

**Conflict and Development:  
Conflict-Sensitive Development and Development-Sensitive Peacebuilding**

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service  
Summer Institute  
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Intrastate conflict and development are intertwined in many ways. Most obviously, poverty is a powerful breeding ground for resentment and despair, and when combined with perceptions of government corruption and discrimination along regional, tribal, ethnic or religious lines, it can lead to violent insurgencies. Violent conflict then destroys whatever has been produced by previous development efforts and, in many instances, generates levels of impoverishment and disease not seen in those countries since the end of colonial rule. As the World Bank noted in 2004, “countries affected by conflict face a two-way relationship between conflict and poverty – pervasive poverty makes societies more vulnerable to violent conflict, while conflict itself creates more poverty.”

The residues of conflict also vastly complicate subsequent redevelopment initiatives. Insensitively designed or implemented, large infusions of aid can themselves exacerbate or even become the source of new communal rivalries and can lead to renewed or new violent conflict. Indeed, about 50% of “post-conflict” countries revert back to war in the first decade of peace.

This six-day course will examine the relationships between conflict and development and consider strategies that can address their interplay in a variety of settings, both before violence breaks out across social fault lines, and after. It will look at the ways in which social and economic development can contribute to, or undermine, peace; the ways in which conflict complicates development; and the various ways in which peacebuilding strategies can impact development. Against this background, the course will analyze the intervention strategies of international organizations, national governments and NGOs, and examine how these have evolved during the last 15 years. It will address the policy dilemmas that most conflict-torn developing countries have in common, and compare how these dilemmas have been solved in specific conflict regions.

Academics, NGOs and government officials in The Netherlands are at the forefront of thinking about these issues. The purpose for holding the course at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) is to enable students to study with experts regarding the many facets of the problem. There is no greater aggregation of experts than in the Netherlands, and their participation as guest faculty will constitute the heart of the course.

To provide a structure for applying general theory, the course will make one primary case study the focus of the students’ learning. Each student will do intensive reading on one subtopic within three major topic groupings:

#### Demilitarization and development:

- Demobilization and security
- Job creation
- Land reform and agriculture
- Infrastructure (energy, water, roads, harbors, etc.)
- Provision of humanitarian aid services (health, food, shelter)
- Dealing with returning refugees

#### Governance reform:

- Establishing the rule of law and dealing with warlords
- Democratization
- Corruption and nepotism
- Development of local government capacity
- Provision of services (through central government vs. local government vs. NGO's)
- The competing roles of government and markets in the reconstruction process
- Managing the exploitation of exportable raw material resources and the distribution of income derived from them

#### Peacebuilding:

- The role of diaspora groups, women's groups, and youth organizations
- The role of the media
- Through education
- Through the arts, urban planning and public architecture
- Reducing tensions between population groups through dialogue processes and/or the development of narratives
- Truth and Reconciliation Commissions vs. criminal prosecutions

At the culmination of the course, each student will share her/his findings with the other students researching subtopics in their topic area, and on the basis of that shared understanding they will apply their findings to the northern Uganda conflict. Each topic group will make a presentation of those conclusions to the entire class, whereupon cross-topic groups will discuss the implications of each presentation for their own, so as to move toward the development of a holistic view of the interplay of the factors that should bear on the planning and implementation of interventions in “post-conflict” situations.

To further enrich the students' experience, there will be a typically Dutch “borrel”, or party, at which the students will be able to meet UvA students and faculty and other guests involved in related fields of work.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Day One: Conflict and development in the global system**

*Prof. Allen Zerkin, NYU*

- An introduction to the various schools of conflict theory

*Prof. dr. Gerd Junne, Department of Political Science, UvA*

- The post-Cold War global system, globalization, international inequality, intra-national conflict and failed states
- How conflicts complicate development and how development programs can ameliorate or exacerbate conflicts
- Public perceptions of conflict and development and how both are simplified and “framed” in different periods of time and different political contexts
- Typology of conflicts and their root political and economic causes: The “greed vs. grievances” debate; the correlation of violence and rent-seeking economies
- The evolution of the ways different European governments view conflict and development policies
- The development of thinking on conflict and development at the World Bank, the UNDP, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC): from reaction to prevention

*Prof. Allen Zerkin, NYU*

- An introduction to the course’s core case study: Northern Uganda

### **Day Two: Good governance and the challenge of corruption and crime**

*Prof. dr Francesco Strazzari, Department of Political Science, UvA*

- Conflict and crime, with a special focus on the Balkans
- Breaking criminal networks

*Prof. dr Reinoud Leenders, Department of Political Science, UvA*

- Corruption, with a special focus on the Middle East

*Prof. dr Dele Olowu, Institute of Social Studies, the Hague*

- Good governance, accountability and democracy: Facing up to the contradictions
- Decentralization: (Re)building local government, with a special focus on Africa

### **Day Three: Nation building and peacebuilding strategies**

*Prof. dr Charlotte Hille, Department of Political Science, UvA*

- Nation building, with a special emphasis on the Caucasus region

*TBA, Pax Christi*

- Peacebuilding strategies, with a special emphasis on Uganda

*Prof. dr K. Nimako, Department of Political Science, UvA*

- Analysis of the conflict in northern Uganda

#### **Day Four: The role of donor governments and NGO's**

*Dr Pyt Douma, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael Institute, The Hague*

- An overview of international organizations involved in peacebuilding and development
- The roles of NGOs and the challenges facing them, part 1

*M. Parkhuis, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague*

- Dutch aid policy and the role of NGOs

*Guido de Graaf Bierbrauwer, European Centre for Conflict Prevention, The Hague*

- Regional action agenda for Africa

Visit to the Peace Palace, The Hague

#### **Day Five: The special role of civil society**

*Prof. Willemijn Verkoren, International School for Humanities and Social Sciences, UvA*

- The roles of NGOs and the challenges facing them, part 2
- Factors affecting the outcome of peacebuilding strategies: Connectors and dividers

*Prof. Allen Zerkin, NYU*

- Intervention strategies: The challenges of peacemaking and peacebuilding; Track II and Track III strategies
- Regional interventions in Africa and Latin America

Students work in groups to apply course material to the northern Uganda case study

#### **Day Six: Bringing it all together**

*Prof. dr. Gerd Junne, Prof. Willemijn Verkoren, Prof. Allen Zerkin*

Group presentations of strategic plans for northern Uganda, cross-group discussions, reports from the cross-group discussions, and general discussion

*Prof. Willemijn Verkoren*

- Implications for NGO capacity building

*Prof. dr. Gerd Junne, Prof. Willemijn Verkoren, Prof. Allen Zerkin*

Course conclusion: Lessons learned