



# Workshop on Conflict Transformation and Peace-building

Canterbury, 31 January to 2 February 2012

The following report describes a workshop on conflict transformation and peace-building organised by the Anglican Peace and Justice Network (APJN) for a group of nine recently consecrated Anglican bishops from Nigeria, South Sudan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India and Brazil.

The report includes samples of material developed by Responding to Conflict (see [www.respond.org](http://www.respond.org)) which was an essential element in the workshop.

The workshop took place at the International Study Centre in Canterbury and was facilitated by Simon Fisher who founded Responding to Conflict and was the organisation's director until 2005. Simon has worked in many countries as adviser, facilitator, trainer and mediator with local and international agencies, governments, faith groups and at the UN and has wide, first-hand experience of conflict, development and change. He has helped to develop and sustain active networks of committed peace workers at global and regional levels. His books include 'Working with Conflict: skills and strategies for action' and 'Spirited Living: waging conflict, building peace'.

Simon was assisted by APJN member Noeline Sanders (who represented the Church of England at the WCC's Peace Convocation in Jamaica in 2011).

The workshop set out to:

- explore the relevance of key ideas and skills in the field of conflict transformation to the church's role in the world.
- apply specific tools and frameworks to the bishops' own situations.
- look at building conflict transformation into future strategy.

Participants were encouraged to consider the ideas being discussed from the perspective of their local contexts and situations.

The workshop was thoroughly interactive, with discussion, group work and exercises to illustrate a variety of conflict transformation and peace-building tools.



## **Styles of Conflict Management**

Conflict was defined as 'a relationship between two or more parties who have, or who think they have, incompatible goals'. The bishops first looked at negative conflict and positive conflict and saw that conflict handled positively and without violence could lead to innovation; creativity; change; fresh energy, and synthesis of ideas. They explored violent conflict in its visible forms, ie, violent behaviours, and in its invisible forms, ie, attitudes and values.

### **Personal Conflict Styles: A summary of the main approaches**

We have set out below one possible model for thinking about conflict styles. Other models exist. As with any model one needs to ask questions such as: Are these the 'right' categories? Are they culture-bound? Are they useful?

#### **Controlling**

Seeing conflicts and problems as contests to be won or lost – and it's important to be the winner. This approach is often the result of an unconscious wish to protect oneself from the pain of being wrong. It is sometimes necessary if there is imminent danger, but often gives rise to more conflict later as the hurt of the loser is translated into aggression.

#### **Compromising**

Everyone gains something and loses something. It is a common way of dealing with conflict, but tends to lead to rather short-term 'solutions'. It may leave everyone feeling they have lost something important, and it closes off the option that a better solution (for example, increasing the amount of resources available) may be possible.

#### **Problem-solving**

Otherwise known as the 'win-win' approach, in which conflicts are viewed as 'problems to solve between us'. In many situations all those involved in a conflict situation can win significant gains. It puts an equal priority on the relationship with the other parties and on a mutually satisfying outcome. While it is most effective way to get fair and lasting solutions in many situations 'but not all, by all means) it is far from an easy option.

#### **Accommodating**

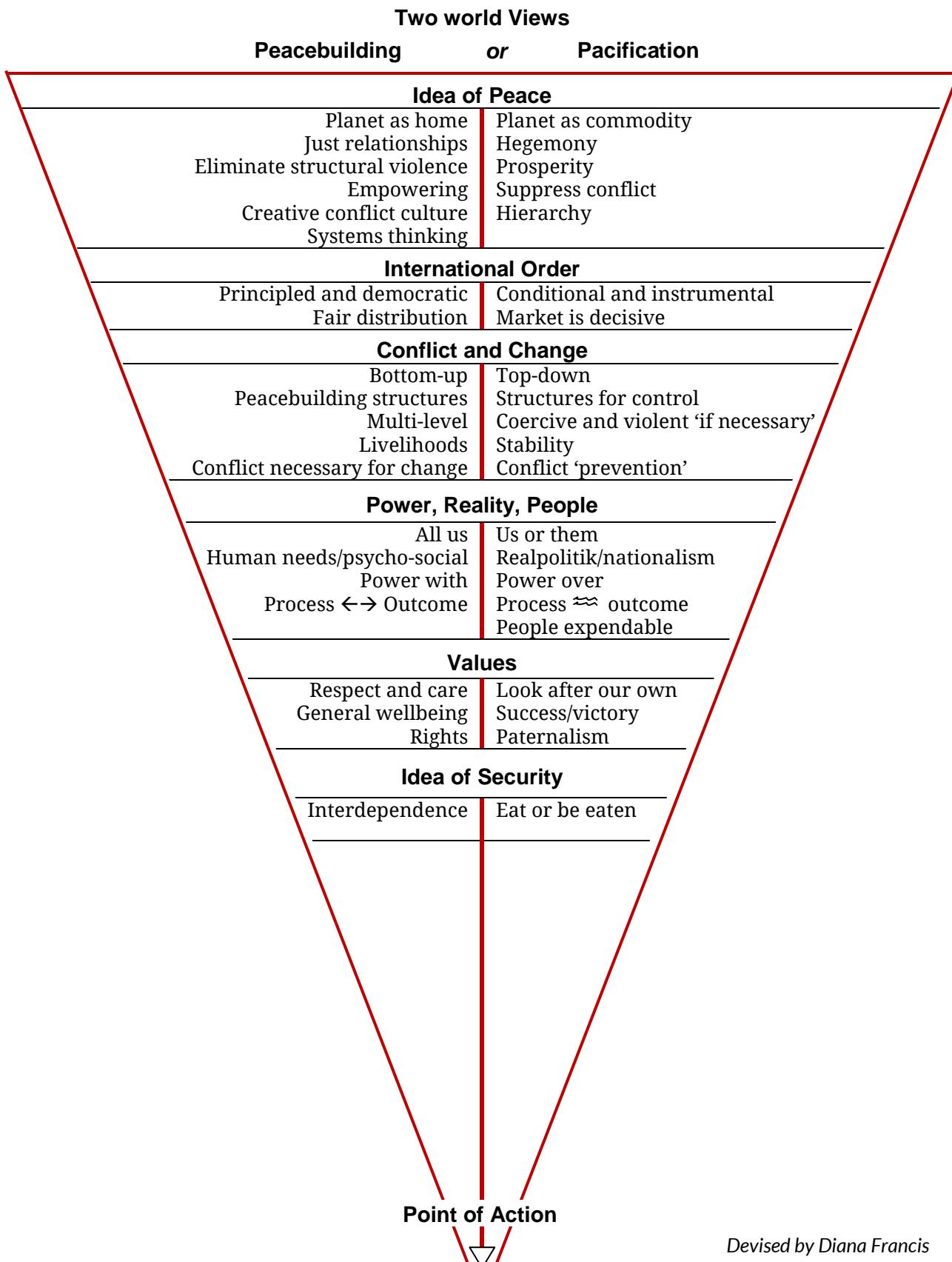
Peace at any cost is the reason behind this approach. You emphasise areas of agreement and smooth over, or ignore, disagreements. If you don't say what you are thinking others cannot know, and therefore they are powerless to deal with the conflict. This approach can be useful if conflict would put too much pressure on a relationship, and sometimes things do get better because you remain good friends.

#### **Avoiding**

Withdrawing, either physically or emotionally, from a conflict gives you no say in what happens, but it may be wise to do so when the matter is not your business. A danger is that it can allow a problem to grow unchecked, and if used unscrupulously avoidance can punish others. People often use this approach to make others change their mind./ But, like other forms of coercion, this has its costs.

## Two World Views: Peacebuilding or Pacification?

The bishops considered what might constitute idealist and realist approaches to peace-making. Using cards labelled with particular attributes they divided them into two columns on the floor, headed 'Peacebuilding' and 'Pacification' and discussed the tension between the two approaches



Devised by Diana Francis

## Conflict Mapping

In groups, the bishops undertook a conflict mapping exercise, based on real situations in their regions or countries – and realised that the mapping itself was already an intervention. The mapping tools used are described in ‘Working with Conflict: skills and strategies for action’ – which can be purchased in English and other languages, and are easy to use.

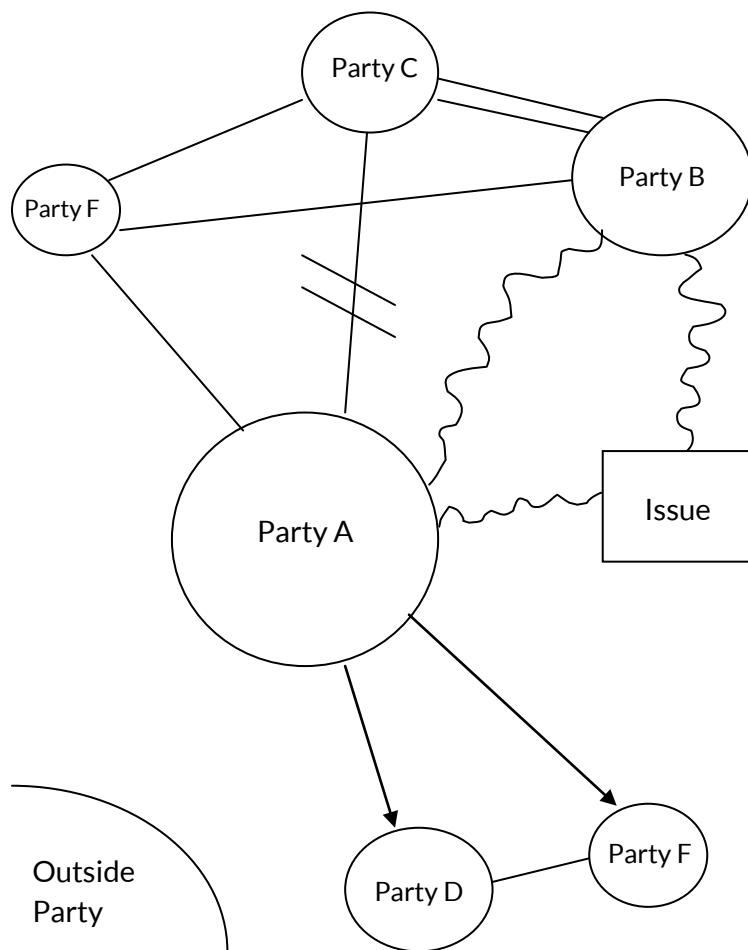
See [www.respond.org/pages/publications.html](http://www.respond.org/pages/publications.html).

### Conflict Analysis: Mapping © Responding to Conflict 2009

<b>What is it?</b> A technique for graphically showing the relationships between parties in conflict.	Mapping is a technique used to represent the conflict graphically, placing the parties in relation to the problem and in relation to each other. If people with different viewpoints map their situation together, they may learn about each other's experiences and perceptions.
<b>Purpose:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To understand the situation better.</li><li>• To see more clearly the relationships between parties.</li><li>• To clarify where the power lies.</li><li>• To check the balance of one's own activity or contacts.</li><li>• To see where allies or potential allies are.</li><li>• To identify openings for intervention or action.</li><li>• To evaluate what has been done already.</li></ul>	<b>In order to map a situation:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Decide <i>what you want to map, when, and from what point of view.</i></b> If you try to map the whole history of a conflict, the result may be so time-consuming and so complex that it is not really helpful. It is often very useful to map the same situation from a variety of viewpoints, as this is how the parties to it actually do experience it. Trying to reconcile these different viewpoints is the reality of working on the conflict. It is good discipline to ask whether those who hold this view would actually accept your description of their relationships with other parties.</li><li><b>2. Place yourself and your organization on the map.</b> Putting yourself on the map is a good reminder that you are part of the situation, not above it, even when you analyse it. You and your organization are perceived in certain ways by others. You may have contacts and relationships that offer opportunities and openings for work with the parties involved in the conflict.</li><li><b>3. Mapping is dynamic – it reflects a <i>changing situation, and points toward action.</i></b> This kind of analysis should offer new possibilities. What can be done? Who can best do it? When is the best moment? What groundwork needs to be laid beforehand; what structures built afterward? These are some of the questions you should ask as you are doing the mapping.</li><li><b>4. In addition to the ‘objective’ aspects, it is useful to map perceptions, needs, or fears.</b> You might want to do this when analysing the attitudes, behaviour and context from the viewpoint of different parties using the ABC Triangle, another tool for analysis (see Appendix). Identifying needs and fears can give you a greater insight into what motivates different parties, and also to understand the actions of parties toward whom you feel least sympathetic. Again, it is important to ask whether the parties would agree with the needs, fears, or perceptions you ascribe to them.</li></ol>
<b>When to use it:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early in a process, along with other analytical tools.</li><li>• Later to identify possible entry points for action or to help the process of strategy-building.</li></ul>	
<b>Variations in use:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geographical maps showing the areas and parties involved.</li><li>• Mapping of issues.</li><li>• Mapping of power alignments.</li><li>• Mapping of needs and fears.</li></ul>	

## Mapping: Example

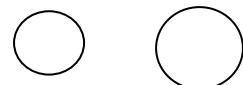
Below is an example of what a conflict map might look like:



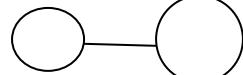
Try making a map of a situation that you are currently working on. Some questions you might ask are:

- Who are the main parties in this conflict?
- What other parties are involved or connected in some way, including marginalised groups and external parties?
- What are the relationships between all these parties and how can these be represented on the map? Alliances? Close contacts? Broken relationships? Confrontation?
- Are there any key issues between the parties that should be mentioned on the map?
- Where are you and your organisation in relation to these parties? Do you have special relationships that might offer openings for working on this conflict situation?

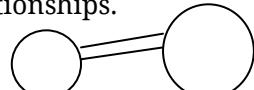
**KEY:** In mapping, we use particular conventions. You may want to invent your own.



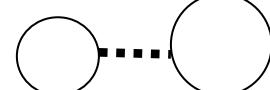
**Circles** indicate parties to the situation; relative size = power with regard to the issue.



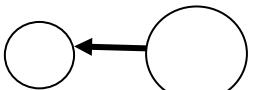
**Straight lines** indicate links, that is, fairly close relationships.



A **double connecting line** indicates an alliance.



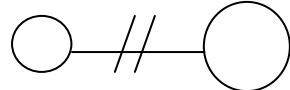
A **dotted line** indicates informal or intermittent links.



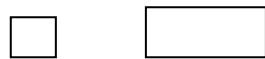
An **arrow** indicates the predominant direction of influence or activity.



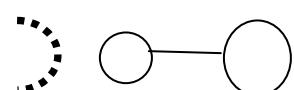
A **line like lightning** indicates discord, conflict.



A **double line** like a wall across lines indicates a broken connection.



A **square or rectangle** indicates an issue, topic or something other than people.



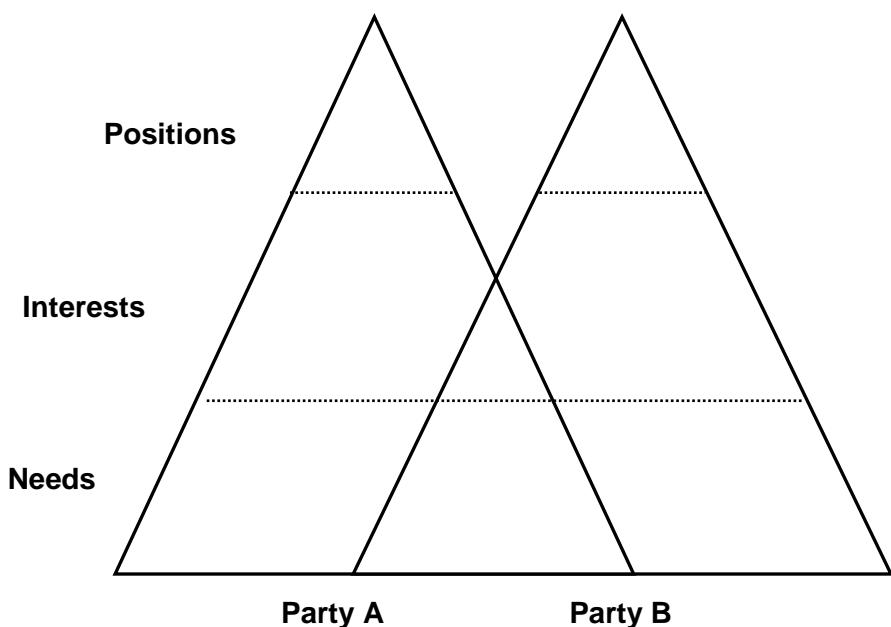
A **shadow** shows external parties which have influence but are not directly involved.



Once the mapping was done, the bishops looked at an illustration of two intersecting triangles which showed how the 'positions' held by parties in conflict are under-laid by 'interests' often held in common, and by 'needs' which are even more frequently held in common.

This flagged up the need for parties in conflict to begin to negotiate on the basis of interests rather than positions. As parties negotiate and become more trusting, they may identify more and more areas of need that are held in common. This was then considered in respect of the conflict maps and some possible ways forward were identified.

### Where do interests and needs meet?



As the parties begin to negotiate on the basis of interests, rather than positions, they develop more trust and a greater understanding of the needs of the other party as well as their own. This may lead them to identify more and more areas of needs which they have in common.

The diagram above illustrates how this overlapping of needs. When the parties reach this stage of understanding, it will be much easier for them to negotiate about the things on which they differ.

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Some time was spent on considering theories of change and deciding whom to work with in order to pursue conflict transformation and peace building. This took into account the need to work both with key people and grassroots, or 'more people', (not necessarily at the same time) in order to effect socio-political transformation which can be sustained. It was recognised that there are 'hard to reach' groups – those who are perpetuating or benefiting from conflict, eg, militia fighters, economic elites, governments and diasporas outside the conflict, and yet it is often important to find ways of working with them in order to secure peace and build or maintain systems that maintain it.

### **Peace Programming Strategies**

*Extract from Confronting War, produced by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 130 Prospect Street, Ste. 202 Cambridge, MA 02139 [www.cdainc.com](http://www.cdainc.com).*

#### **The Challenge of Improving Effectiveness: Can approaches be compared?**

'Reflecting on Peace Programme' (RPP) worked with many, varied peace agencies implementing an even wider variety of peacebuilding approaches and activities. Nonetheless, all agencies involved with RPP could agree on two broad ways in which peacebuilding work contributes to 'peace writ large', or the bigger peace beyond the immediate context of their programmes:

- 1) ending violent conflict or war
- 2) building just and sustainable peace.

For months, RPP struggled with the question of how to identify effective strategies for impacting 'peace writ large'. Identifying effective strategies required, in the first instance, a way of comparing them. Was the vast array of approaches to peacebuilding included in RPP, in fact, comparable? Were there ways of determining whether and how small programmes could 'add up' to peace writ large?

## Common Strategies for Affecting ‘Peace Writ Large’

Through much discussion and analysis, the project discovered that the varied peace activities could be related to each other by comparing the strategies, or theories, RPP participants used for promoting change in ‘peace writ large’. This is represented by a simple, four-cell matrix (see Figure 1 below) describing the basic approaches and levels of work of the peace activities undertaken by RPP participants – who is being engaged and what type of change is being sought. As the Figure shows, RPP found that all activities are based essentially on one of two approaches related to *who* needs to be engaged for peace.

- **More people approaches** aim to engage large numbers of people in actions to promote peace. Practitioners who take this approach believe that peace can only be built if many people become active in the process, ie, if there is broad involvement of ‘the people’.
- **Key people approaches** focus on involving particular people, or groups of people, deemed critical to the continuation or resolution of conflict because of their leverage or their roles. Who is ‘key’ will depend on the particular context. ‘Key’ people may be political leaders, warlords, or others necessary to a peace agreement. They may be people with leverage on broad constituencies. They may be important entry points for work. Or they may be key because they are otherwise involved in warring (eg, unemployed young men). ‘Key people’ strategies are based on the belief that, without the involvement of these individuals or groups, no real progress can be made toward resolving the conflict.

As the rows of the matrix show, RPP also found that all programmes work at two basic levels: the individual/personal level and/or the socio-political level.

### Figure 1

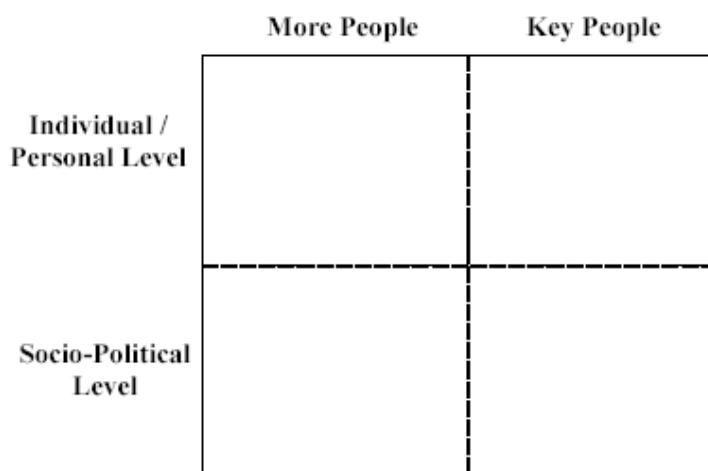
- Programmes that work at the **individual/personal level** seek to change the attitudes, values, perceptions or circumstances of individuals, on the belief that peace is possible only if the hearts, minds and behaviour of individuals – of people – are changed.
- Programmes that concentrate at the **socio-political level** are based on the belief that peace requires changes in socio-political, or institutional, structures. These programs aim to support creation or reform of institutions that address the grievances that fuel conflict and to institutionalize non-violent modes of handling conflict within society.

All the activities included in the range of RPP case studies and consultations can be located on this four-cell matrix. Some programmes cover more than one cell – or work in the boundaries between cells. Some programmes start in one quadrant, but eventually move to, or have impacts in, others. However, many programmes operate within one cell.

## Theories of Change

When an agency makes a choice of where to start a programme—ie, which cell on the matrix, they are operating on a theory about how change (or peace) comes about. For example, an organization concentrating on achieving a peace treaty might be saying: ‘Engaging political leaders in the negotiation process, will result in a treaty, a crucial ingredient of peace.’ However, another group might focus on grassroots efforts, saying: ‘Leaders may sign treaties, but unless we achieve reconciliation at the community level, peace will not last.’ The RPP matrix can be used to explore the Theories of Change underlying our programme choices and strategies.

*Figure 1*



### **Linkages and Leverage**

#### **Does it all ‘add up’? The importance of linkages**

Assessing contribution to ‘peace writ large’ is difficult as most peacebuilding programmes are discrete efforts aimed at affecting one (often small) piece of the puzzle, and no one project can do everything. Outcomes are also difficult to assess. As one practitioner noted: ‘Peace requires that many people work at many levels in different ways, and, with all this work, you cannot tell who is responsible for what.’ Moreover, when the goal of ‘just and sustainable peace’ is so grand, and progress toward it immeasurable in its multitude of small steps, then anything can qualify as peace practice. In the face of this complexity, practitioners often say, ‘I have to assume that, over time, all of our different activities will add up.’

The evidence gathered by RPP participants in the case studies and consultations is sobering. Although many people do, indeed, work at many levels, conducting good programs at each level, these programs do not automatically ‘add up’ to peace!

RPP found that work that stays within any one quadrant of the matrix is *not enough* to build momentum for significant change. Any individual program aiming to contribute to peace will have more impact if its effects transfer to other quadrants of the matrix. Two critical lessons emerged from the case studies and discussion.

#### **What linkages?**

Two kinds of linkages were found to be particularly important for programmes to have impact on ‘peace writ large’.

#### *Individual/Personal → Socio-Political*

First, RPP found that programming that focuses on change at the individual/personal level, but that never links or translates into action at the sociopolitical level has *no discernible effect* on peace. Peacebuilding efforts that focus on building relationships and trust across conflict lines, increasing tolerance, increasing hope that peace is possible often produce dramatic transformations in attitudes, perceptions and trust. But evidence shows that impacts for the broader peace are more significant if these personal transformations are translated into actions at the socio-political level. Does work at the socio-political level likewise need to transfer to the individual/personal

level? Evidence suggests that sometimes, but not always, work is necessary at the Individual/Personal level to ensure that socio-political changes are internalized in the behaviour of individuals to be durable. The linkage needed from the Socio-Political to the Individual/Personal to impact 'peace writ large' is less strong.

### *More people ↔ Key people*

RPP found that approaches that concentrate on More People but do nothing to link to or affect Key People, as well as strategies that focus on Key People but do not include or affect More People, do not 'add up' to effective peace work. Activities to engage More People must link, strategically, to activities to engage Key People, and Key People activities must link strategically to activities to engage More People, if they are to be effective in moving toward peace writ large.

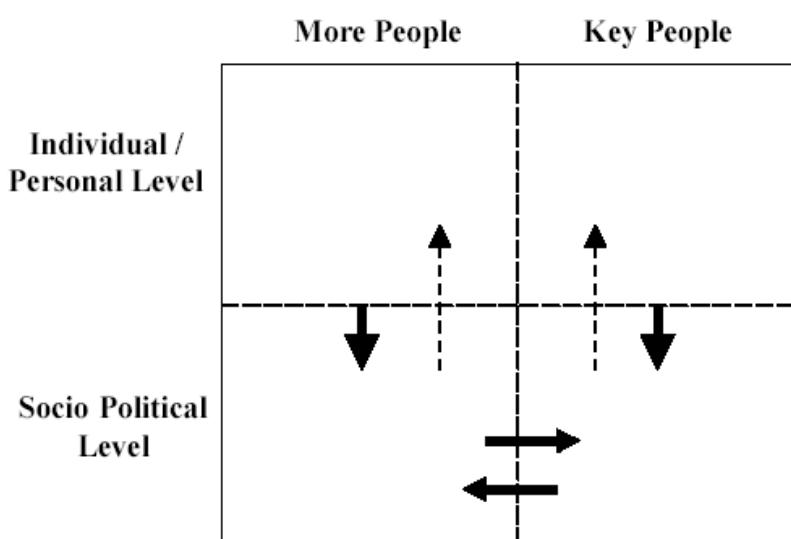
The arrows in Figure 2, below, reflect the findings about the importance of transferring impacts among the quadrants. Wherever an organization's particular project is located on this matrix (in terms of work targets and levels), it needs to plan mechanisms for transferring project effects.

Who else needs to be affected, at what level, in order to produce significant change?

An agency organized a high-level dialogue in the Caucasus among people on the negotiating teams and in influential policy positions in government, academia and business. This resulted in improved communication and relationships in the negotiations and the implementation of some ideas to de-escalate the conflict and facilitate refugee return. However, after several years, while some convergence had been achieved in the dialogue on political resolution, participants claimed they were blocked by public opinion (and a regional power). They urged the programme to shift the focus of its work with media to affect More People.

Multiple efforts funded by international donors to promote bi-communal rapprochement through conflict resolution training workshops, dialogue, and bicomunal study visits and joint projects led to improved relationships, trust and cooperation among thousands of people on Cyprus. These efforts, however, did not link to and had little impact on decision makers at the political level. The work remained for a long time at the More People level and was unable to affect Key People.

*Figure 2*



This does not mean that a single agency must necessarily have programmes in all areas simultaneously. An agency's programme may evolve, over time, to move from one quadrant to another. Or there may be cooperation and/or coordination of efforts with other agencies working in different areas in order to magnify impacts. How these connections are best made will, of course, vary from context to context.

### **Which People? Governments and the 'hard to reach'**

RPP found that most peace agencies work with people who are comparatively easy to reach – such as children, women, schools, churches, and health workers – because they are, in some way, deemed non-political or because they are often ready to collaborate. As a beginning point, this makes sense, because initiating peace activities in a tense conflict arena is difficult. Yet RPP found that few agencies move beyond these groups to those forces that are perpetuating or benefiting from the conflict – militia fighters, economic elites, governments and diasporas outside the conflict zone. In addition, in many cases, the NGOs emphasize working with civil society, so that few peace agencies make direct connections to official governmental actors and functions or warring factions. These groups are the 'hard to reach'. RPP's experience affirmed the importance of working with these 'hard to reach' people and groups – especially government and other combatants – because involving them (or dealing with them in a way that ensures that their actions do not undermine peace) often critical to securing peace and to building or maintaining the systems that sustain it.

The final exercise involved half the bishops sitting in a circle, facing outwards to an outer circle of bishops facing them. The inner circle bishops were designated consultants. The outer circle bishops presented a challenge from the case studies already considered. After three minutes each outer circle bishop moved on one place in order to speak to a second consultant, and then a third, etc. It was an animated exercise with plenty of speaking and listening. It embodied the fact that there was a body of wisdom in the room. We have what we need to do conflict transformation and peace-building.



The bishops taking part in the workshop were asked to complete evaluation forms, and these revealed that all the bishops considered that they had spent their time well. The workshop had encouraged them to take a journey and enter into some fresh ways of thinking about the nature of conflict and what processes of peace-building might look like.

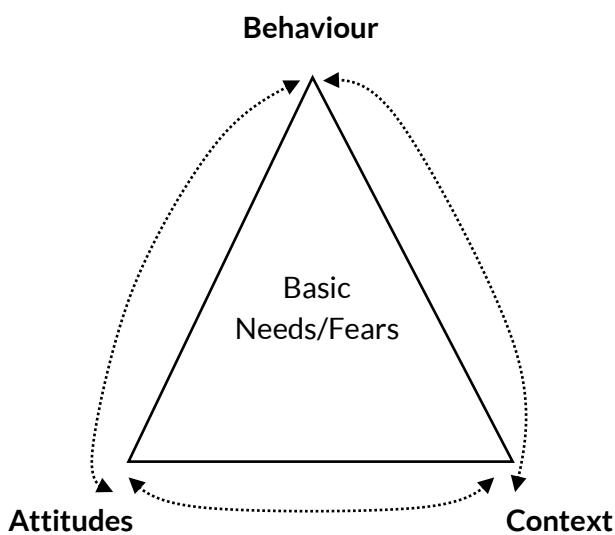


APJN was sincerely grateful for the grant received from the St Augustine Foundation which made the workshop possible.

## Appendix: The ABC Triangle and the Conflict Tree

### The ABC Triangle

This analysis is based on the premise that conflicts have three major components: the *context* or the situation, the *behaviour* of those involved, and their *attitudes*. These are represented graphically as the corners of a triangle:



These three factors influence each other - hence the arrows leading from one to another. The behaviour of my group influences the attitude of your group, for example, if my group stages many protests demanding jobs, and your group reacts by becoming resentful. That attitude has an effect on the context as for example when your group is so annoyed about job demands that it pushes legislation requiring that all job applications be completed in a language unknown to my group. This legal context will in turn affect each group's behaviour and attitudes, and so on. If the conflict situation is to improve, one or more likely all of these will have to change.

#### How to use this tool

1. Make a separate ABC Triangle for each of the major parties in a situation.
2. On each triangle, list the key issues related to attitude, behaviour and context from the viewpoint of that party. (If the parties are participating in this analysis, then they can each make a triangle from their own perspective.)
3. Indicate for each party what you think are their most important needs and/or fears in the middle of their own triangle.
4. Compare the triangles, noticing similarities and differences between the perceptions of the parties.

*Acknowledgement: There is a version of this triangle in 'The Structure of International Conflict' C R Mitchell, Macmillan, 1981*

#### The ABC Triangle

##### What is it?

An analysis of factors related to Attitude, Behaviour and Context for each of the major parties.

##### Purpose:

- To identify these three sets of factors for each of the major parties.
- To analyse how these influence each other.
- To relate these to the needs and fears of each party.
- To identify a starting point for intervention in the situation.

##### When to use it:

- Early in the process to gain a greater insight into what motivates the different parties.
- Later to identify what factors might be addressed by an intervention.
- To reveal how a change in one aspect might affect another.

##### Variations in use:

After listing issues for each of the three components, indicate a key need or fear of that party in the middle of the triangle.

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## The Conflict Tree

This is best used with groups, collectively, rather than as an individual exercise. If you are familiar with the 'Problem Tree' from development and community work you will recognise that here it has been adapted for use in conflict analysis.

In many conflicts, there will be a range of opinions concerning questions such as:

- What is the core problem?
- What are the root causes?
- What are the effects that have resulted from this problem?
- What is the most important issue for our group to address?

The Conflict Tree offers a method for a team, an organisation, a group or a community to identify the issues that each of them see as important, and then sort these into three categories: (1) core problem(s); (2) causes, and (3) effects.

### How to use this tool

1. Draw a picture of a tree, including roots, trunk and branches, on a large sheet of paper, a chalkboard, a flip chart, on the side of a building, on the ground...
2. Give each person several index cards or similar paper, with instructions that, on each card, they write a word or two or draw a symbol or picture to indicate a key issue in the conflict as they see it.
3. Then invite each person to attach the cards to the tree:
  - on the trunk, if they think it is the core problem
  - on the roots, if they think it is a root cause, or
  - on the branches, if they think it is an effect.
4. After everyone has placed their cards on the tree, someone will need to facilitate a discussion so that the group can come to some agreement about the placement of issues, particularly for the core problem.
5. An optional next step is to ask people to visualise their own organisation as a living organism (a bird, a worm, ivy?) and place it on the tree in relation to the issues it is currently addressing. Is current work focusing mainly on the consequences, the roots, or the central problem?
6. Assuming that some agreement is reached, people may want to decide which issues they wish to address first in dealing with the conflict.
7. This process may take a long time and may need to be continued in successive meetings of the group.

### The Conflict Tree

#### What is it?

A graphic tool, using the image of a tree to sort key conflict issues.

#### Purpose:

- To stimulate discussion about causes and effects in a conflict.
- To help a group to agree on the core problem.
- To assist a group or a team to make decisions about priorities for addressing conflict issues.
- To relate causes and effects to each other and to the focus of the organisation.

#### When to use it:

- With a group having difficulty in agreeing about the core problem in their situation.
- With a team who need to decide which conflict issues they should try to address.

#### Variations in use:

Can be used to explore values.

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