

CONCEPTS FOR PEACEBUILDING – PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORKS

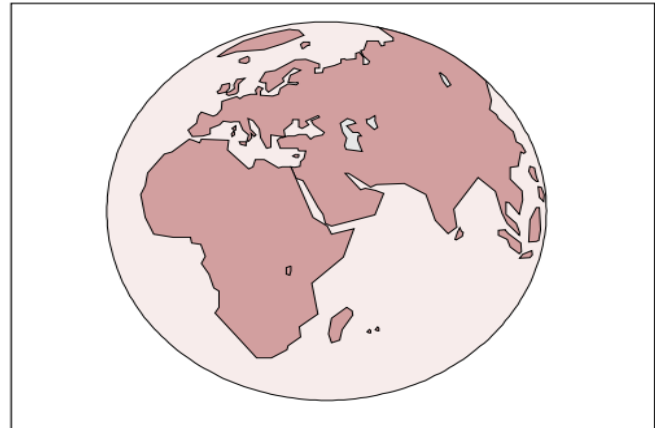
Peacebuilding

The Parable of the Quarry. One day, a woman walked through a quarry and asked three different workers what they were doing. The first worker responded, “I am here breaking stones.” The woman walked on through the quarry and asked a second worker the same question. The second responded, “I am earning a living.” She walked further yet and asked a third worker the same question. The third responded, “I am building a cathedral!”

All three of these answers from the quarry workers help us understand our work in peacebuilding. Sometimes we are just breaking stones, and we are focused on the immediate task, which is very hard work. Sometime we are focused on earning a living, which is important for our survival and our family’s survival and health. Sometimes we also understand that our work is part of a much larger vision that involves many other workers; hewing stone is part of building a beautiful cathedral, and working on local relationships and programmes is part of building long-term peace for many to enjoy.

They say that astronauts get “instant global consciousness” when they go into space. Looking down on the earth, they see the intimate nature of the world and our global connectedness. This is the same concept as building the cathedral. How do we achieve that? This is the challenge for peace workers: to see the larger vision as well as focus on immediate tasks.

Peacebuilding refers to the long-term project of building peaceful, stable communities and societies. This requires building on a firm foundation of justice and reconciliation. How we build on that foundation is very important. The *process* needs to strengthen and restore *relationships* and transform unjust institutions and systems. The focus on relationships and the process of how we achieve justice and build peace is unique to peacebuilding. In development work this requires looking at how relationships and decision-making in projects are done. Rather than just looking at the specific ways to improve food production or build new houses, peacebuilding emphasises building right relationships with partners and programme recipients as an integral part of establishing lasting peace in violence-prone areas. Understanding peacebuilding in this way allows us to take a new lens to development projects and programming (Lederach, 1997, 2001).



Grounding peacebuilding in relationships means that we engage in a process that respects the abilities and talents each person brings to projects and programming. Relationships are built on trust amongst staff and partners, and the groups in conflict. Relationships also help fortify and sustain people in the process of social change. To fully respect those with whom we are working, we need to engage with them in the process of programming, and identify the goals, means to achieve those goals and ways to evaluate them together. Participation naturally flows from being relationship-centred.

Five Operating Principles for Peacebuilding

The conceptual framework for peacebuilding in this manual is built on five basic principles adapted from Lederach's groundbreaking work (1997). These principles provide useful guidelines for designing and assessing specific peacebuilding interventions and are used in

The principles are that peacebuilding needs to: (1) be *comprehensive*, (2) strengthen *interdependent* relationships, (3) be *sustainable*, (4) be *strategic* in its focus, and (5) construct an *infrastructure* for peace. These principles rely on the two assumptions identified at the beginning of the manual, that healthy relationships and participatory processes are central to peacebuilding.

1) Comprehensive

To be comprehensive means that we need to be able to see the overall picture in order to affect change within it. Lasting peace comes from addressing the multiple sources of conflict at multiple levels of society – the grassroots, middle and top levels of leadership. This suggests we need to develop lenses to identify the needs of those we are working with, a vision of what we are working towards, actions that can get us there, and a design or plan that we can use as a guide to get us there. To do all of this, we must be able to step back from the swirl of day-to-day jobs and crises around us and situate our actions and the daily events within a broader vision and purpose – this requires a thorough context analysis for peacebuilding.

2) Interdependent

Peacebuilding involves a system of interconnected people, roles, and activities. Interdependence involves being linked by what we do as well as how we do it. No one person, activity, or level of society is capable of designing and delivering peace on its own. All things are linked, and mutually affect one another. With people at the core of peacebuilding, our activities are intimately connected to the nature and quality of our relationships. Peacebuilding builds and supports the interdependent relationships necessary for pursuing and sustaining desired changes. This necessarily includes developing processes that forge relationships between people who are not like-minded but are nevertheless interdependent.

3) Sustainable

Building peace is a long-term prospect. Violent conflicts occur over generations, and we can expect that peacebuilding will take no less time. For peacebuilding to be sustainable over generations, we need to pay attention to where our activities and energies are leading

us. While comprehensiveness requires that we think beyond the immediate and come up with effective responses to issues and crises to reach a long-term vision, sustainability requires that we think about what creates an on-going capacity within the setting for responding to and transforming recurring cycles of conflict and crises. Like sustainable development, sustainable peacebuilding seeks to discover and strengthen the resources rooted in the local context of the protracted conflict

4) Strategic

Peacebuilding needs to include a comprehensive assessment and vision, but it also needs to have specific programmatic actions that are chosen strategically in order to do some things very well – as Archbishop Oscar Romero stated beautifully in the poem included in Section I of this manual. Being strategic means learning to respond proactively to emerging, dynamic social situations and meeting immediate concerns and needs while at the same time reinforcing a larger, longer-term change process. In designing and assessing peacebuilding actions therefore we must meet the immediate needs and work towards the desired vision of change. By strategically assessing the activities we work on – including what we do, where we engage and how we focus our activities – our peacebuilding work will respond to a crisis but not be driven by it

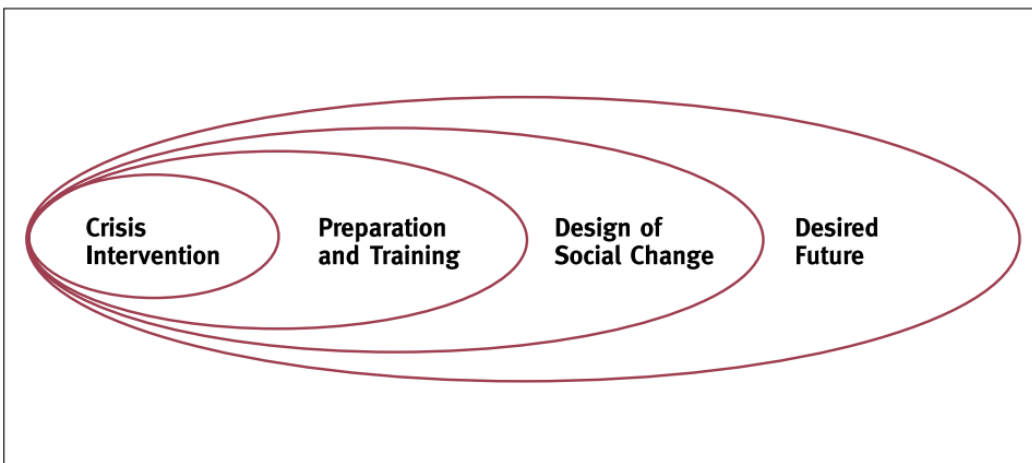
5) Infrastructure

An infrastructure provides the social spaces, logistical mechanisms, and institutions necessary for supporting the process of change and a long-term vision of peace. Infrastructure provides the basic support that enables people and peacebuilding processes to weather any immediate crises while patiently pursuing the slow, long-term, desired change. A peacebuilding infrastructure is based on people, their relationships, and the social spaces they create, which are necessary for reconciliation and conflict transformation.

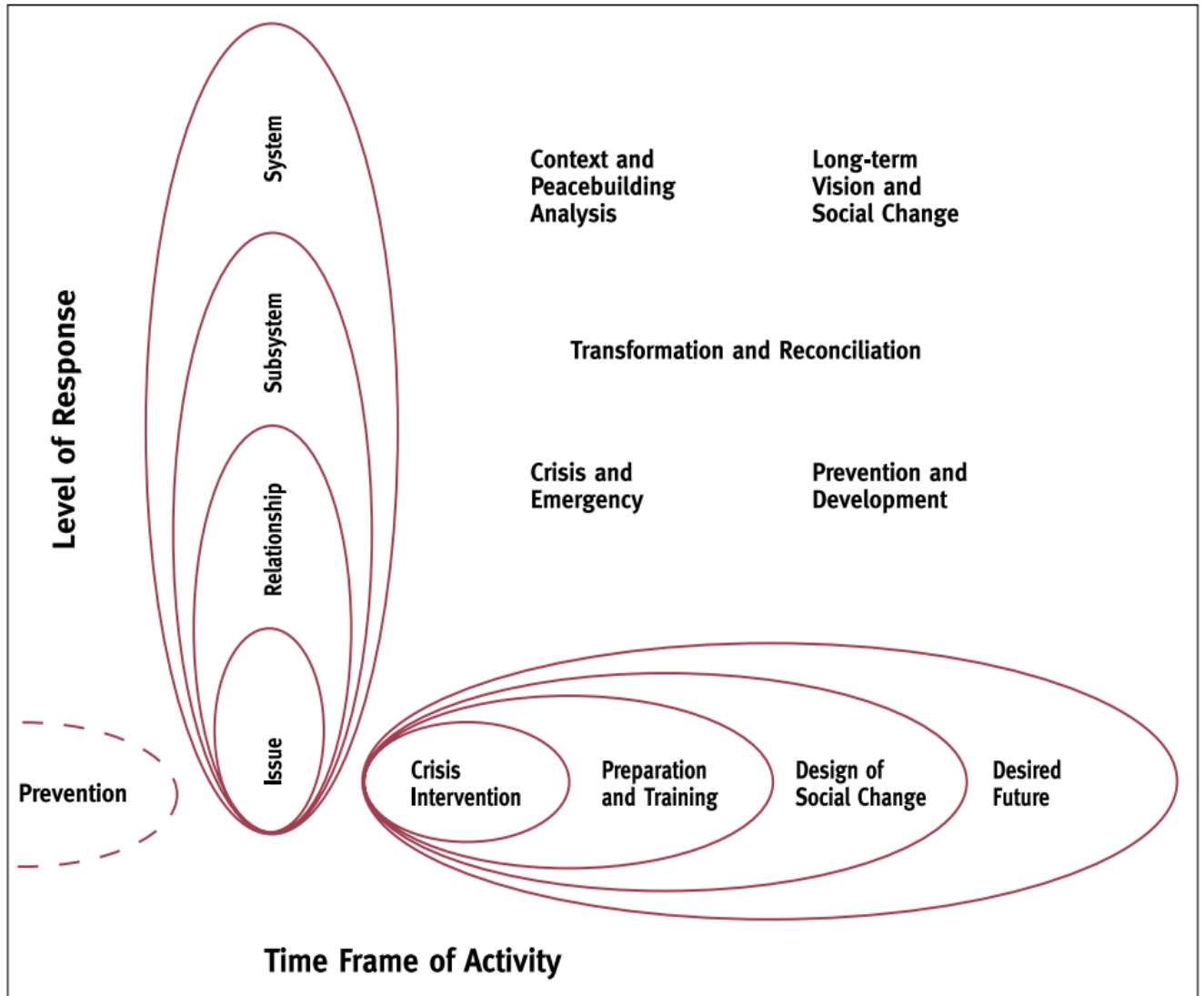
An Integrated Framework for Peacebuilding

An integrated framework, which puts together two dimensions of programming, is helpful for highlighting how the five peacebuilding principles can be put into action. The framework focuses on (1) the level of programmatic response, and (2) the time frame of activities. By examining these two dimensions, we can identify how to be comprehensive, reinforce interdependencies, be strategic and sustainable in our efforts and identify where infrastructure needs to be enhanced.

Time Frame of Activity



Emergency Response and Peacebuilding



(Source: Adapted from Lederach, 1997)