A Conceptual Model of Peacebuilding and Democracy Building:
Integrating the Fields

The Conflict Resolution and Change Management in Transitioning Democracies Practicum Group, School of International Service, American University (Spring 2013)
By Idris Evans, Jessica Lane, Jessica Pealer, Megan Turner
Acknowledgments

The Conflict Resolution and Change Management in Transitioning Democracies Practicum group at American University would like to thank Partners for Democratic Change for their support of this project. We would also like to thank American University’s School of International Service Practica Program for creating this opportunity for collaboration.

We would like to thank the individuals who supported and guided the process of creating the report:

- Hrach Gregorian, Adjunct Professorial Lecturer, American University
- Nick Oatley, Chief Operating Officer, Partners for Democratic Change
- Conner Purcell, Manager, Partners for Democratic Change

We would also like to thank our colleagues who supported the creative process:

- Meagan Allen, M.A. Candidate
- Cate Broussard, M.A. Candidate
- Adam Gould, M.A. Candidate
- Ian Schramm, M.A. Candidate
Abstract

The peacebuilding and democracy building fields are often viewed as separate areas of practice, yet for practitioners to help a society to work towards Peace Writ Large they need a better understanding of how these two fields intersect and strengthen one another. Commissioned by Partners for Democratic Change, the following report, which is based on an extensive examination of the two fields, proposes a framework to conceptualize how these fields come together to achieve common goals. In order to operationalize the implications for each field, this report has identified democratic institutions, civil society, and local capacity as the three key “spheres” of practice that together constitute the nexus of peacebuilding and democracy building. The strengths or weaknesses of each of the three “spheres” have profound implications for the others, and all must be taken into account by practitioners working to build peace and democracy. The report aims to encourage practitioners to be aware of where their own work lies within the broader constellation of actors working in the highly complex and interconnected nexus of peacebuilding and democracy building, in order to build more effective strategic relationships and develop innovative paths to Peace Writ Large. This report is an exploration of this nexus and promotes further academic research and conceptual work on this topic.
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A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF PEACEBUILDING AND DEMOCRACY BUILDING:

Introduction

Theory and practice of democracy building and peacebuilding continue to evolve in tandem with changes in a dynamic global environment. While democracy building has expanded beyond an emphasis on electoral processes and institution building, peacebuilding has grown to entail more than just the definition popularized by the United Nations (UN) as “action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict.” There is now a growing realization in both fields that establishing lasting peace and sustainable democracy will require greater coordination across many domains and levels of activity. This report provides a framework intended to demonstrate how democracy building and peacebuilding intersect in practice. The report begins with a survey of each field and then proceeds to examine areas in which the two align and become mutually reinforcing. We identify three broad “spheres” that represent a nexus where democracy building and peacebuilding overlap. These three spheres are state institutions, civil society, and local capacity. The Nexus model demonstrates how the interdependent relationships between these three spheres of practice can contribute to simultaneously enhance peace and democracy.

Peacebuilding: Background and Theories

To promote deep societal change and reconciliation, peacebuilders must undertake holistic interventions to achieve Peace Writ Large: reduced violence and increased social justice.

Post-Cold War dynamics of international aid and conflict resolution in transitioning societies have given rise to the broad and varied field of peacebuilding. The several theories underlying peacebuilding practices identify a need for holistic interventions aimed at deep societal change and the achievement of Peace Writ Large, a state of reduced violence and increased social, political, and economic justice.

The current field of peacebuilding developed out of a realization that forging a peace agreement and providing relief would not be sufficient to have the long-term stabilizing impact that many hoped to achieve. In An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping (1992), former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali articulated this need for a paradigm shift in the emergent field of peacebuilding practice. Boutros-Ghali called for a shift away from a focus on achieving a mere cessation of violence and toward a greater emphasis on post-conflict reconstruction, including a stronger institutional and structural approach. Boutros-Ghali also called upon the UN to seize a unique opportunity to reclaim the great objectives of its founding Charter and to never again be stifled in efforts to achieve these as it

was during the Cold War period. He called upon the UN to engage in the earliest point of conflict and to address issues such as economic inequality, social injustice, and the political process – a much more comprehensive approach than had hitherto been the body’s practice. He also called upon the UN to end violent conflicts through peacemaking, to preserve peace through peacekeeping, and to assist peacebuilding through the rebuilding of institutions and infrastructure and the building of new relationships. Importantly, this was one of the first times a distinction was made between peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.3

Since Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Peace*, the field of peacebuilding has continued to evolve to include not only state-building activities, but also activities that aim to strengthen the social fabric of society. Today peacebuilding can be defined as the community of practice that includes actions and principles that seek to address the root causes of conflict in order to build social relationships and state structures capable of sustaining peace.4 Within this broad and diverse field of practice there exist numerous underlying theories related to why these different practices arise. Some of these theories, as noted in a recent study by conflict specialist Robert Ricigliano include:

- **Institutional development theory**: Stable institutions allow for peace to be secured – institutions that guarantee democracy, justice, equity, etc.
- **Root causes/justice theory**: It is necessary to address the underlying causes of war, such as injustice, oppression, lack of security, and threat to social identity.
- **Individual change theory**: Transforming individuals’ attitudes, behaviors, and values will lead to peace.
- **Withdrawal of the resources for war theory**: Interrupting the supply of materials that support war will collapse the war-system and bring about peace.
- **Healthy relationships and connections theory**: Diminishing the structures and processes that sustain divided societies, such as prejudices among and between groups, will lead to peace.

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Grassroots mobilization theory: Mobilizing a critical mass of people who are against violence and war will eventually cause elites to follow suit.\(^5\)

Economics of war theory: Stopping the flow of money that funds war and combatants will lead to peace.

Public attitudes theory: The media can be used to change public attitudes of intolerance and prejudice, and this shift will contribute to peace.

Reduction of violence theory: Reducing violence between combatants will lead to peace.

Political elites theory: Peacebuilding needs to address and change the attitudes of elites so that peace is in their interest.

These theories inform the theories of change used by the international and domestic actors who engage in peacebuilding activities. As Ricigliano describes, while each of these theories captures an important conflict dynamic, none of them on their own is able to create large-scale, sustainable change. In other words, when put into practice, none of these theories is sufficient on its own to achieve Peace Writ Large. Peace Writ Large, a term coined by Mary B. Anderson and Lara Olson, is defined as the “changes at the broad level of society” that include both “stopping violence and destructive conflict” and “building just and sustainable peace.”\(^6\) This concept encapsulates the broad approach to peacebuilding that many peacebuilding practitioners have called for. A systems approach to Peace Writ Large that encompasses all of these theories and works with the true nature of conflict – which is broad, complex, and dynamic – is inherent in what Ricigliano calls for. While falling short of a genuine systems approach, many authors and organizations have created frameworks that approach peacebuilding by addressing wider societal challenges to a more broadly conceived peace.

“Vision of Humanity,” an organization that produces the Global Peace Index, has recently issued its Pillars of Peace derived from over 300 country-level data sets.\(^7\) According to their analysis, the Pillars of Peace consist of the following eight “independent” yet “reinforcing” factors:

- Well-functioning government
- Sound business environment

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• Equitable distribution of resources
• Acceptance of the rights of others
• Good relations with neighbors
• Free flow of information
• High levels of education
• Low levels of corruption

Each of these factors can be found embedded within larger models of peacebuilding where they are often identified as the stated goal of a certain peacebuilding activity. A number of other academics, organizations, and practitioners have developed models that address the dynamic and complex nature of the peacebuilding field. One prominent academic and practitioner in the field of peacebuilding is John Paul Lederach, who has created a conflict transformation approach (see box 1) that addresses the need to include all levels of actors, from the grassroots to the elite, in the peacebuilding process.8 Two other models of peacebuilding are discussed below.

• The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) defines the conflict prevention and peacebuilding field in one model with the goal of transforming attitudes, structures, relationships and behaviors to reduce or end violence and/or instill a culture of peace. This model includes the following functional areas:9
  ▪ Equitable Socio-Economic Development
  ▪ Good Governance
  ▪ Reform of Justice

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and Security Institutions
  ▪ Culture of Truth, Justice and Reconciliation

- The Peacebuilding Palette is a model created by Dan Smith in order to visualize the “interplay between different elements of peacebuilding,” and to stress the “possibilities for optimizing and multiplying the effect by combining different kinds of activities”.\(^{10}\) The palette includes four functional areas:
  ▪ Security
  ▪ Socio-economic Foundations
  ▪ Political Framework
  ▪ Reconciliation and Justice

These three models, along with Ricigliano’s systems approach to peacebuilding, emphasize the need for a holistic approach that focuses not only on the elites, but also on the grassroots level; not only on security and stabilization but also on justice, politics, and socio-economic issues; and not only on institutions, but also on psycho-social dynamics such as forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation.

Against this backdrop, we propose that peacebuilding scholars and practitioners must take an integrated approach to building Peace Writ Large. As underscored by the UN’s Boutros Boutros-Ghali in *Agenda for Democratization*, democracy building strengthens sustainable peacebuilding activities.\(^{11}\) In order to better understand democracy building practice, it is necessary to understand the theories that underlie it.


Democracy Building: Background and Theories

Democracy building promotes the structures of an open, transparent, and democratic government, widely considered to be the political system most supportive of peace.

Democracy building promotes the structures of an open and democratic government. The underlying theories, including economic development and modernization, globalization, and democratic peace, are not universally accepted, but do form the rationale for most government and NGO interventions.

Democracy building refers to the work that practitioners undertake to facilitate, support, and accelerate democratization, which is defined as the process of transitioning to a political system in which governments are freely elected and power is ultimately vested in the people. The field of theory behind democratization theory is dynamic and has a vibrant history. Samuel Huntington was the first to use the now commonly accepted framework of three distinct waves of democratization. The first wave of democratization refers to the extension of suffrage in the United States and Western European countries beginning in the 19th Century. The second wave was the post-WWII democratization reinforced by the Marshall Plan, which provided assistance for European reconstruction with an emphasis on buttressing western European democracies against communist ideologies. The third wave of democratization, which prompted a large body of theoretical analysis, refers to the trend in democratization that started in 1974 and included Latin American, southern European, and some African countries.\(^\text{12}\) Important democratization theories include:

- Economic Development/Modernization Theory
- Globalization Theory
- Economic Liberalization Theory
- Democratic Peace Theory
- Dependency Theory

Modernization theory, also known as economic development theory, is one of the most important theories to emerge from the analysis of the third wave of democratization. Authored by Seymour Martin Lipset, economic development theory argues that economic development is a necessary condition for democratization.\(^\text{13}\) Globalization theory, an influential theory that stems from modernization theory, refers to the growing interconnectedness of the world both in communication and flow of goods and ideas, and in cultural awareness.\(^\text{14}\) An important criticism of modernization and globalization theories comes from dependency theory, which argues that underdeveloped countries (mostly in the southern hemisphere) are held in a state of perpetual


poverty by being forced to integrate into a global economic system that favors the developed North, and leads to unequal development and the developed world benefiting from cheap access to the resources of the developing world.15

Another important contribution to the theoretical underpinning of democracy building is democratic peace theory. Originally introduced in the 1970s, the theory came to prominence in the 1990s.16 It argues that democratic states “rarely fight one another because they share common norms of live-and-let-live and domestic institutions that constrain the recourse to war, [and] is probably the most powerful liberal contribution to the debate on the causes of war and peace.”17 Although some international relations scholars have questioned the empirical validity of this claim and note that democracies often experience civil conflict, governments and practitioners have used democratic peace theory to underpin their democracy building and peacebuilding initiatives.18

Democracy and Peace Writ Large: Identifying the Linkages

Democracy is arguably the best, and perhaps only, political system in which Peace Writ Large can thrive.

Mature, stable democracies are better equipped to support peace by addressing the needs of the many, making government accountable to its people, channeling disputes through peaceful processes, promoting equitable resource distribution, and remaining sustainable without the need for renewed violence. Democratic institutions provide checks both on central state power and on one another, acting as a series of fail-safes to keep democracy running.

A functioning, pluralistic, and mature democracy is an essential component of sustainable peace. As Churchill famously noted, democracy is the worst form of government except for all of the others that have been tried.19 A firmly established democracy is best suited to manage conflict and sustain Peace Writ Large. Democracy is able to safeguard Peace Writ Large by better supporting governance, peace, and security. This is because a mature democracy can:

15 Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Economic development also plays an important role in establishing Peace Writ Large. Economic liberalization is integral to modernization theory and economic development theory, two of the foundational theories of democratization. It is an important part of peacebuilding as well, as the Pillars of Peace, the Peacebuilding Palette, and the OECD Development Assistance Committee’s models demonstrate. However, in order to hone in on the work that peacebuilding and democracy building practitioners do and more fully develop the theories and ideas covered in the paper, we chose to focus on the specific linkages between democracy building and peacebuilding, and leave the concurrent influence of economic development for future research.


18 Ibid.

• Address the articulated needs of the broadest section of society;
• Provide a means for accountability in government;\(^\text{20}\)
• Constitute a form of conflict resolution;\(^\text{21}\)
• Support security and peace by effecting nonviolent means to decide who gets what, when, and how; and\(^\text{22}\)
• Sustain itself without violence.

The primary reason that an established democracy supports peace is that a freely contested electoral process constitutes an alternative to using violence to air grievances or achieve political outcomes. Thus, democracy, in and of itself, is a powerful form of nonviolent dispute resolution.\(^\text{23}\) Furthermore, at the most basic level, an established democracy creates a strong mechanism of accountability that holds elected officials liable to their electorate for their policy choices. Leaders who are unable or unwilling to institute the reforms necessary to bring about peace and stability can lose their jobs. Thus, built into politicians’ very positions is an incentive to improve security and build peace, provided that the electorate desires peace and security.

Additionally, because democratic governance constitutes the rule of the majority rather than the rule of the few or the one, the government can be held accountable by the electorate through a number of means other than elections, such as ombudsmen, oversight boards, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that specifically focus on government accountability and anti-corruption. Furthermore, democratic peace theory contends that in a community of mature democracies this electoral accountability supports interstate peace. Democracy is also one of the most equitable forms of government, as most modern democracies allow virtually all adults to have a role in the decision-making process.\(^\text{24}\) This means that democracy can allow marginalized members of society to voice their opinions even when they lack informal or economic power. The equity that a deep democracy can provide prevents particular ethnic, religious, or social groups from wielding a disproportionate share of power over other groups or marginalizing those


\(^{23}\) Indeed, as Kinsella and Rosseau argue, “democratic practices can also facilitate the resolution of intense conflict when the political system is challenged from within by groups fighting against the established government, and when it is challenged from without and on the brink of interstate war.” Kinsella and Rosseau, “Democracy and Conflict Resolution,” 477.

\(^{24}\) Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, trans. Lewis White Beck, 1957 ed. (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1795); Paola Conconi, Nicolas Sahuguet, and Maurizio Zanardi, Democratic Peace and Electoral Accountability, (London: Centre for Economic Policy Research, 2013), [http://www.ecares.org/ecare/personal/conconi$/web/DP.pdf](http://www.ecares.org/ecare/personal/conconi$/web/DP.pdf), 3-4; Conconi, Sahuguet, and Zanardi make the point that “Kant argued that the leaders of republics are less likely to break peaceful relations, since they are accountable to the people, who dislike costly conflicts: if the people who have to pay for it with their lives and possessions decided whether or not there should be a conflict, they ‘would be very cautious in commencing such a poor game, decreeing for themselves all the calamities of war.’”
groups entirely. This in turn supports Peace Writ Large by reducing the potential resentment and fear that minority groups might harbor toward the majority.

Importantly, unlike less representative governments, established democracies provide a non-violent means of sustaining the political system itself. A system of democratic governance does not need to rely on violence for self-preservation. Undemocratic regimes are more likely to use violence as a means of maintaining power. This coercive use of violence by the state helps to construct a violent society in which violence becomes an accepted recourse in the face of political differences. Under these regimes, the people whose preferences have not been met feel like losers in a zero-sum game because they have not been allowed to freely advocate for their interests and beliefs. This can foster violent resistance and undermine the regime.

Democratic regimes are less susceptible to this problem. Once mature, democratic governance more fairly allocates decision-making powers among the people, which gives a larger proportion of the governed a sense that they have a stake in the government. In this way, while politics might be the art of deciding who gets what, when, and how, as Harold Lasswell describes, democratic politics explicitly attempts to decide these three key questions without resorting to violence. Thus, democracy provides a way of distributing scarce resources in a society through a mechanism in which the peacefully expressed will of the majority of the people decides how the resources should be allocated. In the long run, this makes democracies more stable and peaceful than authoritarian regimes.

Although the above is true of mature democracies, with established and well-functioning institutions, political institutions are often weak during the democratization process and are open for exploitation by elites or other groups seeking to acquire more power. This is potentially destabilizing. Without a system of institutional accountability through checks and balances there is too great a risk of having “illiberal democracy” where elections are not completely free and fair, and the rule of law and civil liberties are not enforced. It is therefore important to have a justice system and judiciary that is empowered to hold other branches of government accountable. A strong legislative body, judiciary, and civil society are necessary to check the power of the executive, protect people’s civil liberties, and promote their interests. Strong institutions are also an important tool for addressing ongoing ethnic conflict or intrastate conflict in post-conflict periods. If institutions are weak or undergoing transition, the role of local capacity building to help mitigate violence and facilitate cooperation at the local is essential to the transition process. While a democracy that is only partially formed can be unstable, a well-established democracy with all of the above elements can help support the peacebuilding process and sustain Peace Writ Large.

26 Ibid.
27 Robertson, Conflict, Local Government and Decentralization Toolkit, 2-3.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
The democracy building and the peacebuilding fields both contribute important elements to building and maintaining sustainable peace. However, they often operate unaware of their how interconnected they are. To maximize their effect, these fields must first overcome the assumption that their work is mutually exclusive. There is a need for democracy building and peacebuilding practitioners to be cognizant of the interdependence of their fields. The rest of this report will set out a “Nexus” model for explaining this interdependence. This model can be used by practitioners in each field to understand some ways in which their work complements the work of their colleagues in the other field and to consider where the two fields can meet to work toward the accomplishment of common goals.
The Need for a Nexus Model

The many intersections of peacebuilding and democracy building necessitate an integrated framework to help practitioners understand the context and effects of their activities.

To better reckon with the host of difficult choices, challenges, and constraints inherent to work at the intersection, or nexus, of peacebuilding and democracy building, practitioners must strive for a “bigger picture” understanding of the context of their work. An integrated conceptual framework will meet this need while promoting innovative partnerships between practitioners.

Despite a sincere desire to do good and solve complex problems, practitioners working in democracy and peacebuilding face many challenges that make their work difficult. In a broad sense, these challenges often stem from a key set of choices practitioners must make – whether to seek a peaceful and democratic change that conforms to established technical standards, or to shape ideas and processes in the hope of creating a deeper, more lasting transformation. While both approaches are necessary for sustainable peace and a functioning democracy, it is rarely possible for one organization to accomplish both ends. Technical projects that aim to solve immediate problems without addressing the deeper issues may undercut sustainable peace and democracy by reinforcing exclusion. This, in turn, can buttress oppression and perpetuate social inequity. What’s more, practitioners can become caught in a pattern of moving from quick fix to quick fix without the capacity to take on broader issues, increasing the risk of seeing democracy and peacebuilding as unrelated or marginally related fields. Without seeing the interconnectedness of the fields, it is next to impossible to make genuine progress.

In fact, certain technical programs may be doomed to fail from the very start if practitioners do not consider the structures underlying the symptoms they wish to correct. As Lappin emphasizes, tension and misunderstanding between regional and identity groups often characterize post-conflict societies. Even if these dynamics did not cause the initial conflict,
violence and war tends to exacerbate them.\textsuperscript{34} As Call and Cook remind us, the tools and personnel for renewed violence are all too readily available and populations have been conditioned to see violence as an acceptable and rational means of resolving a dispute.\textsuperscript{35} Practitioners, then, cannot afford to lose opportunities for applied conflict resolution, such as dialogue and negotiation – two activities that strengthen peacebuilding and democracy building work.

International organizations must contend with the frustrating realities that peacebuilding and democracy building are two vast and interconnected fields, and the troubling knowledge that lack of attention to one element is likely to weaken work in another. At the very closely interconnected nexus of democracy building and peacebuilding, no single organization can hope to address every dimension of the problem it wishes to solve. But much like the field itself, interventions mounted at this critical nexus must have as robust an idea of the “bigger picture” as possible. Simply put, all actions have consequences that ripple out across the world of practice. Practitioners need to be aware not only of their own actions, but of the actions of the constellation of actors with whom they are linked. In this way, they can begin to develop more cohesive relationships that can lead to innovative aid solutions, working together to strengthen Peace Writ Large.

\textbf{The Nexus}

\textit{Democratic institutions, civil society, and local capacity are the three key concepts existing at the Nexus, functioning in a mutually supportive manner to support Peace Writ Large.}

We identify three concepts that best represent work at the Nexus: democratic institutions that facilitate the operation of functioning democracies; civil society, the bridge between people and their government; and local capacity, grassroots human and social capital. The three behave in a symbiotic manner to support Peace Writ Large.

Even when taken as separate fields, peacebuilding and democracy building can encompass an extensive range of goals, theories, and activities. When the two fields are taken together, this range and complexity is even greater. Because of the vastness of these fields, we have refined our framework of the Nexus to focus on three “spheres” encompassing theories and practices of peacebuilding and democracy building. Although within and between these spheres, democracy building and peacebuilding practitioners sometimes work in tandem, in order to maximize their impact they must do so with greater awareness of their interdependence. The Nexus framework below demonstrates the importance of understanding the interrelated nature of these two fields. The three Nexus spheres include:

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 142.
Strong democratic institutions depend on trust and accountability to function effectively and peacefully. Local capacity building and civil society building are both vital to the development of this trust and accountability, and the field of peacebuilding in particular has developed various methods and practices for building trust. We further argue that the three Nexus spheres are mutually reinforcing, and we will demonstrate how these mutually reinforcing interactions can contribute to Peace Writ Large.

The model below provides a visual representation of the Nexus. The outer bars display the major theories that underlie the fields and shape the thinking of practitioners working in the Nexus. The inner bars outline the different activities that are central to each field. The three circles in the center represent the spheres of the Nexus that we have identified as central to our framework. Although these spheres are arranged horizontally, we do not mean to imply a linear relationship. Instead, the captioned arrows indicate the multi-directional ways in which the different spheres interact:
CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN TRANSITIONING DEMOCRACIES PRACTICUM GROUP

The Nexus

Democratic Institutions
- Reduces power and acts as watchdog/Voices needs of people
- Allows space/Mode for engagement with the people
- Provides human and social capital

Civil Society
- Organizes will of the people

Local Capacity
- Local Governance

Democracy Theories
- Economic Development Theory/Modernization Theory
- Globalization Theory
- Economic Liberalization Theory
- Democratic Peace Theory

Democracy Building Activities
- Meeting society’s needs
- Government accountability
- Government legitimacy
- Democratic culture & political participation
- State structures of conflict resolution
- Building civil society
- Majority rule
- Local governance

Peacebuilding Activities
- Negotiation
- Democratization
- Stabilization
- Bridge-building activities
- Campaigns for change
- Trauma and healing initiatives
- Track I diplomacy
- Reconstruction
- Truth and Reconciliation
- Applied conflict resolution
- Tolerance and CR trainings and education

Peacebuilding Theories
- Political Elites Theory
- Institutional Development Theory
- Healthy Relationships and Connections Theory
- Root Causes/Justice Theory
- Individual Change Theory
Introduction to the Nexus

An analysis of the two fields of theory and practice led us to identify democratic institutions, civil society, and local capacity as the three main overarching spheres of the Nexus of democracy building and peacebuilding. This is because each of these three spheres is critical to both fields, and together all three encompass the important elements of building Peace Writ Large. Institution building incorporates organizational elements of democracy into the model and civil society contains important cultural and interpersonal elements, which together make up two broad elements of Peace Writ Large. Local capacity building represents another important area of practice, integrating tools that strengthen both institutions and civil society at the local level in our model.

The first sphere of the model is democratic institutions. Some examples of institutions of democracy include political institutions such as the various branches of government, elections, justice systems, institutions that govern the rule of law, and local governance systems. Each of these elements is an important part of the sphere, which is essential to the establishment of a functioning democracy and a lasting peace. Strong political institutions are important to democracy because they provide the framework for democratic government to function. Strong institutions are also an important component of sustainable peace, as they can address ongoing ethnic conflict or intrastate conflict in post-conflict periods.36

Democratic institutions can also increase the likelihood of violence when they are poorly designed. This dichotomy can be seen in the example of democratic elections. Both local and national elections are considered essential parts of the democratization process. However, some scholars in the peacebuilding field see some pitfalls surrounding post-conflict elections and stable peace. These scholars argue that elections alone do not resolve conflict and may even exacerbate it.37 This is in part because the mere act of holding elections does not guarantee that the underlying causes of a conflict will be addressed. Moreover, the competition promoted by elections can actually carry the risk of new violence between opposing groups.38 Some ways to mitigate these risks are: to ensure that elections are only one key activity among many others that address the grievances of all groups and advocate

“Civil society is essential for the human element of Peace Writ Large, to allow people to come together and build strength, unity, and healing after conflict.”

36 Pei, “Implementing the Institutions of Democracy.”
for a spirit of pluralism; that the elections are ongoing and not merely a one time, winner-take-all event; and that they are aligned with firm electoral rules and election monitoring activities to ensure that elections are free and fair.\textsuperscript{39} The risk of conflict emanating from elections is also lessened when other institutions are strong, when there is local capacity for non-violent action and violence prevention, and when civil society is functioning.

Civil society is another vital sphere of the model because without a flourishing civil society, democratic institutions cannot function. Civil society can support democracy in several ways. First, civil society can act as a bridge between government and the people, allowing for mutual communication. Second, it also allows minorities and marginalized groups to organize themselves and be heard in government and in their communities. Lastly, civil society can act as a check on government power and protect the people from government tyranny.

Yet civil society has the potential to weaken democracy and threaten peace. There is a body of literature based on the analysis of civil society organizations that have either had no positive impact or even a negative effect on the broader societies of which they are a part. These organizations can have a negative effect either by aggressively prioritizing the agenda of one group over another, which can create or exacerbate the inequalities and grievances that breed destructive intergroup conflict, or by acting in collaboration and complicity with an ineffective, corrupt, or malevolent government.\textsuperscript{40}

This research on the potential negative impact of civil society should caution practitioners to consider how they can reduce the likelihood that their civil society building initiatives will adversely impact peace and democracy. Peacebuilding initiatives and values can help mitigate these potential negative effects. Civil society that has been built with peacebuilding values in mind can provide a space in which people can come together as a community to engage in dialogue. In this way, civil society can help advance reconciliation efforts in post-conflict or post-authoritarian societies.\textsuperscript{41} Civil society that supports democratic values addresses the human

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element of Peace Writ Large by allowing people to come together in the formation of peaceful communities.

The final sphere of the Nexus model is local capacity. This sphere includes grassroots peacebuilding initiatives such as reconciliation, healing, and relationship-strengthening, as well as local governance support initiatives. Local capacity building strengthens civil society by providing the human and social capital upon which civil society organizations depend. Local governance building, which is a key facet of local capacity building, is an essential element of democratic institutions because it facilitates government responsiveness and accountability at the local level and builds trust and confidence in democratic institutions. Local capacity building represents a significant area of intervention in which diverse organizations work with communities on the ground to lay the most basic foundation for Peace Writ Large.

The three spheres that form the Nexus model can function cooperatively to build and sustain Peace Writ Large. If one of these spheres is weak, then the whole system suffers. If institutions are weak and unable to respond to people’s needs, it can lead to dissatisfaction in the populace, causing instability. If civil society is weak, people are less able to communicate their preferences to the government, leading to a weaker democracy. Furthermore, without a strong civil society, minority groups are unable to organize themselves and have their voices represented, making them susceptible to domination by majority groups. And without local capacity, communities suffer from a lack of adequate resource distribution, a lack of skills to prevent intergroup conflict, and ill-functioning local institutions, all of which can lead to dissatisfaction with the system, economic stagnation, and the risk of recurring violence. However, when all three spheres are strong, they work together to fortify one another and contribute to lasting peace and sustainable democracy. The following sections explore how these spheres reinforce one another and, ultimately, contribute to the development and sustainability of Peace Writ Large.

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Democratic Institutions and Civil Society

A vibrant civil society and functioning democratic institutions are necessary to achieve Peace Writ Large; they mutually support tolerance, accountability, and citizen engagement.

Civil society keeps institutions accountable and institutions protect civil society from state overreach. Theory and practice support the notion that Peace Writ Large will suffer unless buttressed by both the tolerance and inclusivity promoted by civil society and the democratic institutions that can engage effectively with citizens.

Democratic institutions and civil society are interconnected and mutually supportive. Both elements need to be strong in order to achieve Peace Writ Large. Democratic institutions support peace through governance by giving people nonviolent methods for airing grievances and managing conflict.

Several peacebuilding theories, including “Healthy Relationships and Connections Theory” and “Institutional Development Theory,” as well as theories of and about democratization, such as Globalization and Modernization Theories, support the need for a pluralistic, interactive civil society and institutions. To achieve Peace Writ Large, state institutions must be based on tolerance and inclusivity, and civil society can help promote this pluralistic political system.
Civil society itself serves an important function in supporting democratic institutions as well. Civil society functions as the forum for interaction between the state and the people. In this sphere, peacebuilding activities that include bridge-building initiatives can help repair severed relationships between government and the governed, often stemming from a former (or remaining) regime with a legacy of corruption or human rights violations. The forum of civil society provides the space for programs that address trust deficits. It also provides a communication channel whereby the government can communicate important ideas and information to the people through the media, and society indicates its preferences to government through political parties, interest groups, and unions. Civil society also functions as a way for the people to exercise power and prevent the government from abusing power. State institutions rely on civil society because without it, democracies would be rendered incapable of responding to the needs of the people, and the people would be unable to balance the power of the government.

However if institutions are weak and civil society is strong, groups are able to organize without a political outlet for their concerns. This can lead to instability because civil society then effectively usurps the role of a state, which is not a sustainable and efficient system of long-term state formation. That is why it is necessary for civil society and institutions to be strong; they strengthen one another, which in turn supports Peace Writ Large. Not only do civil society and institutions support one another, but they also strengthen peace and democracy together by giving people the tools and mechanisms to interact more peacefully with their neighbors and address conflict nonviolently.

Democratic institutions play an important role in strengthening civil society in transitioning countries. They do this chiefly by providing the space for civil society to exist in the first place. Institutions that guarantee civil and political liberties, such as the rule of law and an independent judiciary, enshrine rights upon which civil society organizations can rely to more freely pursue their agendas. For instance, the codification of rights to free speech allows civil society to more openly petition or criticize the government or other sources of political power in a transitioning state.

References:

Elections, a principal and crucial institution of democracy, also support civil society. In transitioning countries, if peacebuilding measures align with democracy building, elections should fill the newly created political space with a democratic institution. They provide a tool through which civil society can advocate for their beliefs and interests and turn those beliefs and interests into public policy. Formal political systems like electoral regimes can also support civil society by giving civil society groups political means to publicly voice their preferences. Depending on the system of representation, a representative democracy can also give a proportionally greater voice to members of society that had been marginalized in the past.

Inversely, civil society also plays a necessary part in the function of democratic political institutions. These institutions depend upon the existence of a supportive civic culture, which is enshrined in and maintained by vibrant civil society. A democratic civic culture based on pluralism grants legitimacy and support to the institutions of democracy by encouraging and enabling people to participate in a democratic system. Ideally, civic culture emphasizes political engagement. This requires citizens of a democracy to understand how democracy works and to commit to democracy as a system.

This civic culture can be developed through civic education. Civic education focuses on teaching democratic values and processes, promoting democratic tools such as participation and debate, and maintaining a national identity. In the context of post-conflict societies and democratic transitions, civic education can also include elements of peace and conflict resolution education, which is designed to enable individuals, communities, and eventually whole societies to resolve past, ongoing, and future disputes peacefully. Peace and conflict resolution education curricula can include the

“At a strong civic culture is the foundation for a vibrant civil society.”

Box 3: Devolution

One democratizing force that can empower civil society is devolution. By bringing key decision-making responsibilities to lower levels of government, devolution makes it easier for civil society actors to petition politicians to act. In sum, democratic institutions can help to provide a protected legal space though which civil society actors and institutions can articulate their demands more freely and efficiently. Even state-level democratizing initiatives like devolution can help make government more local, which can in turn enable civil society organizations to better engage with the government.

48 Linz and Stepan, Problems of democratic transition and consolidation, 121.
52 Ibid.
teaching of concepts like dialogue, conflict resolution, healing, and justice, as well as efforts to train people in these techniques.\textsuperscript{54} This is where ministries of education can partner with NGOs to develop peace programming in schools. Although democratic participation may exist independently of civic culture, a well-established civic culture can facilitate people’s peaceful interaction within the structure of democratic institutions.\textsuperscript{55}


Local Capacity and Civil Society

Building local capacity strengthens the human capital available to civil society organizations, which can use that widened talent pool to recruit and train stronger stakeholders in both peace and democracy.

Local capacity and civil society also exist in symbiosis, with local capacity building activities adding value to civil society by increasing human capital. Civil society organizations educate, train, and facilitate at the grassroots, building better citizen stakeholders in the process of building peace and democracy.

The relationship between local capacity and civil society is important to both peacebuilding and democracy building, and local capacity and civil society interact in a circular fashion and support each other. This is primarily because both are broad spheres that include educational and training activities as well as technical assistance. Local capacity building initiatives seek to provide local actors with human, social, and structural capital, which enhance the ability of civil society organizations to independently carry out their activities.

Just as building local capacity can bolster civil society, supporting civil society can build the capacity of local stakeholders in a democratic transition. Civil society organizations are able to educate society and disseminate technical information, provide services, and deliver aid in ways that businesses and governments do not.\(^{56}\) Civil society can help individuals better

\(^{56}\) Antlöv, Brinkerhoff, and Rapp, “Civil Society Capacity Building for Democratic Reform,” 419.
understand the political processes in their own communities and train communities in effective ways to resolve conflicts and promote peace.

Yet in many post-conflict countries, civil society is lacking and violence may have become an acceptable form of dispute resolution. In these scenarios, education is a key component of capacity building. Allowing individuals, who have often endured repression and trauma, the ability to see that they have non-violent options in handling confrontations and that their opinions matter is an essential component in peacebuilding and democracy building. The building of a peaceful civic culture through civic and peace education is incredibly important for the development of a functioning civil society and for the overall health and growth of a country. Building local capacity should take place as a bottom-up approach in conjunction with top-down peacebuilding and democracy building initiatives in order to address psycho-social effects of war.\(^57\)

Educating the public on their rights under the law and the appropriate role of government can help citizens exercise their democratic rights to further advance their status in society. A better understanding of civil rights or the legal role of government officials in a society can help civil society better fulfill its role as a check on government power and improve government responsiveness and accountability.\(^58,59\) Issues such as poverty, sexual and gender-based violence, and prejudice and discrimination can be the effect of a lack of education. Education and trainings in, for example, gender-sensitivity in police forces, can be offered by civil society organizations and can improve relations between security forces and society. In this example, if implemented effectively, programs aimed at teaching nonviolent and inclusive ways of interacting, and developing accountability systems can strengthen the rule of law, thereby elevating the security of women and strengthening the status of women to participate in the economy. This advances Peace Writ Large as overt violence against women decreases and underlying injustices are addressed. This could also be an opportunity for partnerships between the government and civil society to train law enforcement officials.

Peacebuilding tools, such as holding intergroup dialogues, training community mediators, problem-solving workshops, and incentivizing non-violence, are ways in which peacebuilding works together with democracy building in an integrated and collaborative fashion. Intergroup dialogue, mediation, and problem-solving workshops are all examples of applied conflict resolution methods, which focus on the psycho-social dimensions of conflict. These methods are used to build empathy and encourage coexistence between individuals from conflicting groups.


\(^{58}\) Brinkerhoff provides a detailed discussion of how civil society organizations can increase government accountability by both increasing government responsiveness and increasing enforcement of laws designed to combat corruption:

Through the development of the vital skill of communication, the parties are able to work toward tolerance, mutual recognition, cooperation, and nonviolence.\textsuperscript{60}

A strong civil society builds peace both by strengthening the capacity of communities to interact peacefully, and by supporting democratic mechanisms of conflict resolution. Local capacity building may also help to create a network of relationships upon which a more peaceful and trusting society can be fostered. In this way, local capacity building initiatives foster the development of not only human capital, but the social capital of the community as well.\textsuperscript{61} In addition, the education that civil society can offer provides people not affiliated with any particular civil society group with the skills to better articulate their political beliefs. While civic education can help to define an individual’s role in a democratic state, general education plays a much greater role in capacity building.\textsuperscript{62}

The relationship between local capacity and civic culture is crucial to the attainment of Peace Writ Large. Local capacity can foster a more robust civic culture that provides a basis on which a more inclusive society can be formed. Civil society, supported by a strong local capacity and trained in methods of applied conflict resolution, can mobilize to hold the government accountable and petition them to respond to their needs and interests through institutional mechanisms.


Local Governance and Democratic Institutions

Local governance capacity provides local actors with institutional peacebuilding tools, and increases their faith in the efficacy of democracy.

Local governance, a dimension of local capacity, can strengthen democratic institutions by putting community-based actors within easy reach of the tools that they need to build peace. In this way, institutions increase their visibility and accessibility at the local level, developing people’s faith and confidence in the ability of democratic systems to resolve disputes.

Although the relationships discussed above work in a more circular fashion, the relationship between democratic institutions and local capacity is more linear. Democratic institutions do more than just support local capacity through devolution and the legal climate. Efforts to build local capacity support stronger state institutions much more directly than the other way around. Indeed, local capacity building is integrated into and strengthens both democratic institutions and civil society. Therefore, this section primarily focuses on the bottom-up relationship between local capacity building and democratic institutions and pays particular attention to the role that local governance plays.

In a capacity building context, local governance refers to activities designed to both enhance the capabilities of people to better govern themselves and to improve the ability of governments to serve the people. Thus “local governance” is a broad term that refers not just to
the political arena but to the wider organization of collective action as well. It is distinct from “local government” in that “local governance” incorporates private organizations and individuals into the network of actors and has a stronger focus on the interdependency of players.

As with local capacity building in general, local governance is a key part of democracy building and peacebuilding. Local governance is able to support democratic institutions by building capacity in a number of related areas. These areas include security, crisis management, aid provision, and the design of local democratic institutions such as elections, laws, and governments. The emphasis on local governance is part of a general push for liberalism that includes an emphasis on decentralization.

Local governance primarily works to strengthen democracy by providing a mechanism through which people can hold government accountable. On the local level, elections are better equipped to do this. Elections also work to build confidence in the system, and thereby build the legitimacy of democratic governance. By building strong local governance to improve the functioning of local democracy, the broader institutions of governance are also strengthened.

Local governance also bolsters peacebuilding in two ways. First, it can support local conflict resolution and maintains sustainable democracy over the long term. Second, it supports the stability of democratic institutions that promote peace by building trust in state institutions. Strong local governance is better able to respond to people’s needs through resource distribution capabilities. Local governance also makes those who govern more susceptible to the threat of elections, making them more responsive to the people and incentivizing peace when the system is functioning efficiently. When people see their local government being held accountable to the wishes of the people, it builds trust in government and in democracy overall. Finally, local governance helps to promote peace because local governments can better respond to the needs of the people. At the local level, government officials have more interaction with communities, enabling them to engage with and listen to people’s needs. Local governments also have the capacity to react to those needs and provide tailored services to the people. This provision of services can alleviate some of the resource conflicts and patronage that states with little local governance experience. Peacebuilding efforts to provide a bridge between the government and the people include building local governance that is representative of diversity in demographics and needs.

The relationship between local capacity building and democratic institutions is crucially important to the attainment of Peace Writ Large. Institutions of government can cultivate local governance.

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66 Bevir, Encyclopedia of Governance.
capacity, thereby fostering Peace Writ Large by providing a strong set of rules for local capacity builders and devolving power to localities. Building the capacity of localities and local organizations works to promote peace from the bottom up. Local governance allows people to have access to the tools of government necessary to build communal peace. There is also a risk here, however, that groups that are not interested in promoting peace can also use local capacity and government institutions to promote their own agenda. That is why it is important to have strong institutions capable of enforcing the law and supported by local capacity building efforts to promote peace and reconciliation in communities. Good practices of local governance build civic culture and trust in government institutions that can be essential in overcoming a national or deeply entrenched conflict. By building trust in the democratic system, strong local governance can provide an avenue through which people can argue peacefully and articulate their beliefs through the ballot box rather than the barrel of a gun.
Resource Distribution: Linking Democratic Institutions, Civil Society, and Local Capacity

Civil society provides a crucial state-citizen bridge and can support weak states in justly distributing resources to citizens while simultaneously educating citizens about their rights.

Justice in resource distribution is mission-critical in the Nexus, and civil society can serve as a crucial resource distribution mechanism. Civil society can take over resource distribution for a weak state, allowing the state to focus on developing the institutions and accountability structures. Civil society also educates people on their right to resources.

Public management, allocation, and distribution of resources need to be effective and equitable to build and sustain Peace Writ Large. More often than not, poor resource distribution disproportionately affects impoverished, minority, or marginalized groups and contributes to economic and social disparities and discrimination. Ineffective or preferential resource distribution is often found as an underlying cause of overt conflict and those in power can exploit resources for individual gain, leaving the majority of the population in poverty.

The distribution and management of resources is a key responsibility of the state. In reality, many states do not have the capacity to handle such a robust task at the top level, even if those elected have the best of intentions. This is especially true in countries emerging from conflict or in transition where there may be power vacuums due to the collapse of a previous

69 To read more about efficient public management, and specifically how it relates to development, see Brian C. Smith, *Good Governance and Development*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 226-248.
government, fragile and incapable institutions, and a lack of trained personnel due to issues such as brain drain. Still, in order to achieve Peace Writ Large, people need to have the resources to satisfy their food, water, shelter, education, and health needs. Especially in cases of weak central states, civil society can serve as an instrument to distribute resources and hold the government accountable for public management. A greater capacity of local structures and human capital translates to a greater ability of citizens to utilize, manage, and distribute resources.

In this regard, the relationship between democratic institutions and civil society is one in which civil society functions as an extended arm of the state in order to serve the needs of its people. Civil society can either be contracted out by the government in an official manner, or can serve as a check and anti-corruption watchdog to ensure elite interests are not interfering with the effectiveness and equity of resource distribution. It is important to note that civil society should not, in the long run, undermine the role of the state, and should work to strengthen the state’s ability to meet the needs and demands of the population. In addition, civil society can educate the people to understand their rights to receive services from the state, thereby building local capacity to demand accountability and equity in resource distribution by the government.

The strength of local capacity can help determine how resources are absorbed and the level of sustainability of public management. In addition, increasing local capacity through skills and technology is necessary for countries to decrease their dependency on outside mechanisms, such as international donors, to fulfill the needs of citizens. Democracy building initiatives directly support resource distribution by allocating tasks to different sectors of government, in order to delegate roles in effective ways and create systems of efficiency and accountability. Democratic institutions, from the rule of law to elections, are in place for reasons already stated, and ensure that citizens can elect a government that can best serve their needs. Peacebuilding activities, spanning economic revitalization, intergroup relations, and confidence-building and training programs, feed directly into how resources are managed with fairness and efficacy.

To read more about resource allocation and distribution in post-conflict countries and the risk of parallel program undermining the state, see Charles Call and Vanessa Wyeth, Building States to Build Peace, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 85.

Ibid., 86.
Conclusion

The Nexus framework described above illustrates the key areas in which peacebuilding and democracy efforts intersect. We have made the case for democracy as the best form of government to sustain a peaceful society, and we have described how the elements of democracy building are also vital to the peacebuilding process through the Nexus model. This model is a snapshot of the complex interconnectedness of the relationships between peacebuilding and democracy building as they promote Peace Writ Large. In the second part of this report, we will use case studies to explore examples of these relationships as they occur in practice. Looking at cases around the world, Working in the Nexus of Peacebuilding and Democracy Building: Case Studies and Insights from the World of Practice will illustrate how particular peacebuilding and democracy building programs work within the Nexus to promote the larger goal of Peace Writ Large.
Annex 1: Glossary of Terms

- **Civic Culture/Democratic Political Culture**: Civic Culture requires citizens of a democracy to understand how democracy works as well as be committed to democracy as a system. A strong civic culture implies the internalization of the democratic values of cooperation and compromise.

- **Civic Education**: Teaching democratic values and processes, democratic tools such as participation and debate, and maintaining national identity.

- **Civil Society**: The space and mechanisms that allow people to gather together, discuss, and advocate for concerns and issues important to individuals and groups.

- **Democracy Building**: The work that practitioners undertake to make a society more democratic.

- **Democratic Institutions**: Democratic Institutions include political bodies such as the various branches of government, electoral systems, a judiciary, the institutions that govern the rule of law, and local governance systems.

- **Democratization**: The process of developing a government where individuals freely contest elections and power is vested with the people.

- **Devolution**: “The transfer of power from a central government to subnational (e.g., state, regional, or local) authorities.”

- **Human Capital**: “The acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society.”

- **Informal institutions**: A separate, but still important part of democratic structures. They include corruption, customs, civil disobedience, and other things that govern how people interact. Democracy building does not involve these institutions, but they are important to understand in order to fully understand how democracies function.

- **Peace and Conflict Resolution Education**: The educational initiatives designed to enable individuals, communities, and eventually societies to resolve past, ongoing, and future conflicts.

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72 Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations.*
disputes peacefully. These include dialogue, conflict resolution, healing, justice, and efforts to train people in these techniques.

- **Peacebuilding**: The community of practice that includes actions and principles that seek to address the root causes of conflict in order to build social relationships and state structures capable of a sustainable peace.

- **Peace Writ Large (PWL)**: The “changes at the broad level of society” that include both “stopping violence and destructive conflict” and “building just and sustainable peace.”

- **Social Capital**: “The norms and networks that enable people to act collectively” and refers to social relationships in communities. Refers to both the structural elements as well as “a large attitudinal component, such as the existence of trust or mistrust between groups.”

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77 Anderson and Olson. “Confronting War,” 12.
79 Ricigliano, *Making Peace Last*, 44.
Annex 2: Works Cited


A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF PEACEBUILDING AND DEMOCRACY BUILDING:


Annex 3: About the Authors

Irdris Evans is an M.A. candidate in the International Politics Program at American University’s School of International Service. He specializes in human rights and international development in Asia, and has extensively researched ethnicity-related barriers to educational attainment in Xinjiang, China. He currently works for the Public International Law and Policy Group, where he researches a wide of array topics related to local governance, constitutional reform, and transitional justice. Before relocating to D.C., Idris lived in Japan, where he taught English to elementary and middle school students. Originally from New Jersey, he holds a B.A. in East Asian Studies from Davidson College, and speaks Chinese and Japanese. Visit Idris’ linked in profile, http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=47996028, for more information.

Jessica Lane is an M.A. candidate in International Peace and Conflict Resolution at American University’s School of International Service. Her area of academic focus is peacebuilding and development in the Middle East. In addition, she has conducted extensive research on gender and sexual based violence in post-conflict Liberia. Jessica has served on the advisory council of the Dialogue Development Group and American University’s Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion and is a member of the D.C. Interfaith Working Group. She has spent time internationally in France and Israel learning French, Hebrew, and Arabic. Before attending graduate school, Jessica served two years with AmeriCorps in Austin, Texas concentrating on access to higher education for low-income and first-generation youth. Visit Jessica’s linked in profile, http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jessica-lane/9/576/a62, for more information.

Jessica Pealer is an M.A. candidate in American University School of International Service’s Comparative and Regional Studies Program. Her regional focus is the Middle East, with specializations in international development and global health. Her primary research focus is women’s health. She holds a B.A. in Politics and Theology & Religious Studies from the University of Glasgow. She is from Boston, and her professional background includes work in education and with nonprofits, working with at risk populations. Visit Jessica’s linked in profile, www.linkedin.com/pub/jessica-pealer/3a/b50/735/, for more information.

Megan Turner is an M.A. candidate in International Peace and Conflict Resolution at American University’s School of International Service. Her area of academic focus is peacebuilding and reconciliation in Africa. In addition, she has conducted research on peacebuilding grassroots organizations and SMS technology as a tool of peace in Kenya. Megan has worked at the Center for Community Engagement and Service and serves as an In Hall Mediator for American University. She has spent time internationally in Kenya and Rwanda learning Swahili as well as in the Dominican Republic and Haiti working with low income Haitians. She will be working as a fellow at A Wider Circle following graduation. Visit Megan’s linked in profile, http://www.linkedin.com/pub/megan-turner/1a/632/422, for more information.