

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Kent
Unit of Assessment: Politics and International Studies
Title of case study: Creating Conflict Resolution Capacity: Transnational Communities, NGOs and Intergovernmental Bodies
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) <p>Research on mediation practice and conflict regulation contributed to the development of resources to enhance professional training standards and democratic participation in conflict-ridden societies. The researchers' work has focused on: a) post-genocide diaspora groups emphasizing the transformative effects of new social networking facilities; b) professional standards in conflict resolution practice; and c) power-sharing arrangements addressing gaps in minority-group representation. Scholarly work on conflict resolution capacity has had an impact on intergovernmental bodies, the media and transnational communities and has demonstrably produced innovative training methods for NGOs and conflict practitioners as well as resources to safeguard inclusivity in divided societies.</p>
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) <p>Kent academics have produced a substantial body of interrelated research in conflict resolution contributing to significant and evidence-based prescriptions. Projects undertaken at Kent have been widely cited, externally funded and peer-reviewed by prestigious global publishers, university presses or high-impact journals. The three examples below draw on a common research tradition and illustrate an evolving engagement in creating effective and innovative conflict resolution capacity.</p> <p>(A) Engaging Post-Genocide Diasporas in Peace Processes</p> <p>Research undertaken at Kent by Féron (2009-) and Miall (2005-2011) explores the role of transnational communities in homeland and hostland post-genocide and post-conflict settings. Féron (2011) surveys civil society organisations in four European cities representing transnational communities from Rwanda, Turkey and Kosovo. The study offers critical lessons for civil society organizations concerned with forging a constructive role for transnational communities in homeland and hostland conflicts, by demonstrating the importance of social media, networking and dialogue in their everyday practice. INFOCON Civil Society Forum on Conflicts', 2008-2010 led by Féron (also involving Miall as co-investigator) was the first to be funded by the EC FP7 programme in a new category of 'research for the benefit of civil society'.</p> <p>(B) Enhancing Professional Conflict Resolution Standards</p> <p>Miall's research, published in <i>Contemporary Conflict Resolution</i> (2005, 2011) and <i>Emergent Conflict and Peaceful Change</i> (2007), includes an original synthesis of theories of conflict and conflict resolution and finds that prospects for accommodation in social conflicts depend on conflict handling capacity. The framework for conflict resolution Miall developed jointly with University of Bradford colleagues Ramsbotham and Woodhouse constitutes one of the most widely referenced studies in the field (4:B) and provides the full panoply of institutional and conflict-mitigating arrangements necessary for the effective resolution of contemporary disputes focusing in particular at different phases of the conflict cycle as well as novel methods of mapping conflictual situations. Professor Edward Newman, formerly Director of Studies on Conflict and Security in the Peace and Governance Programme of the United Nations University in Tokyo says it provides 'a coherent and compelling overarching intellectual agenda' for the field.</p> <p>(C) Shaping Institutions for Democratic Participation in Deeply Divided Societies</p> <p>Research conducted at Kent by Bieber (2006-10), Loizides (2011-) and Cochrane (2012-) has focused on the study of ethnic minorities and political accommodation in societies split across deep ethnic, racial and religious divisions. Bieber (2006) examines how power-sharing arrangements have reduced disparities in political representation in the Balkans while Cochrane (2013) examines the disconnect between elite-level institutions in Northern Ireland and popular expectations for peace. Cochrane (2013) and Loizides (2012) draw on the Northern Irish and Cypriot experience to</p>

inform mediations on civic engagement and political representation across divided societies. Shared findings emphasize innovations in power-sharing inspired by the Northern Irish d'Hondt mechanism applied in the formation of the cabinet; d'Hondt safeguards inclusivity in divided societies as membership in the executive is automatically determined by electoral strength rather than post-election negotiations as commonly assumed. Loizides (2012) finds that such mechanisms make power-sharing arrangements more negotiable and durable. He proposes a federal executive in Cyprus and elsewhere combining the Northern Irish consociational d'Hondt style executive with an integrative co-presidency as an additional arbitration mechanism.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

3.1 Féron, E. (2011) "Diaspora Politics: From 'Long Distance Nationalism' to Autonomization", in Dirk H., Sezgin Z. (eds.), *Migration and Organized Civil Society - Rethinking National Policy*, (Routledge) ISBN: 9780415691987

[Derived from Kent's EU FP7 programme ('INFOCON Civil Society Forum on Conflicts') project by Elise Féron PI, 2007, €849,877, Kent element £100,000].

3.2 Miall, H. (2007) *Emergent Conflict and Peaceful Change* (Palgrave) ISBN: 0333987667

[Two chapters by Miall resulting from this book and *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* [3:3] were also adapted for a wider policy audience and published in the handbook *Transnational Communities and Conflicts* edited by Féron].

3.3 Miall H., Ramsbotham O. and Woodhouse T. (2005, 2011) *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (Polity). ISBN: 0745649742

[The two editions produced while Professor Miall was at the University of Kent represent significantly revised and extended versions of the book].

3.4 Bieber, F. (2006). *Post-War Bosnia. Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance* (Palgrave). ISBN/ISSN: 1403998825

[Endorsed by Wolfgang Petritsch, former High Representative for Bosnia].

3.5 Cochrane, F. (2013). *Northern Ireland: The Reluctant Peace* (Yale University Press). ISBN: 978-0300178708

[Cochrane's book shaped the agenda of dedicated policy workshop focusing on the book's non-academic impact shortly after its publication in March 2013: a) *Cyprus Peace Process: Alternative Approaches* funded by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Cyprus and b) *Power-Sharing Lessons for Divided Societies* at the University of Kent attended by a diverse audience of policymakers].

3.6 Loizides, N. (2012) "Mediating Power-Sharing? Institutional Design and Federalism in Cyprus", Keynote Address organized by Cyprus Academic Dialogue (CAD), Nicosia (available at: http://works.bepress.com/neophytos_loizides/24)

[Peered reviewed as part of sole-authored manuscript *Designing Peace Processes* forthcoming with the University of Pennsylvania Press and work in *West European Politics* (2013) focusing on relevant policy lessons from Northern Ireland and Cyprus (5:7)].

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

A. Engaging Post-Genocide Diasporas in Peace Processes

Féron (3:1) challenged conventional wisdom on transnational communities in homeland and hostland conflicts by underscoring and catalysing their potential for constructive engagement in peace processes. Féron's INFOCON project influenced the development of resources to enable positive communication and introduced its own dedicated web resources to enable the use of new social media among diasporic groups. It provided a forum for expressing ideas and strengthened lines of communication among groups. Participants included Hutu, Tutsi and Twa individuals from political parties and Rwandan civil organizations from the diaspora in Africa, Europe and North America. The INFOCON website counted 17,762 visits (April 2008-June 2011) while the project's dedicated policy handbook (also involving Miall) has been downloaded 1604 times from the project's website, not including downloads from other organizations that made it available online

such as Eldis, academia.edu and Cordis or provided wide coverage following its publication (e.g. the Scoop Project, WBC and Avanna). Several ‘problem-solving’ workshops involving Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) were conducted, such as a Serb-Albanian-EU dialogue, and a roundtable dialogue on Rwanda that brought together representatives of Rwandan diaspora and homeland organizations, chaired by a Spanish member of parliament. INFOCON’s impact and achievements were commended by the European Commission (5:1). The project’s findings were subsequently used for implementing programmes and policies at the local level, in the frame of two follow-up projects, one called Labour-Plus (involving 11 local authorities, funded by the EU-ERDF funds under the Interreg-IVC Programme), and the second called AWARD, (involving 6 local authorities or networks, with the support of Europeaid, programme ‘Non-state actors and local authorities in development’) (5:2).

B. Enhancing Professional Conflict Resolution Standards

Miall’s work reshaped the professional training standards and practices of NGOs, development agencies and intergovernmental bodies. Miall et al.’s (3:3) cited in Google scholar 1003 times demonstrate the work’s reach across the conflict resolution field; most visibly, the EU Directorate for External Relations reprinted parts of the book in a publication on ‘What works in response to crises and security threats’ (5:3). Miall et al. has been employed as a core text for practitioner training by the Berghof Centre for Conflict Research in Germany, the Japan International Cooperation Agency JICA, Oxfam in Kenya and by Norwegian conflict resolution trainers in India. Dr Ropers, Programme Director of the Berghof Centre, argues that (3:3) “identified new avenues in the field and offered topics for state-of-the art discussions in the Berghof Centre” (5:4).

C. Shaping Institutions for Democratic Participation in Deeply Divided Societies

Research at Kent has shaped the agenda in constitutional design across divided societies. Bieber informed the European Commission and the OSCE High Commission on National Minorities which employed his expertise to evaluate the implementation of various peace initiatives. Bieber authored an expert report on the protection of national minorities for the Council of Europe which improved public understanding on disparities in minority group representation in the Balkans (5:5). Cochrane and Loizides are now carrying this stream of research forward. John McGarry Senior Advisor on Power-Sharing to the United Nations endorsed Loizides’ proposals in his Northern Ireland Assembly testimony (5:8). Loizides (3:6) led to the full endorsement of the d’Hondt mechanism by CAD the leading bi-communal lobby group in Cyprus (5:7), and to the development of similar proposals for the Colombian peace process (5:7). It also contributed to Council of Europe recommendations in Georgia based on a co-authored report submitted with James Ker-Lindsay (PhD, University of Kent) (5:6). Finally, following the publication of Professor Cochrane’s book (3:5), Cochrane and Loizides influenced the Cypriot negotiations (5:7) and the 2013 Stormont review of the d’Hondt (5:10). Ray McCaffrey Research Officer, Northern Ireland Assembly, offers that Cochrane’s insights on community designation (which was at the centre of the NI Assembly review), transformed his understanding of the issue with regard to how Community Designation itself should not be necessarily seen as a barrier to the gradual breaking down of communal divisions (5:9).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

A. Engaging Post-Genocide Diasporas in Peace Processes

1. Testimonial by Angela Liberatore (INFOCON’s project officer and Director-General for Research and Development of the European Commission) [‘The INFOCON project led by Élise Féron helped representatives of diasporas and migrants coming from conflict areas and experiencing integration problems in the countries they moved to, to better understand and improve their engagement and impact on reconciliation and peace building processes in their countries of origin’]. Speech, Brussels Dec 2010, available on request.
2. Testimonial by Pascaline Gaborit, Director of the ENTP (European New Towns & Pilot Cities Platform) an organisation representing pilot urban developments, new towns, and fast growing cities.

[‘European New Towns and Pilot Cities Platform (ENTP) drew on INFOCON’s research and Élise Féron’s work to launch the two projects (AWARD and Labour Plus) funded

respectively by INTERREG IV and Europaid, focusing on multiculturalism within cities, and the labour inclusion of minorities’]

B. Enhancing Professional Conflict Resolution Standards

3. EU Directorate General for External Relations ‘Making the Difference, what works in response to crisis and security threats – the debate continues’. Ed: Andrea Ricci, Brussels, 2010. This volume has republished Chapter 1 of *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*.
4. Testimonial by Dr Norbert Ropers, Berghof Foundation Berlin. [Dr Ropers argues that the book identified new avenues in the field and offered topics for state-of-the art discussions in the Berghof Center].

C. Shaping Institutions for Democratic Participation in Deeply Divided Societies

5. Report authored by Dr Florian Bieber for the Council of Europe titled “The role of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in selected countries of South-Eastern Europe after two monitoring cycles” [available at http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/6_resources/PDF_IAConf_Report_FBieber_Wshop1_en_12nov08rev.pdf]. International media have also provided coverage on Bieber’s related work, *Globe and Mail*, 19 January 2007.
6. Testimonial by Anna Capello, Head of Division, Directorate of Political Advice, Council of Europe [‘The report and advice were well received by the Georgian authorities and were used in the legislative work of the government. Examples detailed by the Lindsay/Loizides’ study of how a number of issues are addressed in Cyprus were of particular interest to the Georgian authorities.... it was also of interest to the international community (EU, UN, and individual member states) who are active in the conflict resolution process’].
7. Media and civil society endorsement of Loizides’ work on the d’Hondt. *Sunday Politis* newspaper devoted a full-page coverage on his proposal (6 May 2012) following a TV interview by the CyBC (May 2, 2012). In its summer 2013 newsletter CAD summarizes Cochrane’s and Loizides’ contributions and states [‘we fully endorse the consociational rationale as well as the provisions of Loizides’ proposal as a whole. In this respect, we will try to promote the ideas therein both at policy makers’ level and at the level of society at large’]. International media have also provided coverage on similar work by Loizides in Colombia *Wall Street Journal* (30 June, 2013).
8. Memorandum to the Northern Irish Assembly by John McGarry [Senior Advisor on Power-Sharing to the United Nations (Standby Team, Mediation Support Unit)]. McGarry et al. cite Loizides’ work on ‘variations of d’Hondt...as constructive ways in resolving the Cyprus problem’ (source: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/Assembly-and-Executive-Review/reviews/review-of-d%27hondt/written-submissions/Joint-memorandum-mccruden-oleary.pdf>).
9. Testimonial from Ray McCaffrey Research Officer, Northern Irish Assembly with regards to the impact of Cochrane and Loizides memos on the 2013 Review for d’Hondt. In his testimonial McCaffrey argues that Professor Cochrane’s memo provided clarity on the most complex issues such as community designation and petitions of concern. McCaffrey argues that ‘I would probably have considered the community designation aspect of the Agreement as an either/or scenario – it either entrenches sectarianism or simply deals with the political realities that exist in Northern Ireland. I hadn’t considered that the parties might be able to evolve and adapt within these designations, and that Community Designation itself should not be a barrier to a gradual breaking down of communal divisions.’
10. Written submissions by Cochrane and Loizides have been included in the Northern Ireland Assembly’s ‘Review of D’Hondt, Community Designation and Provisions for Opposition’ Official Report, available at http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/Reports/Assem_Exec_Review/nia-123-11-15-Review-of-DHondt-Community-Designation-and-Provisions-for-Opposition.PDF Cochrane’s submission is included in pp. 207-215 and Loizides’ is available from pp. 224-227.