

Institution: Coventry University
Unit of Assessment: 21
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The Unit undertakes international research which addresses issues of Human Security, with a focus on two inter-related dimensions: peace and conflict transformation; and governance structures and identities. The Unit's innovative, participatory approach to research fully engages both local and international actors to develop novel approaches to engaging with Human Security issues.</p> <p>The main types of impact relevant to the Unit's research are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on creativity, culture and society informing and shaping public and political debate. For example, Barrett's research on HIV/AIDS has featured in the media (the <i>Guardian</i>, May 2008; the <i>Guardian Online</i>, December 2009; and <i>The Times Supplement</i>, December 2010). Beider's work on community cohesion has also stimulated significant practitioner debate (see case study 21.1). • Impact on practitioners and professional services in developing resources to improve professional practice. For example, Bywaters' research on health inequalities has influenced the 'Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development' document, from the International Federation of Social Workers. Özerdem led an evaluation of the mediation process for highly sensitive, cross-border management issues between Afghanistan and Pakistan (see case study 21.2). • Impact on public policy, law and services, influencing policy made by quasi-government organisations and NGOs. For example, Murshed has presented reports to the Asian Development Bank on reconstruction strategies in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, and a report on 'Meta Analytic Approaches to Country Analysis' for the United Nations in Pakistan. Baker's research is cited extensively in the global Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report 'State-Provided Service, Contracting Out, and Non-State Networks' (see case study 21.3). <p>Key beneficiaries include: communities in both the developed and developing world that have experienced human insecurity or are living with threat or uncertainty; professionals working to improve human security; international NGOs; commercial organisations; government departments; and policy makers at regional, national and international levels.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The Unit has developed an iterative approach to impact that has three strands: community-engaged participation, funded research and debate stimulation.</p> <p>(i) Community-engaged participatory research</p> <p>The Unit uses a pioneering methodological approach to research, through community engagement, interacting with communities of interest or of geographical location. The engagement of end-users in the development and delivery of the research ensures that outcomes are demanded. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daly's research has both involved the perspectives of service users and critiqued the championing of choice in the refashioning of the governance of public services [GD3]. Daly has also helped to shape government political direction in relation to state support of older people whether in terms of prevention [GD2], or supporting those with long term conditions (Randall et al, 2013, Primary Health Care Research & Development), or in the personalisation of their care [GD1]. • Barrett's research on female genital mutilation (FGM) combines participatory action-research methods with health psychology behavioural-change approaches. She has worked closely with Somali and Sudanese communities in the UK and the Netherlands to identify key psychological determinants important for the reduction and elimination of FGM [HB2]. Her research has featured in the press (the <i>Parliament Magazine</i> (Nov 2011) and the <i>Conversation</i> (June 2013) and she has subsequently contributed to a government-funded consultation at DFID on FGM prevalence rates.

(ii) Funded research

Specialist knowledge developed through research allows the Unit to undertake funded research with external partners to achieve further impact on policy and practice at international, national and local levels. For example:

- **Bywaters'** international research reputation on social work and health inequality, established over 20 years, led to commissioned research from the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW - the federal body representing national associations of social workers and as such representing over 750,000 social workers worldwide). He led the re-writing of the IFSW policy on health, including managing a two-year long consultation process. The policy was ratified unanimously by the IFSW Members' General Meeting in 2008.
- **Mitchell's** criticism of the current law which permits defendants to be convicted of manslaughter even though the victim's death was extremely unlikely and unforeseeable, was cited with approval by the Lord Chief Justice in 2009. The Nuffield Foundation subsequently funded **Mitchell** to produce a research report on the public opinion of sentencing in murder cases (October 2010).

(iii) Stimulating and informing debate

The Unit's researchers are involved in facilitating and informing public and policy debate both through traditional channels and social media. This has resulted in members being sought for opinion and comment by both the print and broadcast media, and their work being cited regularly in a range of media sources. For example:

- **Hunter's** research on the religious and cultural dimensions of human security led to his engagement with various Chinese civil society organisations. For example, Amity Foundation, a Christian NGO in China which conducts relief work but also reconciliation and conflict resolution activities, invited **Hunter** to be the lead speaker in a two-day workshop in May 2011, where he presented papers and led discussions on reconciliation and the roles of religion and ethnicity in conflict. The workshop informed the Foundation's current thinking and fed into the Foundation's new programme.
- **Baker** has co-organised three international conferences and numerous smaller events in collaboration with Chatham House. This has led to wider debate and consultation on oil governance by the Ugandan oil minister and an article for CNN on Kenyan oil prospects. Similarly, the conference report on Gulf of Guinea maritime security was distributed widely at expert meetings in Tema (Ghana) and Lagos that prepared for a Heads of Government and State summit on the topic in Cameroon. Facts from the report were cited by news agencies and the regional press.
- **Beider's** research on the white working class in England has informed public debate on this politically-sensitive topic, with significant media exposure (*Huffington Post*, *Daily Mail* and the *Guardian*) resulting in thousands of tweets, comments and re-posts. **Beider** has subsequently participated in a 'teach-in' for senior policy and research managers at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's headquarters in York (June 2012). He has also presented his research findings at a meeting at the Houses of Parliament and has supported the drafting of the Cohesion and Integration consultation report that will be used to shape Labour Party policy.
- **Özerdem** and **Hunter** have edited an innovative e-book series, 'Human Security Challenges', which aims to make international research available at an affordable price.

Institutional support for impact - internal funding support: To develop the impact of its research, the Unit has made use of the institutional support structures available (see **REF5**). This includes Applied Research Fellowships which provide up to £10,000 per year to fund secondments to establish internationally excellent, long-term partnerships. For example, in 2009, **Thompson** was funded to consolidate a partnership with a Zimbabwean NGO working with grass-roots community groups, to develop a deeper understanding of transitional justice processes. With funding from the Unit's competitive impact fund, **Hunt** extended her research on women and labour. As a result, her research on women's employment and trade union membership in the years following the First World War featured in the BBC2 series 'Servants: the True Story of Life Below Stairs'.

Impact template (REF3a)

Staff support and development: The Business Development Group is a central service providing project and financial management support for all research and knowledge transfer activities. An extensive researcher development programme includes: project management, working with industry, effective networking, impact identification, and consortium formation. Researchers are encouraged to join practitioner and professional networks to improve the visibility and uptake of their research. **Thiessen** and **Lee** have both benefitted from this support: as a result of **Thiessen's** research [CT1] he is now a capacity-building external advisor to a network of five peacebuilding NGOs based in Kabul. He helps them to review the levels of corruption within Afghan government procurement and recruitment processes; also, **Lee's** research [SYL1] formed the basis of a workshop that he delivered on project management in post-war peacebuilding to four, local, grass-root NGOs in Svay Rieng, Cambodia.

c. Strategy and plans

The Unit's overall research strategy is to enhance existing research expertise in Human Security. In particular the Unit will strengthen and invest in the areas of peace and reconciliation, good governance and social relations, whilst developing emergent themes focussing on trust and transformation, resilience and social justice. The Unit will continue to use and enhance the approaches detailed previously in section b to translate its research into impact. Specific plans for maximising impact include:

- **Research:** Focussing on the distinctive competencies of the Unit, in terms of methodologies and approaches, in particular community-engaged participatory methods to inform political debate in the UK and EU. This will include research on traditional harmful practices, the focus of which will shift from migrant communities based in Europe to local communities in Africa and the Middle East;
- **Secondments:** Delivering an ambitious and ground-breaking vision of a University-sponsored *Coventry Peace Hub* to mentor peace-building initiatives through their early years. The Hub will host NGOs working in peace and conflict transformation. This will provide significant opportunities to link research with impact and practice. Also, the launch of the *Coventry City - University Initiative* to strengthen the connections between the two through innovative, practical programmes to enhance social mobility across the city – will provide further opportunities for maximising research impact;
- **Practitioner Engagement:** Extending the reach of the Unit's impact by formalising expert input into an international practitioner-led advisory group for Human Security, to ensure that the Unit's research has the capacity to influence policy. Jean-Christophe Bas (Deputy Director, Strategic Development and Partnerships at United Nations Alliance of Civilizations) will chair the advisory group.
- **Dissemination:** Disseminating research to practitioner communities, through workshops, professional media, conferences, CPD and social media. The Unit will also work with the University's social media officers who will ensure the Unit maximises impact through channels such as blogs, Twitter and Brandwatch.
- **Staff Support:** Building on the existing approach to impact, the Unit will develop workshops for research staff on how to make their research more impact-oriented. The University has received funding from JISC (£15k) to develop a system 'Embedding Research Impact at Coventry' (ERIC), which is a structured tool to support the identification of impact measures and evidence collection. An Unit 'impact champion' will support researchers to monitor and capture impact throughout the lifecycle of the research project and beyond.

d. Relationship to case studies

The impact case studies (REF3b) have been selected to illustrate the breadth of impact achieved. **Case study 21.1** (white working class) exemplifies the Unit's approach to informing public debate. Through its focus on white working class views it has challenged conventional wisdom and established new thinking on the issue. **Case study 21.2** (conflict transformation) shows our approach to working with policy makers. It showcases how research into security sector reconstruction has led to observable change and quantifiable improvement in operations. **Case study 21.3** (state and non-state policing in Africa) demonstrates the impact of the Unit on non-state policing and its relationship to state policing.