This chapter first appeared in *Governance, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding* edited by Carl Bruch, Carroll Muffett, and Sandra S. Nichols. It is one of six edited books on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Natural Resource Management. (For more information, see www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org.) The full book can be purchased at http://environmentalpeacebuilding.org/publications/books/governance-natural-resources-and-post-conflict-peacebuilding/.

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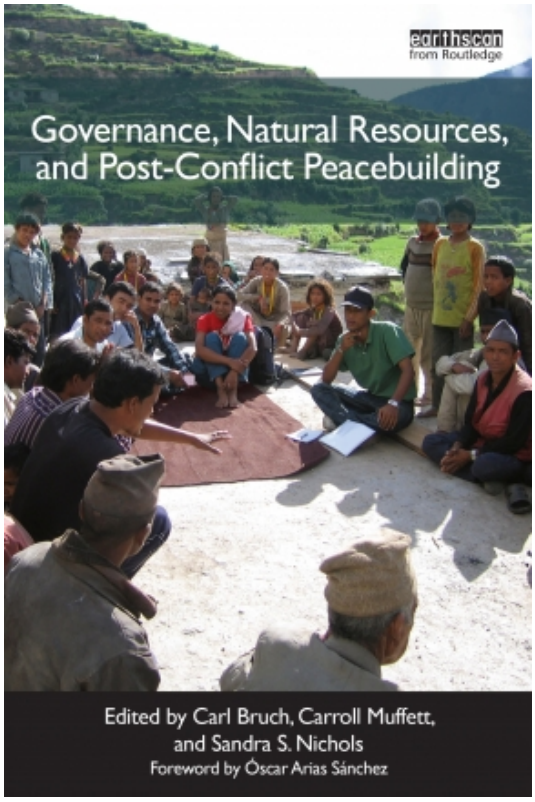

Peacebuilding Through Natural Resource Management: The UN Peacebuilding Commission's First Five Years

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Online publication date: 30 November 2016

Suggested citation: M. Lehtonen. 2016. Peacebuilding Through Natural Resource Management: The UN Peacebuilding Commission's First Five Years, *Governance, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding,* ed. C. Bruch, C. Muffett, and S. S. Nichols. London: Earthscan.

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Peacebuilding through natural resource management: The UN Peacebuilding Commission's first five years

Matti Lehtonen

The term *peacebuilding* was coined in the 1970s by Johan Galtung, a Norwegian professor who is traditionally regarded as the first authority on peace research. Galtung called for international support for endogenous peace management initiatives and for peacebuilding efforts that addressed the root causes of conflicts (Galtung 1975). Two decades later, post-conflict peacebuilding was one of the four key elements of United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* (UNSC 1992).[1] Boutros-Ghali defined *peacebuilding* as comprising a wide variety of activities designed to avoid conflict relapse by supporting structures that solidify peace.

Although the UN's understanding of peacebuilding has been refined by the literature on the subject (including its own reports), the term has yet to achieve a universally agreed-upon definition. One practical implication is that the very nature of peacebuilding challenges is subject to debate. Nevertheless, there has been growing agreement, among both researchers and practitioners, that natural resources can play a major role in conflict—and can therefore play a similarly crucial role in peacebuilding. A 2009 United Nations Environment Programme report noted, for example, that 40 percent of intrastate conflicts since 1960 have had a link to natural resources, and that such conflicts are more likely to relapse within five years of a peace agreement (UNEP 2009).

There is also wide agreement that underdevelopment and conflict are connected, and that it is important to better understand the interconnections (Tschirgi, Lund, and Mancini 2010). In many post-conflict situations, natural assets—if used for the benefit of the population—can provide a foundation for basic services, development, and economic expansion. But where the benefits of extractive revenues bypass communities, where communities suffer the negative consequences of extraction, and where workers must endure harsh conditions, a

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[1] The other three elements were preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping.

self-sustaining peace is often difficult to achieve. As traditional definitions of security have expanded to encompass economic and developmental considerations, understanding of the connections between natural resources and conflict has both broadened and deepened. The UN is uniquely positioned to combine an analytical understanding of these connections and to facilitate the implementation of remedies.

In September 2005, to address a glaring institutional gap in the transition from conflict to sustainable peace, the UN member states decided to establish a peacebuilding architecture (UNGA 2005b). The architecture—which consists of the thirty-one-member Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the Peacebuilding Fund,[2] and the Peacebuilding Support Office—was established four months later, by means of identical United Nations General Assembly and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions (UNGA 2005c; UNSC 2005).

The peacebuilding architecture is intended to bring cohesion to the UN's existing peace and security, development, humanitarian, and human rights pillars of peacebuilding. This chapter focuses on one element of the architecture, the PBC, during its first five years of existence (2005–2010). In particular, the chapter considers how the PBC has been affected by a deepening understanding of the connections between conflict and natural resources. The chapter is divided into five major sections: (1) a description of the origin and purpose of the peacebuilding architecture; (2) a discussion of the PBC's work in Sierra Leone; (3) a discussion of the PBC's work in the Central African Republic; (4) a summary of lessons learned; and (5) a brief conclusion.

ORIGINS OF THE PEACEBUILDING ARCHITECTURE

The notion of establishing a peacebuilding architecture originated in the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (UNGA 2004); the panel, which was established in 2003, expanded the meaning of *threats* to include issues beyond military security. The panel also noted that threats such as poverty, infectious disease, and environmental degradation were being treated as discrete issues, rather than in a coherent, integrated way. Finally, the panel identified a systemic weakness in the UN response to conflict: once peacekeeping operations came to an end, the country in question would fall off the UNSC's radar. In the panel's view, although the UN Economic and Social Council had established ad hoc committees to address specific cases, such efforts had mixed results and had failed to generate crucial resources; thus, the panel

[2] An important part of the peacebuilding architecture, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was designed as a quick, catalytic means of complementing other peacebuilding financing instruments (which are larger but slower). In the first years of the architecture, the PBF was often the most tangible and visible pillar of peacebuilding, frequently serving as the entry point and introduction to the peacebuilding architecture for post-conflict countries requesting assistance.

called for the creation of an intergovernmental organ that would be dedicated to peacebuilding and empowered to ensure concerted action to support sustainable peace.[3]

As the source of the UN's "comparative advantage in addressing economic and social threats," the panel invoked the "UN's unparalleled convening power, which allows it to formulate common development targets and rally the international community around a consensus for achieving them" (UNGA 2004, 28). In particular, the panel recognized that common action would be needed to improve natural resource governance: "The United Nations should work with national authorities, international financial institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector to develop norms governing the management of natural resources for countries emerging from or at risk of conflict" (UNGA 2004, 35).

In 2005, at the time of the UN World Summit, Secretary-General Kofi Annan released a report titled *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* (UNGA 2005a). The report described the grave lack, within the UN, of institutional mechanisms that could deal effectively and coherently with the transition from conflict to lasting peace,[4] and recommended that member states establish a peacebuilding commission.[5] While *In Larger Freedom* did not explicitly address natural resources or other substantive policy areas, the very concept of peacebuilding implies consideration of the environment, including natural resources. Since the end of the Cold War, the academic and policy communities have become increasingly sensitive to factors that can contribute to both conflict and its amelioration. As a result, peacebuilding approaches are now based on an understanding of conflict drivers and peace drivers. By addressing these underlying causes, peacebuilding is more likely to ensure that the remedy matches the diagnosis.

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[3] The UNSC has a strong mandate to address issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security (which can lead to the use of force, if other means are exhausted). The UN Economic and Social Council addresses development, cultural issues, and universal human rights, and its authority is limited to making recommendations and initiating studies.

[4] Whereas the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change had viewed the peacebuilding architecture as playing an important early-warning role for the UN, *In Larger Freedom* referred to the "inappropriateness of the Peacebuilding Commission taking on an early-warning function" (UNGA 2005d, add. 2, para. 3). Although the report agreed that post-conflict peacebuilding is a "critical form of prevention" (UNGA 2005d, add. 2, para. 16), it stated that neither the PBC nor the Peacebuilding Support Office should have early-warning functions because there are other mechanisms for this: mediation and preventive peacekeeping. Risk reduction, on the other hand, was categorized as relevant to the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund, both of which can "add an important dimension to UN preventive efforts by providing better tools for helping States and societies reduce the risk of conflict, including by aiding their efforts to build State capacity" (UNGA 2005d, add. 2, para. 18).

[5] Addendum 2 of *In Larger Freedom* focuses on the peacebuilding architecture.

SIERRA LEONE: FROM BLOOD DIAMONDS TO BENEFITING THE POPULATION

Sierra Leone was in the grip of civil war from 1991 to 2002. The United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), a peacekeeping mission,[6] was established in 1999 (UNSC 1999), and was followed, in 2005, by the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL). In 2008, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) became the UN presence in Sierra Leone (UNSC 2008).

It was during the tenure of UNIOSIL that the PBC became involved in Sierra Leone. Along with Burundi, Sierra Leone was one of the first two countries on the PBC's agenda. The first task of the PBC and the government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) was to develop, in consultation with major stakeholders, an integrated peacebuilding strategy for Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone Peacebuilding

[6]UNAMSIL was established in the wake of an Economic Community of West African States mission and several UN observer missions.

Cooperation Framework was adopted on December 3, 2007, at the PBC's country-specific meeting (PBC 2007). On May 20, 2009, Sierra Leonean president Ernest Bai Koroma launched *An Agenda for Change: Second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP II)* (ROSL 2008). The following month, the PBC adjusted its programming to match *An Agenda for Change*, and called on the international community to (1) regard the agenda as a core strategy document and (2) realign all assistance programs in support of it (PBC 2009a).

Natural resources were addressed somewhat timidly in the cooperation framework: specifically, the analysis of priorities, challenges, and risks for peacebuilding mentioned that "[f]urther efforts are also needed to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Sierra Leone, in accordance with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, for the management and governance of natural resources for the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone" (PBC 2007, para. 19).[7] The GOSL also explicitly committed, as part of the framework, to a review of the Core Mineral Policy and related regulations. The PBC, for its part, committed to supporting capacity building in the management of natural resources, focusing in particular on the Ministry of Mineral Resources (PBC 2007).

By the time the cooperation framework was created, the role of natural resources—diamond exploitation and trade, in particular—in fueling the conflict in Sierra Leone was well established. The international response to the problem had included UNSC sanctions and the creation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which regulated the trade in rough diamonds. Restoring state control of the Sierra Leonean diamond industry was also part of the pioneering, country-level UN benchmarking exercise that guided the gradual withdrawal of the UNAMSIL peacekeeping force in 2005: as a precondition for reducing the presence of international troops, the UN required the GOSL to demonstrate that its institutions and regulations could control the diamond trade.[8] Thus, by the time the PBC got involved, the links between conflict and the diamond trade were well known, and strategies had been developed to address them. Nevertheless, the references to natural resources, including diamonds, that were ultimately included in the cooperation framework were rather minimal.

Natural resources in Sierra Leone: Analysis and assignment of priorities

The discussions of natural resources that occurred during the preparatory phase were more pronounced and thorough than the final text of the framework

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[7] The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a voluntary regime that provides accessible information on extractive industry revenue streams. For more information on the EITI, see http://eiti.org/eiti.

[8] The UNSC had previously discussed the need to define exit strategies as a policy issue, but UNAMSIL's drawdown and withdrawal marked the first time that the UNSC and a UN mission had measured progress against benchmarks. Eventually, benchmarks became common in similar circumstances.

suggests. While the framework was still under development, Global Witness, an international nongovernmental organization that had been in the forefront in identifying links between natural resources and conflict, published *Peacebuilding Omission?* The report criticized the lack of attention to natural resource management in the June 2007 draft of the cooperation framework—particularly in light of the extensive discussions of natural resource management that had occurred during the preparatory phase, which were reflected in the chairman's summary of October 2006 (Global Witness 2007; PBC 2006).

The Global Witness report pointed out that Sierra Leone was a well-known example of resource exploitation acting as an economic driver for conflict (Global Witness 2007). Moreover, Sierra Leone was dependent on two primary sectors, agriculture and mining, and mining accounted for 20 percent of gross domestic product and 65 percent of foreign exchange. The report also noted that although the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme had sparked an initial increase in revenues from the legitimate diamond trade, smuggling had contributed to a drop in diamond exports from 2005 to 2006. Finally, the report observed that diamond exploitation was linked to land insecurity—a problem that was particularly acute for youth, who felt increasingly marginalized, and who believed that land was being taken away from communities who were receiving no benefits in return.

The PBC strategies are instruments for spelling out mutual commitments; thus, the final formulation illustrates where the common denominator was found. It would be wrong to expect an in-depth, academic analysis from a PBC peacebuilding framework, which is a strategic-level statement of priorities. The question is what kind of follow-up was brought about by such a nonoperational formulation.

From analysis to action: Getting into specifics

The PBC process includes biannual reviews to evaluate progress toward the commitments laid out in the integrated peacebuilding strategy. Because the requirements of the cooperation framework were minimal with respect to natural resources, the GOSL was not under pressure from the PBC to deliver on specific natural resource commitments.[9] Nevertheless, the biannual reviews provided the GOSL with an opportunity to report on actions that it had taken. In keeping with its commitment in the cooperation framework, the GOSL proposed, as part of the June 2008 review, to assess the Core Mineral Policy, with the goal of improving governance, preventing smuggling and illicit trade, and ensuring participation at the local and community levels (PBC 2008a). By the second progress review, in December 2008, the GOSL reported that the Mines and

[9] The mechanisms by which PBC priorities are translated into action are discussed in the lessons learned section of this chapter.

Minerals Act had been enacted, and that the act elaborated on natural resource issues in more detail (PBC 2008b).[10]

Toward a joint programming document

Beginning with the first biannual review, the PBC provided a forum to discuss what peacebuilding entailed. The cooperation framework was developed in concert with the PBC, and thus targeted the priorities that the PBC and the GOSL agreed were most relevant to peacebuilding. The intention was not to create a new layer of bureaucracy, but to define peacebuilding as the new, overarching guide to how to do things.

To the UN mission, however, the cooperation framework felt like an additional strategy document. Moreover, as the PBC became active in Sierra Leone during the early days of the UN peacebuilding architecture, UN mission staff had no precedent regarding the implementation of the cooperation framework. The mission already had its own reporting lines and budget responsibilities, and it was not always clear how to combine ongoing activities with the implementation of the cooperation framework.

Despite criticisms for having established a separate peacebuilding strategy, the cooperation framework was intended (1) to be connected to existing priority frameworks of the UN, the GOSL, and other actors; and (2) to reflect "priorities of priorities." During the preparation phase for the cooperation framework, the PBC supported the GOSL's *An Agenda for Change*, and the December 2008 progress review made under the cooperation framework specifically acknowledged the agenda as a "concerted attempt to move away from the culture of stabilization, recovery and aid dependence to one of growth, development and prosperity" (PBC 2008b, 2). In 2009, the PBC welcomed *An Agenda for Change* as a new core strategy document—and, as noted earlier, UN assistance was realigned to be in keeping with the agenda: the result was presented in a document titled *Joint Vision for Sierra Leone of the United Nations' Family* (*Joint Vision*) (UNIPSIL and UNCT 2009).

An Agenda for Change restructured Sierra Leone's priorities to focus on infrastructure, agriculture, and sustainable human development. The agenda noted that sustaining and consolidating peace was "still a paramount consideration of the Government of Sierra Leone" (ROSL 2008, 101); in fact, peace is one of the preconditions for achieving the priorities. The efficient and effective management of natural resources, including tourist destinations, forests, minerals, land, and the environment in general, is also among the preconditions. The "paradox of

[10] Other topics addressed in the December 2008 review included licensing improvements; tax evasion; disturbances in Kono District; a review of all mining contracts; and the oversight role of parliament with respect to the mining sector (PBC 2008b).

plenty" is explicitly acknowledged: "Findings show that some countries with abundant natural resources have tended to have relatively low rates of economic growth, social development and political stability, ultimately undermining their ability to reduce poverty" (ROSL 2008, 135).

The *Joint Vision*, the UN's response to *An Agenda for Change*, includes a program titled Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding, which is led by the United Nations Environment Programme. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme are participants; the Sierra Leone Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency are the government counterparts; and the European Community is the development partner (UNIPSIL and UNCT 2009). The *Joint Vision* points specifically to the underlying connections between conflict and environmental management, particularly with respect to "youth estrangement and rural alienation," and notes that "many of the conditions for conflict that existed before 1992 continue today, aggravated by concerns about unfair distribution of benefits, opaque processes and inefficient and unsustainable practices" (UNIPSIL and UNCT 2009, 40).

In a February 2009 UNSC meeting on Sierra Leone, Michael von der Schulenburg, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General, noted that elections had been held, national institutions had been built, poverty levels had dropped, and child mortality rates had declined; nevertheless, von der Schulenberg observed that the young democracy still faced daunting challenges, and that much remained to be done (UNSC 2009). Ambassador Frank Majoor, permanent representative of the Netherlands to the UN and the PBC Sierra Leone meeting chair, noted, with reference to the December 2008 review, that significant progress had been made in consolidating peace, but that "impressive achievements in the areas of peace and security [had] not yet resulted in concrete peace dividends for the population" (Majoor 2009).

Natural resources have been among the key peacebuilding themes in Sierra Leone.[11] Although the inclusion of natural resources in the cooperation framework required some insistence, the eventual result was a general expression of commitment. The PBC provided a political space in which to discuss and focus sustained attention on the topic. Clearly, "management and governance of natural resources for the benefit of the people" is not a minor technical matter (PBC 2007, 7). Producing peacebuilding benefits means making an impact at the system level, and such impacts can emerge only from a wide range of measures. Unless natural resources have a place in a nationally owned strategy, action in the natural resource sector risks being limited to isolated technical fixes.

[11] For example, in September 2010, during a UNSC briefing on the situation in Sierra Leone, von der Schulenberg discussed the role of natural resources in helping the country move away from aid dependency (von der Schulenberg 2010).

THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: REVENUE SHARING AS A STRATEGIC PEACEBUILDING FOCUS

With respect to peacebuilding, the experience of the Central African Republic (CAR) differs significantly from that of Sierra Leone. Since the CAR's independence in 1960, coups d'état, military mutinies, instability, and banditry have been part of the political landscape, leaving little space for political dialogue or the development of stable socioeconomic structures.[12] As of 2008, two-thirds of the population lived on less than US$1 a day, and only 30 percent of the population had access to clean drinking water (UNEP 2008). In 2007, the CAR was ranked 171 out of 177 in the Human Development Index; in 2008, its ranking dropped to 178 out of 179. Clearly, the CAR faces a profound need to strengthen government and institutional capacity.

Since 2006, most of the armed conflict has been centered in Vakaga Prefecture, which borders the Darfur region of Sudan. In June 2008, the CAR government and the armed opposition groups—the People's Army for the Restoration of Democracy (L'Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la Démocratie) and the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement)—signed the Global Peace Agreement, which was subsequently signed by the Democratic Front of the Central African People (Front Démocratique pour le Peuple Centrafricain). During the last quarter

[12] The armed conflict in the CAR renewed in December 2012, resulting in the fall of the Bozizé regime, spiralling violence, and an acute humanitarian crisis that continues as of August 2014.

of 2008, an "inclusive political dialogue" between the government and the opposition groups led to elections, the formation of a new government, and the establishment of two committees: a truth and reconciliation committee and a committee to monitor the peace agreement (PBC 2008c, 6).

In March 2008, several months before the peace agreement was signed, the CAR government asked to be placed on the PBC agenda. The UNSC responded by requesting the PBC to prepare recommendations;[13] during the June 2008 meeting of the PBC Organizational Committee, the CAR became the fourth country on the PBC agenda. On the basis of the experience that it had gained in the three countries that were already on its agenda—Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone—the PBC had developed a more streamlined approach to the development of a peacebuilding strategy.[14] The guiding principles, however, remained the same: national ownership, partnership and mutual commitment, inclusiveness, continuous engagement, and a human-rights-based approach. The Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic 2009–2011 was finalized on June 9, 2009 (PBC 2009b).

The strategic framework describes the country as having suffered from a multidimensional crisis for several decades and notes that "the authority of the State is concentrated mainly in the capital [Bangui], its surroundings and some of the main towns. State services remain rather weak and are virtually absent outside of Bangui" (PBC 2009b, 2). The framework therefore acknowledges that peacebuilding is not only a matter of addressing conflict drivers, but also a matter of building legitimate institutions that can deliver public services.

Natural resources: A potential peace driver

Natural resources often provide the most immediate source of economic development in peacebuilding situations; the manufacturing and service sectors are much less likely to provide a platform for economic growth. The CAR has two important natural assets: forests and minerals. Timber accounts for 16 percent of export earnings; diamonds, the main export product, represent 40 percent of export revenues (Purdy 2007). Along with timber and diamonds, gold is among the most profitable of the CAR's natural resources; it may also be possible to commercialize the exploitation of uranium. Finally, the CAR offers potential for the production of biofuels.[15]

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[13] The UNSC invited the PBC, in its capacity as an advisory body, to prepare recommendations addressing the following issues: "establishment and conduct of an inclusive political dialogue"; the development of an "effective, accountable and sustainable" security sector; and "restoration of the rule of law, including respect for human rights, and good governance in all regions of the country" (PBSO 2008, 3).

[14] In Burundi, the PBC's priorities focus on land rights. Among the peacebuilding priorities included in Guinea-Bissau's integrated peacebuilding strategy are rehabilitating water infrastructure, decreasing dependence on firewood and charcoal for energy, and diversifying economic production.

[15] Even if other minerals are discovered in the CAR, transportation would be a challenge, as the country is landlocked.

Natural resources are not only potential sources of livelihoods, but also of export income. However, if communities do not benefit from natural resource extraction, illegal trade continues to be lucrative, and revenue management remains opaque, achieving a self-sustaining peace will be a major challenge. Transparency and revenue sharing were thus included among the priorities related to good governance in the strategic framework.

As noted in much of the literature on peacebuilding, countries with weak institutions and an abundance of natural resources tend to experience lower economic growth and to be characterized by political instability.[16] Establishing good natural resource governance early in the peacebuilding process harnesses revenues from natural resources, which can be used to establish and strengthen essential state services. Some revenues can then be distributed to the extractive regions, to tangibly demonstrate the benefits of natural assets to local communities, and thereby encourage the responsible use of natural resources. Furthermore, the early phases of peacebuilding are often characterized by a strong sense of momentum; it is desirable to take advantage of this momentum to establish good practices, including appropriate checks and balances, before natural resources are utilized to their full potential. Once unsustainable practices develop, it is more difficult to change them later, when production is in full swing.

To tackle the diverse peacebuilding challenges in the CAR, the strategic framework addresses the rule of law, the security sector, and regional development. Under the rule-of-law section of the strategy, two of the priorities are to strengthen institutions and increase transparency. With respect to strengthening institutions, the CAR government has committed to revising the mining code and implementing the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

The strategic framework also assigns priority to ensuring that "natural resources are being managed within a protected environment," and that communities "are benefiting from their revenues" (PBC 2009b, 27). This goal is intended to ensure that some of the revenues from the natural resource trade are returned to the areas from which the resources were extracted. Despite the weakness of state services outside Bangui, the regulatory framework for natural resource extraction (including a provision for returning some portion of revenues to extractive regions) is in place. In practice, however, the framework does not function, and communities see little benefit from the revenues from trees felled in their forests.[17] In acknowledgment of the complexities associated with revenue distribution, the strategic framework includes benchmarks for implementation of the finance law, which regulates revenue distribution, and for training of local authorities, to ensure the appropriate use of such revenues.

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[16] See, for example, Collier (2007, 2010).

[17] Alluvial diamond wealth does not translate into development either, but does not raise the same issues regarding wealth sharing that arise with timber.

Taking action

The first progress review for the CAR concluded, in January 2010, that out of the forty-four priority actions related to good governance and the rule of law, nine had been completed, twenty-eight were being implemented, and seven had not yet been implemented (PBC 2010). Many of the initial peacebuilding initiatives focused on the security sector—specifically, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of armed factions and the establishment of modern security services. Preparation for the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2011 was also a major focus, particularly during 2010.

Action has also been taken on natural resource management. When the first EITI report was submitted, in March 2009, the CAR had made progress toward becoming an EITI compliant country, and had promulgated the new mining code and issued related implementing legislation. There was some initial criticism of the new mining code because it increased taxes for foreign companies and therefore made the investment climate less favorable (ICG 2010a). The greatest difficulty that the CAR had encountered during the EITI review period, however, was a drop in international demand and prices, both of which were attributable to the global financial crisis.

LESSONS LEARNED: DELIVERING RESULTS AND ASSESSING EFFECTS

What has been learned, in the course of the PBC's first five years, about natural resource management and peacebuilding? There are five key lessons.

Lesson 1: Recognition of differences is one of the PBC's strengths

As is clear from the experiences in Sierra Leone and the CAR, the PBC has succeeded in recognizing different types of peacebuilding needs within the natural resource sector. To prevent conflict relapse, it is critical to understand a country's political and social context; to take account of how that context affects natural resource management; and to develop tailored peacebuilding approaches.

Lesson 2: Transitions require consistency

The peacebuilding strategy should reflect clear commitment and provide guidance—but when it comes to achieving genuine, sustainable results, perseverance is more important than declarations. For example, even though the cooperation framework for Sierra Leone included only a brief mention of the extractive industries, it provided a platform for discussing new developments. Managing change takes a great deal of effort, and providing a platform for the expression of different viewpoints on peacebuilding issues is a valuable contribution to the change-management process.

Lesson 3: Peacebuilding comes from within

Peacebuilding occurs at the system level: without national buy-in, any solution is likely to be short term and limited in scope. International partners can help by ensuring access to information and technical expertise, and by fostering attention to the long term—a perspective that is often eclipsed by the survival logic that may dominate in the immediate aftermath of conflict. International partners may also apply pressure to pass painful reforms. Ultimately, however, countrywide ownership of the peacebuilding process is critical.

Lesson 4: New priorities must build on those that have been previously identified

It is difficult to identify critical areas for peacebuilding without creating new—and potentially competing—priorities. For example, when Sierra Leone became involved with the PBC, the country had no shortage of planning documents—and the PBC's strategy was criticized for adding yet another one. In contrast, the president's *An Agenda for Change* was welcomed as a good way to merge the "priorities of priorities." Even with agreed-upon indicators, monitoring of peace consolidation should nevertheless be sensitive to other emerging signals as well.

Lesson 5: Coordination must occur through influence

The peacebuilding architecture is the UN structure dedicated to peacebuilding issues, but when it comes to the implementation of peacebuilding strategies, there is no explicit division of UN labor, roles, and responsibilities. For example, even where natural resource management has been identified as a peacebuilding priority, the PBC has no direct mechanism for providing expertise on natural resource management if it is not available through UN staff or programs already present in the country. The Peacebuilding Fund can cover gaps (until a donor conference can be held, for example) and catalyze other financing, but it is not a long-term solution. The UN presence on the ground is responsive to national priorities, but the UN country team's reaction to the national programming cycle takes time, whereas catalytic peacebuilding activities must occur quickly and efficiently, both to avoid conflict recurrence and to provide peace dividends.

CONCLUSION

When the UN peacebuilding architecture was established in 2005, peacebuilding was not new territory: peacebuilding practice was blossoming. The General Assembly's decision to fill a glaring institutional gap did not mean that the peacebuilding architecture was expected to engage in day-to-day peacebuilding work: the purpose of creating a dedicated entity was to ensure that peacebuilding became the focus of coherent attention. In keeping with this perspective, the

PBC was established as an advisory body, not as an entity that would issue UNSC-type mandates, and the Peacebuilding Support Office was to be neutral and nonoperational. Thus, the key characteristic of the peacebuilding architecture is "soft power"; the architecture does not wield authority, but instead embodies the UN's collective interest in a coherent approach (Scott 2008). The country in question is in charge of determining what kind of peace it wants to build. At the same time, the members of the PBC are free to raise uncomfortable but necessary peacebuilding issues.

Peacebuilding never occurs in isolation: what is already in place establishes the starting point for addressing conflict causes and for the eventual withdrawal of international engagement. The PBC was established to address a gap in the transition from conflict to sustainable peace; nevertheless, the PBC itself has drawn criticism for creating burdensome processes and producing vague priorities. The PBC is eager to expand options for "lighter" engagement (PBC 2012).

While there is certainly a need for dedicated peacebuilding, such efforts must be connected to other plans and programs, which may have different criteria for success than peacebuilding—such as halting violent conflict, reducing poverty, and ensuring adherence to humanitarian principles. There is also a natural overlap between peacebuilding, natural resource governance, and other endeavors: for example, the management of natural resource wealth is likely to underpin peacebuilding, and many humanitarian activities (for example, establishing refugee camps, managing water, and ensuring food security) are related to natural resources and the environment. Such commonalities should be systematically assessed and integrated into planning and programming.

In post-conflict countries, natural resource wealth can provide peace dividends and can be a pivotal support for livelihoods and economic development. And when managed for the benefit of the population at large, natural resources can provide a way out of the cycle of poverty and conflict. The PBC's strategies do consider natural resources, but the means of supporting specific, concrete responses are still taking shape.

Natural resource management cuts across typical dimensions of peacebuilding such as economic development, the provision of basic services, and rule of law. In a crowded field that is full of competing priorities, it is often difficult to ensure that the role of natural resources in peacebuilding is well understood; nevertheless, a common understanding is crucial for coherent action. Because it takes a holistic view and seeks to address the factors underlying conflict, the PBC is well placed to incorporate natural resources into its efforts, assuming that timely and high-quality analyses of the country's specific needs are available. A broad perspective is valuable because peacebuilding is about more than changing laws and institutions; it is also about service provision, which is a massively complex undertaking. The PBC is not a technically expert body, but it still needs to be able to see the forest for the trees—that is, to identify what is important for overall peacebuilding needs.

By the time the PBC became involved in Sierra Leone, the structures that had allowed diamonds and timber to fuel fighting had already been reformed, but there was still much to be done to improve natural resource management. With regard to the CAR, an International Crisis Group report from December 2010 notes that in certain parts of the eastern diamond zone, rebel groups are involved in the diamond business, although in a smaller and less organized way than in Sierra Leone (ICG 2010b). This suggests that unless rebel links to diamond mining and trading are addressed, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants will not bear fruit. In the future, the PBC will certainly encounter other cases in which extractive industries provide incentives for armed factions to maintain insecurity. As important as they are, conflict commodities are not the sole source of a spoiled peace; environmental scarcity—for example, a shortage of water or fertile land—can also contribute to conflict, and needs to be addressed before peace can become self-sustaining.

What approaches do the international community and the PBC have in their tool kits? Local knowledge will always be superior to that of outside experts, but an influx of fresh ideas can be beneficial. The PBC's coercive powers are highly limited, but it can help to identify win-win solutions in situations where parties tend to see everything as a zero-sum game. By properly analyzing the situation, the PBC can foster a discussion of incentive structures, and thereby discourage peace spoilers from taking advantage of extractive industries. Transforming natural assets into sustainable development is a national prerogative, and the options need public discussion. One of the PBC's strengths is its pragmatic approach: the country-specific meetings do not focus on theoretical questions but on concrete facts.

The peacebuilding architecture requires cooperation from the whole UN system, but because the Peacebuilding Support Office does not have authority over other UN entities, it can only play a facilitating role—by making such cooperation appealing.[18] For the actors in the field, the modalities and entry points are clear, but agencies that have no permanent presence in the country in question would benefit from clearer modalities. The UN entities that provide substantive input can also improve their position by cooperating with each other. Such bottom-up initiatives to establish a more efficient mechanism for connecting the various UN entities that deal with the natural resource aspects of peacebuilding can benefit from synergistic connections. Interagency cooperation has already found institutionalized forms in the traditional peacebuilding areas of security

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[18] Building coherence within the decentralized UN system is often approached from a procedural perspective. It is therefore worth noting that in 2007, the PBC created the Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL), which provides a forum in which substantive issues related to peacebuilding can be discussed, and experiences in different situations compared. In May 2008 and July 2011, the WGLL also held lively debates on the role of natural resources and the environment in conflict and peacebuilding.

sector reform; rule of law; mine action; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; election support; and mediation support. Similar clustering is emerging in other fields, including natural resources.

Finally, the measurement of peace consolidation is an important undertaking that requires a more robust methodology. The PBC's biannual review process monitors trends in relation to the benchmarks established in the peacebuilding strategies, providing a dynamic evaluation of improvements or declines in peaceful conditions. Depending on context, however, different criteria indicate whether the situation is on the right track. Robust methodologies need to be connected to specific local conditions, objective indicators to perceptual data, and quantitative findings to qualitative findings. Technical experts working in the natural resource sector should also contribute by developing evidence-based ways to assess the environmental and natural resource aspects of peace consolidation. By clarifying which aspects of natural resources are important to peacebuilding and why, such efforts would help connect natural resources to the larger peacebuilding picture.

As Galtung has noted, peace needs to be managed and owned by the people concerned (Galtung 1975). Thus, national capacities and national ownership have a central position in peacebuilding. In a typical peacebuilding context, however, the capacity to manage the peace process needs to be strengthened. Although both national ownership and capacity development are incorporated into many declarations and enjoy wide acceptance in theory,[19] neither is easy to achieve in practice. In peacebuilding contexts, strengthening capacity to manage natural resource wealth is often a matter of achieving consensus: where natural resource extraction risks spoiling peace prospects, international partners need to ensure inclusive national ownership that reflects the broad interests of the society as a whole, not those of a select subset.

Natural resources can be expected to remain a mainstay of peacebuilding for one principal reason: it makes sense. Under international pressure, Sierra Leone and Liberia have reformed their natural resource laws so as to increase state revenues and remove the spoils of war from those who were benefiting from the conflict. Paul Collier has noted, for example, that Sierra Leone's motivation to engage in the transparent allocation of contracts increased as it became clear that transparency strengthens competition and lets the market determine the price (Collier 2010). In a typical peacebuilding case, managing the country's natural resource wealth for the benefit of the population is a means of transitioning from donor dependency to domestic fiscal revenues, employment opportunities, and economic growth. To this end, international partners would do well to ensure that post-conflict countries have access to the best understanding and expertise that is available: this is where the peacebuilding architecture can make a contribution.

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[19] See, for example, the Busan New Deal (International Dialogue 2011).

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