EVANGELISCHE AKADEMIE LOCCUM

In War as in Peace:

Youth Violence – A Challenge for International Co-operation

International Conference
14 – 16 November 2007

In co-operation with
Institute for Development and Peace (INEF), Faculty of Social Sciences
at the University Duisburg-Essen and the sector project education and conflicttransformation
(gtz, Eschborn); sponsored by SDC-Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Strategies For Adressing Youth In The Immediate Post-War Period

Siobhan McEvoy-Levy
Butler University, Indianapolis

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Abstract:
This paper addresses the following questions: what different dimensions of the post-accord environment do youth strategies need to consider, accommodate, or address? What are the specific challenges that youth pose, and how are these challenges related to other actors and factors? What are the lessons learned about the entry points, target groups, levels and kinds of intervention, both short and long-term, that can lead to the most effective responses to youth violence? How do military-civilian "grey areas" during war to peace transitions impact youth-centered interventions? Drawing evidence from a number of different cases worldwide, the paper argues that youth strategies need to address youth needs in a comprehensive way. Specifically, youth strategies need to address young people's physical injuries and trauma, their militarized identities, their political exclusion and apathy, their economic exclusion and (perceptions of) social marginality, and loss of family and education. In post-war situations, youth are involved in significant ways in new forms of violence and in recast 'para-political' violence, in developing new myths and conflict narratives, and in peace building work, boundary-crossing, and social networking that shape the post-war political landscape. Policies toward youth need to accommodate these different needs, roles and social positions of youth. The paper examines current findings on 'best practice' and suggests some policy gaps and opportunities. An initial step in defining positive interventions is to have as clear and detailed a picture as possible of the unique strands and dimensions of youth experiences and their impacts in a particular conflict. However, a number of problems of clarity complicate analysis and interventions and these "grey areas" are also examined.

Strategies for addressing youth in the immediate post-accord period.

This paper addresses the following questions: what different dimensions of the post-accord environment do youth strategies need to consider, accommodate, or address? What are the specific challenges that youth pose, and how are these challenges related to other actors and factors? What are the lessons learned about the entry points, target groups, levels and kinds of intervention, both short and long-term, that can lead to the most effective responses to youth violence? How do military-civilian "grey areas" during war to peace transitions impact youth-centered interventions? The paper draws on and expands previously published work by this author[1], and recent research by others, in order to highlight the different parts of the youth challenge. It attempts to identify the broad lessons learned for peace building from studies of children and youth in a number of different war-zones and post-war situations, rather than those specific lessons derived from one in-depth case study. Therefore, a caveat about the dangers of over-generalization is necessary. Each context is different and an initial step in defining positive interventions is to have as clear and detailed a picture as possible of the unique strands and dimensions of youth experiences and their impacts in a particular conflict.

[1] In particular, it draws on my fourth chapter in the co-authored volume, Borer, Darby and McEvoy-Levy. Peacebuilding After Peace Accords 2006.

Nevertheless, as argued in the first part of the paper, in general, youth strategies need to address young people's physical injuries and trauma, their militarized identities, their political exclusion and apathy, their economic exclusion and (perceptions of) social marginality, and loss of family and education. In post-war situations, youth are involved in significant ways in new forms of violence and in recast 'para-political' violence, in developing new myths and conflict narratives, and in peace building work, boundary-crossing, and social networking that shape, and are, at the same time, constrained by family and community. Policies toward youth need to accommodate these different needs, roles and social positions of youth. However, a number of problems of clarity complicate interventions and these "grey areas" are examined in the second part of the paper. Finally, the third section of the paper analyzes some of the main policy lessons learned about youth in relation to: demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR), economic development, families and gender, trauma and transitional justice, education, political participation and peace work, and security and policing reform.

1. Youth experiences and challenges in post-accord settings

The peace building challenge in post-accord or post-war periods has been well captured by Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, who see it as entailing 'the "negative" task of preventing a relapse into overt violence', as well as 'the "positive" tasks of aiding national recovery and expediting the eventual removal of underlying causes of internal war.'[2] Post accord peacebuilding entails parallel and overlapping challenges, and synergies and tensions between different tasks, which greatly complicates the endeavour. The first part of this paper examines how young people experience a post-war environment and consequently the challenges youth pose for peacebuilding. I argue that addressing the roles of youth in relation to the negative tasks (violence prevention) of peace building without addressing their roles in relation to the positive tasks (national recovery and reconciliation) will be counter-productive. Moreover, it will also be inadequate to pay attention only to the very important physical health and survival needs of post-war youth, without also addressing the social meanings of war and of the post-war period for youth, as well as the psychological legacy of war more broadly in society. Pertinent to this discussion are eleven dimensions of the post-war youth experience that seem to be shared across several cases. These dimensions – injury and trauma, militarized identities, economic and political exclusion, post-war violence, loss of family and education, social networking and peacebuilding - are examined below along with the challenges and opportunities they pose for peace building.

Trauma and Physical Injuries

Physical injuries, ongoing disabilities, and diseases are one of the most evident, though not adequately addressed, legacies of war. War-related trauma is even more widespread in most post-war environments. As the transition process unfolds, practical struggles for survival may entail new traumas and health problems, due to inadequate access to health care. If they have been combatants, and/or were displaced, youth pose a complex rehabilitation and reintegration challenge, differing by gender and other factors. The short-term challenge is to address ex-combatant's trauma and physical injuries during the reintegration phase of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration. But even if physical damage can be repaired for those most

[2] Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse 1999, p. 188.

affected, long-term there is a need to address the wider psychological legacy of war, including the 'intergenerational transmission of trauma'[3], a process within which youth are central actors, as well as exposed subjects.

Militarized identities

Where children and youth have experienced armed power, political and economic promises in recruitment, and positive self-concepts and identity in armed conflict, the transition to 'peace' is very difficult[4] and inter-generational conflict is likely.[5] Therefore, there is a need to address the changing identities and social roles of youth, and to address the personal and social meaning and, sometimes, economic gain provided by involvement in armed groups. However, militarized identities are not only shaped by local sources. Global popular culture and international political conflict provide additional role-models for militarized youth (as the adoption of names such as Tupac, Rambo, and 'Scudi Ya Bongo' illustrate[6]). And, as noted above, militarization, like trauma, may affect many more youth than those youth involved in actual fighting.

Political Exclusion or Apathy and (perceptions of) Social Marginality

Despite the promises of political change inherent in a transition out of war, dominant among youth in post-war situations are feelings of political exclusion and apathy. In fact, in some cases, 'peace' does entail a loss of power for youth. Even if they have been actively involved in political activism and political violence before a settlement (as they were in South Africa), they now become marginal, as political power flows to adult leadership, elders, or external international power elites. In other cases, politics and politicians are blamed for war, and hopelessness, political apathy and brain drain result, as has been noted in Bosnia.[7] Like experience of post-conflict violence, political exclusion impacts young people's attitudes towards a peace agreement or transition process.[8] It is necessary to create mechanisms for the meaningful political inclusion and participation of youth in transition processes (political and social), to address alienation and despair, to help transform militarized identities and to promote a culture of civic engagement and human rights.

Economic Exclusion and Insecurity

A key challenge after war is to provide access for youth to economic livelihood and hope for future economic productivity and success. Often, youth grievances from before the war can be linked to repressive or unfair systems of local governance and resource distribution, which remain unchanged post-war or are actively reproduced through donor aid efforts.[9] Parental, elder and external authority may be resented. Or youth who are not able to provide for themselves may feel that they are a burden on their families. Young women with dependent children have particular needs and vulnerabilities (but also knowledge), and gendered-expectations also put pressure on young men. Intergenerational conflict, youth suicide and other self-harming activities, as well as economic crime and domestic violence may expand (as they have in Northern Ireland, for example). Addressing poverty, economic exclusion, the social barriers preventing youth mobility, values

[3] Bar-On 1996.
[4] See chapters in McEvoy-Levy (ed.) 2006.
[5] See, for example, Barber 1999.
[6] See Sommers 2001 for the latter.
[7] Cilliers 2006.
[8] McEvoy-Levy 2006 and 2007.
[9] Sommers 2006b.

perpetuating gender stereotypes and related stigmas, and repairing intergenerational relationships, are all important in fostering economic security.

New and recast violence

In post-agreement contexts, various forms of state-sponsored and factional violence continue to target youth (both directly and indirectly) and ex-combatants and other youth may transition into gangs, community defense militias, and dissident/spoiler groups for a variety of reasons, such as for protection, economic gain, and, additionally, in the case of dissidents/spoilers, through political conviction. Youth take to streets to protest unjust aspects of agreements, shaking perceptions of the stability and utility of a peace accord, and to remedy social marginality through "regenerative" violence.[10] Young people's economic activity (in gangs) and social activity (in street and school) generates competition. Along with rumors, such socializing can trigger violence[11] and sometimes 'recreational' violence[12] pays (unconscious) homage to the past conflict while reproducing sectarian fear and division (Northern Ireland). These activities are tied up with perceptions of the transformed police and military of a post-accord era, and with inherited distrust of authority, honed in past political resistance or rebellion, that makes the identity of social marginal, outlaw or pariah attractive.[13] As well as being actors in violence, youth find themselves on the sharp end of policing, and are the victims of many other forms of violence in post-war periods. The challenges are how to prevent and contain youth violence while ensuring youth protection, and how to address the root causes of violence.

Social networking and storytelling

Cycles of violence are related not only to the economic vulnerability of youth, to their perceptions of political and social marginality, and to their experiences of violence, but also to their roles as social connectors and ideological reproducers, who create and shape social meaning. As social connections are rebuilt after war, youth play a key role because of their mobility and desire for society. Youth are key connectors. They move between numerous different public and private spaces - such as homes, armed groups, peace organizations, the streets, schools, and refugee camps – although the extent of their mobility is different by context and by gender. These interactions create vital support networks and also shape the wider social and political landscape. It is important to address the narrative and myth building roles and potential of youth, and to ensure that truth telling and transitional justice mechanisms include and engage youth. Different spaces of youth interaction where peer education and narrative building take place are potential entry points. They provide existing and potential channels for peace messages. And often they provide linkages to parents and siblings as well.

Loss of Family or Family Conflict

The role of family in influencing whether or not a young person participates in armed conflict is supported by recent research.[14] Influenced by age, position in family, and relationship with siblings, the decision of a young person to volunteer for armed service seems to be strongly impacted by

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[10] CSVR 1998.
[11] Examples from Northern Ireland and Kosovo.
[12] Jarman and O'Halloran 2001; McEvoy-Levy 2006b and 2007.
[13] Mullan and Lewis 2005.
[14] Brett and Sprecht 2004.

either family tradition or attempted escape from family conflict and abuse.[15] Therefore, after war, family unification may not be desired by all youth, while in other cases family reunification and counseling may be helpful. In general, traditional structures and/or key institutions (such as family, schools, and health care) that might protect young people, mitigate youth violence, and productively channel youth energies, are often non-existent or fragile in post-war periods. So re-establishing key structures and institutions for promoting physical and social 'well being' are necessary activities. But the values that structure such institutions – and the power of youth within them – are extremely relevant to their functioning, and these are challenges to be addressed over the long-term.

Loss of Education or Alienation from Education

The loss of years of education is one of the costs of war for many young people. After war, severe difficulties accessing education may continue, particularly for those youth who have been internally displaced or are refugees. Funding, re-opening and refurbishing schools, while essential, may not address the needs of older youth who are beyond school age or those not interested in attending school, and teachers may be distrusted[16] and/or they may be distrustful of youth. The questions, criticisms, and creativity of youth are often not rewarded or fostered in these contexts.[17] The challenges include improving access to, and quality of, education, addressing educational segregation, repairing teacher-student relationships, and developing 'peace' curriculum for non-traditional as well as traditional educational settings. In some contexts, important roles exist for street-based (rather than center-based) youth workers and for early education initiatives related to peacebuilding. In others, in the short term, more basic concerns such as availability of any schooling, and the added difficulties faced by girls seeking education, are the most pressing challenges. But it is important to consider the very significant opportunities provided by education institutions and youth work initiatives, as they potentially provide key gateways for providing far-reaching services to youth and their communities. Fundamentally, education needs to prepare youth for available jobs and sustainable livelihoods which are intrinsic to sustainable peace. Identifying the specific education and youth work gaps in each location is important.

Peace building, boundary-crossing, and 'non-violent' youth groups/networks

It has been noted that militarized identities are widespread in post-conflict situations. However, many youth shun militarism when they can. Some opt, instead, for active bridge-building and peace building roles. Often youth emphasize the creation of new social spaces, such as actively reclaiming a public fountain as a symbol of reconciliation between divided ethnic communities,[18] lobbying for and organizing opportunities for youth development and dialogue about contentious issues,[19] or living in utopian communities.[20] Forming an even wider circle are the young people who are creative 'world builders'[21] in their everyday lives, who through their peer and family interactions resist and subvert war-supporting values. These peace builders, boundary-crossers, and 'nonviolent' youth groups and networks need to be supported. Moreover, they need to be more

[15] Ibid.
[16] Adwan and Bar-On 2006.
[17] See the recollections of Namik Kirlic in Helsing 2006.
[18] Kirlic in Helsing 2006.
[19] Kirlic and McMaster in Helsing 2006.
[20] Sonnenschein in Helsing 2006; and Sanford 2006.
[21] Nordstrom 2006.

closely studied to provide lessons for other contexts and initiatives.

2. "Grey areas" and targets for intervention

After war, many youth find themselves in the "grey area" of literal displacement and uncertain legal status. It may take many years to acquire refugee credentials and/or to return home. Some may not consider it in their best interests to become documented at all, and these youth land in a shadow zone of vulnerability. Some special populations, such as children born as a result of wartime rape and sexual exploitation, may also fall into a political grey zone after war, considered to be neither of one ethnicity or another, but suspect to both.[22] Moreover, the post-agreement or post-war period is in itself a "grey area"; its occupants metaphysically, as well as sometimes literally, displaced. Many of the same problems experienced during and before war remain, yet they can take on a new meaning. In a muddled zone of new hope and old grievances, a peace process, transition, or reconstruction period is a powerful symbol as well as an uncertain lived experience. But the challenges of loss of identity and meaning and loss or transformation of relationships and roles may not present neatly corresponding points or modes of intervention.

A key difference between post-agreement/war situations and other contexts of contestation and youth violence may be the expectation of change that comes with a peace agreement, and subsequent disillusionment if change is slow or intangible. As both symbol and experience, a peace or transition process shapes attitudes and values. It can become an educational institution shaping the ideas and values of the next generation (see Northern Ireland). The actions of international interveners have enormous symbolic significance. Perceived and actual failings cement youth apathy and distrust (Bosnia), and run the risk of reproducing anger and despair (Rwanda). A challenge for intervention is how to sustain long-term, locally directed and anchored initiatives in situations where the definition of success and exit point are unclear, and where the affective dimension is shaped by ongoing politics, including the politics of displacement.

A second "grey area," that influences the first, is that blurred territory existing between victims and survivors, perpetrators and peacebuilders. For example, a child soldier's pathway into armed conflict often involves prior displacement, and physical and structural violence. This child soldier may then recruit other youth into his/her armed group but at the same time he or she may also adopt a role as caretaker as did 'mommie queen' in Wessells and Jonah's study of RUF youth soldiers in Sierra Leone. Some young soldiers 'make choices that do not compromise their values excessively,' finding ways to protect other young recruits from excessive brutality.[23] Some youth intentionally do military service, as a means to moderate others in an armed group.[24] And on the streets, young people sometimes help prevent gang and 'recreational' violence.

While every context is different in terms of the extent and character of youth agency and violence, a common challenge for intervention is who to target, at what level, and when? Should the focus be on ex-combatants, for example? Or, on all those most affected by the conflict, either as

[22] See Carpenter 2007.
[23] Wessells and Jonah 2006.
[24] Sonnenschein in Helsing 2006.

victims/perpetrators, or both? Or, should the focus be on all youth, in a generalized, and arguably less stigmatizing, strategy? Some studies identify young women as a most important and most marginal target group (Rwanda, Kosovo); others highlight young men (Northern Ireland). Another framework considered especially salient is adolescence. New groups also struggle to find their way onto the policy agenda, such as children born of wartime rape and sexual exploitation.[25] Another important and neglected group consists of those who may be loosely termed peace activists or, perhaps, boundary crossers. In conflicts involving ethnic division and community solidarity, boundary crossers may also find themselves placeless, identity-less and under threat in post-accord periods. How can these individuals and groups be protected and included in transition?

(Extended) adolescence is a third "grey area" that also poses a challenge for intervention. Youth is a contested concept, culturally and contextually, and it is historically variable. Again, the need to be culturally knowledgeable in identifying 'youth' is important. But, despite the differences that exist in the definition of youth, one factor seems to be constant. Elder-systems maintain the boundaries between childhood and adulthood, whether those boundaries consist of age grade rituals, voting rights, or some other local form of power (such as access to illegal trade). In some contexts, war disintegrates such systems – which can be one of war's attractions for youth - and the social meaning of 'adolescence', like 'childhood', 'youth', and 'adulthood', becomes uncertain. In other contexts, the post-accord period will see violence because within the once unified 'community at war', a younger generation and the old conflict power elites compete for control of 'peace'. At a very basic level, many societies emerging from war need to be able to rebalance and repair intra-group social relations as well as reconcile with wartime enemies. This is an aspect of transitional justice that is underdeveloped.

Like elder-systems and local political authorities/elites, international political actors make categorizations seeking to protect or contain young people that in the process also mold or frame reality. Many human beings who are defined as 'children' in international law (under 18) are in fact household heads, and laborers crucial to their economies, and in war become combatants, voluntary and involuntary; at the same time they are not politically enfranchised or included in negotiations that end wars. The legal and cultural identities of these children may not correspond with their own self-concepts and identities as warrior, community defender, caretaker, social 'mender'[26]or peacebuilder. For example:

One 13-year-old with a Kalashnikov found directing traffic at a Kabul intersection stated: "I came to Kabul when my brothers [in the Northern Alliance] removed the Taliban. Before I was in a camp, but now I'm a policeman and proud."[27]

This contradiction between the legal/policy image and the self-image of children has important implications for post-war reconstruction, integration and reintegration. For example, as Marc Sommers notes in his study of Rwanda: "The backward glance inferred by reintegration may be precisely what many people, youth in particular, do not want."[28] In South Africa, post-apartheid gangs and community defense organizations emerged from the marginalization of former youth

[25] Carpenter 2007.
[26] Hammad and Al Bakri 2007.
[27] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Afghanistan," 1.
[28] Sommers 2006b.

activists who, after apartheid, were expected to stand down.

Current definitions and images in international law and policy, while important for advocacy and protection of vulnerable children and youth, may not allow us to fully appreciate that young people have a variety of different social and political roles. Moreover, if a ' rights of the child' framework is relied upon to address the issue of young people in conflict, we run the risk of further marginalizing already marginalized older youth aged from 18 to mid 20s. This group is increasingly securitized and framed as a demographic threat. Very real violence, and threats of violence, does emerge from this demographic group. But it should be noted that young people are not the architects of war, and rarely are they the primary beneficiaries of post-war gangs and criminal enterprises. These roles usually are filled by much older adults. An important set of lessons learned from these 'grey areas' is that it is important to identify the complex pathways youth take into armed conflict, the country and contextual differences in recruitment paths, and the blurred lines separating a victim from a perpetrator from a peace builder. The challenge for intervention activities is to recognize, accommodate and strengthen the social and political roles and agency of youth, while balancing cultural sensitivity with the need to avoid reinforcing elder power systems that keep youth marginal. Target groups for youth strategies will vary by context, but the displaced, ex-combatants, impoverished and underemployed young men, young women, peace builders/boundary crossers, adolescents, and children born of wartime rape and sexual exploitation are important groups to address. In a review for USAID, Marc Sommers recommends "significantly expanding the participation of female and lower-class youth in program development," noting that "the general inattention to these issues is thoroughly alarming." [29] A key challenge related to all the potential target groups mentioned is how to balance their needs for protection with their needs to be active, engaged and respected participants in war-peace transitions, so that they are not subject/objects of intervention, but share power, responsibility and rewards.[30]

3. Policy Responses to the Lessons learned

Holistic responses

Analysis of the different dimensions of the post-war landscape - both micro and macro - suggest that the challenge of youth violence needs to be addressed in an holistic way that considers needs for physical security and wellbeing, economic security and education, positive social roles and political participation, and that deals with the political past, trauma and memory, making peace meaningful and tangible. This section of the paper looks more closely at these issues and suggests some key entry points and strategies for intervention. It highlights the findings of number recent research studies and reports. This is not an exhaustive review of policy lessons, and, again, each context will entail different priorities, but this section of the paper highlights some of most significant existing knowledge about policies and policy gaps.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

One key lesson learned is the importance of good demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR). One Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) ex-combatant youth, who was disarmed by the

[29] Sommers, 2006c.
[30] Cilliers, 2006; Kirlic in Helsing 2006.

UN, illustrates this need clearly when he states:

We are disappointed, because when we disarmed, they promised to help us with projects and finding some work. But up until now, we haven't been helped. And this is risky because we have friends who are still in the bush. They are watching what happens to us. They are waiting to see if we are helped before they decide whether to disarm or not.[31]

Even if original hostilities do not resume, ex-combatants are more vulnerable than others to recruitment into other forms of armed groups, such as criminal gangs. Key reasons for youth transitioning into community defense militias and criminal gangs are protection and economic necessity. But trauma and loss of identity also make reintegration difficult. These facets of the ex-combatant's predicament strongly indicate the need for DDR programs that address an ex-combatant's needs in a holistic way. Writing about their experience with one such program, the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) in Sierra Leone, Wessells and Jonah note the desire for "respect" and "positive social roles" among former soldiers. The CCF project focused on providing livelihood skills, spiritual/ritual healing, and community works projects. "The stipends really helped," noted one ex-combatant youth who was a participant in the rehabilitation program in Sierra Leone. Another stated:

"After the ceasefire, I had no gun and got no package [that is, did not qualify for the government benefits for former soldiers]. Now we are presentable and can survive . . . Before we had only cassava but now we have rice—this makes us believe in peace."[32]

It is clear that multifaceted reintegration programs targeted at ex-combatant youth are very important for sustainable peace in societies transitioning out of war. Brett and Sprecht find that reintegration programs need to address the motives that young people have for participation in armed conflict and in particular provide for their education, employment and family needs. Displacement is often one of the first events from which participation in armed conflicts unfolds.[33] A key task is to avoid new cycles of displacement and to promote reintegration. However, as noted earlier, the notion of reintegration may be flawed. It is important to consult displaced youth to discover what kind of approach - integration or reintegration - they seek and to build confidence that promises (of peace dividends) will be kept. But a key challenge exists in that the very mechanisms that seek to rehabilitate ex-combatants—such as DDR programs—can have the effect of alienating other youth who do not qualify, as Sommers discovered in his study of post-genocide Rwanda.[34] And this is also a problem in resettling refugees in other states, that have their own impoverished or underserved populations.

Economic development

So not only ex-combatant youth need access to development and reintegration programs in post-war periods. Displacement, physical insecurity, and restricted access to education, employment, land, and capital occur broadly in many post-war societies, making it difficult to move beyond the past. Other marginal, underemployed and poor youth would benefit from development and

[31] W. Ross, 2005, p. 1.
[32] Wessells and Jonah 2006, pp. 44–45.
[33] Sanford 2006.
[34] Sommers, 2006a; Kruse 2004. See also Mgbako 2005.

reintegration, too. Moreover, as Brett and Sprecht have noted, for ex-combatant girls, more broadly targeted socio-economic programs may be better than ex-combatant DDR programs, because of the special stigma for girls entailed in being survivors of child soldiering and sexual violence.

An under-explored strategy is the expansion of the integrated reintegration model for youth combatants to youth more broadly, and/or to families. This model seems in best practice to link education and employment or livelihood skills with psycho-social and spiritual work, including trauma therapy or cultural ritual, and identity reinforcement through providing opportunities for positive social roles.[35] This integrated, multifaceted approach to reintegration could be usefully applied to post-war development programming for youth more broadly, if applied in youth work and education settings. Some organizations have expressed concern about moving beyond a specific program such as DDR to include other youth, because it would expand a commitment and make exit difficult.[36] But tangible change in living standard is a litmus test for a peace or transition process. Planning that ensures vocational skills training that matches labor markets, and start up funds for newly trained youth, is important, as is recognition that long-term commitment may be required to ensure sustainability.

Families and gender

A key finding of recent research is that many youth soldiers are motivated by a desire to escape from family abuse or dysfunction. Brett and Sprecht recommend training in parenting skills and policies 'to reinforce the general capacity of families to survive - economically, physically, and emotionally' (125), and to ensure that the next generation thrives. But they acknowledge the enormous challenge this presents. Public policies aimed at transforming societal values about the role, status and treatment of girls in education or employment may be more achievable than addressing domestic violence, they argue. After war, the extent of social breakdown as a result of armed conflict differs by context but, as noted earlier, tensions between children and parents who have taken different roles in a war/struggle need to be addressed. In South Africa, for example, young people who lead the anti-apartheid struggle resented their parents' passivity; in Northern Ireland, some reports suggest that children of political prisoners resented the loss of parents (and their childhood) to a cause, with some becoming involved in anti-social behavior as an act of confusion and rebellion.[37] Truth-telling initiatives and local memory projects can help address these intergenerational tensions if designed with that goal in mind.

Trauma, Identity and Transitional Justice

In post-conflict situations, two of the fundamental barriers to moving beyond the past are the trauma of individuals involved in or impacted by violence and also the collective trauma of the society within which there is a widespread sense of powerlessness, hopelessness, and distrust, and a lack of confidence in a settlement's endurance or its ability to effect real transformation. As Dean Adjukovic has noted, people seek to understand why war and loss has happened to them, and what has happened to their loved ones. As part of this a search for meaning and closure, there may also be a preoccupation with finding the bodies of loved ones, or with the symbolic message

[35] See Wessells and Jonah 2006.
[36] Kruse 2004.
[37] See youth worker testimony in Baizerman and Magnuson (ed). Pp. 260-61.

entailed in a particular attack. Speaking about the Balkans, Adjukovic states that victims' interests groups provide support but can also result in the isolation of victims from the rest of their communities.[38] The children of such survivors may become isolated too. Their search for meaning may be complicated by secrets – such as their father's identity and/or role of their parents in the conflict – and the fact that they may remember no pre-war period. Traumatic memories interact with subjective interpretations of threat and history, deeply held beliefs, and evocative symbols that youth both receive as an inheritance and create themselves.[39] Findings based on studies of Holocaust survivors and their families on the 'intergenerational transmission of trauma' and even possible 'trangenerational haunting' underline how crucial dealing with trauma is to sustainable peace.[40] Expanded resources for psycho-social initiatives for ex-combatants, their immediate families, including children, and communities, are vital. To more broadly address societal trauma is more difficult. But it would be useful to make school counseling widely available. Counseling has not been provided in Northern Ireland, for example, until this year, when it was promised in response to the public outcry at the increase in youth suicides since the peace agreement. Integrating dialogue about the past into curriculum[41] developing truth telling mechanisms,[42] and actively involving youth in constructive narrative building and meaning- making may help promote the 'trustworthy communities of listeners' that Jonathan Shay argues are essential for trauma recovery.[43] These activities may also help promote the 'resilience' that seems to come from having positive social and political roles.[44]

In dealing with trauma it is also is important to understand how, from their own authentic experiences, young people conceptualize the problems that confront them and use that to shape policy.[45] Narrative construction is organic to the everyday activities and interactions of youth and part of a process of peer education. The stories youth tell, in school, street, gang, refugee camp, or other organization, shape and are shaped by more organized social narratives such as murals and graffiti, internet sites, blogs, songs, poems, and political pamphlets, which young people also participate in creating. In these ways youth can have a central role in the reproduction of conflicts. Through the narratives that they create and share with each other, they may reproduce (or help perpetuate) the larger conflict by passing on old reasons for war, or by creating new explanations for why it is necessary to fight.

Yet youth also create narratives in these formats that are supportive of peace. How is it possible to utilize youth's knowledge as well as norm-building and peer-education roles to address trauma and subjective meaning—and, more generally, as peacebuilding tools? Among the lessons learned are that, in some contexts, indigenous, local healing and reconciliation methods that involve public

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[38] Dean Adjukovic, Plenary Presentation, Conference on Peacebuilding and Trauma Recovery. Integrated Strategies in Post-War Reconstruction, University of Denver, February 22-24, 2007.
[39] Sommers 2003; McEvoy-Levy, "Silenced Voices?"
[40] Bar-On 1996; Abraham and Torok 1994; Daiute and Turniski 2005.
[41] An interesting example to follow would be reported national curriculum project in Rwanda addressing children born of wartime rape. See Wax 2004.
[42] Youth did give testimony to the South African TRC and in Sierra Leone. See McIntyre and Thusi 2003 for an evaluation of the latter.
[43] Shay 1994.
[44] Straker 1992, Cairns 1996.
[45] McEvoy-Levy 2006b.

ritual[46] are preferable to individualized talk-therapy models. This understanding should be reapplied to utilizing the practices and knowledge of youth sub-culture(s). Another important psychological finding is that political leadership and a sense of political purpose may inoculate young people against trauma.[47] Storytelling—which may be oral, text-based, art- or theatre-based, personal, local, or national—has broad basis in world cultures and appeal as means for equalizing and even reconciling conflicting views of the past, and for healing dialogue.[48]

Whatever transitional justice model is chosen youth should be closely and publicly engaged in it. Truth commissions, for example, should involve youth, not only in providing testimonies, but also in the day-to-day organization of submissions and in writing final reports. Likewise, other mechanisms for dealing with the past, such as media retrospectives, museums, and memorials, should involve youth in collecting and compiling stories and designing installations. Where truth-telling activities related to the past might be temporarily considered too sensitive, it may be possible to allow youth to establish their own truth commissions to deal with more limited periods, including periods *since* the signing of a peace agreement which often have the most direct impact on, and meaning for, the young. Allowing youth to achieve political authority through providing them with authorial roles is a way to address apathy and disillusionment, and a form of active youth political participation that is usually lacking in postwar contexts.

Political participation and positive social roles

A key post-conflict challenge is to provide opportunities for youth to transition into non-military roles (as well as military roles, such as integration into a new police force, where appropriate) that involve positive social status and community service or collection action, fostering individual resilience[49] and a human rights culture. Consultation with youth is different from participation in program development which is, in turn, very different from real power. An important concern is raised by Doug Magnuson who writes:

In the Western world, youth participation, youth leadership, and participatory research are values that threaten to become platitudes because, it seems, what we really mean is the careful parceling out of resources, decision-making power, and access. In conflict societies, it is likely that Western aid organizations are reproducing this careful control by adults, rather than promoting democracy. This is bound to fail to attract youth in societies, where, in other places, youth are deciding the future. [We need to be] more innovative and more honest about these issues.[50]

Real opportunities for youth to participate in peace negotiations and post-conflict decision making at the elite level should be fostered. In some cases the competencies already exist among youth. In others they could be developed through training programs viewed as a long-term investment, not only in democracy, but also in job skills. In post-war situations, and ongoing conflicts, youth councils and youth ministries have been established but either they command little real power or

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[46] Wessells and Jonah 2006.
[47] Straker et al. 1992; Cairns 1996; Barber 1999; Ziv, Kruglanski, and Schulman 1974.
[48] See Adwan and Bar-On 2006; Senehi and Byrne 2006; Cilliers 2006; and McEvoy-Levy, "Politics, Protest and Local 'Power-Sharing.'"
[49] Straker et al. 1992; Cairns 1996; Barber 1999.
[50] Baizerman and Magnuson 2007, p. 8.

are seen by youth (workers) as simply containment mechanisms.[51] The primary barrier exists in powerful adults —local and international – whose mindsets will have to change. Positive first steps would entail improving communications between political elites and existing youth structures, creating new youth institutions and mechanisms (that are genuinely accountable to youth) to give young people access to decision making, and addressing the barriers posed by entrenched elites or elder systems. These barriers may possibly be scaled through education of elders about the relative costs and benefits of youth participation, including the loss of vital knowledge and excuse for violence that youth exclusion represents.

Supporting peacebuilders and boundary-crossers

In post-war contexts, it remains important to identify and support the different peacebuilding roles and boundary-crossing activities of youth. Recording the stories of young people who resisted war in different ways can become of part of a new national narrative, for example. It may be also useful to document the often 'untold stor[ies]' of youth soldiers who take care of others, or resist committing atrocities.[52] Can these acts be valorized and used as a peacebuilding tool without further marginalizing those who did not similarly resist? This is where storytelling and national narrative-building through memory projects in youth centers and schools or university-based curriculum development projects can be used. These would allow the recovery of a history that shows nonviolent resistance as well as personal struggles to make difficult moral choices.

In post-war periods, a generally higher profile for youth peacebuilding work would raise the morale of young activists and perform a wider function in educating the public about the constructive, nonviolent roles of youth in their communities. Moreover, a militant stance, in itself, is not inevitably violent or destabilizing. The assertive but nonviolent activism of Otpor in Serbia, for example, which used quite militant symbolism (the black clenched fist), leather dress and rock music to pursue a non-violent struggle is a good example. During the peace process in Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin youth committed minor property damage against a British military installation as part of an organized protest and day of civil disobedience. This protest provided a focus for continued activism against the British state once armed struggle had been suspended, and was an important safety valve, perhaps, although it initially angered the party leadership. It is important for policymakers who wish to promote youth peacebuilding to allow the local context, and youth themselves, to shape its terms, and to promote forms of work with youth that involve genuine participation by youth.

However, Baizerman argues that contested societies push people's thinking 'toward the reactive and ideological and to the absolute and inflexible' (328). One question to be answered, when examining a case or considering support for a particular group, is does youth activism in post-war settings break or reinforce such a mold of non-critical thinking? A person's answer to this question is likely to depend on his/her status within a contested space, including his/her age. It was mentioned earlier that youth may seek integration and not *re*integration. Likewise, in contexts of protracted conflicts, much so-called peacebuilding work has a 'same old' quality for youth. Often particularly disparaged are the perceived 'hands across the barricades' or 'pacification' projects that aspire to build bridges between groups where there is no real basis for living together in a new

[51] Hammad and Al Baqri, 2007, p. 205.
[52] Wessells and Jonah 2006.

way: that is, the practical and emotionally charged issues such as violence, land, displacement, education, employment, trauma, the powerful symbolism and meaning of the conflict, and the political exclusion of certain groups, are not being addressed.

Nevertheless, peace building initiatives must operate in the absence of perfection and they could involve youth in addressing these core issues through service learning education, public works projects, youth peace and reconstruction corps, and the active inclusion of youth in peace negotiations and transitional justice initiatives. The projects of Public Achievement provide compelling examples of youth civic engagement in a variety of community service activities that address both youth powerlessness and community fears of youth. Efforts such as these, activities in the arts and recreation, and activities that involve skills training relevant to future employment, should be considered requirements of a youth reconstruction package.

Security and policing policy and reform

The experience of everyday insecurity, and of policing, forms the platform from which youth view other aspects of the post-war environment, and evaluate their country's peace settlement. So, a youth-sensitive policing and security strategy is vital. The most effective responses to youth violence will be ones that makes redemptive violence less attractive. This requires policing and security strategies that avoid excessive use of force, repression, curfews, detention, profiling and harassment of youth, and that do not scapegoat whole communities or ethnic groups. It will be essential to move away from monolithic images of child soldiers, youth gang members, and alienated youth, and from notions of demographic threat. Containment strategies alone reinforce the feelings that drive youth to violence. The dilemmas involved in protecting while also confronting children and youth engaged in violence should be more publicly acknowledged and planned for by government officials and law and order institutions in post-war settings. What, for example, should be the policing response to grassroots organizing of communities to combat youth violence or anti-social behavior on their own terms? Likewise, more public recognition and acknowledgement of youth grievances, ideas and capabilities might help mark a transition from the past, and undercut some of the appeal of spoiler groups, the attraction of which for youth is not just economic or ideological, but also sentimental and emotional regeneration.

A second important role for policing and security is the protection of youth spaces - rehabilitation centers and schools for example - from which youth may be abducted or reabducted to reignite a war[53]. Also helpful in many contexts would be official acknowledgement and protection of youth recreation spaces including sports or youth clubs and organic territories carved out by groups of youth for 'hanging out.' Young people often cite the 'lack of respect' they receive from the police as a reason for youth troublemaking. In the long-term, since policing contends with a generation that may have been socialized to disrespect authority (as in Northern Ireland), police training should recognize this reality and the ways in which policing can exacerbate it. It is also important to familiarize police with the other long-term measures being taken as part of reconstruction – such as economic development or education initiatives – that will gradually help to transform the policing environment in relation to youth (assuming these measures are in fact underway)

[53] See P.W. Singer 2005.

Conclusion

In summary, the policy or program responses that emerge from this review and analysis of existing research entail:

1. Expanded and holistic DDR programs.
2. Economic development and education that emphasize livelihood skills and access to capital.
3. Inclusion of youth in politics, transitional justice, and development program design.
4. Support for youth peace activities.
5. Protection of youth and protection of youth spaces.
6. Local advocacy and human rights monitoring for youth.
7. Improving access to education and use of both formal and non-formal education settings for peace education, truth-telling activities, skills-training, and as gateways for providing training and health services for families and wider communities.

Similarly, Marc Sommers highlights six overlapping program areas for addressing youth in conflict: "vocational training, reproductive health, basic skills training, peace education, youth empowerments, and psycho-social programming." He notes that other researchers, while recommending slightly different combinations, agree on the need for "education and training aimed at protecting and empowering young people."[54] In short, there is a significant consensus on the need for youth protection, development and participation as essential and interrelated components of youth work in post-war settings, and on the use of educational settings for reaching youth. These requirements of youth strategies have been well acknowledged in the literature on youth work[55] and separately are the foci in practice of many organizations working with youth in post-war or war settings.[56]

Better incorporation of these components into an integrated youth strategy that, in turn, is an integrated and highly valued part of the overall post-war reconstruction or peace building plan, would be advantageous. An important role exists for high profile youth policy advisors on the ground in helping to bridge crosscutting youth concerns and in helping to minimize dilution of youth issues. But more interest at all levels of intervention – external and internal - needs to be fostered. Key personnel involved in post-war reconstruction efforts must have an understanding of the importance of youth issues to the whole of postwar peacebuilding. This entails recognizing that all of the main tasks of postwar reconstruction have important youth dimensions. It also entails resisting the urge to scapegoat youth for violence. It is important to not only look at youth as security threats or challenges, but as survivors and victims, and as positive social actors and peace builders, and to think about youth in terms of the social networks and the peer groups to which they belong.

As importantly, youth policies need to be presented to their publics as a peace dividend. This would require careful diplomacy by the internal and external actors involved, because there would be those who would view education or political inclusion initiatives as threats to their traditional

[54] Sommers, 2006 c. He cites the Office of Conflict Management and Lowicki and Pillsbury 2005.
[55] Baizerman and Magnuson 2007.
[56] Kemper 2005.

culture or power. But the intentional centering of 'change for youth' as a litmus test for the success of a peace process could help develop societal consensus on moving forward together. And real participation of youth could help persuade the next generation to go along.

A further step forward would be for intervention programs to pay more attention to the affective and cognitive dimensions of youth experience post-war, the roles of youth in conflict reproduction and transformation[57], and how these aspects are shaped by each mode of intervention over time. Over time, new and different challenges will present themselves in each setting. This is why a flexible rubric for youth policy - one that can accommodate changing ground conditions, definitions of youth, and needs - may be the most useful one in post-war settings.

Finally, missteps in addressing or in failing to address the practical material and safety needs, trauma and social meanings, the political marginalization, the peace roles and potential, and violence roles and potential of youth will likely be multiplied because youth educate each other in a web of different social spaces. So whatever approaches are adopted, they need to be very carefully constructed, culturally sensitive and informed, and guided by genuine youth participation, and by a genuine commitment to youth empowerment and development. Moreover, the enormity and the complexity of the challenge of youth, and of youth violence, in post-war contexts, necessitates international co-operation. This is not just because of the need to pool resources, but because the sources of youth violence are increasingly shaped by transnational dynamics, including economic migration patterns, arms transfers, a 'global war on terror', and global popular culture. Whatever solutions are implemented in today's post-accord situations, they will need to contend with these external forces, suggesting that cross-pollination of lessons and strategies from other violent contested spaces will be increasingly important.

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[57] See McEvoy-Levy 2006a.

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Author:
Siobhan McEvoy-Levy
Butler University
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA
smcevoy@butler.edu

Drug crime in Rio, racist offences against immigrants, shootings at schools, harassment in Belfast's neighbourhoods, killing brothers and sisters in Ramallah, kids traumatized by war in Bosnia or in the Congo – the involvement of children and adolescents in political and criminal acts of violence in mega-cities, as well as in (post-)conflict zones of recent wars, is an increasingly disturbing phenomenon.

What do we know about the reasons and root causes of youth violence stemming from such a variety of political and cultural backgrounds and contexts? What do (post) war constellations have in common with the urbanized reality of western democracies? Do social exclusion, poverty, the absence of education, and the availability of small arms create contexts which enhance violence and may be considered as „grey zones" between war and peace? How would we differentiate between politically motivated, socially, ethnically or religiously based, and other ritualized forms of violence? Which patterns of violence are specifically youth related?

The conference will look at recent results and findings of international research on youth violence. In order to better understand the driving forces behind, and to identify political strategies to deal with this critical development, we will try to compare and contrast (post) war and non-war constellations, and the causes or patterns of youth violence they present. What are promising approaches on communal and state levels, amongst civil society actors and those in the field of international co-operation, to tackle the challenge of youth violence?

You are cordially invited to participate in the discussions of this conference.

Dr. Corinna Hauswedell, Academy Loccum
Dr. Sabine Kurtenbach, Institute for Development and Peace (INEF)
Andrea Grimm, Academy Loccum
Dr. Fritz Erich Anhelm, Academy Director

Conference Fees/Registration:

Room and meals: € 180,--.
For students (age 30 or under), members of the armed services and alternative service as well as unemployed with proper identification: € 90,--. Conference fees are to be paid in cash at the time of registration.
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Registrations will be confirmed as long as places are available. Should you have to cancel your registration, please inform us as soon as possible.

Accomodation and meals:

Participants will be accommodated in single rooms or double rooms, if preferred. All meals are served at the Academy. By prior arrangement, rooms and meals may be available before and after the conference.

Directions:

Loccum is located 50 kilometers west of Hanover in Lower Saxony. The nearest airport is in Langenhagen airport near Hanover. The nearest train stations are Wunstorf, Minden and Nienburg. Detailed instructions will be sent to all registered participants.

Conference Organizers:

Dr. Corinna Hauswedell, Director of Studies (Loccum) Tel. +49-5766-81-109
Karin Hahn, Secretary Tel. +49-5766-81-113
Fax.+49-5766-81-128

Media Contact:
Reinhard Behnisch (Loccum) Tel. +49-5766-81 105

HOUSE SCHEDULE:
8.30 MORNING PRAYER, 8.45 BREAKFAST
12.30 LUNCH, 15.30 COFFEE/TEA,
18.30 DINER.
Opportunity to visit Loccum Monastery, Thusday 13:30 Uhr

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In War as in Peace:

Youth Violence – A Challenge for International Co-operation

International Conference
14 – 16 November 2007

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Wednesday, November 14, 2007

15:30 Coffee/ Tea with cake

16:00 Welcome and introduction
Dr. Corinna Hauswedell, Loccum

16:15 - 18:30 **Youth violence in the globalized world**
Introductions to the conference theme

Context matters: violence in (post)war and non-war societies
Dr. Sabine Kurtenbach, INEF, Duisburg

Demographic data and findings concerning the social situation of youth in countries undergoing (post-)conflict and crisis-like situations of radical change
Dr. Rüdiger Blumör, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Eschborn
Steffen Kröhnert, Berlin Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung
Facilitator: *Dr. Corinna Hauswedell*

19:30 - 21:00 **Current state and perspectives of international research on youth violence**
Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Heitmeyer, Institute for Interdisciplinary Conflict and Violence Research, Bielefeld University

Thursday, November 15, 2007

09:30 **Causes and contexts of youth violence – stocktaking** (work in two parallel sections)

SECTION I: Non-war constellations: urbanization, social change and exclusion

A world of gangs
Prof. Dr. John Hagedorn, University of Illinois, Chicago

Youth at risk programming – A crucial element to build citizenship
Clarissa Huguet, Children in Organized Armed Violence (COAV), Rio de Janeiro

Nigeria: Youth violence and the challenges in the age of globalisation
Dr. Nick Idoko, Centre for Peace in Africa, Lagos, Nigeria

Urban riots in France: History, patterns and the significance of institutional violence
Dr. Carsten Keller, Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin

Facilitator: *Dr. Rose Ngomba-Roth,* Göttingen
Rapporteur: *Dr. Peter Lock*, Hamburg

SECTION II: Post-war and continuous conflict constellations: ethnicity and identity, terrorism, religion

Israel-Palestine
Stephan Clauss, Akademie für Konflikttransformation, Bonn

Northern Ireland
Dr. Neil Jarman, Institute for Conflict Research, Belfast

West Africa
Prof. Dr. Paul Richards, Wageningen University, Netherlands

Afghanistan
Martin Hayes, Child Protection Specialist of the Christian Children's Fund (CCF), Richmond/Virginia

Facilitator: *Dr. Corinna Hauswedell*
Rapporteur: *Prof. em. Dr. Peter Waldmann*, Augsburg University

16:00 - 18:30 **Strategies for dealing with youth violence and its causes**
(work continued in two parallel sections)

SECTION I: Non-war constellations: urbanization, social change and exclusion

Juveniles as target group and partner in development co-operation
Günter Sohr, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Berlin

Comprehensive public health strategies
Dr. Alberto Concha-Eastman, Regional Advisor, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Washington D.C.

Intercultural youth exchange: opportunities for young people to prevent and de-learn violence and experience alternatives (beams of hope)
Christa-Berta Kimmich, european play work association (e.p.a.), Hamburg

Neglect and trauma amongst young people in London – how to prevent and work with it at street level
Daniel Baltzer, Kids Company, London

Facilitator: *Erich Marks*, Geschäftsführer, Deutscher Präventionstag, Hannover
Rapporteur: *Andrea Grimm*

SECTION II: Post-war and continuous conflict constellations: ethnicity and identity, terrorism, religion

Linking development and peacebuilding: experiences from Bosnia
Dr. Martina Fischer, Berghof Centre for Conflict Research, Berlin

Strategies for working with youth in the immediate post-accord period
Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, Butler University, Indianapolis

Demobilization and reintegration of children and adolescents – experience from the Congo
Achim Koch, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Eschborn

Strategies to confront youth violence – experiences from Nicaragua and Central America
José Luis Rocha, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Managua

Facilitator: *Prof. em. Dr. Franz Nuscheler*, INEF, Duisburg
Rapporteur: *Dr. Sabine Kurtenbach*

19:30 - 21:00 **Youth violence in cultural contexts: film and Hip Hop music**
Katrin Lock, London

Friday November 16, 2007

09:30 **Youth violence as a challenge facing international co-operation**
Final winding-up session, introduced by reports of the section rapporteurs

Ambassador *Friedrich Däuble*, Appointee for Conflict Prevention,Federal Foreign Office, Berlin
Dr. Winrich Kühne, Center for International Peace Missions (ZIF), Berlin
Nadine Lyamouri-Bajja, European Youth Centre, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

Facilitator: *Dr. Corinna Hauswedell*

12:30 Conference ends with lunch
12:50 Departure of shuttle bus to Wunstorf train station (arrival around 13:30 hours)

Conference languages: German and English; simultaneous translation available