

<b>Institution: Coventry University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 21</b>
<b>Title of case study: Security sector reconstruction through a conflict transformation approach in war-torn societies</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The primary <b>impact of this research has been the adoption and implementation of its recommendations at both field and policy levels</b>, by a wide range of donor institutions, non-governmental organisations and local authorities working on peacebuilding and security challenges. At field level, the research has led to an observable change and quantifiable improvement in operations, primarily through engaging with major service providers such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). At policy level, the research has informed donors and other policymakers on matters related to security sector reconstruction – most notably the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT).</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries:</b> The case study outlines these strands of work with the IOM and DFAIT, which have both had an impact in Afghanistan and elsewhere. It also provides detail of work specific to the Philippines, which informed the approach of the Philippines' Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and a number of local and international NGOs, towards local security provision and post-conflict reconstruction in Mindanao.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The underpinning research, on security sector reconstruction, is rooted in the work of the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS), founded in 1999. It builds on the work of Professor Rigby [1], who focused on peace and reconciliation issues including non-violent conflict transformation (at Coventry from 1999 until retiring in 2010), and Professor <b>Hunter</b> [2], who explored the cultures of peace and human security (at Coventry from 2000 to present). Professor <b>Özerdem's</b> research on the process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) explores linkages between security, development and reintegration of ex-combatants and child soldiers in conflict-affected environments [3] (at Coventry from 2010 to present). His research investigates how these soldiers could be integrated into society effectively, with a particular emphasis on social cohesion, justice and reconciliation-related issues between ex-combatants and receiving communities. <b>Özerdem's</b> research investigates the concerns and priorities of both 'soft' and 'hard' peacebuilding measures concurrently. He applies conflict transformation methodologies to investigate relationships between ex-combatant reintegration and security sector reconstruction in war-torn environments, such as Afghanistan and Iraq [5]; and to examine the roles played by international organisations in conflict resolution and peace processes (such as the role of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Mindanao, Philippines [6]). This participatory and reflexive approach is necessary, as the dominant practice of post-conflict state-building had been criticised for being externally driven and top-down, concentrating on security from a 'state-centred' perspective.</p> <p>With a particular focus on the application of conflict transformation methodologies in security sector reconstruction, <b>Özerdem's</b> research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands and facilitates the transformation of a person's identity from combatant to civilian;</li> <li>• Complements conventional state security initiatives by providing insight into reintegration of ex-combatants and cross-border management;</li> <li>• Promotes conflict transformation as a viable approach for security sector reconstruction.</li> </ul> <p>Through fieldwork in a wide range of conflict-affected countries, including Afghanistan, El Salvador, Kosovo, Philippines and Liberia, <b>Özerdem's</b> research has demonstrated that an official end to violent conflict does not guarantee long-term stability [4]. Rather, it signals the beginning of a long and complex peacebuilding process, with one of the major risks to peace being a failure to successfully reform security provision in a way that is acceptable and appropriate for all sides. The cessation of hostilities inevitably produces a large number of demobilised combatants, most of them lacking any basic means of support or livelihood. The poor economic conditions and political instability of many war-torn societies means that failure to respond to the reintegration needs of former combatants, and bring about reform within the security sector in general, can result in a</p>

high level of insecurity [5]. This insecurity, driven by crime waves or politically-motivated violence from disenfranchised ex-combatants, threatens peace accords and can provoke further armed conflict.

By conducting comparative research into the four main aspects of post-conflict reconstruction (security, governance, socio-economic environment, and justice and reconciliation) the research has made a significant contribution to knowledge and has been particularly beneficial to peacebuilding practitioners. The research has been conducted in close coordination with traditional state agencies and the non-governmental sector, through consultancy projects and externally funded research, and the findings have been directly relevant to policy formation at senior level, as well as programme design and implementation.

### 3. References to the research

1. Rigby, A. (2001). *Justice and reconciliation: After the Violence*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
2. Hunter, A. (ed.) (2006) *Peace Studies in the Chinese Century: International Perspectives*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
3. Özerdem, A., Podder, S., & Quitariano, E.L. (2010). Identity, ideology and child soldiering: Community and youth participation in civil conflict – a study on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Mindanao, Philippines. *Civil Wars*, 12(3): 304-325. (Impact Factor = 0.380; 57/244 politics and IR journals rated by SCImago Journal and Country Rank; Citations 4).
4. Maclay C. and Özerdem, A. 'Use' Them or 'Lose' Them: Engaging Liberia's Disconnected Youth through Socio-Political Integration. *International Peacekeeping*, 17(3): 343-360, 2010. Impact Factor = 0.410; 52/244 politics and IR journals rated by SCImago Journal and Country Rank.
5. Özerdem, A. (2010). Insurgency, militias and DDR as part of security sector reconstruction in Iraq: how not to do it. *Disasters*, 34-(S1), S40-S59. Citations 2. (Impact Factor = 0.515; Ranked 796 of 3460 Social Science journals rated by SCImago Journal and Country Rank).
6. Özerdem, A. (2012). The contribution of the organisation of the Islamic Conference to the peace process in Mindanao. *Civil Wars*, 14(3): 393-413. (Impact Factor = 0.380; 57/244 politics and IR journals rated by SCImago Journal and Country Rank).

### Key Funding

- Özerdem *et al*, 2013 - 2014. 'Faith-based conflict prevention and early warning scoping project', Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) £88,273. Principal investigator.
- Özerdem, 2013 – 2018. 'Integrated Peacebuilding', The Allan & Nesta Ferguson Trust £500,000. This is a follow-on funding from previous grants provided by the same trust.
- Özerdem *et al*, 2013 - 2017. 'Conflict Transformation in the Middle East and Europe', FP7 Marie Curie, £138,000. Principal investigator.
- Özerdem *et al*, 2011 - 2014. 'Inter-Continental Exchange of Leadership in Conflict Transformation', FP7 Marie Curie, £153,000. Principal investigator.
- Hunter, 2011 - 2013. TRANSCON: Global civil society, new diplomacies and the EU external action – FP7 Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship, £158,000.
- Özerdem, 2009-2010. 'Identity, Ideology and Child Soldiering: Community and Youth Participation in Civil Conflict: A Study on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Mindanao, Philippines', The British Academy, £7,150.
- Özerdem, 2008 - 2009. Education for change: Developing higher education programmes in peace and human security in Uganda and Kenya, The British Council, £15,300.

### 4. Details of the impact

Enabled by the key publications and funding listed above, Özerdem's research has produced findings that have had significant impact at policy and programme level. This impact has been particularly strong for practitioners working in the fields of peacebuilding, post-war reconstruction, conflict resolution and diplomacy, and also for those working in aid and development programmes. The following three examples are illustrative of this impact. Each is supported by testimonials from senior leaders setting out how their organisations directly benefited from Özerdem's research.

#### 'Change of DDR Practice by International Organisation for Migration'

Özerdem was commissioned by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to produce their

'Information, Counselling and Referral Service' Handbook. The handbook sets out their approach to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes, provides an evidence-based framework to underpin future programming work with ex-combatants and acts as a training tool for the organisation's staff. The IOM has more than 7,800 staff working in over 470 locations. It is currently running around 2,300 projects with an annual expenditure of USD 1.3 billion. Having undertaken disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes in over 20 countries, the IOM recognised the need to distil lessons learned and provide a training tool for staff involved in current and future programmes. They also wanted to identify interconnections between past and present missions, and those in different places.

Preparing the handbook involved undertaking an extensive evaluation of the organisation's current and previous DDR, programmes and interviewing senior level leaders within IOM. **Özerdem** used his conceptualisation of 'social reintegration' of former combatants and child soldiers in drafting the handbook. This concept is now being used by IOM field offices worldwide, including in 25 of the 36 countries the World Bank identifies as 'conflict-affected'. Marco Basso, Chief of Mission for IOM Afghanistan, identified the strengths of the handbook as:

*"Firstly it gives clear direction on how to plan and implement DDR-focused projects, and it does so in an easily-accessible way. Secondly, it has contributed significantly towards the standardisation of practice across IOM operations in the DDR field. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it exemplifies based on IOM's previous experiences."* [a]

**Özerdem** also engaged in the IOM's project planning for the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP), which aims to reintegrate the Taliban into society. **Özerdem's** "good practice" recommendations on identity transformation for former combatants and child soldiers formed the backbone of his advice to the APRP process. As part of his involvement, he assisted the design of a comprehensive reintegration strategy focused on income generation for ex-combatants, which involved key government agencies and the private sector. Referring to **Özerdem's** research, Tajma Kurt, former DDR programme officer in IOM Afghanistan stated:

*"As the DDR-related aspects of IOM's work in Afghanistan drew to a close, we commissioned an independent evaluation [from **Özerdem**]. This demonstrated considerable improvement in delivery, with clear effects for the beneficiaries of programmes. We were able to assist ex-combatants transition to civilian life more effectively, providing them with meaningful employment in a targeted manner."* [b]

### 'The Dubai Process'

**Özerdem** conducted an evaluation of the Dubai Process - a cross-border management programme between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The evaluation was funded by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), July – Dec 2010, and was carried out in collaboration with researchers from the Carleton University, Ottawa and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (see <http://tinyurl.com/nn5ks8p>).

The evaluation was commissioned to assess the effectiveness of Canada's input into mediating cross-border relationships between Pakistan and Afghanistan, provided a detailed conflict analysis and an appraisal of Canada's role in the mediation process. The Afghanistan/Pakistan relationship is a difficult one and the mediation attempts to initiate dialogue and establish a working-level relationship between the two countries. **Özerdem** investigated the motives of the parties for engaging in dialogue and the operational challenges that the stakeholders faced, and identified the tangible outcomes of the process as they stood then.

DFAIT was struggling to identify an appropriate cross-border management framework capable of responding to the wide range of human development, law enforcement, customs, counter-narcotics and socio-economic challenges in the region. **Özerdem's** research on the connections between security sector reconstruction and conflict transformation formed the theoretical underpinning of the evaluation's recommendations. The wider angle of security conceptualisation proposed by **Özerdem** provided recommendations for an effective way forward for DFAIT.

According to Ms Elissa Golberg, Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Conference on Disarmament (formally Head of START bureau at DFAIT), referring to **Özerdem's** work for their midterm evaluation:

*"The Canadian mediation team found the midterm evaluation particularly useful for understanding the motivations of the various stakeholders and their reasons for engaging in the process, and this*

*in turn helped them to make decisions to ensure continued participation. The report also provided crucial input into the significance of the role of the chair and advice on how to manage intra-delegation politics. This resulted in a better-resourced secretariat for the process.” [e]*

In addition to assessing the impact of Canadian support to cross-border management, the evaluation identified more general, tangible outcomes in this area and proposed a methodology for dealing with similar border disputes worldwide. Findings from this investigation have already led to a change in the Canadian mediation framework. An international conference on cross-border management was held in Ottawa in March 2011, and since then the DFAIT has started a thorough assessment and restructuring of its cross-border mediation programmes around the world.

#### **‘Community-Based Security Reconstruction in Mindanao’**

The international community invests substantial time and resources in reforming the security sectors of post-conflict countries, but often with little success. Previous responses have been accused of being too ‘state-centric’, narrowly-focused, and based on weak assumptions.

**Özerdem’s** research has provided a constructive critique of how current responses often fail to provide security to war-torn societies. Building outwards from the existing Comprehensive Security Sector Reform (SSR) Framework, his ‘community based security reconstruction’ approach widens the range of stakeholders involved in reform efforts and offers a pragmatic methodology based on the principle of working with the political, socio-economic and cultural realities of the context. This alternative model was presented at an experts’ meeting on Security Sector Transformation in North Africa and the Middle East held by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in July 2011 (see <http://tinyurl.com/pv6w2w4>).

**Özerdem** has also operationalized his community-based approach to SSR in Mindanao, a predominantly Muslim area of the Philippines seriously affected by ethno-religious conflict [d].

**Özerdem** was funded by the British Academy to research the role of communities in the recruitment of youth and child soldiers and the determinants of young people’s successful reintegration. His research has played a pivotal role in the planning and implementation of the peace process in Mindanao. The issue of community security provision has been a crosscutting focus of the five Peace Tables convened by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP). It has been especially important in discussions around new laws for Bangsamoro (Muslim autonomous region in Mindanao). **Özerdem’s** research has fed into these processes and has been significant in shaping the reintegration discourse between the peace panels. This is particularly important as one of the most critical issues in the current discussions between the Mindanao Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Philippines is weapons decommissioning. **Özerdem’s** findings have been used by local and national decision makers in reframing security sector reconstruction as a community issue. This has created space for communities to be actively involved in decommissioning, which will in turn increase levels of trust between the state and local communities. **Özerdem’s** work has also included a comprehensive household survey, which provided demographic information for three of the most war-affected provinces of Mindanao. According to Jurgetta Honculada, member of the Government panel negotiating with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, **Özerdem’s** work has “*played a very valuable role*” forming “*the most considerable body of independent and academically rigorous research*” available [c].

#### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

- a) Testimonial from Chief of Mission, IOM Afghanistan
- b) Testimonial from Chief of Mission, IOM Tajikistan [formerly DDR programme officer in IOM Afghanistan]
- c) Testimonial from Member of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) Panel negotiating with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)
- d) Testimonial from Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Philippines
- e) Testimonial from Canada’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament [formerly Head of the START Bureau at DFAIT]