

**CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING
AND THE PRACTICE OF PEACE BUILDING
(William R. Headley and Reina C. Neufeldt)**



Armed conflicts

There are many armed conflicts and tensions in the world: Rwanda, Burundi, Chad, Cameroon, Philippines, Colombia...

“Interventions into these conflicts will not yield the expected effects if the root causes of the conflicts are not correctly defined and well understood. Thus a **deep understanding of the historical, political, cultural, social and economical key factors** will be a first important step to address these issues”. (GRIP, *Conflits en Afrique, Analyses des crises et pistes pour une prevention: la communaute internationale, quelle responsabilite?* Bruxelles: Ed Complexes, 1997)

WHAT KIND OF PEACEBUILDING?

Rooted in CST, Peacebuilding is a **process** that aims to:

- a. **Change** unjust structures;
- b. **Transform** the way people live;
- c. **Heal** their relationships,
- d. **Create a space** for mutual trust, respect and interdependence” (Baltimore, **CRS, 2001**).

CRS PEACEBUILDING PRINCIPLES

- **Response to the root causes** of conflict (Rwanda, Bururndi, Chad);
- **Long-term commitment;**
- Uses a comprehensive approach (holistic): need to grasp the cultural dimension of the conflicts;
- **In-depth participatory analysis** of conflict;
- Focus on **community defined visions and needs;**
- **Integration of all shared common values** (sacredness and dignity of human life, common good, justice, option for the poor, solidarity, subsidiarity, reconciliation)

PREREQUISITES FOR PEACEBUILDING

1. **Peacebuilding and development:** Peace cannot be built when **basic needs** are not fulfilled. Do not talk peace on empty stomach.
2. **Peacebuilding and truth:** Peace cannot be built on partial and incorrect information, holistic approach to the facts
3. **Peacebuilding and dialogue:** Deep listening and learning from local people and communities
4. **Peacebuilding and social analysis:** Correct understanding of the context and the root causes of conflict.
5. **Peacebuilding and empowerment:** Enable local people to articulate their vision and implement their plans action.
6. **Peacebuilding and gender:**
7. **Peacebuilding and advocacy :** local, national, regional and global network.
8. Peacebuilding and justice, reconciliation. To make an end to impunity. ACEAC recommendation
9. **Peacebuilding and spirituality :** persons at peace for peace.