for instance, the head of an important indigenous nongovernmental organization, the former dean of a national university, or a well-known priest in a given region—who may be well recognized and respected within that network or geographic region. A third approach is to concentrate on the identity groups in conflict, and to locate middle-range leaders among people who are well known as belonging to a minority ethnic group, or who are from a particular geographic region within the conflict and enjoy the respect of the people of that region but are also known outside the region. Yet another approach is to focus on people from within the conflict setting but whose prestige extends much farther—for example, a well-known poet or Nobel laureate.

Important features of this level characterize the key actors within it. First, middle-level leaders are positioned so that they are likely to know and be known by the top-level leadership, yet they have significant connections to the broader context and the constituency that the top leaders claim to represent. In other words, they are connected to

both the top and the grassroots levels. They have contact with top-level leaders, but are not bound by the political calculations that govern every move and decision made at that level. Similarly, they vicariously know the context and experience of people living at the grassroots level, yet they are not encumbered by the survival demands facing many at this level.

Second, the position of middle-range leaders is not based on political or military power, nor are such leaders necessarily seeking to capture power of that sort. Their status and influence in the setting derives from ongoing relationships—some professional, some institutional, some formal, others matters of friendship and acquaintance. Consequently, middle-range leaders are rarely in the national or international limelight, and their position and work do not depend on visibility and publicity. By virtue of this, they tend to have greater flexibility of movement and action; certainly, they can travel with an inconspicuousness denied to top-level leaders.

Third, middle-range actors tend to have preexisting relationships with counterparts that cut across the lines of conflict within the setting. They may, for example, belong to a professional association or have built a network of relationships that cut across the identity divisions within the society.

In sum, middle-range actors are far more numerous than are top-level leaders and are connected through networks to many influential people across the human and physical geography of the conflict.

Level 3: Grassroots Leadership

The grassroots represents the masses, the base of the society. Life at this level is characterized, particularly in settings of protracted conflict and war, by a survival mentality. In worst-case scenarios, the population at this level is involved in a day-to-day effort to find food, water, shelter, and safety.

The leadership at the grassroots level also operates on a day-to-day basis. Leaders here include people who are involved in local communities, members of indigenous nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) carrying out relief projects for local populations, health officials, and refugee camp leaders. These people understand intimately the fear and suffering with which much of the population

must live; they also have an expert knowledge of local politics and know on a face-to-face basis the local leaders of the government and its adversaries.

In many instances, the local level is a microcosm of the bigger picture. The lines of identity in the conflict often are drawn right through local communities, splitting them into hostile groups. Unlike many actors at the higher levels of the pyramid, however, grassroots leaders witness firsthand the deep-rooted hatred and animosity on a daily basis.

Before we turn our attention to the peacebuilding approaches associated with each level, two broad observations should be made about the pyramid population. First, while many of the fundamental conditions that generate conflict are experienced at the grassroots level—for example, social and economic insecurity, political and cultural discrimination, and human rights violations—the lines of group identity in contemporary conflicts are more often drawn vertically than horizontally within the pyramid. From a descriptive standpoint, in most armed conflicts today, identity forms around ethnicity, religion, or regional geography rather than class, creating group divisions that cut down through the pyramid rather than pitting one level against another. Correspondingly, leaders within each level have connections to their "own people" up and down the pyramid and, at the same time, have counterparts within their own level who are perceived as enemies.

Second, there are two important inverse relationships in the conflict setting. On the one hand, a higher position in the pyramid confers on an individual greater access to information about the bigger picture and greater capacity to make decisions that affect the entire population, but it also means that the individual is less affected by the day-to-day consequences of those decisions. On the other hand, a lower position increases the likelihood that an individual will directly experience the consequences of decision making, but reduces the ability to see the broader picture and limits access to decision-making power. These two inverse relationships pose key dilemmas in the design and implementation of peace processes, to which we now turn our attention.

APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING

Level 1: Top-Level Approaches

On the right-hand side of the pyramid are various features of, and approaches to, peacebuilding. At the top level we find what we might call the "top-down" approach to peacebuilding. This approach has the following characteristics.

First, the people who emerge as peacemakers, often seen as intermediaries or mediators, are eminent figures who themselves possess a public profile. They are often backed by a supporting government or international organization such as the United Nations, which lies outside the relationships embroiled in the internal conflict. More often than not, actors at this level operate as single personalities.

Second, the goal is to achieve a negotiated settlement between the principal high-level leaders in the conflict. These peacemakers tend to operate as third parties who shuttle between the protagonists. What transpires is a process of high-level negotiations in which top-level leaders are identified and brought to the bargaining table. Getting to the table and setting the agenda for negotiations become guiding metaphors of the peacemaker's work.

By virtue of the players involved, both the intermediaries and the negotiations are typically subjected to close media scrutiny. Yet, a critical aspect of this work is the need to create sufficient trust and flexibility among the protagonists to permit new options to emerge and compromise to take place. This poses a serious dilemma for a negotiation process conducted in a highly visible environment, in which the lead negotiators must maintain publicly articulated goals and demands in order to not be seen as weak yet move toward each other at the table.

Third, the peacebuilding approach at this level is often focused on achieving a cease-fire or a cessation of hostilities as a first step that will lead to subsequent steps involving broader political and substantive negotiations, which in turn will culminate in an agreement creating the mechanisms for a political transition from war to peace.

A number of operative assumptions undergird peacebuilding activity at the top level. It is assumed, for example, that the key to achieving peace lies with identifying the representative leaders and getting them to agree. This presumes that (1) representative leaders *can* be identified; (2) they *will* articulate and advocate, from the perspective of those they represent, the concerns giving rise to the conflict; and (3) they *possess* the power, or at least the influence, to deliver the support of their respective communities for the implementation of any agreements reached. In other words, the model builds on the assumption of a hierarchical, as well as a monolithic, power structure within the setting.

Moreover, the framework is based on a top-down, or what might more aptly be called a "trickle-down," approach to peace. In essence, it is believed that the accomplishments at the highest level will translate to, and move down through, the rest of the population. According to this model, the greatest potential and the primary responsibility for achieving peace resides with the representative leaders of the parties to the conflict. If these leaders can agree, that sets the stage, the framework, and the environment for delivering the rest of society in the implementation of the agreement that will end the war.

Finally, the top-level approach makes some concrete assumptions about the order and time frame for peace. A certain pattern for a phased approach has emerged that can be detected from the recent peace processes in Ethiopia, El Salvador, and Cambodia. It first involves efforts aimed at achieving a cease-fire agreement with military leaders. Next, a process of "national" transition is initiated involving the political leadership in creating a framework that will lead to democratic elections. "Peace" in the early stages hinges on achieving a cease-fire, and in the later stages on broadening and including more sectors of the society. This assumes a step-by-step, issue-oriented, and short-term achievement process engaged in by top-level leaders. Perhaps the most critical assumption, however, is that by and large the other levels of the population wait for the accord to be reached and only then are engaged in its implementation. In other words, it is assumed that the accord will have to be relevant to and capable of practical implementation at the local level, even though in most instances the accord was reached under enormous political pressure and involved compromises on all sides. As

we shall see, this scenario contrasts sharply with the kind of peace process envisaged under a more comprehensive framework, which assumes an interdependence of levels that involve multiple tiers of leadership and participation within the affected population and that integrate simultaneous but pace-differentiated activities.

Level 2: Middle-Range Approaches

The middle range offers what might be called a "middle-out" approach to peacebuilding. It is based on the idea that the middle range contains a set of leaders with a determinant *location* in the conflict who, if integrated properly, might provide the key to creating an *infrastructure* for achieving and sustaining peace. To my knowledge, a theory or literature of middle-range peacebuilding as such has not yet been developed. We do, however, have a number of parallel examples to draw upon of middle-range approaches to peace. These fit into three categories: problem-solving workshops, conflict resolution training, and the development of peace commissions.

Problem-solving workshops. Perhaps the most developed activity theoretically and the most thoroughly evaluated for effectiveness and impact (given that few nontraditional peace processes have received enough attention to be formally evaluated) have been problem-solving workshops.[3] These workshops, at times referred to as "interactive problem-solving"[4] or "third-party consultation,"[5] provide a venue for persons who unofficially represent the parties to a conflict to interact in a process of "collaborative analysis" of the problems that separate them.[6] As Christopher Mitchell has summarized, the approach involves

> informal, week-long meetings of the representatives of parties in protracted, deep-rooted, and frequently violent conflict in an informal, often academic, setting that permits the re-analysis of their conflict as a shared problem and the generation of some alternative courses of action to continued coercion, together with new options for a generally acceptable and self-sustaining resolution.[7]

The problem-solving approach has a number of important features that are characteristic of middle-range peacebuilding. First, participants are typically invited because of their knowledge of the conflict and their proximity to key decision makers, but top-level actors are not invited. Mitchell has referred to such participants as opinion leaders—those who are in a position to influence opinion. The workshop is not an exercise aimed at emulating or replacing formal negotiations. It is an exercise aimed at *broadening* participation in the process, as well as the perceptions of the participants, and *deepening* their analysis of the problem and their innovation in seeking solutions.

Second, the workshop is designed to be informal and off the record, which creates an environment for adversaries to interact in ways that their home settings, and certainly public events, would not permit. An environment is established that enables direct interaction with adversaries and encourages the development of relationships, as well as flexibility in looking at the parties' shared problems and possible solutions. The workshop provides a politically safe space for floating and testing ideas, which may or may not prove useful back in real-life settings.

Finally, the third-party component in the workshop provides multiple services. Among its key functions are the convening of the parties, facilitating the meeting, and providing expertise on the analysis of conflict and processes of conflict resolution. The third-party team seeks to provide participants an opportunity for—and an example of—a more effective mode of interaction, and to permit them to look at the conflict through analytical rather than only coercive lenses. It is worth noting that recent peace processes that have captured public attention have featured, behind the scenes, significant and concerted problem-solving efforts that provided support to the negotiators and fed new ideas into the bargaining process. This was the case, for example, with the PLO-Israeli accord signed in 1993, developments in Northern Ireland in the mid-1990s, and the accord in Guatemala signed in 1996.

Conflict resolution training. Training approaches differ from problem-solving workshops in several respects. Training, in the conflict resolution field, generally has two aims: raising awareness—that is, educating people about conflict—and imparting skills for dealing with conflict.[8] In terms of education, training programs are developed to provide participants with an understanding of how conflict

operates, the general patterns and dynamics it follows, and useful concepts for dealing with it in more constructive ways. In terms of developing skills, training has the more concrete goal of teaching people specific techniques and approaches for dealing with conflict, often in the form of analytical, communication, negotiation, or mediation skills.

In contrast to the problem-solving workshop, the focus of training is internally rather than externally oriented. For the most part its purpose is to develop the participants' skills, not to deepen their analysis of a given conflictive situation. Because of the focus on processes and skills, training faces the challenge of how best to orient and adapt its effort in a wide variety of contexts and cultures, while still remaining appropriate and helpful.[9]

A problem-solving workshop constitutes a very carefully constructed process of convening and of selecting participants to provide a balance within the proposed format. Middle-range actors are the most appropriate participants for problem-solving workshops, both because they are knowledgeable about the conflict and because they have access to the top policymakers. Training, while perhaps most strategically useful at the middle level, can in fact be appropriately employed at any level or across levels of leadership within a society. In some instances, a training program may be open to participation by any interested parties; in others, it may target or be requested by a particular group; and in yet other instances, trainers may strategically convene a set of participants from within a setting of conflict.

Some illustrations of practical applications will highlight the role middle-range training has played in peace strategies. In the South African context, for example, the Centre for Conflict Resolution (formerly the Centre for Intergroup Studies) has undertaken an extensive training program directed at providing a conceptual framework and skills for dealing with conflict in the postapartheid "New South Africa." In some instances, the organization has trained leaders of political movements such as the African National Congress; in others, it has targeted sectoral actors such as religious and civic leaders; and in a third approach, it has provided training that brought together former antagonists, such as liberation movement leaders and policemen.[10]

Paula Gutlove and other members of the Harvard-based Balkans Peace Project undertook a program of training middle-level leaders across the former Yugoslavia.[11] Here the threefold goal was to create for participants an opportunity to reflect on the experience of the conflict; to deal with the psychological dimensions inherent in their experience of the conflict; and to develop skills for dealing with conflict in alternative ways.

A third example is the vast array of training approaches and events that have emerged in Northern Ireland.[12] In these instances, the training has not only provided skills but also endeavored to identify Irish approaches and experiments for dealing innovatively with the sharp sectarian divisions.

Yet another example is the efforts by the All Africa Conference of Churches, principally in collaboration with the Nairobi Peace Initiative, to combine the roles of convenor and trainer.[13] Middle-range leaders from church communities who found themselves on different sides of conflicts in countries such as Mozambique and Angola were brought together to share their perceptions and experiences of the conflict, analyze their own roles in it, and develop approaches for encouraging and supporting reconciliation in their context.[14]

What these approaches suggest is that although training is generally thought of as the dissemination of knowledge and imparting of skills, it becomes a strategic tool as it promotes the development of peacebuilding capacities within the middle-range leadership. This potential is further enhanced when training, serving a convening function, brings together people from the same level of society but on different sides of the conflict.

Peace commissions. The third category of middle-range peacebuilding activity involves the formation of peace commissions within conflict settings. These commissions have been as varied in form and application as their settings. Two situations will illustrate the point: Nicaragua in the late 1980s, and South Africa in the early 1990s.

Throughout the 1980s, multiple internal wars raged in Central America. In an innovative approach that built upon the efforts of the earlier Contadora peace process, the Central American peace accord, which was signed in Esquipulas, Guatemala, by the five countries in the region, provided mechanisms that dealt with the

internal situations of each country but did so simultaneously, through a coordinated plan.[15] Among the provisions of the plan was a process whereby each country would establish a national peace commission made up of four prominent individuals representing different sides of the conflict. The Nicaraguan government moved quickly, not only to set up its national commission but also to devise a more extensive internal structure that included region-specific commissions and an extensive network of local commissions.[16]

The most extensive of the regional efforts within the country was the establishment of a conciliation commission to deal with the East Coast of Nicaragua. The commission was established to prepare and then facilitate the negotiation and conciliation efforts between Yatama (the umbrella organization of the East Coast indigenous resistance) and the Sandinista government. The conciliation commission was composed of the top leadership of two Nicaraguan religious networks: the Moravian church, which had its roots in the East Coast; and the Evangelical Committee for Aid and Development (CEPAD), an ecumenical arm of the Protestant churches that was based in Managua.[17]

The model for this conciliation effort was that of an insider-partial mediation effort.[18] (An insider-partial approach involves intermediaries from within the conflict setting who as individuals enjoy the trust and confidence of one side in the conflict but who as a team provide balance and equity in their mediating work.) As a member of the conciliation team, I experienced how "partiality" is not always a detriment to intermediary work, and can in fact be a significant resource. The insider-partial approach we saw in operation in the Sandinista-Yatama conflict involved "insider" intermediaries such as Andy Shogreen, who was from a Creole-Miskito family, had been superintendent of the Moravian Church during the war in the 1980s, and was a close childhood friend of Brooklyn Rivera, the key Miskito leader of Yatama. Gustavo Parajon, by contrast, was from Managua and had been appointed by President Daniel Ortega as the "notable citizen" on the national conciliation commission. The middle-range religious leaders whom the conciliation commission drew on were able to use their personal and institutional networks within the context to create a successful response

to the conciliation needs of the regional aspects of the overall national conflict.

A parallel example can be drawn from the National Peace Accord structure that emerged in postapartheid South Africa. In this instance, the rubric of formal negotiations between top-level leaders set in motion a process of transition and sociopolitical transformation that specifically contemplated numerous levels of activity across society. The accord created at least seven major levels of activity, running from a national peace committee through to regional and local committees.[19] It contemplated, for example, jointly operated communication centers to monitor and where possible preempt community violence that was threatening to undermine the peace process.[20] Such an effort was a move toward identifying key people in critical locations who, working through a network, would begin to build an infrastructure capable of sustaining the general progression toward peace. Central to the overall functioning of the peace process was the development of institutional capacities through the training of a broad array of individuals to respond to the volatile period of transition.

What the above approaches suggest is that the middle range holds the potential for helping to establish a relationship- and skill-based infrastructure for sustaining the peacebuilding process. A middle-out approach builds on the idea that middle-range leaders (who are often the heads of, or closely connected to, extensive networks that cut across the lines of conflict) can be cultivated to play an instrumental role in working through the conflicts. Middle-range peacebuilding activities come in varied forms, from efforts directed at changing perceptions and floating new ideas among actors proximate to the policymaking process, to training in conflict resolution skills, to the establishment of teams, networks, and institutions that can play an active conciliation role within the setting.

Level 3: Grassroots Approaches

Grassroots approaches face different challenges from those confronting the top and middle-range levels. First, at this level are massive numbers of people. At best, strategies can be implemented to touch the leadership working at local and community levels, but more

often than not these strategies represent points of contact with the masses rather than a comprehensive program for reaching them. Second, many of the people at this level are in a survival mode in which meeting the basic human needs of food, shelter, and safety is a daily struggle. Although unresolved human conflict is a central cause of their suffering, efforts directed at peace and conflict resolution can easily be seen as an unaffordable luxury. Nonetheless, important ideas and practical efforts do emerge at this level. We will consider here an outline of a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding and several concrete examples of programs targeted at the grassroots-level population.

Bottom-up approach. One could argue that virtually all of the recent transitions toward peace—such as those in El Salvador and Ethiopia, as well as the earlier one in the Philippines—were driven largely by the pressure for change that was bubbling up from the grassroots.[21] In fact, at times it seems that exhaustion, rather than innovative planned transformation, is chiefly responsible for ending conflicts.

A concrete case of a bottom-up approach has been clearly delineated in the Somali context. First articulated by the Somali members of the Ergada—a forum of Somali intellectuals for peace created in 1990—the bottom-up perspective was later rearticulated in more detail by international and Somali resource groups convened by the Life and Peace Institute of Uppsala, Sweden, to advise the United Nations in its reconciliation work in Somalia between 1991 and 1993.[22]

The approach was rooted in an assessment of three important features of the situation in Somalia. First, since the fall of President Siad Barre in 1991, the formal, political infrastructure of the country had for all practical purposes disintegrated. Second, in the post-Barre years Somalis had come to rely directly on clan and subclan structures for security and subsistence. Third, Somalis have a rich history of traditional mechanisms for dealing with interclan disputes.

Given this background, efforts to identify national leaders or convene peace conferences relying on common diplomatic devices, such as bringing together key militia leaders, would create a superficial structure unable to sustain itself. Instead, the most promising approach would be to develop a process that builds on the traditions of the Somali people.

In brief, the bottom-up approach involved a process of first achieving discussions and agreements to end the fighting at local peace conferences, by bringing together contiguous and interdependent subclans, guided by the elders of each subclan. These conferences not only dealt with issues of immediate concern at local levels, but also served to place responsibility for interclan fighting on the shoulders of local leaders and helped to identify the persons who were considered to be rightful representatives of those clans' concerns. Having achieved this initial agreement, it was then possible to repeat the same process at a higher level with a broader set of clans. Characteristic of these processes were the reliance on elders; lengthy oral deliberations (often lasting months); the creation of a forum or assembly of elders (known in some parts of the region as the *guurti*); and careful negotiation over access to resources and payments for deaths that would reestablish a balance among the clans.

These are basic parameters of the process as it was implemented in Somaliland, the northwestern part of the country, which announced its secession in 1991.[23] The process was initiated with numerous local peace conferences throughout the region and culminated in the Grand Borama Peace Conference, which brought together more than five hundred elders. The Grand Conference lasted for more than six months and succeeded in establishing a framework for peace, the basic structure of which helped to significantly diminish the level of fighting and violence in Somaliland as compared to other parts of Somalia, particularly Mogadishu.

Programmatic peace efforts. A number of other important efforts aimed at promoting peacebuilding at the grassroots level suggest a broader scope of possibilities. These efforts can be divided chronologically according to whether they were launched before or after a formal peace structure had been achieved in a conflict situation.

Two examples of peacebuilding efforts targeted at the grassroots level *before* formal peace and electoral structures were established took place in Mozambique, where initiatives emerged from both the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) and the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF). The CCM-initiated program,

"Preparing People for Peace," was conceived as a way to open up and deal with conflict and peace issues in the Mozambique setting, with a specific focus on the provincial and district levels.[24]

The CCM program began with a national seminar in summer 1991 that brought together church representatives from all of the provinces; these representatives were then given the responsibility for implementing seminars at local levels. An integrated approach was taken to the content of the seminar discussions, which ranged from topics such as religious perspectives on war and peace, to family and church involvement in conflict resolution, to issues of youth, displaced persons and their return, land reform, public health, human rights, and the impact of violence and war on children. On average, each seminar involved between thirty and fifty participants, both pastors and laypersons, and lasted for two weeks. Over the course of sixteen months (toward the end of which the national peace accord was signed), more than seven hundred people participated in the seminars, several of which were held in refugee camps in neighboring Zimbabwe.

The second example from Mozambique was the UNICEF project, "Circus of Peace."[25] The aim in this case was to deal innovatively with the conflict, violence, and militarization facing local communities, especially their youth. Like a circus, the project was organized as a traveling show that wove drama and the arts into its explorations of the nature and challenges of war and conflict and the possibilities of reconciliation, including the skills of resolving conflict. The show not only captivated audiences but also served as a way to publicly grieve over the losses the country had suffered, to address concerns of the people, and to set the stage for changes and movement toward peace.

A third example from Africa is the ongoing efforts of the Christian Health Association of Liberia, which has integrated conflict resolution approaches within broader community and public health programs for dealing with postwar trauma.[26] Conflict resolution components have included training in dealing with community conflict and violence, and in reducing prejudice and enhancing community decision making. The workshops have been conducted in locations around the country as part of the health-delivery system,

and have drawn on resource teams made up of conflict resolution trainers, public health officials, and psychiatrists or counselors.

What stands out in all three of these examples is the effort to provide an opportunity for grassroots leaders and others to work at the community or village level on issues of peace and conflict resolution. Programs such as these frequently work through existing networks, such as churches or health associations. These grassroots-level programs are also characterized by their attempts to deal with the enormous trauma that the war has produced, especially among the youth. War at this level is experienced with great immediacy, both in terms of violence and trauma endured and insofar as people live in close proximity and continued interdependency with those who were once, and may still be, perceived as enemies. This is not a matter of political accommodation at the highest level; rather, it involves interdependent relationships in the everyday lives of considerable numbers of people. From personal experience I can attest to the fact that the process of advancing political negotiation at polished tables in elite hotels, while very difficult and complex in its own right, is both a more formal and a more superficial process than the experience of reconciliation in which former enemies are brought together at the village level.

FROM ISSUES TO SYSTEMS

Having used one set of lenses to focus on the actors and appropriate peacebuilding activities to be found at the different levels in a population affected by conflict, we can now employ a second set of lenses to focus on the structural component of an analytical framework for conflict transformation. As we do so, we need to take into consideration both the immediate, "micro-issues" in the conflict and the broader, more systemic concerns. The work of peace researcher and theorist Maire Dugan is of help to us in this regard.[27] Dugan has developed what she calls a "nested paradigm" as a mechanism for considering both the narrower and the broader aspects of conflict resolution and peacebuilding (see figure 3).

This paradigm was developed, Dugan explains, in an effort to explain how the approach of a conflict resolution practitioner to a

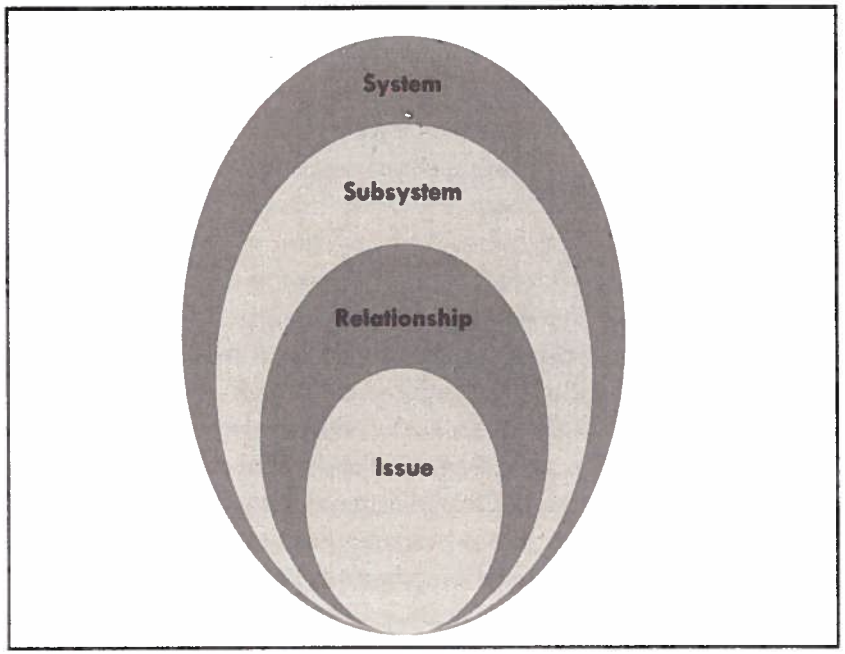

Figure 3. The Nested Paradigm of Conflict Foci.
Source: Maire Dugan, "A Nested Theory of Conflict," *Women in Leadership* 1, no. 1 (summer 1996).

given situation differs from that of a peace researcher. She took, as a practical example, a violent conflict that had emerged in a local school between African American and white gangs of young boys. She speculated that a conflict resolution practitioner, such as a mediator, would see this as an issue in dispute, a case to be explored and resolved between the boys who had been fighting. The answer to the problem, then, would be to resolve the issue that sparked the fight.

Taking it one step further, she suggested that in some instances, depending on the model of practice used, the mediator might see this as not only a particular issue to be resolved but also a relationship that needed to be addressed. In this case, the issue would be embedded within a relationship that needed to be reconciled. Here, the practitioner might move to incorporate, for example, prejudice-reduction or bias-awareness work with the boys in order to increase

their understanding of one another and promote reconciliation in a deeper sense. The problem in this instance would be defined as a broken relationship that needed to be restored as part of the solution.

A peace researcher, on the other hand, might see the school fight in the context of a society built on racial inequality and economic inequity. In other words, the boys' struggle might be seen as symptomatic of broader societal structures and systems. The problem might thus be defined as racism. The solution, according to the peace researcher, would be to change society and the social structures that create and perpetuate racism.

In the conflict resolution approach, the practitioner's efforts would be likely to help defuse the immediate face-to-face tensions, and in some cases would also repair the broken relationships. This approach, however, would do little to redress the inequities in the broader system that were at the root of the racial tensions. The peace research approach, on the other hand, would move to label the problem as racism, which would help focus attention on the deeper structural and systemic concerns. But this prescription would offer few handles for dealing with the immediate crisis and the problems of relationship.

Dugan, therefore, adds a third, intermediate level—the subsystem. Here the focus would be on the immediate system within which the boys are located, in this case the school. At this level, a peacebuilding strategy could be designed that would address both the systemic concerns and the problematic issues and relationships. It might involve the development of a schoolwide program that would address the social issue of racism in the context of the relationships in that subsystem. The school, for example, might introduce into its curriculum a required course on diversity and race relations or might host a weeklong training program on prejudice reduction for students and teachers. By such means, the school could bring to the surface and address systemic racism while engaging in concrete programmatic activity that would deal with the immediate issue of gang violence and the need to reconcile the two groups of boys. The subsystem, in other words, is a middle-range *locus* of activity that connects the other levels in the system.

There is an obvious parallel between this systems-level analysis and the foregoing analysis of levels, which related to the actors and

peacebuilding approaches found at different levels of a population affected by internal armed conflict. In both frameworks, the middle level provided the strategic link to the other levels.

We can see the value of the nested paradigm by applying it to a specific area of concern within a situation of protracted conflict: the challenge of dealing with roving gangs of armed youth in the streets of Mogadishu, a problem that perplexed people both within and outside Somalia. At the "system" level, this was of course a matter of disarmament and demobilization. An immediate response at the "issue" level might have been to offer the youth money for guns. Closer analysis, however, would reveal such a response to be superficial, one that might in fact exacerbate the situation if the availability of weapons and the socioeconomic reasons that the youth were armed were to go unaddressed.

This is precisely the perspective reached by initial research into the phenomenon of armed gangs in Mogadishu.[28] It was discovered that people there, youth included, were carrying guns for a variety of reasons. Some did so in support of the political objectives of a particular movement. Many people carried weapons to protect themselves and their families. For others, the gun was much more analogous to a job than to a commodity or possession. It represented employment in the form of providing protection—for aid workers or for the delivery of food, for example—or the securing by force of scarce resources and the reselling of the same. Further, at a social-psychological level the gun helped establish and maintain social status—again, not unlike a prestigious job. When gun-toting was seen in this broader systemic context, the offering of money for guns was shown to be comparable to offering cash for a person's job.

The "system" and "issue" perspectives thus raised legitimate but different questions. On the one hand, how should one address the deeper and longer-term issues of limiting the availability of weapons and creating increased security and stability in the setting? On the other hand, how should one meet the immediate challenge of providing an alternative that is roughly equivalent in socioeconomic terms to the status and benefits provided by the gun? Might a subsystem, relationship approach provide a bridge that would link the broader structural concerns and the immediate local needs?

Such an approach was proposed through the Ergada and Life and Peace Institute resource groups. The proposal—aspects of which were explored by the United Nations in Somalia[29]—suggested the creation of a pilot training center. Youth from the gangs in Mogadishu, in exchange for their weapons, would be offered training in various vocations over the course of a year. At the end of the year they would receive the tools necessary for their trade and contracts for employment for a second year. In socioeconomic terms, the plan offered an employment package roughly similar to what the gun could provide. Further, the training context would be structured so as to also provide participants an opportunity to deal with the trauma experienced in the war, interact in a structured environment with their counterparts from other clan militia, and learn basic literacy (the educational system had been totally disrupted by the conflict). In short, the process would create an opportunity for social and economic transformation.

The nested paradigm underscores the need to look consistently at the broader context of systemic issues. It suggests, however, that at the subsystem level we can experiment with various actions that promise to connect "systemic" and immediate "issue" concerns.

At the macro-systemic level, however, we need to create innovative projects that take seriously the major challenges that go beyond the scope of any one internal armed conflict. It seems to me that these should address the production and availability of weapons, the difficulty of creating functional arms embargoes, and the reliance on militarization to provide security. In meeting these challenges, the idea of experimenting in the middle range, or subsystem, offers some guidance and inspiration.

For example, we need to move toward regional arms-transfer control mechanisms, through which countries afflicted by internal conflicts address the issue of arms control within their region. Additionally, disarmament resource groups could be created, made up of specialists from a variety of perspectives, which would generate specific proposals for arms control or demobilization projects in a given region. In this regard one example is the Disarmament Resource Group that was created in 1993 for agencies and groups working in the Horn of Africa. Its mandate is to provide expertise, research,

ideas, and support to disarmament, weapons control, and demobilization issues in the region. Its membership—drawn from the United Nations, NGOs, and academia—includes specialists in arms control, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and humanitarian relief and development.[30] The group has set a research agenda, has performed consultancy and evaluation work for operational agencies, and is engaged in regional arms control advocacy.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined a number of key concepts in the structural side of establishing an overall framework for peacebuilding. We have suggested the need for two basic sets of lenses. One set is used for looking at the overall situation in terms of the levels of actors concerned with peacebuilding in the affected population and the kinds of resources and activities available at each level. The second set provides a means for looking at both the immediate issues in the conflict and the broader systemic concerns. These conceptual approaches have important features in common.

First, both approaches suggest that an integrative, comprehensive analytical framework is not merely instructive but is imperative to meet the needs of peacebuilding today. Constructing a peace process in deeply divided societies and situations of internal armed conflict requires an operative frame of reference that takes into consideration the *legitimacy*, *uniqueness*, and *interdependency* of the needs and resources of the grassroots, middle range, and top level. The same is true when dealing with specific issues and broader systemic concerns in a conflict. More specifically, an integrative, comprehensive approach points toward the functional need for *recognition, inclusion,* and *coordination* across all levels and activities.

Second, in both of these conceptual approaches, the level with the greatest potential for establishing an *infrastructure* that can sustain the peacebuilding process over the long term appears to be the middle range. The very nature of contemporary, internal, protracted conflicts suggests the need for theories and approaches keyed to the middle range. Although such approaches are informed by deeper systemic analysis, they also provide practical initiatives for addressing

immediate issues, and are able to draw on valuable human resources, tap into and take maximum benefit from institutional, cultural, and informal networks that cut across the lines of conflict, and connect the levels of peace activity within the population. These qualities give middle-range actors and subsystem and relationship foci the greatest potential to serve as sources of practical, immediate action *and* to sustain long-term transformation in the setting.