



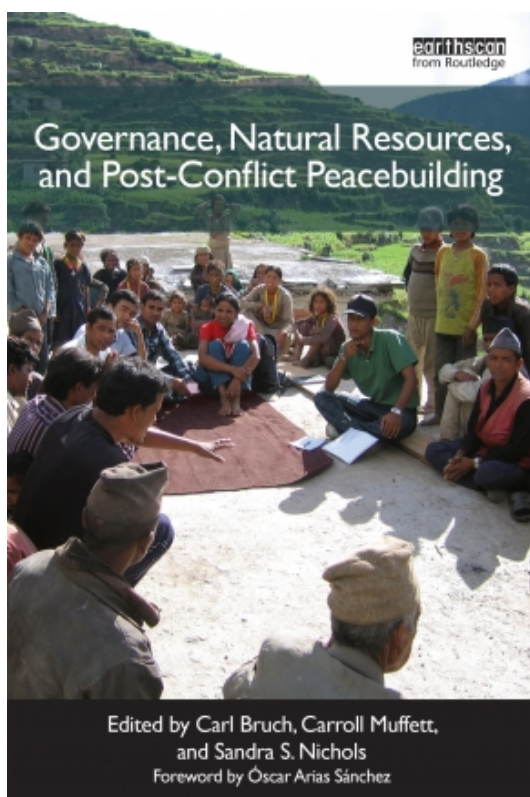
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Part 7: Integration of Natural Resources into Other Post-Conflict Priorities

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PART 7

Integration of natural resources into other post-conflict priorities

Introduction

In the wake of conflict, natural resources play an integral role in meeting immediate humanitarian needs and securing long-term political and economic stability. Fresh water and fuelwood are essential inputs for humanitarian interventions. Agricultural and forest resources provide a basis for securing livelihoods and for reintegrating combatants, refugees, and internally displaced persons. And high-value natural resources, ranging from petroleum to timber, can drive economic recovery and provide the necessary revenues for reconstruction. Failing to consider natural resources in post-conflict humanitarian and development activities can degrade the resource base, increase local conflicts over natural resources, and spur continuing security problems.

Given the importance of natural resources to humanitarian and development activities, governments, international organizations, and private sector actors are beginning to consider natural resources in the context of post-conflict planning. This approach can meet with resistance, however, as some members of an organization may view such efforts as diverting personnel and other resources away from the organization's core mandate and competencies. In such instances, it is advisable (and may even be necessary) to highlight the direct and immediate importance of natural resources to the organization's post-conflict activities. The chapters in this part describe approaches to and lessons from mainstreaming natural resource and environmental considerations into planning and programming for peacebuilding priorities.

In "Natural Resource Management and Post-Conflict Settings: Programmatic Evolution in a Humanitarian and Development Agency," Jim Jarvie describes how Mercy Corps, a humanitarian and development agency working in forty fragile and post-conflict countries, mainstreamed consideration of the environment and natural resources. Proponents of this approach overcame internal resistance by providing evidence of the many natural resource-related activities that the organization was already undertaking—for example, in the context of economic development and livelihood restoration. Through a case study of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where a tree-planting program successfully addressed security and energy problems at refugee camps, as well as environmental problems in surrounding areas, Jarvie demonstrates that when organizations like Mercy Corps explicitly address natural resources, they can work more effectively toward their humanitarian and development goals.

In "Consolidating Peace through Aceh Green," Sadaf Lakhani describes the development of Aceh Green, a sustainable development strategy designed to address both environmental and economic problems that arose in the wake of the secessionist conflict in Indonesia and the 2004 tsunami. The governor of Aceh worked with nongovernmental organizations and development partners to create the initiative, which was intended to generate revenue and employment

846 Governance, natural resources, and post-conflict peacebuilding

by prioritizing renewable energy generation, food and livelihood security, and environmentally sound forest management practices. Lakhani focuses on the potential of Aceh Green to contribute to peacebuilding by developing the capacity of government and civil society; providing avenues for public participation in natural resource governance; and creating mechanisms for addressing grievances and resolving disputes, while still recognizing a role for customary institutions.

Economic data on the importance of natural resources to post-conflict economic development can play a key role in persuading policy makers and peacebuilding actors to focus on environmental issues. In “The Power of Economic Data: A Case Study from Rwanda,” Louise Wrist Sorensen describes how the Poverty Environment Initiative, a joint program of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, generated economic data that influenced the development of Rwanda’s Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Failure to consider natural resource dynamics in development projects can jeopardize their effectiveness and increase the risk of conflict. In “Mitigating Natural Resource Conflicts through Development Projects: Lessons from World Bank Experience in Nigeria,” Sandra M. Ruckstuhl illustrates the importance of conflict-sensitive development projects in the fadama region of Nigeria. In its initial phase, an agricultural development project had ignored the dynamics of resource use, instead focusing exclusively on agricultural production—and thereby exacerbating tensions between agriculturalists and other resource users such as fishermen, pastoralists, and hunters. In response to lessons learned in earlier phases, subsequent phases of the project incorporated features designed to reduce resource-related conflict, including environmental and conflict assessments, conflict resolution, and mechanisms to promote transparency and the participation of diverse stakeholders.

In “Mainstreaming Natural Resources into Post-Conflict Humanitarian and Development Action,” Judy Oglethorpe, Anita van Breda, Leah Kintner, Shubash Lohani, and Owen Williams draw on examples from Mozambique, the DRC, Nepal, Indonesia, and other post-conflict countries, emphasizing the need for monitoring and assessment, policy reform, improved governance capacity, collaboration across sectors, and secure funding sources. The authors conclude that peacebuilding actors must recognize and attempt to understand the dynamics associated with natural resources from the earliest stages of peacebuilding.

Natural resource dynamics also need to be considered in efforts to attract and manage private sector investment. Private investments can be critical to rebuilding an economy following conflict, but resource exploitation and its associated impacts can generate new conflicts. In “Natural Resources and Peacebuilding: The Role of the Private Sector,” Diana Klein and Ulrike Joras consider case studies from Colombia, Nepal, Nigeria, and elsewhere, demonstrating that in order to preempt natural resource-related conflicts and ensure that communities benefit from investments, private investors must meaningfully engage

with local communities—and not just with the national government—on issues related to natural resources.

The chapters in this part demonstrate both the importance of integrating natural resources into various post-conflict activities—including humanitarian, development, and commercial undertakings—and approaches and considerations for doing so. The first step is to understand the natural resource-related dynamics; in practical terms, this means that project planning, private investment strategies, and government policy reform need to be informed by social, economic, and environmental assessments and consultations with communities. Over the long term, this understanding must be continuously updated through monitoring and ongoing public participation, and programming must be adjusted to take into account changing environmental and social circumstances.