
Peacebuild
The Canadian Peacebuilding Network

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2012

January 2008

Subsequent to the network's Operational Review, carried out in July and August 2007, Peacebuild¹ developed both a Strategic Directions document and Business Plan. While the Operational Review surveyed the internal dynamics and working culture of the network, the Business Plan operationalizes the network's Strategic Directions for 2008 and 2009. Whereas the latter will be reviewed in two-year cycles, the Strategic Directions document aims to provide a broader framework of five-year objectives, and will be reviewed every five years.

The Strategic Directions document is the product of a consultative process that assessed the collective interests, needs and strengths of the membership. While providing a clear and coherent vision for the network, Peacebuild's Strategic Direction strikes a balance between the call for clarity of direction, more effective leadership, support and facilitation on the one hand, and the benefits of self-direction, flexibility and creativity, on the other. The document also situates the network in a complex and continuously evolving policy environment, and speaks to the need to proactively address the changing nature of destructive conflict as a network.

The Strategic Directions document advances a set of aspirations, reflecting a consensus and recognized need to see the network become more stable and influential over the course of the next five years. It speaks to members' recognition of Peacebuild's value-added as a catalyst for dialogue, knowledge synthesis and collaboration amongst constituents of the peacebuilding community, and its role in identifying and bridging the policy gaps between Peacebuild members and the Government of Canada.

Executive Summary

The Strategic Directions document is divided into three sections, beginning with a description of the identity of the network, followed by a discussion of its activities and focus areas.

Peacebuild's identity is rooted in its definition of peacebuilding, which is flexible and comprehensive, yet offers operational guidance and form. It captures the diversity of members' activities, and their understandings and applications of peacebuilding. It accounts for the shifting ground of peace and conflict work in an increasingly interconnected world, while acknowledging the primacy of the local and the importance of context.

Peacebuild's identity is also defined by the diversity and collective expertise of its membership, while the network's goals, organizing principles and niche speak to its members' desire to broaden and deepen the scope, capacity and overall policy influence of the peacebuilding constituency in Canada and internationally.

The Strategic Directions document addresses important gaps and niche areas identified by Peacebuild's members. It reflects their desire to engage with, and include, a number

¹ The Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) was renamed Peacebuild at the 2007 AGM (November 30).

of new or ‘non-traditional’ actors expected to reinforce and regenerate the network and further increase its value, effectiveness and representative nature.

Looking to the future, Peacebuild endeavours to support members’ efforts as relates to four themes deemed to be of greatest priority in the contemporary and developing field of peacebuilding: the changing nature of destructive conflict; the rethinking of key concepts such as security and failed or fragile states; the linkages between conflict and governance, democratization and the capacities of civil society; the politics of identity and community; and the elaboration of peacebuilding policy and peacebuilding mechanisms and practical applications. The network’s Strategic Directions document underscores the interconnectedness and complexity of these themes and issues. In particular, the limitations of ‘traditional’ state-centric views of conflict and peace are acknowledged. Equally important is the recognition that these themes and issues are inherent in broader developments relating to human rights, the environment, and socio-economic security.

Peacebuild is committed to develop program activities that are relevant, innovative and timely, with a view to increasing the overall effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions. In order to do so, and to maximize benefits to members, Peacebuild strives to ensure that its activities are, above all else, rooted in its function as a catalyst: enabling dialogue; facilitating knowledge synthesis and exchange; and coordinating collaboration among peacebuilding actors. It endeavours to conduct these activities without displacing or duplicating the existing efforts of members. While Peacebuild is an independent, legally constituted entity, it works to act on and be responsive to the demands of its members. It is also subject to review by its governing body, the Board of Directors, which is elected by the membership and is charged with ensuring that Peacebuild works to meet the objectives spelled out in the Strategic Directions document in a transparent and accountable manner.

Finally, while setting out a clear vision and direction for the network, the Strategic Directions document recognizes that Peacebuild’s ability to meet its five-year objectives is contingent upon a degree of stability and continuity of adequate funding. Modest growth in this period will enable Peacebuild to enhance its capacity as a well-organized, professional and focused network that is responsive to its membership and adaptable to evolving peacebuilding needs and landscapes.

I. Peacebuild’s Identity

Peacebuilding defined

The term "peacebuilding" came into widespread use after 1992 when Boutros Boutros-Ghali, then United Nations Secretary-General, announced his *Agenda for Peace*. Initially, the UN’s definition was limited to when a violent conflict subsides or stops altogether, occurring after peacemaking and peacekeeping. Activities were associated with capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation. Since then, peacebuilding has come to be understood and used as an umbrella concept reflecting a more comprehensive and long-term approach to peace and security including: early warning, conflict prevention,

civilian and military peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire agreements, the establishment of peace zones, reconciliation, reconstruction, institution building, and political as well as socio-economic transformation.²

For Peacebuild, peacebuilding identifies and supports relationships, governance modes, structures and systems, and provides capacities and resources to strengthen and consolidate the prospects for internal peace in order to avoid a resort to, an intensification of, or a relapse into destructive conflict. Peacebuilding also seeks to mitigate sources of tension that increase the probability or intensity of armed violence. As such, it involves a range of approaches and transformative processes – for specific contexts or on a larger systemic level – that identify and address both the root causes and effects of violent conflict.³

This definition emphasizes both the relational and structural elements of violence and conflict. It moves away from sequential limitations of peacebuilding and accommodates both short and long-term approaches and needs. It acknowledges both effects and root causes of conflict, including historical, socio-economic and political elements. It allows for considerations of the complexities of globalization, including the effects of new ‘violence entrepreneurs’ and non-state transnational actors. It emphasizes the importance of indigenous or local, context-specific mechanisms for resolving conflict, maintaining peace or reducing the likelihood of violence altogether. It also highlights the need for country-specific and larger international structural actions to address sources of tension. This definition also frames peacebuilding as a policy development and policy advocacy tool that may be used to address the consequences of poor development, defence and foreign policy practice. Finally, this view of peacebuilding captures the diversity and collective strength of Peacebuild’s membership, and speaks to the network’s vision and mission.

Our Membership

Peacebuild members are engaged in, promote or support the values, approaches and processes constitutive of peacebuilding, most notably *conflict prevention, conflict transformation and reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation activities*. (Page 2 of General By-law).

Our Vision

To promote and further develop a vibrant and robust Canadian peacebuilding constituency in the interest of advancing just and lasting peace internationally.

² Michelle Maiese (2003) What it Means to Build Lasting Peace. Electronic document, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding/> accessed October 31, 2007.

³ Claire Casey, Nilanj Desai, Bendikt Franke (2005) Peacebuilding: An Overview. Conflict Management Toolkit. The John Hopkins University School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Electronic document, <http://www.sais-jhu.edu/cmtoolkit/approaches/peacebuilding/index.html>, accessed October 31, 2007.; Cate Malek, Michelle Maiese and Heidi Burgess. Peacebuilding. The Conflict Resolution Information Source. Electronic document, http://www.crinfor.org/CK_Essays/ck_peacebuilding.jsp, accessed October 31, 2007.

Our Mission

Peacebuild's overarching objective is to support greater and more effective Canadian participation in peacebuilding activities internationally by:

- Enabling peacebuilding and human security policy dialogue and policy development involving Canadian non-governmental and governmental agencies and individuals and others;
- Enabling active collaboration and knowledge exchange between Canadian peacebuilding organizations and their international counterparts;
- Undertaking and facilitating systematic learning and dissemination and application of learning related to peacebuilding objectives, practices and outcomes.

Our Organizing Principles and Operational Objectives

A number of principles and operating goals define Peacebuild's approach to peacebuilding:

1. Inclusion and Renewal

To renew Peacebuild's membership by identifying and reaching out to non-member peacebuilding actors in Canada who share Peacebuild's vision and mission, by appealing to, mentoring, and drawing on the energies and experiences of children and youth, and by providing opportunities for their engagement in leadership at all levels of the network.

To enable marginalized or overlooked peacebuilding actors to participate more fully in the network's efforts such as children and youth, members of various diasporas, individuals living throughout Canada, Francophones and Aboriginal peoples.

2. Exchange

To deepen the capacity and strength of the Canadian peacebuilding constituency by providing more opportunities for networking, and by contributing to the identification, development, dissemination and advancement of robust and measurable tools, knowledge, skills and lessons learned.

To provide opportunities for practitioners and researchers to work collaboratively and in mutually beneficial ways, enabling theory to inform practice and practice to inform theory.

3. Engagement

To contribute to Canadian foreign policy and international peacebuilding developments through dialogue with government actors, existing members of the national and

international peacebuilding constituency, and by reaching out to a diversity of non-traditional or unrecognized actors such as the private sector, teachers, unions, etc.

To acknowledge the diversity of national and transnational actors and potential partners as relates to Peacebuild's peacebuilding efforts (and, likewise, the potentials for policy advocacy).

4. Innovation

To be recognized as a catalyst for innovation in peacebuilding theory and practice.

To recognize and endeavour to better understand: the local dimensions and contexts of conflict and power; their interconnections with global developments, including Canada's role and responsibilities; and the involvement and effects of new, transnational actors, in addition to those of more 'traditional' actors.

To identify and develop novel partnerships for peace, and synergistic approaches to policy dialogue.

To be proactive vis-à-vis Canadian foreign policy priorities or trends.

5. Relevance and Timeliness

To adopt a timely and flexible approach to emerging peacebuilding issues.

6. Effectiveness

To integrate evaluation into all elements of Peacebuild's activities and programming so as to assess quantitatively and qualitatively, short and long-term benefits to members, to the peacebuilding constituency more broadly, and to beneficiaries on the ground and the overall impact on policy development, programming and implementation.

Means for Achieving our Mission

- People – Network members, members of the Board of Directors, Secretariat and Working Group staff, interns and volunteers, Southern partners, network collaborators, funders, specialized support (IT, accounting, legal, etc).
- An institutional vehicle adequate to achieving objectives (legally constituted and endorsed by membership, professionally staffed, and applying a full range of effective organizational practices).
- Predictability and continuity of funding at the level necessary for achieving objectives (adequate to support network core needs and a program of work that clearly and substantially advances our Mission).

- A communications strategy that:
 - Facilitates member involvement;
 - Assists network members and itself in being recognized as playing a leading role in the field of peacebuilding;
 - Helps build an understanding of, and support for, peacebuilding policies and programs among leaders in government, business, the media, military, philanthropy, and other sectors of civil society;
 - Supports network contributions to Canadian foreign policy and international peacebuilding developments;
 - Supports greater consistency, clarity, transparency and information dissemination that builds trust within the network.

- Activities directly focused on achieving the network's operational objectives:
 - Dialogue and consultation
 - Coordinated research
 - Knowledge-Sharing
 - Joint peacebuilding field programming with network members and local partners

Our Niche and Competitive Advantage

Peacebuild is unique as a civil society mechanism for dialogue with government departments and international stakeholders. As such, Peacebuild is well-placed to identify and tap into the strengths of Canadian experiences and perspectives on peacebuilding and to project these onto the international scene and in our partnerships in international networks, platforms and with Southern partners.

Overall, Peacebuild is most highly valued by both civil society members and government for its unique role as a catalyst and facilitator.

It also provides:

- An institutional home and additional resources to enable collaboration and opportunities for coherence and action.
- Information and knowledge-sharing:
 - First-hand information from key players and beneficiaries;
 - Insight into Government of Canada priorities and policy development, and conversely, access to expertise situated within civil society;
 - Identification and sharing of knowledge and programming gaps;
 - Publications;
 - Dissemination of information via electronic lists;
 - Connecting members and stakeholders across Canada.
- Meaningful (and, in some cases, alternate opportunities), for participation and engagement, but also for networking, generally;
- For members: opportunities for input into Canadian foreign policy debates and international developments, either collectively or as individual members; and

- working relationships with both the Government of Canada and on the international stage;
- For government: access to ‘grassroots’ actors and to specialized knowledge (experience-based and/or academic).

II. Peacebuild’s Activities

Of benefit to members, Peacebuild acts primarily as a catalyst and enabler of dialogue, knowledge synthesis and exchange, and collaboration among peacebuilding actors. Specifically, Peacebuild’s activities aim to:

- Increase productive interaction among and between civil society actors and government involved in peacebuilding activities;
- Contribute to knowledge generation and sharing within Canada and globally;
- Increase cooperation in joint programming at all levels;
- Increase overall effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions.

The three main categories of activities below present opportunities for engaging in policy development and can complement government policy cycles and magnify Peacebuild’s efforts. In keeping with the core principles of Peacebuild, the Secretariat and Working Groups will pursue these activities in accordance with the programming aims noted above, and regularize open and transparent decision-making.

1. Facilitate and Participate in Dialogue and Consultation

Above all else, Peacebuild is defined by its role as facilitator and convenor of dialogues inside the network, and with the broader community of practice (including academics and government officials). The Secretariat and Working Groups will continue to provide a space for thought-gathering and non-threatening conversation. They will work both to widen the scope for Canadian debate on peacebuilding and to identify and generate new policy options. Representatives of Peacebuild and its Working Groups will actively engage in national and international policy development processes.

2. Synthesize Knowledge and Distil Policy and Programming Implications

Peacebuild will facilitate the consolidation of findings and the assessment of policy and programming implications of cutting-edge research generated by civil society organizations, universities and research institutes, governments and international organizations. Emerging directions in Canadian government policy on peacebuilding and human security will be analyzed. Emphasis will be given to consolidating and assessing peacebuilding evaluations, and to examining promising evaluation methodologies.

3. Catalyze Collaborative Initiatives

The Secretariat and/or Working Groups will act as catalysts (and potentially coordinators) for network members seeking to collaborate on larger projects (i.e.

commissioning/undertaking new research; building connections to international networks; supporting field-based projects).

Key Actors

In keeping with Peacebuild's Organizing Principles and Operational Review results, the following actors will be considered when developing, conducting and evaluating activities:

- Children and youth
- Women and girls
- Researchers
- Regional networks, including an emphasis on the francophone sector
- Diaspora groups
- Private sector actors and corporations as sponsors and/or as participants
- Government departments other than DFAIT and CIDA (e.g. Department of National Defence; Department of Justice, etc.)
- Other political actors, such as parliamentarians and relevant committees of the House and the Senate
- Other networks: CCIC, CCHS, CIGI and IGLOO, CERIUM, new Canadian International Human Rights Network (CIHRN)
- Academic programmes and institutes specializing in Peace and Conflict Studies (e.g. University of Toronto's Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies; the Munk Centre; the Coady Institute; and the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa)
- International networks and 'sister organizations'
- Southern beneficiaries and 'local' actors (in the field) beyond conventional or dominant forms of leadership and participation

III. Peacebuild's Focus Areas: Priority Themes and Emerging Issues

The research conducted for the Operational Review and the Strategic Directions document and Business Plan highlighted the complexities inherent to contemporary conflict and the need for more nuanced, spatialized, contextualized and/or strategic approaches to peacebuilding.

At the outset, it should be noted that peacebuilding is not advanced in a vacuum. It is nested within broader international efforts to promote human development, social justice and environmental sustainability. Although these extend beyond the network's Vision and Mission statements and may not be considered explicit themes of Peacebuild, they must be acknowledged for the nuance and depth they bring to understandings of peace and conflict. By virtue of their crosscutting and general nature, these also present opportunities for partnerships with other NGOs, or international and national networks such as the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, the nascent Canadian

International Human Rights Network or the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict.

Peacebuild's work therefore is undertaken with an explicit awareness of a range of underlying issues including:

- Human Rights, especially the protection of the rights of women and children, linkages between global or macro-level developments and local relations and abuses of power.
- Environmental degradation, recognizing that “severe environmental stress multiplies the pain caused by such problems as ethnic strife and poverty.”⁴
- The growing socio-economic divide, both within and between countries.
- Demographics and socio-economic insecurity: the ‘youth bubble’ combined with poverty, urbanization and unemployment.⁵

Within this broader context, members identified four emerging and overlapping themes deemed to be of greatest priority in the contemporary and developing field of peacebuilding. Peacebuild endeavours to support members' efforts as relates to these themes, which offer form and content to the network's future orientation, without foreclosing the possibility of additional (or even contrary) perspectives or possibilities for action. Working within and across these four themes, Peacebuild seeks to advance thinking in both Canadian foreign policy and the international peacebuilding arena and to translate this knowledge into novel and measurable programming approaches, partnerships and techniques.

1. Trends in Organized Armed Violence

- The **changing nature of armed conflict**, including the increasing prevalence of counter-insurgency / counter-terrorism operations as central components of peace operations; the securitization of humanitarian aid and development assistance and the shrinking humanitarian space; possible interventions under the “responsibility to protect;” the political economy of armed conflict and the role of non-state actors (e.g. ‘violence entrepreneurs,’ private contractors and the broader private sector).
- The **prevention of armed violence** in cases that fall outside of traditional definitions of armed conflict, including organized armed violence in cities, the privatization of security outside of formal armed conflicts, and inter-communal violence with an emphasis on potential drivers.

2. The Contested Concepts around “Security” and “Peacebuilding”

⁴ Thomas Homer-Dixon (2007): *Terror in the Weather Forecast*. In: The New York Times, 24th April. <http://www.homerdixon.com/articles/20070424-nytimes-terrorintheweatherforecast.html>

⁵ See Humansecurity-cities.org (2006): *Human Security for an Urban Century. Local Challenges, Global Perspectives*. http://humansecurity-cities.org/sites/hscities/files/Human_Security_for_an_Urban_Century.pdf

- State-centric approaches to security and their limitations in addressing the contemporary realities of human / personal and transnational security issues; the future of human security and the responsibility to protect; the security discourse of a “war on terror”; the policy debate framed around “failed and fragile” states; disenfranchisement and unequal citizenship, i.e. whose security is prioritized?

3. State and Civil Society Capacities to Prevent and Resolve Conflict

- To explore and identify in theory and in practice the linkages between weak governance practice and structures, and the prevalence of conflict at both national and international levels. Key themes include democratization and disenfranchised populations, weak institutions and state-building, reform of the security sectors and entrenched corruption among economic and political elites.

4. Identity, Communities and Conflict

- To map the intersections of conflict and identity (gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, etc.). Key themes may include the link between increased militarism and destructive constructions of gender or the disproportionate effects of conflict on children, youth and the poor;
- To explore emerging ‘spaces’ of conflict, which challenge traditional approaches to conflict management and resolution, including those that are ideologically-based (e.g. religious identities and fundamentalisms of all kinds) and move across borders, propelled by communications and information technologies.

5. Peacebuilding Policies and Mechanisms

- Tracking national and international compliance with and implementation of international standards and agreements (e.g. commitments on war-affected children, the Program of Action on Small Arms and Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security), and analyzing broad Canadian and international policy directions and institutional capacity as they relate to peacebuilding (e.g. CIDA, DFAIT, DND, UN Peacebuilding Commission, UNDPKO, UNDP, international financial organizations, regional organizations etc.).