CHURCH & PEACE

PMU

RESOURCE
AND TOOL BOX

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Call to Action

THE WORLD NEEDS PEACE. We can work for poverty reduction, education and health care for all, equality, and environmental sustainability. But if, through these initiatives, we do not also manage to build peace, all our efforts will be undermined.

In 2018, Dr Denis Mukwege, together with the human rights activist Nadia Murad, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his relentless work to treat and support survivors of sexual violence in DR Congo. The announcement of the prize did not come as a surprise for those who have supported, worked with, and prayed for Dr Mukwege and the Panzi Hospital throughout the years. To many, it was rather a matter of time before this important work would be recognized by the Nobel Committee.

Besides his work as a gynaecologist. Dr Mukwege has struggled for many years to make the world aware of the connection between the sexual violence and the war in DR Congo, a war that is largely driven by the desire to control the valuable mineral mines in the eastern part of the country. He is also a Pentecostal pastor, and in the work at Panzi he is thus bringing the faith- and the rights-based perspectives together. In his laureate speech at the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in Oslo, on 10 December 2018, he called on the world to put an end to the violence:

With this Nobel Peace Prize, I call on the world to be a witness and I urge you to join us in order to put an end to this suffering that shames our common humanity. [...] Taking action is a choice. It is a choice: whether or not we stop violence against women, whether or not we create a positive masculinity which promotes gender equality, in times of peace and in times of war.[1]

This call from Dr Mukwege is a call for us all to act: To act against abuses, violence, and war, and to act for a better and more peaceful society. The call is addressed to the whole world, but maybe not the least to the Church. While the work that is being accomplished at the Panzi Hospital is indeed exceptional, it should not be exceptional for Christians to engage in peacebuilding. The Church has a long tradition of promoting peace, justice, and social cohesion. These efforts have taken different expressions throughout the years, ranging from prayer and theological work on peace, through charity and the provision of material support, to hands-on physical action, sometimes even at the risk of the actor's own life and safety. The Bible has much to say about peace

for all humankind, and the mission to work towards a peaceful world is as relevant today as ever.

With this book, we would like to inspire churches and faith-based organisations to respond to the call and step up their efforts towards building a peaceful society for everyone. Praying is one of the foundations of Christian life, and as Christians, we believe in the power of prayers for achieving constructive change. We also believe that the people of God must, to cite Dr Mukwege, choose to take *action*. As we pray for the positive change, we also need to be that change. Or as the theologian Miroslav Volf reflects on it: "There is something deeply hypocritical about praying for a problem you are unwilling to resolve"[2]. Violent conflicts destroy and tear down what people are struggling to build up. If the Church takes action in this context, it can be an important counterforce, standing for hope, stability and love in the face of insecurity and suffering. If we believe in a God who wants to restore what has been broken, we must also be ready to use our hands and our feet, our knowledge, and our commitment, to work towards that same goal.

A recent study conducted by PMU[3], based on six case studies, showed that many churches are already engaged in peace and trust building within and between communities. In many contexts, the Church is also relied upon to participate and play a role in peace processes. But there is more to be done. The recommendations from the study include working for peace with a bottom-up perspective, strategically working for resilience, and addressing diversity issues through the creation of platforms for dialogue. In this book, we present and discuss some of the perspectives and aspects that we consider essential if the Church wants to deepen and expand its actions for peace around the world. The book consists of four parts. In part one, we give a theological background to the peacebuilding mission of the Church. In part two, we present a number of theoretical perspectives on conflict, violence and peace. In part three, we look at some key perspectives to integrate in the work for peace. Part four gives some inspirational stories from PMU partners on how to work with peace and conflict on the ground.

This book does not claim to be a comprehensive manual for churches and faith-based actors on how to work with peace and conflict issues. Rather, the aim is to provide new insights and approaches to these subjects, and thereby inspire the Church to take on a more active role in working for peace. When it comes to the actual work on the ground, each situation is unique, and there is no blueprint solution on how to create a more peaceful society. We therefore invite each reader to critically examine the content of this book, and to use in a way that seems relevant within his or her context.

Niclas Lindgren
Director, PMU

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PART 1

A FAITH PERSPECTIVE ON PEACE

A Faith Perspective on Peace

IN THIS FIRST part, we will examine some of the key perspectives and concepts that we find essential for understanding peacebuilding in the context of the Church and the Christian faith. PMU is a faith-based organisation, and this part part rests on our interpretations of the Bible texts about peace and how Christians, should follow that example and include everyone in the work towards peace.

We begin with a reflection on Jesus' message of peace, and then explore the concepts of *shalom*, reconciliation, and justice. Next, we look at how Jesus, throughout his life on earth, included and cared for those who were considered outcasts by society and how we, as Christians, should follow that example and include everyone in our work towards peace. We also give room for a more in-depth look into some biblical passages on non-violence and how to interpret their meaning in relation to peacebuilding.

"My Peace I Give You"

IN THE SHORT time that Jesus walked the earth, he completely redefined the notions of power and peace. At the time when he was born, the Roman Empire was the dominating power around the Mediterranean Sea. The period was characterized by political power struggles, oppression, and riots, and we can assume that the common understanding of the concept of peace could be summarized as *a successful enforcement of law and order in a society where the emperor had all the power.* In this context, the Jews were waiting for the Messiah, a Prince of Peace who they believed would take the power, restore the glory of their people, and build the kingdom of God that they were all waiting for.

But the words spoken by Maria, only a few days after she had been told that she was expecting, indicated that Jesus'

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life would follow another path than the one of worldly power and glory. She said: "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble"[4]. Throughout his life, Jesus showed in words and action what peace really is about. He preached that people should love their enemies and turn the other cheek. He told people to bless those who cursed them, to do good to those who hated them, and to pray for those who spitefully used them and persecuted them. He said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid"[5]. At a time when the Old Testament principle of "an eye for an eye" was dominating, we can understand that Jesus' words were revolutionary.

Instead of proclaiming his power and taking up arms against the Roman Empire, Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross for our sins. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."[6] This act of compassionate love became the culmination of his message of peace, and all power relations were turned upside down. By sacrificing himself, submitting to the enemy and abstaining from using his power to save his own life, he won a victory not only over the powers of the world, but also over death itself. The self-giving love of Jesus embodied and proclaimed peace.

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4   Luke 1:52

5   John 14:27

6   John 3:16

The Biblical Concept of Shalom

IN THE BIBLE, we find various forms of the word *peace.* One of the central concepts is the Hebrew word *shalom.* Shalom is usually translated as 'peace', but this translation does not capture the full sense of the word. The meaning of shalom is a lot broader and includes aspects such as fullness of life, prosperity, justice, and righteousness. It describes a peace that contains much more than the absence of armed conflicts.

The Bible speaks of peace, or shalom, as a way of life where justice and righteousness prevail, and where all material and spiritual needs of people are met. Shalom requires a lot more from us than disarmament. The famous quote from the Bible about how swords are turned into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks[7] refers to how we should not only put down the weapons used to destroy the enemy, but turn them into tools for farming, thus creating livelihood and growth.

Rev. Dr. Al Tizon, author of the book *Whole & Reconciled,* defines shalom as "God's very best for me, for others, for all, and for creation"[8]. This means that to be at peace is to live in harmonic and prosperous relationships with God, with other humans, with ourselves and with the environment. From this perspective, to bring peace is not only about ending an armed conflict and going back to the way things were before. It is about building relationships with God and other humans, bringing people together and leading a life that respects the boundaries of the planet. To achieve true peace, we need to build a world that is characterized by harmonic and prosperous relationships on all levels and in all directions.

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7   Isaiah 2:4

8   Tizon. 85
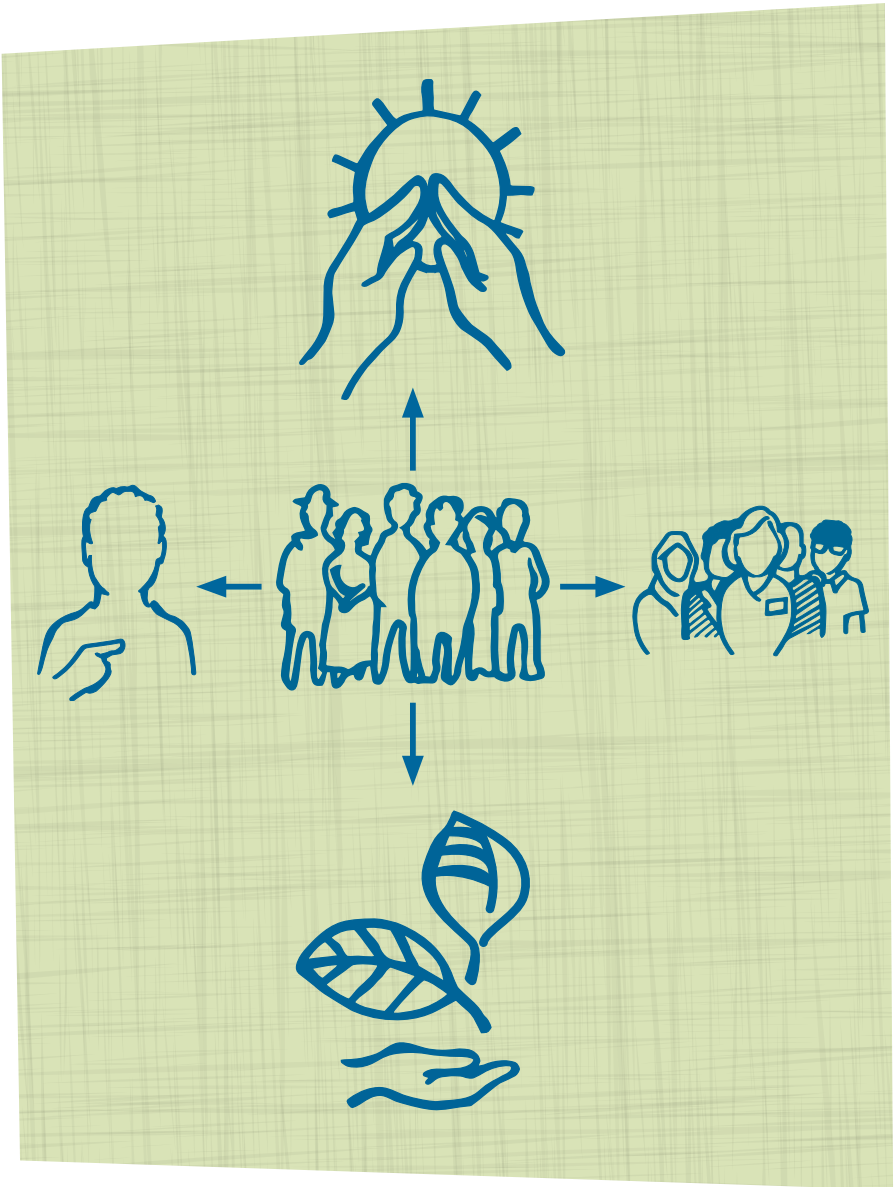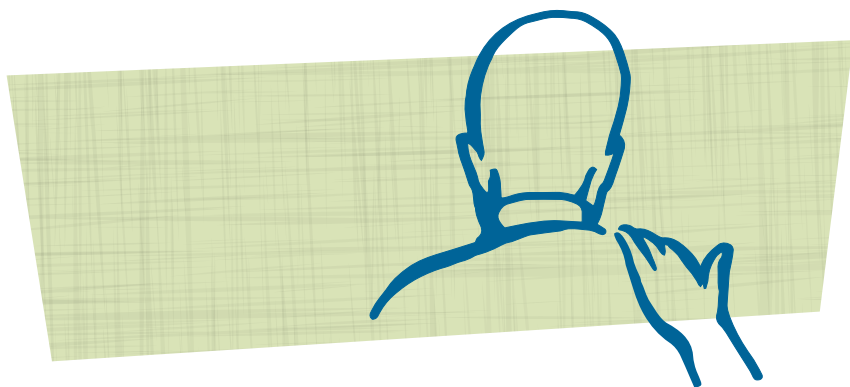
Reconciliation and Justice

FROM A CHRISTIAN perspective, reconciliation and justice are important parts of peacebuilding work. Reconciliation is a process where different actors come together and work towards good relationships after a conflict has taken place. It could be described as a "spiritual process involving forgiveness, repentance and justice that restores broken relationships and systems to reflect God's original intention for all creation to flourish"[9]. The process of reconciliation is key in the idea of shalom, and it involves listening, understanding, and humanizing the Other[10].

In 2010, the Lausanne Movement, gathering Christians from all over the world met in Cape Town to discuss critical issues of the time, with peace as one of the themes. In the Cape Town Commitment, the movement presented its shared Biblical convictions and called Christians all over the world to action. In the following quote, reconciliation is described as a prerequisite for peace:

Reconciliation to God and to one another is also the foundation and motivation for seeking the justice that God requires, without which, God says, there can be no peace. True and lasting reconciliation requires acknowledgment of past and present sin, repentance before God, confession to the injured one, and the seeking and receiving of forgiveness. It also includes commitment by the Church to seeking justice or reparation, where appropriate, for those who have been harmed by violence and oppression. [...] Ethnic diversity is the gift and plan of God in creation. It has been spoiled

by human sin and pride, resulting in confusion, strife, violence and war among nations.

The Cape Town Commitment on peace – The Lausanne Movement

RECONCILIATION CAN BE a hard, and sometimes painful, work – like the cleaning of an infected wound before it can be left to heal. But to make a peace that goes beyond the mere absence of war, it is necessary to engage in this kind of process. Peacebuilding with true reconciliation requires us to work for the realization of the kingdom of God. To make peace, we must take what is broken and work to restore it in the direction of the harmonious state that God intended for the creation.

In the perfect world that God initially created, there was no place for injustice. Thus, in our mission to build the kingdom of God we need to address injustices. Theologian Ruth Padilla De Borst writes: "In any situation in which power is misused and the powerful take advantage of the weak, God takes the side of the weak. In concrete terms, that means God is for the oppressed and against the oppressor, for the exploited and against the exploiter, for the victim and against the victimizer [11].

In our work for peace, we need to follow the example of Jesus and the early Church to challenge harmful norms and structures in society. We need to stand up for the most vulnerable, the oppressed and the destitute[12]. Then we will be true peace*makers*.

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Further reading:

JOHN PAUL LEDERACH, Professor of International Peacebuilding, has further developed the idea of seeing Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace as persons, and has written a short play about what happens when they meet in a conflict setting. The play can be found at:
https://omiusajpic.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Truth-Mercy-Justice-and-Peace-meet.pdf

The Body of Christ

WHEN JESUS WALKED the earth, he talked with and cared for those who were considered sinners or outcasts by the society of his time. He showed that he wanted to include everyone in his kingdom, and that he considered every single person important and worthy of being taken into account. His peace was not intended for a few chosen ones, but for everyone. The apostles, starting off from the day of the Pentecost when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, followed Jesus' example as they began to spread the Gospel around the world, giving rise to a growing group of Christians. The Apostle Paul confirms that everyone should be included on an equal basis when he writes to the Galatians that from now on, there is "neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ"[13].

We can only imagine how revolutionary and provocative the first Church and Christians must have appeared to the people of its time. The followers of Christ were to maintain equal and just relationships with everyone in a society that was otherwise built on strict hierarchical structures. They shared their economic assets equally among themselves and were encouraged to seek out the most vulnerable people in society and give them water, food, and clothes to wear, invite them to their homes and visit them if they were sick or in prison.

Even if Christians of today mostly do not live as the first followers of Christ, the notion that we are all created in the image of God, with a unique and equal human value, is still central to the Christian faith. Thus, just as Jesus showed, every single person, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disabilities, or social status, must be included as we work towards a peaceful society.

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13   Galatians 3:28

Turning the Other Cheek — the nonviolent approach of Jesus

THE FOLLOWING TEXT is a summary of chapter 5 in Walter Wink's book *The Powers That Be – Theology for a new millennium* [14]. The text can be studied individually or used as a Bible study in a workshop about nonviolence. In a workshop setting, you can act out the three scenarios to visualize what happens in each case.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE?

IN THE GOSPEL of Matthew, we can read the following verses about Jesus' thoughts on how to respond to violence and oppressive treatment:

You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth'. But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.[15]

These words have often been interpreted in Christian contexts as a call to passive submission to oppression and have been thought to discourage any kind of resistance against evil. In the light of Jesus' own actions and his other teachings, this seems very strange. Jesus himself resisted evil with every fiber of his being. With this in mind, how can we understand his words about turning the other cheek? In fact, the verses from Matthew are not to be read as a call to submission. Rather, they are quite revolutionary, giving examples of ways to challenge an unjust societal system through means of nonviolent action.

The Greek word translated 'resist' in Matthew 5:39 is *antistenai,* meaning literally to 'stand against'. However, it was a word that was most often used in contexts of warfare, so to the people of that time, it meant more than just 'resist'. It should rather be translated as 'resist violently' or 'engage in armed insurrection'. Consequently, what Jesus was really saying was: "Do not react violently against the one who is evil". Or,

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with words that can be found in several places in the New Testament: "Do not repay evil for evil"[16].

TURN THE OTHER CHEEK

THE EXAMPLES THAT follow confirm this interpretation of the word *antistenai*. First, Jesus says: "If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also". To hit someone on the right cheek, the perpetrator must either use his left hand, or the back of his right hand. Try it out to see for yourself! In Jesus' days, the left hand was considered unclean and could be used only for unclean tasks, so hitting somebody with it would have been out of the question. This means that to hit someone on the right cheek, the only option is to make a backhand blow. This kind of blow was never administered to an equal. It was a blow that was used to insult, humiliate, and degrade the other party. Now, Jesus tells his audience that if somebody hits them with this kind of blow, they should turn the other cheek. What happens then? Well, it becomes impossible for the perpetrator to make another backhand blow. If he does, he will hit the person in the face. The left cheek, on the other hand, offers a perfect target for a blow with the right fist. But only equals fought with fists. What the beaten person is saying by turning the other cheek is not, as is has often been assumed: "You are welcome to hit me again". What he is saying is: "I refuse to be humiliated any longer. If you want to hit me, you must hit me as your equal".

STRIP NAKED

IN JESUS' SECOND example, he pictures a situation where a poor man has been taken to court over an unpaid loan. Indebtedness was a plague in Palestine in Jesus' days and was a direct consequence of the Roman imperial policy. The most severely affected were the ones that were already very poor, and the poorest of the poor literally owned nothing more than the clothes they were wearing. Yet, their wealthier compatriots could take them to court over unpaid loans, and according to the Jewish law, it was allowed to take a person's coat as a compensation if he was not able to pay back what he owed. But when Jesus says: "give your cloak as well", he is not advising people to add to their disadvantage by renouncing justice altogether. What he really does is telling impoverished debtors to use the system against itself. If the person taken to court takes off his cloak, he will basically have stripped naked. Nakedness, at this time, was considered taboo, and the shame fell less on the naked party than on the person viewing or causing the nakedness. By giving away his very last possessions, the poor person demonstrates the injustice of the system, and puts the shame where it belongs, on the shoulders of the creditor. The entire system by which

16   Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9

debtors are oppressed is thus publicly unmasked, and the poor has risen above shame and humiliation.

GO THE SECOND MILE

IN HIS THIRD example, Jesus refers to a practice among Roman soldiers to force people from occupied territories to carry their packs during displacements. This was perfectly allowed according to Roman law and happened regularly. But the distance that one person could be forced to walk with the soldier was limited to one mile. Soldiers who went beyond this threshold would face disciplinary control of his centurion. Jesus was aware of these laws, so when he suggests that the oppressed should walk an extra mile if forced to carry a soldier's pack, he does not do this to encourage people to accept and support the occupying forces. What he does is presenting a way for subdued civilians to take back the initiative. Imagine the reaction of the soldier when, after one mile, he reaches out to get back his pack, and the civilian says: "Oh, no, let me carry it another mile". Normally, soldiers had to coerce people to carry their packs, but here is a person who does it cheerfully, and he will not stop! What is he up to? Will he file a complaint and try to get the soldier disciplined for seeming to violate the rules of his own army? Suddenly, the power roles are reversed as the Roman soldier is pleading with the civilian to give back his pack!

What Jesus is suggesting in his three examples is to meet oppression neither with passivity nor with violence. He presents a third way, through which people can take back their human dignity and oppose violence without mirroring it. This is precisely what nonviolence is about.

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THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONFLICT, VIOLENCE AND PEACE

Theoretical Perspectives on Conflict, Violence and Peace

IN THE PREVIOUS part, we looked at how peacebuilding can be considered an integral part of our mission as Christians. We will now turn to some theoretical aspects of peace and conflict in order to better understand how we can go about working towards peace and a restoration of relations on different levels. With a deeper knowledge of the mechanisms that drive conflicts, and the factors that promote peace, it becomes easier to evaluate any current situation as well as our own actions and those of people around us, and to see how we can contribute to a more peaceful society.

What is a Conflict?

WE WILL START by looking at our understanding of conflict. Conflict is an inevitable social phenomenon and something that we can all relate to, in one way or another. Conflicts take on many different forms. They can be small and short-lived, or they can stretch over centuries. They can include as little as two individuals, or entire nations. Yet, the essence of what a conflict is can be described as follows:

Conflict is a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals[17].

If we break this definition down into pieces, we first find that a conflict is about *a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups).* This means that conflicts can occur for example between individuals, between

groups in society or between states.

We then turn to *incompatible goals*, which can be seen as the core of the conflict. All people and all groups have goals that they pursue in various ways. Sometimes, these different goals clash. Two groups of people want the same piece of land. Two colleagues both want to go on holiday at the same time, but the company they work for needs one of them to work. This is where the conflict arises because both parties cannot have what they want.

However, the third piece of the definition: *who have, or think they have,* is important to keep in mind. It is not necessarily the incompatibility in itself that gives rise to conflict, but the idea or conviction among the conflicting parties that there is an incompatibility. This shows how conflict is not only based on the external reality, but also on the attitudes and expectations of those involved.

The definition above is very basic, but that does not mean that conflicts are always easily defined. On the contrary, they often include many different factors and many incompatibilities, or perceived incompatibilities. Let us illustrate with a case: two kids fighting over the larger piece of a cake split in two after finishing a meal. At a first glance, the fight seems to be about who gets the largest chunk – the largest piece of the allocated resources. This is the most apparent incompatibility: both kids want the bigger piece, but only one of them can have it. However, the conflict can also highlight more aspects than

the fight over resources. It can expose what the kids consider to be fair rules in this context ("*She didn't finish her vegetables – but I did!*"), perhaps in historical context ("*He got the largest piece last time*"). It will reveal aspects about the relationship between actors in the conflict *("You always spoil her more than me!"*) and negotiations about the future ("*Next time I will get the larger piece, remember!").*

These examples from an inter-personal level can help us understand conflicts on organisational, institutional, societal, and international levels, as well as the importance of analysing a conflict in order to understand its meanings. It is always important to remember that conflicts are often complex, with many different, intertwined issues and incompatibilities. Moreover, if not transformed constructively, conflicts can lead to more conflicts, creating new incompatibilities, poisoning relationships, and deepening the gap between groups. They can also create a strong conception of *us and them*, by which stereotypical portraits of the other part are formed and reinforced, and issues become even more entangled. This process is described more in detail in part 3.

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Conflicts are Not
Inherently Bad

TRY TO REMEMBER a personal conflict that you have gone through, for example at home, at work or with a friend. Think about what happened during the conflict. What was it about? Who was involved? How would you define the incompatibility?

When you have described the situation to yourself, try to remember the feelings you experienced during the conflict. Were they mainly feelings that are perceived as negative, such as frustration, fear, aggression, sorrow, or impotence? Or did you also experience something else at some stage of the conflict, like relief, strength, or power?

Once you have thought through the conflict itself, try to remember what happened next. How did the conflict end? Did you get out of it feeling like a winner or a looser? Did the conflict lead to some sort of change? And finally: if you could go back in time and do something to prevent the conflict from taking place, would you do that?

Because conflicts are so diverse, the answers to the questions above will vary a lot, depending on who you are and what conflict you have chosen to recall. Some might say that the conflict they are thinking about was totally unnecessary, and that they would gladly have it undone. Others might think that even if the conflict was difficult to go through, it led to a good outcome. Some conflicts might even have been necessary to pursue.

Examples of conflicts

HERE FOLLOWS A few examples of conflicts, some that can take place in the everyday life and some more severe and with more far-reaching implications. What do you think of them? Were they necessary? Could or should they have been avoided? Could the situation have been handled in another way?

ADELINE AND MARIELLA

ADELINE AND MARIELLA have known each other since preschool. Now, they have just graduated from university. Adeline has been offered a job that she has dreamt of for years, but that is now taking up all her time. Mariella has not been that lucky in her search for work, and despite herself, she is getting more and more jealous of her friend. When it is time for Mariella to celebrate her birthday, she does not invite Adeline. Adeline hears about the birthday party from another friend and calls Mariella to ask if there is a problem. Mariella says dryly that she did not think that Adeline would have the time to come anyway, since she seems to spend all her time at work these days. Adeline replies that she would love to come, but Mariella has already hung up on her. After this incident, the two friends avoid each other for months, even though they both miss each other.

MIKA AND JOSHUA

MIKA AND JOSHUA work at a small company. They have similar working tasks, and share a workroom with two desks, a few shelves, and a small coffee table. Every afternoon before leaving office, Mika spends some time tidying up the workroom, removing coffee cups and sweeping the floor. Joshua always leaves as soon as he can, and never notices Mika's work. After some time, Mika is getting tired of always doing the extra work of cleaning. One afternoon, he asks if Joshua could not, for once, take his own coffee cups to the kitchen and sweep the floor. Joshua retorts that he is not employed as a cleaner. Mika replies that neither is he, but that somebody has to take care of the mess that Joshua creates every day. They both leave work in anger that day. But the next day, when they have both thought through the situation, they sit down and decide on a fairer division of work.

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THE CONFLICT IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA[18]

IN A NUMBER of former communist countries, the collapse of the Soviet Union led to violent transitions to non-communist regimes. Such rapid transition brought to the surface latent conflicts and internal divisions. One example was former Yugoslavia, which disintegrated in a series of violent conflicts, including conflicts in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. The conflict took a devastating human toll. Ethnic cleansing and other atrocities in Kosovo resulted in an estimated 10,000 civilian deaths, over 1.5 million internally displaced persons and refugees, the burning of homes, the use of human shields in combat, rape as an instrument of war, and summary executions.

ROSA PARKS AND THE BUS SEAT

AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE historically suffered a lot from different sorts of violence, segregation, and discrimination in the US. On December 1, 1955, the African American seamstress Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery city bus to a white man, a violation of the city's racial segregation laws. Rosa Parks was arrested for her act of disobedience, something that led to anger among the African American communities, and to a campaign to boycott the Montgomery Bus Company, organized by a young Baptist minister named Martin Luther King, Jr. After more than a year of boycotts, the US Supreme Court ruled that bus segregation was unconstitutional. Many believe that Rosa Parks' act of initiating conflict in a peaceful manner has sparked the Civil Rights movement in the US and the restoration of rights and human dignity [19].

WE OFTEN TEND to connect conflicts primarily with the negative feelings that they produce. And because we instinctively dislike negative feelings, we see conflicts as something that should be avoided. But conflicts are also an opportunity for social change, and as such, they cannot be totally eradicated and should, in fact, not be avoided. Instead, they must be seized in a constructive way. The aim should not be to prevent conflicts from expressing themselves, but rather to avoid the negative and destructive elements and impact of conflict, namely violence in different forms. We will examine this further in the following sections.

Conflicts, when analysed, can tell us something about the world, and about how to heal it in a sustainable way. In the best of cases, they help us to be inventive and find new solutions to difficult problems. If conflicts are handled constructively, they can turn into something positive in the long run. As the authors of the book *Working with Conflict 2* point out, positive effects of conflicts include "making people aware of problems, promoting necessary change, improving solutions, raising morale, fostering personal development, increasing self-awareness [and] enhancing psychological maturity"[20].

Through conflicts, social change expresses itself and takes place, imbalance of power and injustices are exposed, and needs of individuals and groups are revealed.

Therefore, when we think of conflicts, we should not only think of them as negative, violent social phenomena that we need to prevent, get rid of, or ignore. Rather, we should think of them as opportunities for positive change and for restoration of human dignity.

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Conflicts in Different Phases

AS WE SAW earlier in this chapter, conflicts are complex social phenomena. They seldom follow standard paths, and there is no general formula on how to solve them. Yet, as we will see in this section, it can sometimes be helpful to look at the progress of conflicts from a theoretical perspective, and to distinguish between five different conflict phases. These phases, which are illustrated in the conflict curve below, all have their own characteristics, and require different responses when it comes to containing the negative aspects of conflict. It might be important to highlight that the field

of peace and conflict studies is relatively new and very dynamic. Therefore, the definitions of the terms used below have differed historically and can differ from one scholar to another. In this text, we focus on giving a general overview, rather than debating the exact definition of each term.

We start by looking at the middle stage, where the intensity of conflict is at its peak, and the use of direct violence is high. Depending on the type of conflict, this violence might manifest itself as family members or work colleagues yelling at each other, a
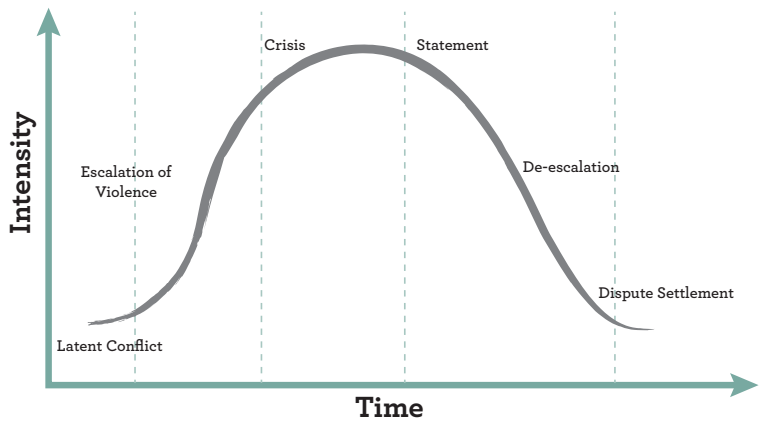
group of a certain ethnicity attacking and burning down the houses of another group, or armies exchanging fires and bombing each other. At this stage, when behaviours are highly destructive, it is almost impossible to solve the root causes of the conflict. The only meaningful thing that can be done is to try to decrease the intensity of violence and the negative impact it has on people affected by the conflict. This can be done through separating the warring parties from each other, trying to reach a cease-fire agreement, or even using some force to coerce the warring parties to cease their use of violence.

'peace' in an area of armed conflict. Other examples could be the national police intervening to prevent the angry mobs from burning down houses, or taking one of the fighting co-workers out of the room until they both calm down. Other actions of protection, like providing humanitarian aid, can also be placed under this approach, as they aim at soothing the negative impact of the violent conflict on the community that suffers from it.

When the warring parties have settled down and are able to sit together, or with a third party, to discuss the conflict in order to solve it, they can
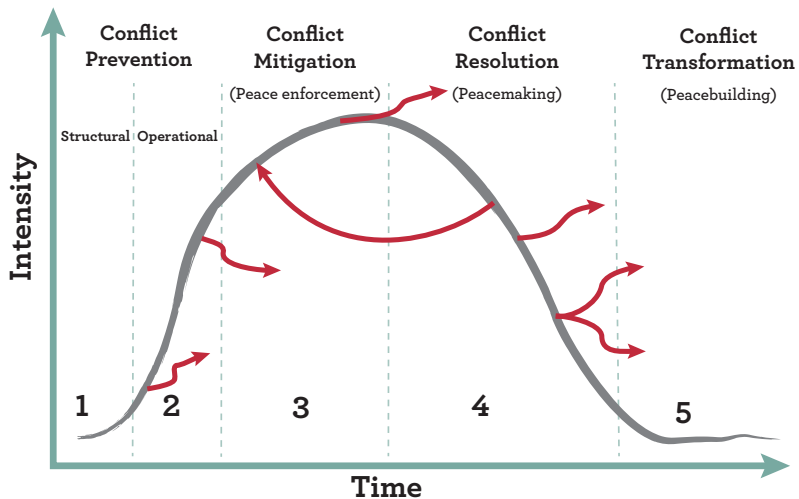
This can be referred to as *conflict mitigation*, or peace enforcement. The most well-known example of this is the UN Peacekeeping Forces, which are deployed to maintain or re-establish

move to the next stage and work on *conflict resolution*, which can also be referred to as peacemaking. At this stage, various tools and approaches can help the parties in conflict to reach a

resolution that is well accepted by all of them. Among these tools and techniques are negotiation, mediation, arbitration, litigation, conflict resolution workshops, and community dialogue facilitation.

Once the conflict is resolved and parties feel satisfied with the outcomes, we face another question: Is it over? The risk that the parties will fight over the same issue again has decreased, because the root causes of that issue are resolved. But what if they resort to violence against each other again whenever they face a similar situation in the future? Here, we get to the importance of *conflict transformation*, or peacebuilding. At this stage, the aim is to build a community where people have peaceful tools to resolve their conflicts, and where bridges of mutual respect, trust, and knowledge exist between different groups. Conflict transformation is a long-term process that eventually aims at creating change at the personal, relational, structural, and cultural levels. It pursues the elimination of all forms of violence in the community. To obtain this, several approaches can be deployed. Some of them are very formal, like a reformation of the judicial or the electoral system, or the reinforcement of law. But enhancing social capital or working with poverty reduction or promoting human rights can also be a part of peacebuilding.

We now go back to the first two stages of the conflict curve. They both fall under what is called *conflict prevention*. Here, we must remember what was said previously about conflict as an opportunity for social change. Prevention

is *not* about avoiding the conflict or making sure it does not manifest itself. It is rather about preventing it from escalating into violent and destructive behaviours. In stage 1 and 2, conflicts are less visible and detectable. In stage 1, they are completely buried under the surface. Working at this stage to address the structural causes of conflict can be referred to as *structural conflict prevention*. Just like the stage of conflict transformation, this stage covers many areas like advocacy, law reform, basic education, and social justice. In fact, many would say that structural conflict prevention characteristics overlap with those of conflict transformation. Life is not linear, but rather cycles, and the end of this curve meets the start of the next one.

In stage 2, indicators of violence start to manifest themselves, and an early intervention needs to take place in order to make sure that this does not transform into wide-scale violence. This can be referred to as *operational conflict prevention*. One of the main techniques that should be deployed at this stage is Early Warning and Response (EWR), which is usually done through the systematic collection and analysis of information coming from areas of crisis, for the purpose of undertaking timely and appropriate prevention initiatives to protect the community from declining into violence.

Finally, it is important to highlight once again that conflicts are complex. They can be unpredictable, and they can contradict a lot of our theoretical

knowledge. Therefore, conflicts do not necessarily take such a simple trajectory as shown in the curve but may escalate and deescalate differently in relation to different factors. It is also important to stress that in reality, there is no clear-cut separation between the different stages, as they normally overlap. Nevertheless, this diagram helps us to see conflict more clearly and consider the best means for intervention at each stage.

What is Violence?

AFTER EXAMINING AND defining conflict, we will now turn to the term *violence*. There are many ways to explain what violence is. At PMU, we often use the definition of the peace researcher Johan Galtung, who has written:

I see violence as avoidable insults to basic human needs, and more generally to life, lowering the real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible.[21]

This phrase contains a lot of information, and to grasp its full meaning, it can be helpful to break it down into pieces:

Let us start with the *basic human needs*. All human beings would most probably consider water, food, shelter, and life itself as basic human needs, without which we cannot survive. But how about the quality of the food or the shelter? How about education, is that also a basic human need? We could surely survive without it, but our quality of life would be seriously affected. How about freedom? Relationships with other people? How about nature? Internet? The most reasonable answer is probably to say that the definition of basic human needs is relative and changes from context to context.

The next piece of the definition that we will look into is *insults*. According to Galtung, the unfulfillment or denial of a basic human need represents an insult to this need. If we agree that water is a basic human need, and someone makes sure that another person does not get access to water, that would be a very clear insult. Another example would be that the state withholds proper healthcare to a certain group, something that eventually leads to death. This would be an insult to the basic human need of health care, and ultimately to life.

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Let us continue to *avoidable.* Here, a historical perspective can be helpful. In the middle of the 14*th* century, the Black Death is estimated to have killed 30–60% of Europe's total population. Health and life are basic human needs, so certainly, there were a lot of insults to basic human needs during this epidemic. Does that mean that the casualties of the Black Death were a form of violence? To answer this question, we need to ask ourselves if the epidemic was avoidable with the technological and medical knowledge existing in Europe at that time. Well, it was not. Therefore, according to Galtung's definition, the Black Death of the 14*th* century should not be classified as violence. However, if one third of Europe's population would die from the Black Death today, the situation would probably be defined differently. Today, the European countries generally have good health care systems, a much better knowledge about how to treat patients with contagious diseases, and the possibility to develop effective medicines. Such massive death numbers as during the Black Death would hardly be seen if governments, together with health care officials and

researchers, took proper action to prevent the catastrophe. And a failure to act when you have the possibility to do something would, according to Galtung, be classified as violence.

The final part of the definition says that violence *lowers the real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible.* This part, which is related to the notion about basic human needs, is about seeing the potentials of each person or each situation and strive for the best possible scenario. This is one of the biggest challenges that comes with violence, because with time, violence becomes normalized, and people start accepting it as something natural, to the extent that they do not realise that something is wrong. They end up lowering their expectations from life and altering their notions about what can be considered basic human needs. Consequently, they also lower the level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible. Hence, a wife beaten by her husband, or a girl deprived from education become the norm that everyone accepts, including the victims, and everyone sustains.

Violence Comes in Many Shapes

AS WE HAVE seen above, violence in the broad definition of Galtung can come in many shapes. When we think about violence, we most often think of its overt and direct forms, like beatings, shootings, or the use of force to coerce someone into doing something. But let us broaden this picture by considering the following account, which is made up, but which has many similarities with real-life situations in different contexts around the world:

A group of people, let it be an ethnic, a religious, or a socio-economic group, is an outcast minority group in a country. For the purpose of this text, we can call them the Minos. Although, the Minos have lived in the same country for hundreds of years, they are believed to have historically emigrated from a neighbouring area. They have traditionally been seen as servants, and they are often exploited and work under slave-like conditions. Other groups perceive the Minos as filthy and violent, among other negative stereotypes. They are deprived from being registered as citizens, and hence have no legal status. Consequently, they have no legal right to public amenities such as medical care and free university education.

When the government decides to issue a law for the equal distribution of land, the Minos are not included as one of the beneficiary groups. This means that if somebody else takes advantage of the new law to claim a piece of land where the Minos live, the Minos can legally be kicked out of their homes and loose the pity livelihood means that they depend on. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, the Minos gather in large numbers in the streets to protest against the new law, demanding to be included and granted the same rights as everyone else. The protests are mostly peaceful, but some of them take a more violent turn, and cases of arson and looting are reported. The government reacts violently and mobilizes the military to strike back with force. After a few days of unrest, the Head of State addresses the citizens and demands them to intervene and prevent the Minos from acquiring gains through violence. He tells the Minos that they are making things worse and threatens to kick them out of the country if they do not retract and subdue. He even restates the historical allegations that they are the descendants of immigrants and that they do not belong in the country. The citizens

respond to the call and go out to attack the Minos and torch down their homes. Eventually, 'order' is restored.

The only direct violence that is being manifested in the scenario above are the looting and arson cases committed by the Minos during the demonstrations, as well as the strike back of the military and citizens. However, judging by the definition of Galtung, there are far more aspects in the situation that can be classified as violence. In his research, Galtung has defined three different types of violence. We only tend to see the first form, but the two others are not less grave or harmful.

First, there is the **direct violence**, which we have already mentioned. It refers to visible forms of violence, like beating or sexual abuse, but also threats and verbal insults. It might be exerted in public or more discretely, but it is a tangible form of violence with a concrete perpetrator, and it is usually easy to define.

Secondly, there is **structural violence**, which can be defined as structures in society that prevent people from realizing their full potential or from enjoying their human rights, usually because they are members of certain groups. This form of violence

does not have a clear perpetrator but is manifested through exploitation and abuse built into our norms, laws, systems, institutions, social hierarchies, political systems, and economic status. In the scenario above, the inability of the Minos to receive proper healthcare and education, as well as their potential loss of shelter and livelihood due to the new law, are clear examples of structural violence.

Thirdly, there is **cultural violence**, which can be defined as any aspect of a culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence, and to inhibit or suppress the response of the victims. Cultural violence does not directly kill or deprive from rights, yet it is harmful because it normalizes violence, and makes it acceptable and sometimes even needed. In the case of the Minos, the interpretation of history which leads to the labelling of this group as outsiders who do not deserve to be treated equally is a form of cultural violence. Likewise, the discourse that the Minos are inferior or inherently violent or filthy is also a form of cultural violence, making it acceptable and justified to discriminate against them and violently persecute them to 'protect ourselves' .

The Iceberg Model

THE DIFFERENT FORMS of violence can be illustrated as an iceberg floating in water. The direct violence is the tip that is visible above the surface. This is the abuse that we see, like war, corporal punishment, or fights. The structural violence is the large part that lies under the surface. It is more difficult to detect but not less harmful. The cultural violence is the cold air and water, upholding the iceberg and making sure it does not melt.

This way of seeing violence as an iceberg can help us to remember that violence occurs even where there is no direct visible perpetrator. Sometimes, these forms of violence are so embedded in our culture and worldview that we do not even notice them. They are just the way things are. If we aim to be peacemakers, we need to uncover and be aware of the unrighteous structures and cultural justifications of violence around

us. Only then can we pay attention to them and try to understand what role we can take in breaking them. In the example above, the Minos are told that they are making things worse by resorting to violence. While this might be true, the speech of the Head of State fails to recognize that the people are already victims of structural violence, and that for them, the situation is already very bad. The problem is not solved just because 'order' is restored. The calmness and order may be temporarily restored, but the underlying conflict remains.

In the cultural and structural forms of violence, we can often find the foundations of the visible form of violence. In situations of overt and direct violations of human dignity, like genocide or the use of sexual violence in conflict, structural and cultural violence is working to uphold the iceberg of violence and justify the direct forms.

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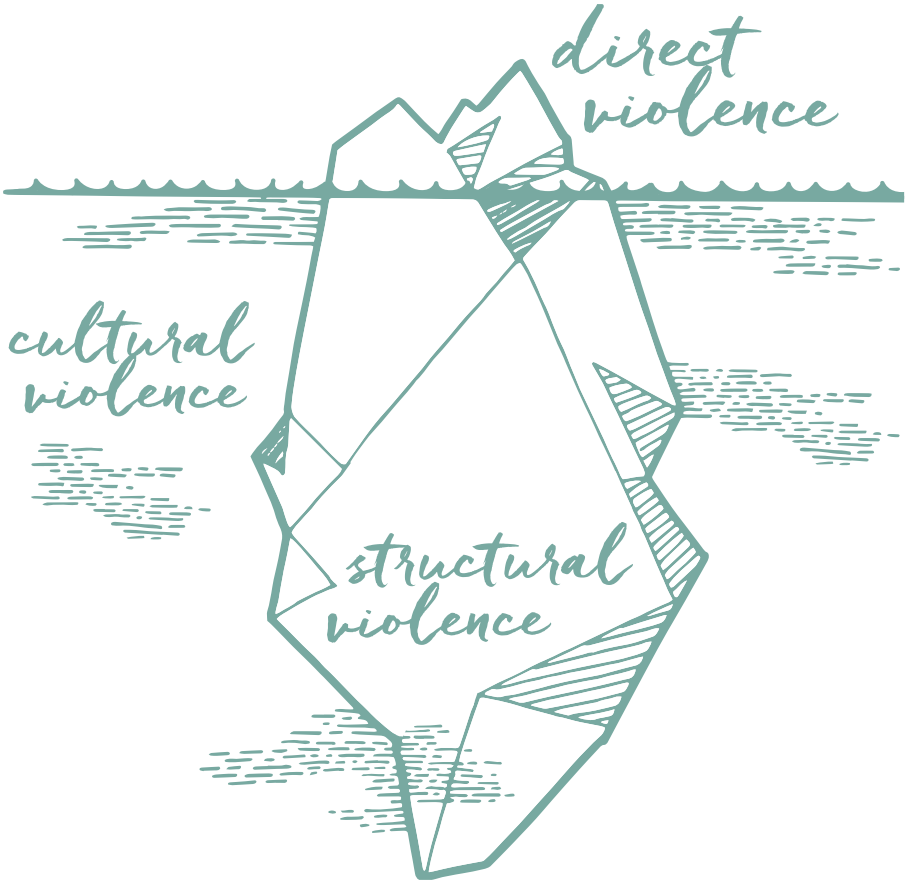
In-depth *– examples of structural and cultural violence*

Structural violence can be categorized into:

SYSTEMS, INSTITUTIONS, SOCIAL HIERARCHY, ECONOMIC STATUS, AND NORMS.

IT IS NOT possible to find any individual who is responsible for the structural violence. The perpetrator is a societal structure or structures. As an example, there might be laws regulating the way one group can relate to another group, as under Apartheid or Nazi Germany where ownership, marriage, work, and many other things were regulated based on race. Another example would be the exclusion of certain groups in society from essential services like education or health care, like when a group does not have access to health care because no clinics are built close to where they live, or they do not have equal access to education because the teachers use a language that they do not understand. A long-term marginalisation of a group can create strong structures of poverty.

Cultural violence can be categorized into:

RELIGION, SCIENCE, ART, LANGUAGE, AND IDEOLOGY.

WHEN WE SPEAK about cultural violence, it is even harder to see any perpetrator, or even a structure. Cultural violence relates to ideas, concepts, and languages within a culture that can be used to justify or legitimize violence in its direct or structural forms. For example, male warriors, liberators, and kings make up the lion's share of the official curriculum in history that is passed down to children, and monuments over these 'big men' appear in public places. This sends a message about who is important in a society, and what important people are supposed to be doing. Religion has been used to justify crusades, inquisitions, caste system, gender inequality and more. The Nazi party justified their ideology with racist science such as phrenology. Our language is full of expressions that reinforces gender inequalities, like "boys will be boys", or "stop crying like a girl!" In literature and in movies, the antagonist often has traits from or connections to a nation that is perceived as a threat to the home country of the producer: just consider all the 'bad guys' with Russian, Middle Eastern, or Chinese origin in Hollywood movies.

What is Peace?

AS WE HAVE hopefully gained some new insights on conflict and violence, we will now turn to our understanding of peace. If we were asked to explain the meaning of the term *peace* in a few words, many of us would probably say that peace is the opposite of war. But while this might be a valid definition, it immediately leads to a new question: What is war? There are a few different definitions of war in the field of peace and conflict research. According to the Uppsala conflict database, a war is "a state-based conflict [...] which reaches at least 1000 battle-related deaths in a specific calendar year"[22]. The United States Institute of Peace writes that "war is sustained fighting between conventional military forces, paramilitary forces, or guerrilla"[23]. Common for these definitions, as well as many others, is that war includes a considerable amount of direct violence. If it is true that peace is the opposite of war, this would imply that all societies that are not experiencing large scale direct violence are, in fact, at peace.

However, the absence of war as an open manifestation of violence only indicates that the tip of the iceberg has been removed. It does not say much about the larger part of violence that exists under the surface. This kind of peace, namely the mere absence of direct violence or war, could be referred to as *negative peace.* It is a peace where poverty, sexism, racism, and other unjust structures are allowed to remain. It is a peace where we can hear the eco of the prophet Jeremiah: "'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace"[24].

On the other hand, a situation with no direct, structural, or cultural violence, could be referred to as *positive peace.* The concept of positive peace is similar to that of shalom, which was introduced in the first part of this book. They both describe a situation of harmony, justice for all and whole relationships between individuals, between groups of people and between humankind and nature. No society lives in perfect positive peace. It is rather a

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24 Jeremiah 6:14

vision and a goal to strive for.

We can work towards a more peaceful society at any time during the conflict curve, including the periods when the society in question does not experience any open violence at all. In a situation with very few manifestations of direct violence, we can still build peace by addressing problems and injustices created by societal structures or upheld by the culture. In that way, we can contribute to a peace that is more inclusive and more stable – a peace for everyone in society.

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KEY PERSPECTIVES TO INTEGRATE IN THE WORK FOR PEACE

Key Perspectives to Integrate in the Work for Peace

THE PREVIOUS PART presented an overview of some of the core concepts of conflict, violence, and peace. In this third part, we will discuss a few other perspectives that are important to consider when working for peace. The list of perspectives that we have chosen to highlight is not exhaustive, and there are surely other important points of view that could be discussed as well. But we do find these perspectives representative for the different challenges that PMU's partners encounter in their work. We also believe that they are key when it comes to analysing and understanding a specific context in relation to questions of conflict and peace.

Even though the different perspectives are presented under separate headlines below, they should not be seen as separate entities. Rather, they are interconnected and relate to each other in many ways. They are also different in nature. For instance, some refer to a specific group of people, while others concern social structures or a way of working. We will start with the perspective of group dynamics and the importance of working for social cohesion. We will then move on to the issues of gender, youth, environment, and conflict sensitivity in development and humanitarian work. Lastly, we will consider these different perspectives in relation to the role of the Church in peacebuilding.

Us and Them and Peacebuilding

IN THE SECTION "What is a Conflict", it was pointed out that conflicts often create strong conceptions of *us and them*. This process, as well as the potential risks connected with it, are described more in detail here.

As human beings, we tend to categorize both things and people into different groups. This is natural, and a necessary way to make sense of the world. By identifying the differences, we are able to understand the world and use language to communicate with each other. However, there are two risks connected with this process of categorization, that can be related to questions of peace and conflict. One of them is that the division of people into different groups may create strong structures of fragmentation and exclusion. When groups are formed and reinforced, those who do not belong to the group will inevitably be excluded. This is part of a group's nature, and everyone cannot, or does not want to, belong to every group that exists in a given context. But when the boundaries that define a group become too rigid, making it

difficult to enter or leave the group, or hindering members of different groups from interacting in a natural way, they fragmentize communities. If we want to work towards a peace for all, it is important to remember that everyone should be included in this peace, not only the ones that belong to *us*.

The second risk, which is connected to the first one, is about over-simplifying other people and seeing them as stereotypes. In the 1950's, Frantz Fanon and later on Edward Said examined the concept of the *Other*, which had been developed by philosophers over the 19th and 20th centuries as a counterpart to the *Self*. Fanon and Said built on this concept to describe how Westerners had looked upon Africans or people from the orient, and how the European identity had been created in contrast to the Other while at the same time simplifying the Other into a stereotype. This division between "the West and the Rest" is probably one of the most blatant examples of categorization and stereotyping, and one that has serious implications in our contemporary

societies. But the same kind of process takes place in and between other groups and constellations as well. In one way or another, we are all creating our identities in contrast with each other and with others. For example, we know what it is to be British because it is to be not French or not American. And we have expectations on how women should act in a certain culture because it is different from how we expect men to act in the same context. We create cultural differences between groups that easily become simplified, limiting, and harmful. In one of her TED talks, the author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie refers to these invented, perceived, or exaggerated differences as "the danger of a single story"[25].

This means that when we tell only one story about what it is to be a woman, a man, Asian, American, African, or European, we fall into the trap of stereotyping each other and reinforcing differences. Stereotypes and single stories divide people and groups, be it based on politics, age, ethnicity, or what opinion we have about the plans to build a new highway right through the area where we live. They may strengthen the mentality of *us and them* and reinforce or even create conflicts between groups.

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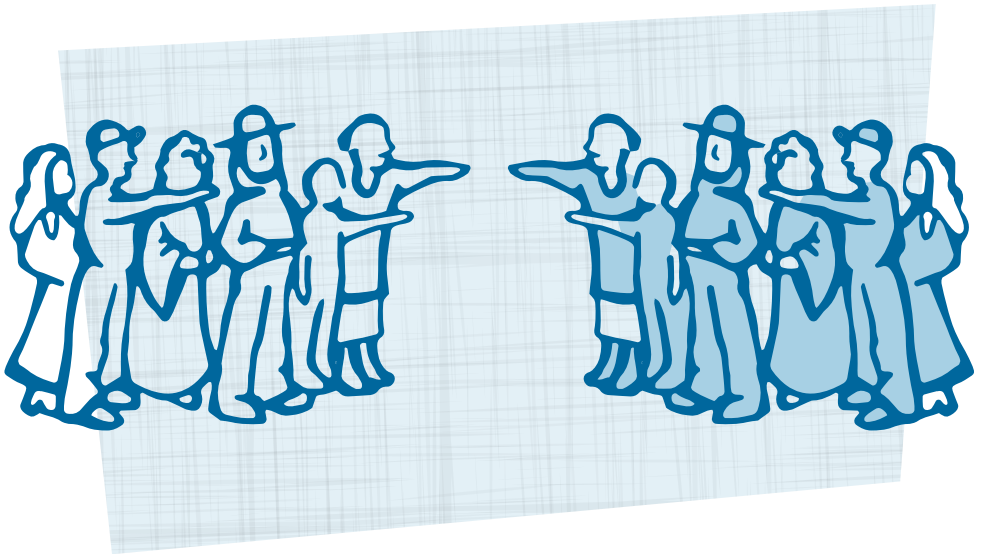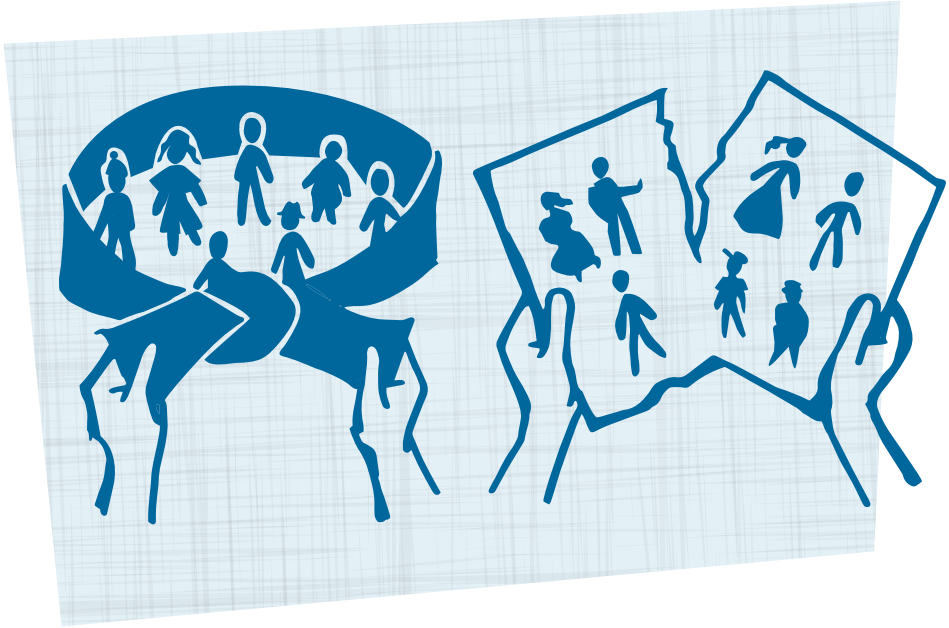
CONNECTORS AND DIVIDERS IN OUR SOCIETIES

ONE WAY TO take action for peace is to try to counteract the possible negative effects of categorization. We can do this by identifying what works in a society – the constructive relationships that already exist and the good forces that contribute to a healthy community – and act to strengthen these factors, or *connectors* as they are often called within the field of peace and conflict. Systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, common values and interests, common experiences, or symbols and occasions can all contribute to bringing people together across dividing lines and conflict boundaries. They can

play a constructive role in increasing trust, cooperation, interdependence, and equality. Examples of connectors are traditions, sports, faith, a common belief in the importance to care for the environment or an appreciated yearly parade through the city.

Just as there are things that bring people together in a society, there are also things that separate them. As we saw above, differences between people, and the fact that we tend to notice these differences, is not a problem in itself. But when the differences are emphasized and reinforced, they may play an important role in creating or sustaining a conflict. The separating factors, also called *dividers*, can be found in the same categories as the connectors. They can be

systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, different values and interests, different experiences, or symbols and occasions. An institution that favours one specific ethnic group over other groups is not a connector, and neither is a sports event if the two competing teams come from two different parts of a city that have a history of mutual distrust and hostilities.

One of the challenges when it comes to connectors and dividers is that they can sometimes be difficult to detect. Especially connectors may fall under what is simply seen as 'normal' in a society. When things are functioning and life goes on as expected, we do not always reflect on why this is the case. But when something goes wrong, we can work hard to identify the problem and its underlying causes. Because of this, we tend to focus more on dividers than on connectors, thus forgetting the good forces for peace that already exist in a society. But if we want to strive towards a positive peace, we cannot afford to ignore the factors that contribute to realizing that vision.

Gender and Peacebuilding

CONFLICT AFFECTS WOMEN and men in different ways. More men than women die in direct combat, but because of stereotypical gender roles and inequalities in society, women and girls are more vulnerable before, during and after a conflict. This makes them a target for a longer period. Conflicts increase the rates of sexual violence, abuse, trafficking, limited mobility, famine, and much more. Crimes against women, such as sexual violence, occur on a large scale in conflicts but are often neglected or ignored.

In many conflicts, conceptions about masculinity often promote and justify violent behaviours and sexual violence. Research shows that countries suffering from high levels of gender-based violence and inequalities are more vulnerable to civil wars and severe forms of violence during conflicts[26]. In crises, many men change some of their core values and identities. The identities associated with 'protector/warrior' increase in importance while others, such as identities associated to 'father/mentor' decrease[27]. Increased domestic violence and limitation to women's mobility can

be viewed as early warnings of social instability and conflicts[28]. The different socially structured roles of women and men in relation to violence and conflicts should not be ignored. But it is also important to remember that just as both men and women can promote peace in conflict situations, both men and women can promote negative identities that uphold a system that rewards a violent behaviour. These roles must be identified and challenged.

To build sustainable peace, the participation of everybody is needed, and peacebuilding needs to take place at all levels and in all parts of a society. This is both a question of everyone's right to be represented and a question of sustainability. When all groups in society are represented and feel they have been heard and respected in a peace agreement, the peace is much more likely to last in the long run. Despite this knowledge, women are often excluded from peace agreements and peace processes. As an example, between 1992 and 2019, on average, only 13 percent of negotiators, 6 percent of mediators, and 6 percent of signatories

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in major peace processes worldwide were women. About 70 percent of all peace processes examined did not include women mediators or women signatories at all[29]. Consequently, women's valuable perspectives and experiences were left out.

An important step towards a change in this regard was the launch of the *UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security* in 2000, which is widely referred to as the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. This resolution highlights the need to work broadly, focusing on what is called *the three P's:* prevention, protection, and participation of women. It has been followed by the adaptation of policies and development projects promoting and protecting women and girls around the world. The Women, Peace and Security Agenda is an important global framework and a tool that can be used to influence decision makers at different levels to involve women in meaningful ways.

However, things are moving slowly and the patterns that maintain the exclusion of women are hard to break as they are upheld by discriminatory structures with justifications deeply rooted in our cultures. Women's lack of access to education, domestic violence, and cultural conceptions about what role a woman can take in public life are just

some examples of what might hinder the participation of women. Initiatives to promote women's participation in peacebuilding need to create enabling cultures on many levels.

The Church has the potential to play an important role for women to be heard. In many churches, the majority of the members are women, and the local church is often an important platform in the community. Unfortunately, the structures that hinder women's meaningful participation in society also affect their participation in church. For those who want to work more in depth with this issue, PMU has published a toolbox on church and gender which might give some ideas and inspiration.

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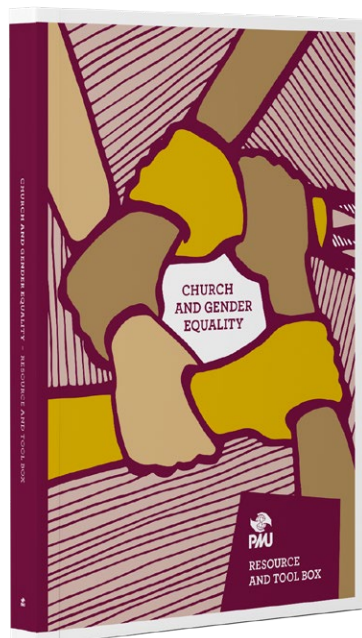
Youth and Peacebuilding

YOUNG PEOPLE CONSTITUTE the majority of the population living in conflict areas and in countries with ongoing peace processes. Yet, traditional peacebuilding efforts and peace negotiations have failed to include youth into peace processes or to involve them in decisions and discussions of their concern. Despite this, young people carry out essential work for peacebuilding in many places. Their voices and contributions should not be neglected. Peace needs to be built in a representative way, because everyone has the right to be heard, and because a broad involvement in peace processes makes peace more sustainable.

Youth is a large and very diverse group in society. However, they are often portrayed in a stereotypical manner, something that might hinder their possibility to participate in meaningful ways. Negative gendered stereotypes are associated with young people in relation to conflicts. A young man is usually characterized as a security threat: volatile, armed, part of criminal gangs, active in mobs, easily manipulated. A young woman is often depicted as a victim: passive and vulnerable, or, in

worst case, she is simply invisible. At the other end of the scale, there is also a risk of falling for stereotypes that overly glorify youth in relation to peace. Not all youth want to work for peace or are easily mobilized for social change. Furthermore, development actors might fall into the pit of using youth and children in a non-meaningful way, as a token, without any real involvement of influence. Youth activities including sport, arts, leisure, or new technology can be beneficial in many ways, but to see them as the primary or only way for young people to participate in peacebuilding is to trivialize their participation, or even mislead it.

To build peace in an inclusive way, we need initiatives that are youth sensitive. This means that they respond to, and are based on, the needs and aspirations of young people. Initiatives should also be youth inclusive, meaning that young people can participate in a meaningful way at different stages. Youth inclusion and a youth sensitive approach is necessary in all interventions that have an impact on young people, whether they are beneficiaries of a project, involved as

partners, or supported as youth leaders.

An important step to raise the issue of youth and peace was the launch of the *UN Security Council's Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security* in 2015. This resolution highlights the need to work broadly and identifies five key pillars for action: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration. Just as the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda is a relevant global framework and a tool that can be used to influence decision makers to involve youth in a meaningful way.

Another important initiative by the UN is a set of nine guiding principles that have been developed by the Subgroup on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding, which is part of the United Nations Interagency Network on Youth Development. More than 1,000 stakeholders and organisations participated in the development of the document, aiming to inspire and support various actors to include young people in peace processes in meaningful ways. The principles cover areas such as promoting young people's participation, involving them in all stages of peacebuilding and valuing their diversity and experiences, being sensitive to gender dynamics, enhancing young people's knowledge and skills, and investing in intergenerational partnerships.

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The nine guiding principles on young people's participation in peacebuilding

1. Promote young people's participation as an essential condition for successful peacebuilding

2. Value and build upon young people's diversity and experiences

3. Be sensitive to gender dynamics

4. Enable young people's ownership, leadership and accountability in peacebuilding

5. Do No Harm

6. Involve young people in all stages of peacebuilding and post-conflict programming

7. Enhance the knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies of young people for peacebuilding

8. Invest in intergenerational partnerships in young people's communities

9. Introduce and support policies that address the full needs of young people

For more information and support in programming, the UN and Folke Bernadotte Academy have published a comprehensive guide on youth, peace and security, which can be found at *yps-programming-handbook.pdf (fba.se).* The nine principles on young people's participation in peacebuilding mentioned above can be downloaded at *https://www.undp.org/publications/guiding-principles-young-peoples-participation-peacebuilding.*

Environment and Peacebuilding

CLIMATE CHANGE IS already affecting people all over the world in different ways. When discussing peacebuilding, it is important to take this perspective into account. Climate change does not cause violent conflict in and of itself. However, the effects of climate change, such as irregular and unpredictable rains, more extreme storms and heatwaves and the resulting drought and flooding can work as a *threat multiplier*[30] that triggers a violent conflict or makes it more severe. The UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) estimates that at least 40 percent of all intrastate conflicts in the past 60 years have had a direct link to natural resources[31].

As the climate changes and alters temperatures and weather conditions all over the globe, resources like water and food will become even scarcer than they already are in the most affected areas. This will likely lead to forced migration, which in turn may lead to crowded cities and intensified livelihood challenges in certain areas. All these effects of climate change have the potential to increase societal tensions and multiply already existing threats. The risks are contextual, determined by the interaction of several factors, including the actual changes in weather conditions, the extent to which a society is exposed to these changes, and most importantly, the capacity of each society to cope with the new situation and the problems that may arise from it[32]. In other words, if two countries are exposed to the same kind of climate-related disaster, for example a severe flooding, the consequences are likely to be much worse in a country that does not have a well-functioning system to deal with disaster. A state that has enough resources, a functioning infrastructure and other supporting systems will be much better equipped to provide affected citizens with food, shelter and other basic needs in a crisis, and to respond to societal tensions resulting from the situation. Unfortunately, 70

percent of the countries that are most vulnerable to climate change today are also among the most fragile countries in the world[33]. The implications of these numbers are clear: when a disaster strikes, it is more likely to strike against those who have very limited capacity to deal with its consequences.

From another point of view, we can also see that conflicts often severely harm the environment in different ways. Military forces usually have a big ecological footprint, contributing to large carbon emissions through their activities. Also, war and the use of weapons may lead to pollution, land contamination, the destruction of forests, the plundering of natural resources as well as the collapse of management systems[34].

As we can see from this brief overview, climate change and the way we relate to our environment must be taken into consideration in our work for peace. The feminist activist Elin Wägner has said: "We don't only need peace on earth but also peace *with* the earth"[35]. This is true, but what does it mean for us in practical terms? Many theologians and Christian thinkers have emphasized over the years that the earth is created,

sustained, and redeemed by Christ. Being a follower of Jesus means loving what he loves and caring for what he cares for. So being part of the restoration of creation speaks to the heart of discipleship, in the same way that sharing the gospel and helping people does.

Churches and faith-based movements across the globe are taking action for the climate by, for instance, investing in green energy such as solar panels and creating community forests with a rich biodiversity which also produce an abundance of fruit and building materials for the communities. Others are engaging in agricultural projects focusing on minimizing the use of water and fertilizers by mimicking natural ecological cycles. These sorts of projects are reducing both the risk of environmental disasters and the risk of conflict based on a lack of resources. Well thought out, inclusive and gender responsive projects aiming to protect the environment and develop the local communities also build trust and peaceful interactions between people. Peace *with* the earth is one of the necessary conditions for lasting peace *on* earth.

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Conflict Sensitivity
and Peacebuilding

WHEN ACTORS OF civil society organise interventions to address different societal problems – be they development projects or humanitarian assistance operations or other types of interventions – they often have one or several clear objectives in mind. They can be aiming at alleviating the direct consequences of a natural disaster or at providing education or creating conditions for people to sustain themselves, among many other things. Some interventions also have a clearly stated objective of building or sustaining peace, but this is not always the case and should not be a necessary component of a development or humanitarian initiative. However, it is important to keep in mind that an intervention always has an impact on the peace and conflict status in the environment in which it is being implemented, whether it aims at addressing peace-related issues or not. This impact can either push towards peaceful coexistence and social cohesion, or towards disparities and violent conflicts between groups. As civil society actors, we need to be aware of the links that exist between development and humanitarian work and peace and of the role that we play, intentionally or not, in alleviating or exacerbating the root causes of violent conflicts.

One way to become more attentive to these issues is to adopt a conflict-sensitive approach to development. Such an approach will help us to better understand the impact of our interventions from a peace and conflict perspective and to contribute more actively to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the work that we do, even when this is not our main objective. To work in a conflict sensitive way is not about altering the vision or the mission of an organisation. Neither is it about backing down from the fights worth taking. Rather, it is a way to make sure that we do not unintentionally create more tensions and clashes but contribute to strengthen those aspects that can unite groups and build more peaceful societies.

The concept of a conflict-sensitive approach to development is based on the ability of an organisation to perform three main tasks:

1. Understand the context in which the organisation operates.
2. Understand the interaction between the intervention and the context.
3. Act upon the understanding of this interaction, to avoid negative effects and maximise positive outcomes.

To support development actors in performing these three main tasks in a structured way, PMU has developed The Conflict Sensitivity Wheel. Using the image of a wagon wheel, the model visually relates the intervention to the environment in which it is taking place. It poses several key questions that help actors identify how the intervention is influencing the context, especially its peace and conflict status. It makes sure that all the relevant aspects are taken into consideration when the intervention is being designed and helps actors to make informed decisions about the actions that should be taken to make the context more peaceful, or at least to ensure that the intervention is not making things worse.

The Wheel can be downloaded at: https://pmu.se/en/for-partners/
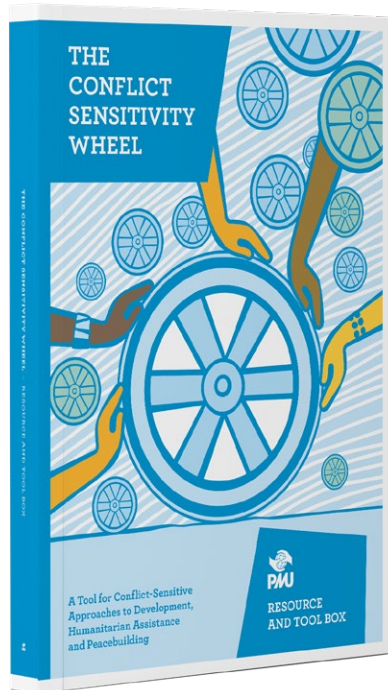
Church and Peacebuilding

MANY PEOPLE TRUST the Church as an institution to turn to no matter what the circumstances are. In this regard, the Church has an important role to play in helping people in need, protecting the vulnerable, and maintaining some sort of stability and day-to-day life even in a chaotic situation. The Church also has a mission to promote and act for peace. In this section, we talk about the Church in a broad sense, referring not only to denominations or local church communities, but also to other Christian actors and faith-based organisations.

Building peace and trust from a faith-based perspective has several strengths. However, before further examining the potential of the Church to build peace, we must acknowledge that the same Church is also capable of promoting conflicts and destructive behaviours. Violent and gruesome actions have been justified by the Church, and people have been oppressed and hurt in the name of religion and faith. There is a need to reveal and analyse the power dynamics and structures within the Church that justify violence and fail to promote peace. We need to call out for actions

of reparation and a process of reconciliation and justice. With this said, we do believe that the Church also has a positive role to play in conflict settings.

The Church often enjoys trust, reliability, and moral authority among a variety of groups in society. This position gives the Church a possibility to challenge negative cultural practices and offers a platform to build trust between different groups and heal broken relationships. The Church can be an important actor both at the local, the regional and the international level since it often has a wide diversity of members and is present at all these levels. Moreover, the Church can be a vehicle for addressing the spiritual aspects of conflict experiences, as it addresses the perceived spiritual needs of those who have been affected by violence. Furthermore, the Church, and religion in general, offers a moral alternative to hatred and revenge during times of violence and instability, especially when it is part of a religious tradition that has a large and stable presence in a society[36].

All of this enables the Church to be a strong and persistent advocate for

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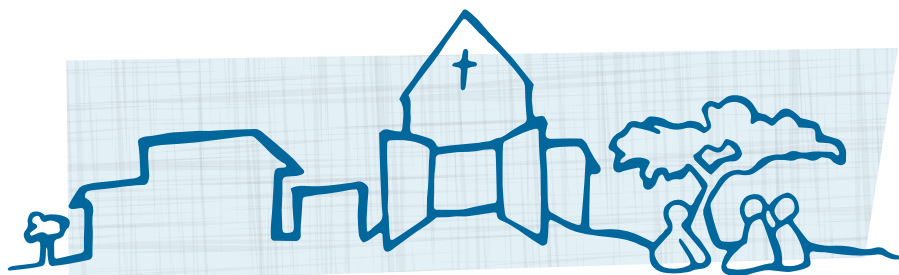
peace, locally as well as globally. But if the Church wants to assume this role, it must actively choose to take action in the right direction. In this chapter, we have looked at some key issues that we find important to consider when working for peace. These issues are relevant for all civil society actors, and not less so for the Church. We will conclude the chapter by briefly mentioning some of the challenges of the Church connected to the perspectives that have been presented.

The first perspective was group dynamics and the *us and them* mentality. The Church inevitably takes part in creating and sustaining groups in society and can function both as a divider and as a connector in any given context. It can promote relations between different individuals and groups, or it can keep strictly to itself and reinforce differences. If the Church wants to build peace, it must work for social cohesion and inclusion and promote contacts across different kind of borders.

When it comes to gender equality and gender awareness, there are many inequal gender structures within the Church that need to be challenged. The same can be said about youth, with

many churches being organized around hierarchal structures giving a lot of space and power to the elder. At the same time, the Church also has a great potential to promote equal relationships since it gathers all kinds of people and offers a community that is not limited to a specific gender or age group. There is also a genuine belief among Christians that all people, regardless of gender, age, or other differences, should be given the same possibilities and are equally valuable before God. This is a good base to build on.

When it comes to the environment, this is an area that has not always been a prioritized question for the Church. But as the environmental and climate issues are becoming more acute, more voices are also raised within the Church to demand that it takes a bigger responsibility to take care of the earth. For a Church that believes that the world is created by God, it should be natural to take care of this creation.

There is much for the Church to do, but there is also much that is already being done. In the next chapter, we will meet some of PMU's partners who have been working with peace in different ways.

HOW TO BUILD PEACE – STORIES FROM OUR NETWORK

How to Build Peace
– stories from our network

THERE ARE MANY ways to promote peacebuilding. Through our work with dedicated partners in different parts of the world, PMU has come across some inspiring cases that we would like to share. There are of course many more examples of great peacebuilding initiatives within PMU's network, but we believe that the ones included here are representative for some very different approaches that work within their specific contexts. Hopefully, they can serve as an inspiration for further action in other contexts as well. Many of the initiatives presented below use the underlying conflicts as an opportunity to understand different negative patterns and injustices in a society. They work towards *conflict transformation*, in that they highlight the need for social change with a long-term perspective. Such a perspective encourages us to promote change on different levels and build a peace that is much bigger than the absence of open violence and war – a sustainable and inclusive peace, making the world a better place for all.

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Kenya – Early Warning System prevents outbreaks of violent conflict

THE NORTHWESTERN PART of Kenya has been characterized by violent conflicts between the Turkana and Pokot pastoralists over natural resources and livestock theft. The Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK) has been present as a church for many years and together with the people living in this area, they decided to start working on peacebuilding initiatives. FPFK's project teams have employed several strategies to address the underlying conflicts in the region, thereby trying to create a sustainable peace. They have initiated livelihood projects to address the lack of resources. To build a culture of peace, they have also created platforms for dialogue where people can meet to better understand each other's situation. One of the key components of the peacebuilding initiatives is that men and women have been encouraged to discuss and question the gender roles that support cattle-raids, and to find male role models that are not warriors.

While working on the underlying challenges, FPFK have also established a successful system that aims to avoid escalation of conflict into violence: the Conflict Early Warning System. In short, this system builds on the assumption that communities can detect early signs of tensions and other threats, and that an outbreak of violence can be prevented by quickly finding adequate responses adapted to the specific situation. Local FPFK peace monitors are trained to detect early signs of a violent conflict. Based on experiences and thorough analysis of the situation, such signs can, for example, be the mobilization of men, a rise in threatening language, or the planning of a raid. The peace monitors can then alert the Early Warning System by mobile phone, using an information technology that keeps the monitors safe and anonymous. In response to the alert, the peace team then mobilizes law enforcement, local leaders, or other peacebuilding actors, depending on the nature of the threat. In addition to the advantage of handling conflicts at an early stage, before they escalate into open violence, the system also creates a link between authorities and the communities, thus cultivating a sense of responsibility and trust.

The Early Warning System stops

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outbreaks of violence that would further deepen the tensions in the region. Over the years, the effectiveness of this system to respond to violent conflicts and gender-based violence has attracted attention from the government and other peacebuilding civil society organizations.

Lokapel Nasia is a reformed warrior from the Pokot ethnic group. He explains how he has gone through a change: "When I grew up, there were intensive battles, so I decided to participate. I fought for more cattle and food... When I was in battle, I felt like a man. When I came back to the village, I was celebrated as a man. I don't fight any more. I saw the negative part. Some of my friends died and we lost animals. Today, I'm part of a peace committee and understand the importance of not fighting. My mother has played an important role, she encouraged me to work instead and make my own income. If we continue to work for peace, then I think we will be able to stay out of battles in the future".

Want to know more – link to PMU study on EWS

South Sudan - Key points for building sustainable peace

SOUTH SUDAN HAS been affected by war since 1955 and Rt. Bishop Dr. Isaiah Dau often mentions that all South Sudanese under 65 are children of the war. He remembers hiding from soldiers as a boy: "As I grew up, there were weapons instead of toys."

As the General Overseer of the South Sudan Pentecostal Church, Dr. Dau has used his platform as a leader to promote peacebuilding in different contexts: from the pulpit, in media and in the peace negotiations. He believes that all kinds of leaders must take a main role in reconciliation and in peacebuilding. Leaders should model the transformation, show example and be deliberate in living in forgiveness. This is something he finds essential, even if it is challenging.

Dr. Dau has five points that he find crucial for peacebuilding. They stem from his vast experience in this area:

1. Peace is built on forgiveness. There are two vital aspects of forgiveness that we need to take note of: The first one is to let go of the wrong unconditionally. We forgive because we want to forgive from the heart. The second one is reparation. This is to make right what

has become wrong. This aspect is usually neglected but without it, forgiveness is incomplete.

2. Peace leads to reconciliation. Forgiveness must lead to peace and reconciliation, in that order. Peace without reconciliation can lead to conflict. A handshake may be a sign of peace, but a heart-shake is a sign of reconciliation and forgiveness. The signing of a peace treaty is an event, but forgiveness and reconciliation are processes that should be worked out in time. When peace is achieved, a ground is provided for reconciliation to come about.

3. Peace must have dividends. Injustice and inequality are causes of conflict. When peace is made, these causes are addressed. It follows that peace dividends are received by the aggrieved parties. Service delivery and social amenities are good indicators that peace has come. Peace without dividends is potential conflict.

4. Peace must ensure security and protection. Peace is more than the absence of war. It ensures security and protection. True peace is prevailing

when the citizens of a given country go about their daily activities without fear, and when ordinary people feel protected at home and on the street. Security and peace should embrace each other. They should never be divorced.

5. Peace provides opportunity.
Opportunity is a result of peace in the true sense. War destroys opportunity by its violence. But peace produces opportunity for all. True peace provides opportunity.

Ethiopia – Finding common ground in an ethnically divided society

ECFE IS AN umbrella organisation for protestant and Pentecostal churches in Ethiopia, gathering 94 denominations as well as 75 parachurch organisations as associate members and 310 denominations as affiliate members from all over the country. One of the missions of ECFE is to promote peace, justice, and unity. Since 2019, they carry out a peacebuilding and trauma counselling program with support from PMU.

Working towards peaceful co-existence in Ethiopia, the program aims at transforming violent means of expression in society into dialogue and other non-violent action. The program is focusing on equipping the evangelical churches to respond to needs of peace-building work in their communities and address ethnocentrism in churches and society. Another important aspect of the program is to work for the active and meaningful inclusion of women, both church leaders and women in communities, in peacebuilding, conflict resolution and trauma healing. Also, young people have been especially invited to participate in the different activities. The project has addressed and involved religious leaders from different traditions as well as community leaders on the local, regional as well as national level. Key to the program has been to work with a broad target group and on different levels, for example to address the leadership as well as the grassroots level in the communities.

By using manuals and by different policies, ECFE encourages church leaders to spread a message of peace and reconciliation regarding issues that are considered sensitive, such as ethnicity. One example is the Resolutions Reached on Ethnicity and Christianity.

Extract from: *Resolutions Reached on Ethnicity and Christianity in the 34th General Assembly of Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia, held on April 14–16, 2019*

WE EVANGELICAL BELIEVERS: Believe that God created the humankind in his image and likeness and hence all men are created equal. Based on this truth, we have decided not to make partiality between persons. We express our deep sympathies to those who were displaced from their homes and had their properties destroyed or looted because of conflicts based on ethnic differences in various parts of Ethiopia. We confess and repent of our sins before God for not fulfilling our prophetic and priestly ministry to prevent this from happening.

...

WE BELIEVE THAT Ethiopia is a land of many nations, nationalities and peoples where its citizens are equal and have equal right, equal benefit and responsibility – where no one people group or ethnic group is greater or less than the other. Moreover, we understand that Ethiopia as a country is a place where we all live together in unity and as Evangelical believers we believe that we should accept and treat everyone equally and give holistic ministry to society.

...

AS GOD LOVES all people and gave his Son Jesus Christ for the salvation of all people and that He is no respecter of persons, likewise we, Evangelical believers, should treat all people without any partiality and hence strongly denounce all kinds of partiality, segregation, hatred, conflict, and displacement based on ethnicity.

...

WE BELIEVE THE Church is a messenger of peace and her platform is a place where this message of peace and reconciliation is transmitted and that she should endeavor to fulfill this calling of hers faithfully and diligently. Moreover, without forgetting our calling to be commissioners of peace and reconciliation, we Evangelical believers endeavor to be faithful ambassadors of peace by leading exemplary life and fulfilling our responsibilities.

...

AS EVANGELICAL BELIEVERS who are called to be ambassadors of peace, we have decided to transmit messages of peace and reconciliation and never communicate hatred, divisive and conflict-inciting messages by using any kind of media and also to advise other members against such unchristian acts.

DR Congo – Promoting peace through gender education and the challenging of harmful gender norms

BADILIKA "GENDER EQUITY and the Promotion of Women's Rights in South Kivu" is a project implemented by Panzi Foundation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Badilika project was born from the realization that violence against women must be combated with both protective and preventive measures simultaneously. The aim of the project is to increase equality between women and men and to prevent gender-based violence by strengthening civil society organisations to combat different forms of gender inequalities on community level.

In the project, women and men meet and discuss how men can be champions of healthy behaviors by practicing new norms for *positive masculinity*, that cultivate peaceful relations and support development and equality in communities. The project team provides training modules that are practical and designed to be culturally appropriate and close to the Congolese everyday life and reality. It challenges the participants to take

small steps for gender equality in their everyday life. It could mean that local religious and customary leaders start to engage in women's rights by using their platform in church and in local tribunals called "Baraza" to address issues of discriminatory practices against women and girls or that parents support their daughters' education by paying for their school fees.

In the DR Congo, there are already laws that very clearly state that women and men have the same rights. However, even if equality exists on paper, it is not implemented in reality. One of the project staff stated that: "People are ready for a change, but the state must lead the way and create the right conditions. Sometimes, all that is needed is to show that the law or the resolution exists, to bring a copy and explain it to the local decision-makers, who are actually sometimes quite ignorant about it".

The project promotes legal frameworks related to women's rights including the Women, Peace and

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Security Agenda 1325. It also equips civil society groups with practical skills for advocacy and communication so that they are able to launch local campaigns and events about promoting women's rights, thereby challenging patriarchal structures and destructive gender norms.

Social cohesion and democratic culture are guiding the interventions implemented by Badilika. Youth movements are therefore supported and encouraged to always demonstrate social activism in a peaceful way and women's movements get coaching from the Badilika team on how to access different decision-making bodies through elections.

Over the years, the Badilika staff have seen changes occur. They have seen women speak up, and even witnessed one woman running a successful candidacy for the parliament. And she will not be the only woman empowered and able to fulfill her potential. Bebe Mulegwa, a father of eight who has participated in one of the workshops, is one of those who show that change is underway. He said: "I will go home and tell my daughters that they are important to the country, and that they must study well so that they can later give something back to Congo. I will tell them that they have a mission to fulfill."

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Philippines – Combatting structural violence through education and advocacy for a democratic culture

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES in the Philippines, commonly called the Mangyans, are working hard in the Filipino Mindoro Island to claim their civic rights and to challenge some structural and cultural forms of violence.

The Mangyans were once forced to leave their ancestral land due to fears and land grabbing by other communities. Now they live in isolated mountains that are prone to typhoons, floods, and landslides. One of the forms of structural violence against this group was that the majority of the Mangyans did not have any citizenship since they had never been registered. This meant that they lacked access to basic rights and services, such as education, health care, and clean water. There is also still severe discrimination and cultural prejudice against them. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the members of the Mangyan community have little or no knowledge of their civic rights, and low self-esteem in relation to authorities and when it comes to claiming their rights.

PMUI (Pampamayanang Mangyan Ugnayan Inc.) has been working for many years to advocate for the civic rights of the Mangyans and is currently active in 30 Mangyan villages in the Mindoro Island. They have been working for a long time to advocate for the civic rights of the Mangyans, such as their citizenship. The organisation emphasizes the importance of increasing the knowledge and awareness among the Mangyans about their basic rights. They believe that when the Mangyans can identify their own problems, becoming more aware of the situation, the community members will take a more active part in transforming their situation and addressing their concerns. PMUI works with a holistic approach, combining advocacy for a democratic culture and good governance with initiatives for basic rights such as health education, literacy, and livelihood programmes. The work promotes a strengthened civil society, and one important part is the advocacy activities to make the authorities aware and willing to act for

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the rights and needs of the indigenous people.

One concrete example of the way PMUI is working is the provision of literacy classes. When the community members learn how to read and write, other positive effects come with this knowledge, such as the possibility to follow the news and developments in society, as well as the capacity to make an informed decision when voting or standing as a candidate in local elections. This means that literacy, in combination with other interventions, is a way to open up for a more democratic culture, diminishing structural violence, and in the long run creating a more peaceful society.

Juvelyn V. Gumal-in, one of the founders of PMUI, says that "the culture of silence is over. PMUI as an agent of transformation through its commitment will continue to fight poverty with dignity by mobilizing our people to help themselves. PMUI believes that the community is longing to participate in their own development."

Palestine – Insisting on the reasonability of peacemaking amid conflict

THROUGHOUT ITS OVER 40 years, Bethlehem Bible College (BBC) has served the local Palestinian community, both the Christian and the Muslim, through its various programs. Initially, the college was established to provide Palestinian Christians the possibility of theological education, but its role has expanded. Today, BBC also conducts other initiatives which serve the community.

One example of the work of the BBC is the establishment of the Mass Media Program. It provides extensive media training and broadcasts television programs on local and satellite television and the Palestinian national network that aims to educate, inspire, and empower. These programs often become a platform in which various sectors of the Palestinian community discuss societal issues, mainly focusing on marginalized populations within the culture – such as women, children, the disabled, and the elderly.

The BBC is an active voice for peace and justice for all the people in the Holy Land, bringing to their campus Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars to build bridges for peace.

Toward that goal, this year, the BBC has launched a new program, the Bethlehem Institute of Peace and Justice (BIPJ). The BIPJ promotes interdisciplinary research and the study of peace and justice in the context of the Palestinian experience. Although different forms of violence afflict that context, the BIPJ stresses that peacemaking is realistic and effective. Besides supporting dialogue between the different communities in the Holy Land, the BIPJ equips peacemakers internationally. Presently it has online courses in English which students from all over the world are taking.

Bishara Awad, founder of the college, stresses that "it is only right that from the city of the birthplace of the Prince of Peace, we sow seeds of peace throughout all the world. Having worked on the frontlines of conflict as peacemakers, it is our conviction that when it seems that peace is most beyond reach, it is time to redouble efforts in working for peace and justice for all in the Holy Land."

You can read more about BIPJ at *https://bipj.org/courses/ certificate-courses/*

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Egypt – Learning about democracy, equality, and freedom of expression through the creation of an imaginary society

MASRTOPIA IS A project developed in Alexandria where children and youth learn about the meaning of democracy and peaceful coexistence. Participants with different socioeconomic background, religion, gender, ethnicity, and nationality partake in a camp where the focus is to get along and to overcome prejudices. In the camp, the children are given the task of creating an imaginary society from scratch, built on democratic principles: a true Utopia on an Island.

The practical and playful exercises model the way values such as respect, citizenship, and the acceptance of the other can take form. The principles of law and the value of democracy are discussed and understood through the process of developing and agreeing on a constitution. Later, the children learn how to handle different situations, for instance to run a democratic election under the principles of equality and

tolerance, guided by volunteers and camp leaders. By the end of the camp, the participants make a commitment about what they are going to do in their communities once they leave the Island and go home.

Over the duration of the camp, there is a noticeable change in the participants' thoughts on the importance of equality, freedom of expression, and respecting others' opinions. All the youth and volunteers discover that a life with no violence is possible, and that mutual coexistence is feasible if differences are respected. Many of the participants have started friendships across borders of religion, background, gender and socioeconomic differences.

Ibrahimia Media Center (IMC), the organisation that arranges these camps, is now spreading the model in different ways to other actors in Egypt. They have a variety of methods to ensure that the

idea is received properly, for instance holding workshops for other civil society actors so that they can organize camps in their context, and educating ambassadors that promote this way of working. IMC has noted that the project does not only change the attitudes of the young participants. The facilitators, volunteers and ambassadors also change to become dedicated actors for peacebuilding. It is the combination of many small changes that can transform a society, and IMC has witnessed many such cases. One of them is about a boy who used to treat the doorman's sons in a very bad way,

believing him to belong to a lower social level. After attending the workshops, this boy changed his attitude and behavior towards the doorman's son and changed his thoughts about him, so that the two boys now talk and play together.

A parent to one of the attendants said: "I wish that the idea of the camp could grow and be implemented in more areas, and I wish I could participate as a parent and promote the vision of the camp. The children really enjoyed the idea of elections, teamwork, and the good spirit between the camp attendees."

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Sweden – Fighting global structures of violence through advocacy and awareness campaigns

THE WORLD IS increasingly interconnected, and what happens in one place can affect the situation in another in many ways. When living in a country like Sweden, that has not been at war for over 200 years, it is tempting to think that peacebuilding is something that has no links to the everyday life of ordinary citizens.

DR Congo is rich in natural resources, including subsoils with mineral content, such as the four minerals included in the EU Conflict Mineral Legislation as well as cobolt, copper, and diamonds. Many of these minerals are indispensable in cell phones and other electronic products, common properties of almost every citizen in rich and middle-income countries. The interest for electric vehicles is also raising. The global demand for these minerals, resulting from the enormous amounts of products released on the market annually, is an important source of income for many Congolese. Unfortunately, it is also financing armed groups that are

continuously destabilizing the eastern parts of DR Congo.

The global race for natural resources and minerals is intensifying every year and has an impact on both economic, social, and environmental sustainability and security in different ways across the globe, not only in DR Congo. But these serious consequences are rarely affecting the end consumers. PMU has therefore joined hands with local actors and expert networks to bring attention to the link between mineral extraction and violence, make consumers aware of the problem and advocate government authorities to keep the topics high on the agenda of decision makers. We are educating companies about the conflict mineral regulations and about Human Rights and Environment Due Diligence. Together with coalitions of NGOs and researchers we publish review papers, meet up with politicians and competent authorities and discuss ways to strengthen the legislations even further.

We also campaign in social and

other medias to reach and mobilize the general population. We want to encourage consumers to ask the companies about the natural resources, reflect on consumption patterns and demand clean supply chains from companies. Some of the many PMU secondhand stores in Sweden have also joined forces with different companies and offer to recycle minerals from mobile phones. The way we consume matters. Dr Denis Mukwege summarizes in his powerful Nobel lecture:

"...When you drive your electric car; when you use your smart phone or admire your jewelry, take a minute to reflect on the human cost of manufacturing these objects. As consumers, let us at least insist that these products are manufactured with respect for human dignity. Turning a blind eye to this tragedy is being complicit. It's not just perpetrators of violence who are responsible for their crimes, it is also those who choose to look the other way... The Congolese people have been humiliated, abused and massacred for more than two decades in plain sight of the international community. Today, with access to the most powerful communication technology ever, no one can say: "I didn't know".

CONFLICT MINERALS
The 3T+G

- Cassiterite (Tin)
- Coltan (Tantalum)
- Wolframite (Tungsten)
- Gold
- *and other minerals that should potentially be added as they also contribute to conflicts*

PMU's Guidelines regarding Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding

OVER THE LAST decades many of the situations in which PMU has been engaged, have been characterised by wars and violent conflicts. And even after the war has ended, conflicts tend to last for longer time, setting off a cycle of violence that affects all society. In many countries human dignity is violated through oppression and denial of human rights, with a shrinking space for civic actors' involvement. This negative development affects PMU and its co-operating partners whether they are engaged in long-term development work or emergency work. Dealing with conflicts and people living in war-affected environments is a sensitive issue, and the ambition of these guidelines is to offer some specialised professionalism and tested experience, along with some practical strategies and approaches which will be helpful for work in this field.

PMU's Objectives

THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE of PMU is to work for human rights for all people, regardless of ethnic origin, religion or sex. Furthermore PMU works to encourage the development of a vigorous civil society that is built on democratic values. Peace and understanding should prevail between people in accordance with the Biblical message of reconciliation and equal value of all. Therefore, in the many conflict situations where PMU is engaged, one of the most important questions must be: How can PMU along with its local partners be engaged in work that supports and furthers peace and reconciliation?

Wherever people are affected by war and ethnic conflicts, priority must be given to such activities and work that will contribute to understanding and reconciliation between human beings and groups, particularly those that are in conflict.

PMU's Guidelines – Two-fold approach

WHEN IT COMES to international aid, whether it is material aid or human resources, PMU is aware of the fact that no project is completely neutral to the surrounding context. This is particularly true in situations where people are affected by war or violent conflict, or where latent conflicts are boiling under the surface, with the potentials to erupt into violence in a certain moment. It is therefore important to explore the links between peace and development. The two are intimately linked in a peaceful society. There can be no sustainable peace without development and respect for human rights, and development cannot wait until there is stable peace. Development can also be used creatively to secure local peace, e.g. jointly building and taking care of a school or a health clinic.

Aid can influence the relationship between the parties in the conflict, change the balance and increase the conflict. Aid may also improve the situation. To minimise destructive effects of aid and maximise constructive effects of aid, PMU will work with a two-fold approach:

1 **Conflict sensitive development projects:** PMU will work to identify what components in a project favour peace and reconciliation and work to strengthen them. At the same time components that might increase the conflict must be recognized and eliminated.

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2 **Conflict transformation and peacebuilding.** PMU will give priority to work that contributes to reconciliation in areas that are affected by war and violent conflict. Conflict transformation and peace building activities will be encouraged and supported, either as a main goal or as steps towards a larger goal.

The following **14 guidelines** are intended as a help to analyse the situation before and during work for peace and reconciliation in conflict areas:

1 Research the realities on the ground
It is important to ask questions like: What are the key issues for the people living in this area? What is the cultural, economic, social history of the particular situation and of the conflict? What are the root-causes and how is the conflict sustained? Who are the key actors on the ground for conflict and for peace? How do they relate to each other? What connects people and what divides them? What are the mistakes that have been made earlier in trying to work for peace? What are the positive developments that could be built upon? How are ideas about masculinity and femininity related to behaviours in the conflict?

2 Build upon what is already going on
In all conflicts there are many people and organisations already engaged for peace and reconciliation. It is important to find out who is already active to avoid duplication of efforts or working against each other. Who can be a trusted partner? Think strategically, who are the key persons and key groups who have capacity to serve as bridge-builders in the conflictive society? What individuals, institutions or groups are trusted by all inside the country? How can they be identified, mobilised and strengthened? Religious persons and/or institutions, elders, women's groups, youth groups, NGO's etc.

3 Work with a broad approach
Peace work cannot be left only to politicians or the top levels of society. All levels of society need to be involved in the work. All parties to the conflict need to be included.

4 Strengthen women's participation in the peace work
Women's active and meaningful participation in peace work is crucial. First and foremost it is important because there is a need for a broad representation if we want sustainable peace. Second it is because of the experiences and perspectives from both peace and conflict that women bring to the table. In many cases women activists and movements are engaged locally in the work for peace. Women are often left with the whole responsibility for the household and family while men join the armed forces or leave the country. In many conflicts, conceptions about masculinity often promote and justify violent behaviours and sexual violence. These roles must be challenged. Crimes against women, such as sexual violence, are seen on large scales in conflicts but are often neglected or ignored in trials. If we take seriously our holistic vision of a peaceful society, we cannot disregard what often constitute the majority of the people in conflict affected areas: the women. Thus, promoting

women's right to meaningful participation in development and peace processes is one of the key issues on the way to peace.

5 Realise that working for peace is process oriented

Working for peace is not one or two events. Peace agreements are important but they cannot replace the necessity to involve the entire society in a process for peace and reconciliation. Unless the peace agreements are part of a process with careful preparation and equally careful follow-up and implementation, they will sooner or later be disrupted. Community-based peace work aims at initiating local processes for peace, processes that are initiated and driven by the people inside the country. Thus we are talking about processes, not one peace process.

6 Sustainability and ownership

The peace processes must be sustainable. Therefore careful preparation and follow-up work is necessary. Also, the people who are in the conflict must have ownership of the process, e.g. the solutions that are found must be owned and supported by those concerned, those who have to live with the solutions.

7 Create possibilities and space for people to meet in dialogue

Dialogue serves as a meeting place and a platform that brings people from different backgrounds together. It can also be a tool to resolve conflicts non-violently. Therefore, it is important to find people who can serve as bridge builders. It is necessary to focus on common understanding and to make sure meetings are not about establishing who is "right". The aim of dialogue should be a search for common understandings. With good dialogue comes knowledge and learning – learning about the other and how he/she sees the world, but also about oneself.

8 Look for possibilities to create hope

Provide good examples where people have actually succeeded in overcoming difficulties. Exchange experiences with others who have been in the same situation.

9 Have a learning approach

Create possibilities for peace education on various levels in society. Design civic education programs including conflict transformation topics, human rights, gender, democratic values, etc. When we use the word education it is important to understand that it is as much an education for a specific group as for the people in the conflict. It is a learning approach, which builds on both the experience and wisdom of the "teachers" and of the "students". It provides an opportunity to learn, grow and develop together. It offers a possibility to change the way people look at conflict and their perceptions of how to solve conflicts.

10 Explore the importance of economy and trade during war or peace

The developments of war-economies are important factors that keep the fighting going. The trade in weapons and drugs is an unholy alliance, which sustains the war. However the trade and business community can also be strong factors for peace as stability and security is something that serves their interest. Security around the local marketplace is in everybody's interest. Normalisation of trade and export can help stabilise the situation.

11 Networking

The networking needs to be developed on many levels, internationally and locally. Networking and co-operation between the local organisations inside the communities is important to avoid competition and counterproductive work.

12 Links to peace work on different levels

Although the churches might primarily focus on the community or middle levels of society, there is also a need to create links to the more "official" peace processes that are taking place on top levels of society. Unless the top level has an understanding and respect for what is happening on the lower and middle levels of society, there is a clear danger that the local work will be crushed or left behind when the top level politicians are trying their best to secure their power positions.

13 Peacebuilding is a long-term commitment

There are no quick fixes or short cuts. The work for sustainable peace is by necessity a slow process. Many analysts claim that it takes as long to get out of a conflict as it took to get into it. Thus for the most part we are talking about generations as it involves healing of relationships and mental wounds.

14 The necessity of clear visions and goals

Such a broad and long term commitment cannot be effective unless there are clear visions and goals. This is particularly needed as the road to peace is long and hard, full of frustrations and setbacks.

Definitions

CONFLICT

A simple definition of conflict is a perceived incompatibility of goals between two or more parties. Conflicts can be waged violently, as in a war, or non-violently, as in an election or an adversarial legal process. But in general, conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction, and when channelled constructively into processes of resolution, conflict can be beneficial.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The process of resolving a dispute or a conflict permanently by addressing the underlying causes of the conflict, finding common interests and overarching goals, and providing each side's needs so that all parties are satisfied with the outcome.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Actions and processes which seek to address the root causes of a particular conflict over the long term, in the pursuit of just peace by peaceful means. It aims at changing existing patterns of behaviour and creating a culture of nonviolent approaches, and proposes an integrated approach to peacebuilding that aims to bring about long-term changes in personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions.

CONNECTORS

The constructive factors that bring people together across dividing lines and conflict boundaries in a community and contribute to healthy communal relationships. These factors can be found in systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, common values and interests, common experiences, or symbols and occasions.

DIVIDERS

The factors that separate people, emphasizing and reinforcing differences and boundaries across dividing lines and conflict boundaries in a community. These factors can be found in systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, different values and interests, different experiences, or symbols and occasions.

EARLY WARNING AND RESPONSE

The systematic assessment of high-risk situations so as to provide timely notice of escalating violence and intervening at an early stage to avoid violence escalation. Early warning systems have been used to assess environmental threats, the risk of nuclear accident, natural disasters, mass movements of populations, the threat of famine, and the spread of disease, as well as violent conflict.

GENDER

The cultural and social understanding of the biological differences between the sexes. This means that gender is based on ideas about how we should be as men and women. Gender roles and expectations are not static but change over time and between different places.

GENDER ROLES

The social and cultural differences between women and men, for example how we are expected to behave and dress, what we are expected to be interested in and work with.

JUSTICE

An ideal which represents ultimate fairness in the distribution of resources and benefits, burdens, judgments, and punishments. Justice is a quality in which every person gets what is due to them, in a fair and non-discriminatory manner, including the rights inherent to being humans.

NONVIOLENCE

A holistic belief in and practice of abstaining from violent acts. Such belief systems may stem from various religions and ethical codes, with the range of understandings varying equally. These may include degrees of rejection of mental harm or physical damage to the environment, the self, or others. In some instances, a conviction in nonviolence rejects the notion of adversaries. Normative nonviolence—religious, ethical, or principled—may be a creed, matter of spirituality, or system of morality. It can also be an article of faith.

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PEACE
The word *peace* evokes complex, sometimes contradictory, interpretations and reactions. For some, peace means the absence of conflict. For others, it means the end of violence or the formal cessation of hostilities. For still others, it means the return to resolving conflict by political means. Some define peace as the attainment of justice and social stability. For others it is economic well-being and basic freedom.

PEACEBUILDING
Originally conceived in the context of post-conflict recovery efforts to promote peaceful relationships, reconciliation and reconstruction, the term peacebuilding has more recently taken on a broader meaning. It encompasses all local, state-based, or international strategies used to mitigate imminent, ongoing, and past violent conflicts, and promote lasting and sustainable peace.

RECONCILIATION
A process that attempts to build trust and transform intense or lingering malevolence among parties previously engaged in a conflict or violent dispute into feelings of acceptance and even forgiveness of past animosities or detrimental acts. According to John Paul Lederach, it involves four simultaneous processes: the search for truth, justice, peace, and mercy. When all four of these factors are brought together, reconciliation is achieved. It can happen at the individual level, the community level, and the national level.

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SHALOM
A biblical concept that refers to a state of wholeness where there are no cracks, and nothing is missing. It entails aspects such as fullness and prosperity, justice and righteousness, and the restoration of broken relationships. It is as a way of life where justice and righteousness prevail, and where the needs of all people are met – both materially and spiritually.

VIOLENCE
Psychological or physical force exerted for the purpose of threatening, injuring, damaging, or abusing people or property. Structural violence refers to inequalities built into the social system that deprives certain groups from fulfilling their human rights.

Endnotes

The Bible quotes are taken from the New International Version (NIV).

1   Nobel Peace Prize laureate speech by Dr Denis Mukwege.

2   See for example: *https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/10/03/why-thoughts-and-prayers-is-starting-to-sound-so-profane/*, accessed 2021-03-25.

3   *https://pmu.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/39915005-Peace-and-Trust.pdf*

4   Luke 1:52

5   John 14:27

6   John 3:16

7   Isaiah 2:4

8   Al Tizon (2018), Whole and Reconciled: Gospel, Church, and Mission in a Fractured World, Baker Academic of Baker Publishing Group, p 85

9   Al Tizon (2018), Whole and Reconciled: Gospel, Church, and Mission in a Fractured World, Baker Academic of Baker Publishing Group, p XVIII

10 *https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/exploring-role-religion-reconciliation/*, accessed 2021-03-25

11 Al Tizon (2018), Whole and Reconciled: Gospel, Church, and Mission in a Fractured World, Baker Academic of Baker Publishing Group, p 195

12 Katongole and Rice (2008), Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing, InterVarsity Press, p 84

13 Galatians 3:28

14 The full text can be found at Christian Peacemaker Team's website: *https://www.cpt.org/files/BN%20-%20Jesus%27%20Third%20Way.pdf*, accessed 2021-03-25.

15 Matthew 5:38–41

16 Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9

17 Simon Fisher et al (2011), Working with Conflict 2: Skills and Strategies for Action, London, Zed Books, p 4

18 Source: United States Institute of Peace

19 We encourage the reader to learn more about Rosa Parks and the Civil Rights movement in the US as an example of constructive conflicts.

20   Simon Fisher et al (2011), Working with Conflict 2: Skills and Strategies for Action, London, Zed Books, 2011

21   Johan Galtung (1996), Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization, CA: Sage Publications, p. 197

22   *https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/*, accessed 2021-03-25.

23   *https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/files/peaceterms.pdf*

24   Jeremiah 6:14

25   Ngozi Adichie, Chimamanda, TED talk, *https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_ adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story*, accessed 2021-02-24

26   United Nations; World Bank. 2018. Pathways for Peace : Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict. Washington, DC: World Bank. P. XXIII

27   Ibid p. 118

28   Hudson et al. 2012

29   *https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures*, accessed 2021-03-25

30   Climate change recognized as 'threat multiplier', UN Security Council debates its impact on peace, *https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/01/1031322*, accessed 2021-03-25

31   Mathiesen, K., "What's the environmental impact of modern war?", The Guardian, 6 November 2014 *https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/nov/06/whats-the-environmental-impact-of-modern-war*, accessed 12 March 2021.

32   Supporting climate security, *https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development/peace/conflict-prevention/climate-security.html*, accessed 2021-03-25.

33   UNDP, Climate security mechanism, p. 5, *https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/csm_ toolbox-1-briefing_note.pdf*, accessed 2021-03-25.

34   Mathiesen, K., "What's the environmental impact of modern war?", The Guardian, 6 November 2014 *https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/nov/06/whats-the-environmental-impact-of-modern-war*, accessed 12 March 2021.

35   *https://sverigesradio.se/avsnitt/1574845*, accessed 2021-03-31.

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The world needs peace. In our contemporary world, we constantly receive reports about human suffering and problems caused by war, violence, and insecurity. As a human being, it is easy to feel powerless in the face of such massive difficulties. Is there anything we can do that can make a difference?

At PMU, we are convinced that much can be done. We also strongly believe the Church has an important role to play in promoting and acting for peace all over the world. In this book, we show how peace is at the core of the Biblical message, and how this is an extremely relevant issue for Christianity to engage in today. We also present a number of theoretical perspectives on peace and offer inspiration for faith-based actors who want to make peace a prioritized issue within their work.

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