



Towards a new cartography: Mapping a peace process using Information and Communications Technology

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Introduction

Peace in Sri Lanka is characterised on the one hand by an emphasis on the constitutional and legal frameworks necessary to under-gird the transformation to a new social contract in support of sustainable peace. On the other, there is limited emphasis on process, of the need to consider the qualitative nature of peacebuilding and construct participatory and holistic frameworks in support of transformative dialogues.

Sandwiched between the two, the shared aspirations of communities in Sri Lanka for an end to violent conflict remain muted. The design and conduct of a peace process that is able to capture and give voice these muted aspirations remains distant.

The interactions within and between parties to the conflict after the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) in February 2002 is best understood as an *entente cordiale*, wherein the positions of stakeholders jostled for international acceptance amidst domestic displays of opportunism. The peace process suffered under the general myopia of political actors who wielded the process as a tool for parochial and short-term gain. The inability to create an inclusive process is further corroded by persistent spoiler dynamics, which bedevil efforts to construct a process that is simultaneously resilient and sensitive to changing ground dynamics.

This vicious dynamic, of ill-thought out process design leading inevitably to ill-fated attempts at sustainable peacebuilding needs to be culled in favour of processes that are better able to engender dialogues in support of sustainable conflict transformation.

It is to this end that the mapping of a peace process assumes significant importance. Mapping a peace process is an endeavour to make sense of the actions of actors in the process. It is a forward thinking and iterative exercise, in which non-partisan cartographers of peace are helped by the political architects of the process in a mutually strengthening dynamic. It looks at past experience in a transformative light – observing the tendencies of stakeholders to react to process stimuli in a negative or positive manner and using this knowledge to draw up processes that constantly encourage parties to respond constructively to the demands placed on them.

Despite the importance of mapping a peace process, there is a large void in exiting conflict resolution literature on how best to conduct and envision such an exercise. Mapping requires us to envision frameworks that go beyond Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments (PCIA) and Early Warning Systems (EWS). While well established in the corpus of CR literature, these frameworks afford little in the form of foundation that help us understand the on-going dynamics of a peace process. The author will expand this point in a following section.

In exploring the possibilities of constructing a mapping process for peace in Sri Lanka, this monograph engages with the theoretical aspects of process mapping and then explores possible ways in which such mapping exercises can be conducted. The author's research into the creation of Computer Supported Collaborative Work (CSCW) systems to support negotiations and peacebuilding has fed into this paper, along with his earlier work on systems design for early warning, conflict prevention and the mitigation of communal violence using technology.

Beginning with a brief outline of what constitutes a process and the importance of mapping such an activity, the monograph will follow through an examination of 'wicked problems' and the locale foundation and then explore other frameworks that may be useful in the formulation of a comprehensive mapping architecture for a peace process. Ending with some basic recommendations and a blueprint that synthesises the key aspects of other frameworks, the monograph primarily aims to stimulate further discussion on a relatively under-developed topic within the existing academic literature on conflict mitigation.

What is a process?

A good definition of a process describes it as a series of connected steps or actions to achieve an outcome. Any process has the following characteristics:

- a starting point and an end point.
- a purpose or aim for the outcome
- rules governing the standard or quality of inputs throughout the process
- it is usually linked to other processes
- it can be simple and short, or complex and long

A peace process in this respect is no different from any other process. Conducted with a principled foundation, a peace process is a vehicle for societal transformation and the creation of new covenants that recognise the full spectrum of diversity in a conflict zone and create conditions for communal, cultural, religious, caste, ethnic and other individual and group identities to blossom and co-exist with each other. Conversely, conducted in a manner that is unprincipled and with wanton disregard for unity in diversity, a peace process, as in Sri Lanka, runs the risk of being derailed.

A peace process is not created from ether. Recognising the unique socio-political and cultural *tableau* of polity and society in Sri Lanka for instance, a peace process must endeavour to give voice to as many different sections of society as possible in an effort to garner voices in support of a plural and just peace.

Mapping then becomes an exercise which not only helps create such a process, but also acts as a weathervane of its on-going dynamics. If the real litmus test of a peace process lies in the dynamics through which a peace agreement is negotiated, the comprehensive mapping of stakeholders and issues can help proactively mitigate problems that may arise in conflict transformation.

Why map?

Alerting levers of constructive change, influencing conflict transformation initiatives and shaping processes more resilient to spoiler dynamics are some of the potential benefits that can be accrued for the benefit of all parties by mapping a peace process.

Beyond the gains for individual stakeholders in the process, mapping helps create a strategic macro, meso and micro level blueprint for peace support operations. The strategic vision that the cartography of an on-going process can give to multiple stakeholders can aid in:

- in the identification and isolation of drivers of conflict, including the inadvertent fall-out from ill-thought programming initiatives by CSOs and INGOs
- the timely identification of socio-political fault-lines which can give rise to a fractured process
- identification of positive reconciliation and peacebuilding processes from Track III to Track I
- cull an unhealthy emphasis and interest in conflict drivers and instead focus on the drivers of peace
- identification of synergies within and between various tiers and stakeholders in the peace process
- renewed emphasis on process design in the long term as opposed to piecemeal approaches
- the process of mapping itself is a meta level exercise that can bring together various stakeholders to complement Track I to III activities and also initiatives such as One Text. Mapping itself becomes a catalyst for change.
- the application of advanced technology, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) can help in literal mapping exercises, where the impact of the peace process can be visually analysed
- the creation of complementary mapping frameworks, that can be sectoral or issue based, that strengthen our understanding of the on-going peace process and its constituent actors

It is open for discussion as to how mapping architectures can feed into the top and centre heavy political architectures in Sri Lanka. While mapping, as an exercise, gathers information in a highly

decentralised manner, the analysis and storage of this information needs to be conducted in an accountable and transparent manner.

Mapping the peace process in Sri Lanka will not automatically guarantee actions on the ground devoid of partisan bias. It is also important to recognize that people will reject almost any outcome - even a wise and fair one - that they feel is a result of bad process. The process of mapping must reflect the values which the exercise seeks to instill upon the peace process itself – as such, it must be open, inclusive, participatory and accountable to the stakeholders.

The mapping of a peace process must also construct and strengthen trust relationships within and between parties to the process of conflict transformation. Mapping is a process is inextricably entwined with the other constituent actors and factors of the larger peace process. As such, meta level mapping exercises need to be deeply cognizant of the trickle down effect of their actions and the highly influential nature of their work and analyses.

Discussions on safeguarding the best interests of parties and preventing the misuse of information through spoiler dynamics needs to form a core pillar in the creation of an overarching architecture for a process mapping exercise.

Mapping as a ‘Wicked Problem’

The complexity of mapping peace processes is evocative of the issues explored in *“Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning”* by Rittel and Webber (1973), and especially the division between wicked and tame problems. As Fitzpatrick states (2003: 4) “Tame problems are those that can be solved by a sequential process going from complete unambiguous problem definition to correct solution via established methods; many traditional science and engineering problems fall into the category of tame problems”.

Rittel and Webber argue that wicked problems are very different. Arising mostly in the social realm, the authors submit that the aim of finding solutions for wicked problems “is not find the truth, but to improve some characteristics of the world where people live” (Rittel and Webber, 1973: 167). Key properties of wicked problems, as defined by Rittel and Webber, include the following (as quoted in Fitzpatrick, 2003: 4 – 5):

- There is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem. In fact, the problem is only understood progressively as solutions are developed.

- Because problem definition and solution co-evolve, and because there are no criteria for determining when the problem is adequately defined, wicked problems have no internal stopping rules.
- It is not possible to exhaustively enumerate the set of possible solutions.
- Solutions to wicked problems are never true or false but instead are qualitatively judged as better or worse. A '*satisficing*' or 'good enough' solution is the realistic goal.
- There can be no immediate, ultimate, or definitive test of a solution because the consequences can possibly extend across time in any number of ways.
- Because every solution has (possibly unknowable) consequences, rigorous experimentation of possible solutions is not possible.
- The process of solving a wicked problem is inherently non-linear. Progress is defined qualitatively in terms of how much more is understood about the problem rather than distance from the solution.
- Every instance of a wicked problem is essentially unique.
- Every wicked problem can be considered to be a symptom of another problem. The problem should be settled on as high a level as possible.
- There are a number of stakeholders who are interested in how a wicked problem is solved.
- Each could make different qualitative judgements about the nature of the problem and the value of the solution.

Peace processes are inherently wicked problems and have no easy 'resolution'. There is no ultimate goal for peace processes – peace itself is not an endpoint or destination, rather a concept that nourishes the processes of transforming violent conflict.

A holistic approach to peacebuilding requires as detailed a map as possible of the multiple tiers of conflict transformation – the dialogues, the interventions, the tensions, the linkages, the loopholes, the caveats. The possibilities of a particular peacebuilding process are only evident if a comprehensive macro, meso and micro level map of peacebuilding is drawn, and is continually revised and updated.

Looking at peace process mapping as a wicked problem enables us to create solutions that are rooted in reality, as opposed to academic models that may have little relevance to the way in which a process is conducted in real life.

The objective of process mapping is to evolve '*satisficing*' solutions - to use the term coined by Herbert Simon (1960). Satisficing is an alternative to optimization for cases where there are multiple (usually conflicting) objectives, in which one gives up the idea of obtaining the 'best' solution. In this approach one sets lower bounds for the various objectives that, if attained, will be 'good enough' and then seeks a solution that will exceed these bounds. The satisficer's philosophy is that in real-world

problems there are too many uncertainties and conflicts in values for there to be any hope of obtaining a true optimization and that it is far more sensible to set out to do 'well enough' (but better than has been done previously).

The point here is that process mapping is a science that will never be honed to a point of perfection. The frameworks that are designed by the cartographers and architects today will lead to and be replaced by more nuanced understandings of the exercise itself and the processes which are being mapped.

This approach lends itself to the locales framework, which as explained in the next section, also deals with the impossibility of creating architectures that are rooted in time, place and context that can map dynamic and fluid process.

The mapping exercise itself has to be iterative, fluid and as dynamic, reflecting the inherent nature of the peace process itself.

Locales Framework

The definition of locale as an *ongoing relationship* between people in a particular social world is of pivotal importance to conflict transformation, which places an emphasis on understanding the ongoing *process* and opposed to a final settlement or peace agreement. The locale framework allows for the "complex, dynamic and situation interactional aspects of work to be accounted for but not in isolation from where and how those interactions happen" (Fitzpatrick 2003: 91). To quote Fitzpatrick, the locale framework concerns itself with:

"The design of systems that support human activity, communication and interaction is a wicked problem. More than being an engineering problem, the design of such socio-technical systems is essentially a social realm problem where the systems are meant to fit into complex social contexts and help people in their daily lives, where there are multiple stakeholders from both the development context and the use context, where the definition of the problem and the solution co-evolve over time and where the solution can only be judged as better or worse rather than right or wrong." (2003: 4-5)

The author has in earlier work examined the viability of technology in peacebuilding in regions coming out of protracted ethno-political conflict (Hattotuwa, 2004). This earlier work was based on the Locales Framework to create basic foundations for the conceptualisation of frameworks & systems

that used CSCW / ICT to address the complexities of peacebuilding. To recapitulate briefly, the five aspects of Geraldine Fitzpatrick's formulation of the locale framework (2003) were re-formulated to fit peacebuilding in the following manner:

1. **Locale Foundations**

The socio-political underpinnings that create sites of dialogue & intercourse within a peace process. These interlinked sites, or locales, serve to provide the stakeholders in a peace process the means through which their voice is heard, and also, the means through which their action is channelled. The locales both shape the qualitative nature of the discussions contained therein, and in turn, are shaped by the timbre of the exchanges that take place within it.

2. **Civic Structure**

The broader palette upon which locales are related to - as Fitzpatrick (2003: 10) notes, these are the "social, political, organisational, material, cultural, legislative, contractual, technological and broader-sphere issues". Furthermore, in a peace process, these also include communal hagiography, personal trauma and histories, identity groupings, secessionist tendencies, fractured memories and a smorgasbord of other social ills that invariably colour the social fabric in countries suffering from protracted ethno-political conflict.

3. **Individual Views**

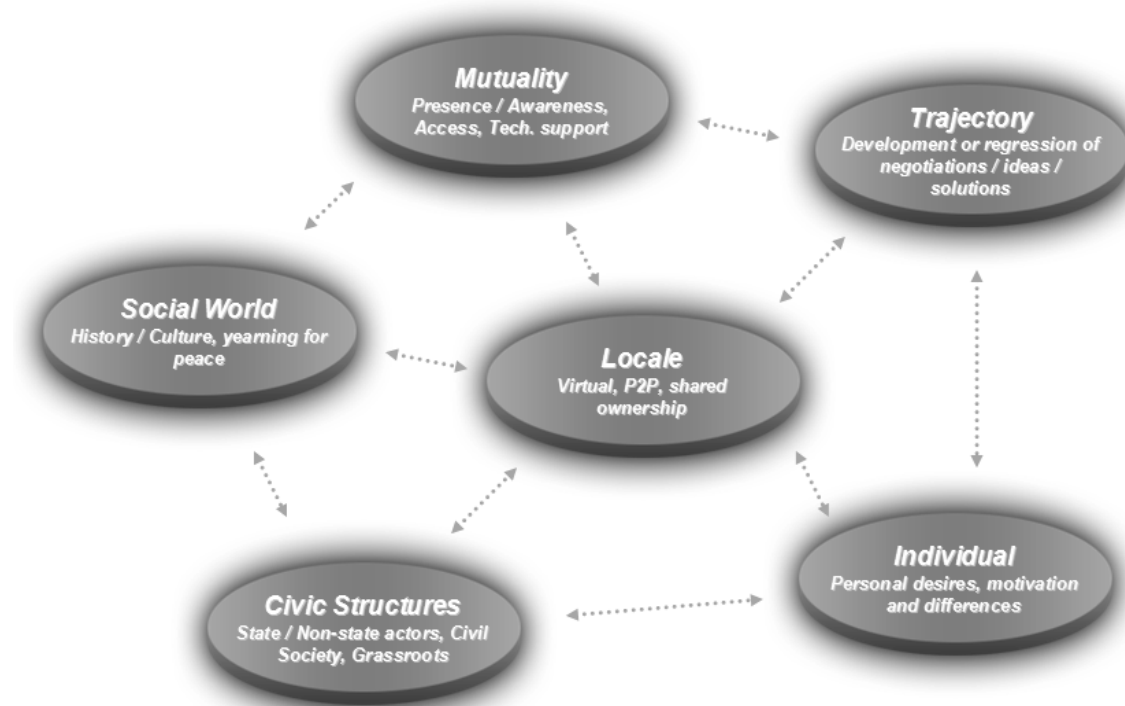
A peace process may see a particularly belligerent individual change tack in other areas, or vice versa, where an individual who is seen to be progressive in macro issues tries to stubbornly micro manage the fine print of certain key issues. Individual views take note of this fact, and identifies the varied perspectives and lenses through which individuals view the same locale, and as Fitzpatrick notes the aggregated view of multiple locales in which that individual may be part of.

4. **Interaction Trajectory**

Locales are hardly ever static in peace processes, oftentimes changing their contours daily. This fluid dynamic and temporality is captured in interaction trajectory, which tries to map the interactions within and between locales over a time.

5. **Mutuality**

The recognition and acknowledgement of a multiplicity of viewpoints that exist simultaneously in a vigorous dynamic in a particular locale. Mutuality is important in itself, but also in the effect it creates – that outcomes and processes are the result of many stakeholders working in parallel, with the objective being to engender harmonious working relationships as opposed to divisive and bitter invective.



If the diagram above is understood as a map through which events and processes can be viewed and understood within an on-going peace process, it is evident that mapping such a process requires the co-existence of multiple viewpoints and frameworks that are attentive to various issues, actors, internal / external factors and other stimuli that collectively shape a peace process¹.

The author submits the importance of recognising the symbiosis between mapping a process and creating a process that is informed by such a mapping exercise. The process and mapping exercise will exist in a mutually strengthening dynamic – the more comprehensive the mapping, the better informed the chief architects of the process will be to construct a process that is able to avoid the pitfalls of previous attempts at negotiations and peacebuilding. Of course, the analyses resulting from mapping peace processes will have to be necessarily juxtaposed against the political will necessary to under-gird all action in support of sustainable peacebuilding.

The importance of the locales framework also lies in its ability to map political will. While mapping frameworks can lead to a better academic understanding of a process, if the objective of the exercise

¹ Note that the diagram was first used by the author to explain computer supported virtual negotiations systems – hence the references technology
Sanjana Hattotuwa, InfoShare, October 2005

is to proactively shape the design and implementation of a peace process, we need to map the dynamics of how well mapping analyses will be accepted by those driving the process.

The following matrix broadly examines Sri Lanka through the locales framework². While the matrix does not aim to be an exhaustive examination of the dynamics of the peace process, it attempts to outline the contours of the socio-political complexities in the peace process in Sri Lanka.

Locale Foundation	Civic Structure	Individual Views	Interaction Trajectory	Mutuality
Track 1	State administration / parallel administrative and legal frameworks setup in areas of rebel control	State vs. Non-state frames and perspectives of conflict transformation	Contestation of viewpoints leads to amalgamation, divergence and recognition of diversity	Govt. agencies / line ministries need to rely on LTTE facilitation
Government / Non-state (LTTE) / Muslim parties (SLMC, NUA)	Donor structures set up through Govt line ministries and parallel structures set up through LTTE political offices and humanitarian organisations Bi-lateral and multi-lateral donor driven interventions	LTTE hegemony in North-East vs. unitary mindset of Sri Lanka Govt. Inability of the LTTE to address the concerns and fears of Muslims in the North-East Perceptions of partisan bias of the ceasefire monitoring body (SLMM) and Norwegian facilitation	Friction between the LTTE and Govt. leads to fear of the resumption of conflict in all three tiers Glimmers of hope in joint mechanism architectures for tsunami aid delivery	LTTE / non-state actors need Ceasefire Agreement to continue to operate in Govt. held areas Tsunami devastation too vast for the LTTE to address alone Govt. cannot address the devastation without the support and cooperation of the LTTE
	[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]
Track 2	LTTE relief and rehabilitation NGO (TRO)	CBOs dealing with human rights, child rights, reconciliation	No sustainable peace without collaboration	Sinhala / Tamil / Muslim communities need to work together for peace
CSOs / NGOs / CBOs incl. LTTE's TRO (Humanitarian Front)	Organisations with links to grassroots peacebuilding networks operating in the vernacular Donor funded CBOs / NGOs / CSOs Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms – village / community level (operating in the <i>swabasha</i>)	Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms Religious leaders and their impact on community dispute resolution Vice-Chancellors of the Universities in the region, who influence the activism of students	Reconciliation orgs – no peace without forgiveness No cohesive peace possible without information sharing Conflict prevention is predicated on sharing information between / within communities	The LTTE and Govt. need each other Fears of all communities needs to be addressed holistically At the basic minimum, the agonistic relationships necessary to maintain harmonious social relations
	[E]	[F]	[G]	[H]
Track 3	Self funded organisations, operating in the vernacular (Sinhala or Tamil) doing work with communities on the ground	Fears of Track 1 processes by the communities on the ground	Communities broadly fear the same things – security, food, shelter, freedom from fear - irrespective of geographical location and ethnicity	Overlapping fears and concerns feed off stereotypes of the 'Other'.
Grassroots organisations – peace committees, Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms, peace activists	Work of solitary peace activists and community leaders	Inability to articulate fears to those who make decisions that affect their lives Fears of marginalisation in a peace agreement		Exposure to the humanity of all and shared concerns opens closed minds.
	[I]	[J]	[K]	[L]

² This framework was drawn by the author to examine the dynamics in the NE of Sri Lanka in an earlier paper. Sanjana Hattotuwa, InfoShare, October 2005

The complexity as demonstrated in the above table is further compounded by the presence of two languages (Sinhala & Tamil), wholly different from each other and the associated politics of language usage, the existence of state and non-state actors proscribed in some countries as terrorists (the LTTE) and questions about the cost (financial & human) of collaboration between these various entities, which some argue may outweigh its benefits. To this end, the locales framework again provides a map through which local / grassroots levels engagements with key actors in the region can in turn influence higher level processes and actors to collaborate on shared ideals for sustainable peace.

This monograph submits that mapping the complex interactions within and between these tiers is *essential* for the sustainability of the peace process. It is impossible to grasp the possibilities for peacebuilding using simplistic categories of conflict transformation that expunge the rich textures of interactivity and symbiotic relationships that exist within and between various communities, stakeholders, tiers and processes. For instance, using the above table, perceptions of communities that reside in [L] directly influence [A], but are informed by processes in [F] and [G]. Likewise, recognising and acknowledging that mutually beneficial collaboration is required to create sustainable peace in [D] need to take into account the actions of [E] and the concerns and fears in [H]. It is imperative that actors in [A] build foundations for negotiations on the rich corpus of shared interests that reside in [K], address the concerns stemming from [J], strengthen the work in [I] and work towards [D] by strengthening activities in Track 2. While much of the problems in the Sri Lankan peace process stem from the fact that actors and processes in [A] to [D] continue to isolate voices from [I] to [L] and ignore constructive criticism from [E] to [H]. This problem is further compounded by the lack of information sharing within these various sections.

In sum, the interactions within and between the Locale Foundation, Civic Structure, Individual Views, Interaction Trajectory and Mutuality can form the basis for a mapping architecture that measures and analyses these interaction in order to paint a comprehensive process

Peacebuilding frameworks that are attendant to the need for such rich cross-fertilisation of knowledge, information and experience are incredibly difficult to design, implement and sustain in the real world. Importantly, the locale framework recognises the different perspectives of each entity involved in a specific locale, because of their singular relationship with it on account of their historical associations and future aspirations. In such wicked problems, it is virtually impossible to attain any degree of objectivity in the search for a perfect solution that maps all viewpoints.

Furthermore, any examination of complex terrains of peacebuilding in a given locale is also coloured by one's own perspective. Thus, the research and design of mapping architectures for peace processes must address dynamics that are brought to the process by other parties. Put another way,

mapping systems need to be sufficiently robust to grapple with conflicting viewpoints of the same locale – an example of a very bad mapping framework for instance could be one that doesn't allow participants the freedom to explore ideas with stakeholders outside the framework, thereby stifling attempts to use process mapping as a tool that supports inter party dialogue and trust building.

Frameworks for mapping a process

The difficulty of imagining a single framework for process mapping that can capture the texture of interactions within and between various actors in a peace process strongly suggests the need for multiple and complementary frameworks that look at a process through a combination of viewpoints based on actors, issues, geographical areas, events, perceptions, semantic analysis, media monitoring etc. In doing so, it might be possible to envision comprehensive quantitative and qualitative frameworks that can, together and in a holistic manner, feed into analyses that proactively guide peace process design.

Based on a framework for mapping violent conflict that is explored in *Peace Research for the 21st Century* published by the Institute for Research on Ethnicity and Conflict Resolution (IRECOR)³ the following macro framework demonstrates a possible point of departure for some of the frameworks envisioned above:

- (1) peace potential: on regional, local & international levels;
- (2) conflict potential: on regional, local & international levels;
- (3) different actors: their motivation, interest; open and hidden agendas;
- (4) history: genesis / origins of destructive group interaction;
- (5) causes and driving forces of the conflict: root causes; (im)mediate causes;
- (6) analysis of antagonism and incompatibilities
- (7) dynamics of peace: escalators/de-escalators; actors / factors / Track 1 to Track 3 potential
- (8) essentials of the ideology of the warring parties
- (9) aims / objectives of different actors: political parties; nationalists; civic and civil society movements; NGOs;
- (10) leaders and masses: representation; the relationship between leadership and their political constituencies; the roles of leaders; examining peace related content in public speeches and media releases

³ <http://transcend.org/Peace%20Research%20for%20the%2021%20Century.doc>
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- (11) resources and economic factors: land and territory, financial resources, human resources, international networks, diasporas;
- (12) Inside / Outside forces: currents for peace within parties, between parties, within Sri Lanka and those which are supported by the international community and diaspora (f)actors
- (13) peaceful conflict settlement: conditions, form, criteria;

Studies such as the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAPS) survey by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA)⁴ can support the exploration of some of these issues, especially using the full dataset of the survey samples, of which only a fraction is published in the report available online. Furthermore, studies that have analysed the changing perceptions of peace, such as the Peace Confidence Index (PCI)⁵ can also support such frameworks, by providing indicators for measuring the health of a peace process.

For instance, the KAP survey constructs a peace typology for Sri Lanka that explores the support for peace in the following constituencies:

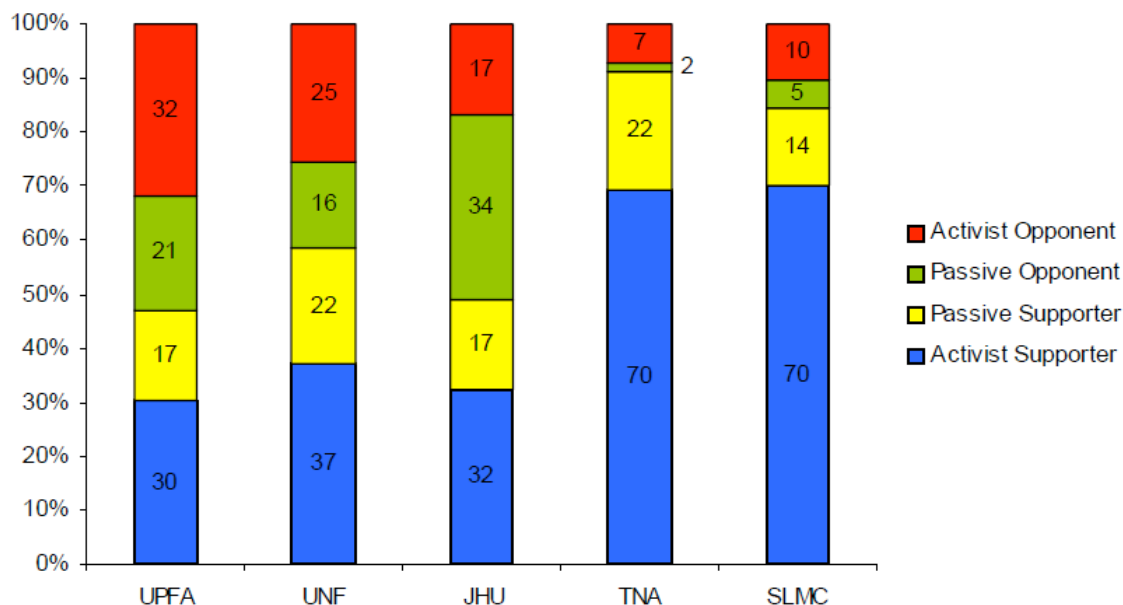
1. Activist Opponent
2. Passive Opponent
3. Activist Supporter
4. Passive Supporter

The following diagram from the 2004 KAP Survey (2004: 25) shows the possibilities of a mapping framework that is based on the exploration of peace support architectures in each political party and their respective constituencies. The typology, which is explained in detail in the report, is a qualitative map of the peace constituencies in Sri Lanka based on age, gender, political affiliation, geographical location, ethnic and religious identity etc.

⁴ http://www.cpalanka.org/research_papers/KAPS_2004_Final_Report.pdf

⁵ http://www.cpalanka.org/research_papers/PCI_19_toplevel_results.pdf

Figure III-5: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Political Party



Based on the four typologies constructed in the KAP survey, it would be possible to construct maps of the divergent and convergent issues along with cross cutting issues of importance to all constituencies. The ripple effects of the introduction of various issues within and between each of these typologies can then be mapped to create models of socio-political interactions that can feed into future scenario exercises. Sophisticated statistical models can also be developed in support of such typologies, so that mapping inter and intra party interactions can lead to generic models of process design that can be tweaked to best fit the needs of a particular peace process.

The Peace Audit framework of the South Asia Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR) is also useful in the exploration of frameworks related to peace process mapping. It is possible to adopt the SAFHR framework to fit the dynamics of the Sri Lanka peace process and expand on the Sri Lanka Peace Audit conducted in 2003⁶:

- i. The relative ineffectiveness of the early warning systems and methods, which call for their radical overhaul, because these methods underestimate the stake of several actors in conflicts and the stake of several other actors in peace;
- ii. The critical role of ceasefire in peace process; the determinants of a ceasefire agreement, as well as the open-ended nature of a ceasefire agreement; conditionalities;
- iii. Disarming of non-state armed opposition and its relation with the agenda of demilitarisation;

⁶ http://www.safhr.org/peace_audits.htm

- iv. The issue of land in peace settlement; autonomy and autonomous arrangements set up as a result of peace accord;
- v. The importance of the human rights and the humanitarian tasks, their links, and determining the stage in which they appear as crucial elements in process; ways in which these two tasks meet, their specifics and common points;
- vi. The open-ended character of a peace accord, its instrumental nature, and the significance of this in framing public policy on peace; impact on what may be called the "policy-fund";
- vii. Listing of basic human rights and humanitarian issues;
- viii. Peace process and the patriarchal nature of military power; women's involvement in peace process, the emergence of women as a critical peace constituency, its implications;
- ix. Peace dialogues at several level; plurality of the peace question and the peace process;
- x. What do exactly we mean by public voice, public media, and public opinion in peace process – the constructed nature of this "public", the manipulability of a plastic medium in the interest of continuing conflict, militarism, and war;
- xi. Nature of the availability of legal and constitutional remedies to an acute conflict, their inadequacies, the need for flexibility in juridical thinking, plural dialogues, and the need for legal pluralism; conflict and the constitutional deficit;
- xii. Nature of participation in the audit exercise; the structuring of the agenda of audit, the nature of confidential "transparency"; method of writing the report, victims' voices, the rights-language, making the audit exercise a middle-ground for meeting of the minds engaged in peace-building; and taking the report to the field;
- xiii. Making concrete studies on the "third dimension" of a conflict/peace scenario, which will involve examinations of various options of indigenous conciliators / facilitators / outside mediators / interventions / arbitration, etc and their specific mandates;
- xiv. Linking the participants of the audit with other human rights and peace activities, they will be come the natural leaders, as they will be endowed with insights in to the extreme cases of abuse of human rights, situations of vulnerability, victims turning into actors, and acute conflict-ridden societies which have to muster their inner depths in defense of justice and dialogic peace;
- xv. Finally, taking peace audit as an act of democratising peace by making reconciliation "the middle ground", examining the dynamics of reconciliation, and by practising through the audit exercise a politics that is known as the art of the possible; the additional issue is therefore - how to restore to politics of peace the virtues of common sense.

However, as SAFHR itself notes, "while most of these were clearly established as the required goals, nature, methods, and objects of a public inquiry into peace process, SAFHR will have to do more in order to develop the findings into a general theory and programme of a democratic peace building

exercise, make it more interventionist as a political technique, and link peace audit with other peace building activities”⁷.

It is these linkages that the mapping exercise in Sri Lanka is predicated upon. Without the necessary connections to other peace support activities, process mapping will be of little or no use to those involved in grassroots or civil society activism.

Process mapping needs to holistically link the various theories, typologies, methodologies, frameworks, systems and frames. Combining the above, a mapping framework should be founded upon the following, at the very least:

1. Media monitoring – print, electronic, web & internet, including political analysis and commentary, emphasis on vernacular media as well as English, regional and international press reports, non-state media
2. Aggregation of monthly situation and analysis reports from Government and CSOs – Human Security, EWS, Tsunami aid delivery, donor reports, social surveys, market research etc
3. Economic analysis – stock market indices, investment, FDI, Central Bank indicators, year-on-year growth, donor aid and grants etc
4. Analysis of international (regional and trans-national) actors – diaspora movements and statements, India’s role, role of Norway and Co-Chairs, donor statements, diplomatic initiatives, travel advisories and bans against the State or non-state actors etc

Ways forward

Process mapping, as noted at the beginning of this paper, is a relatively novel idea. The spirit of the exercise isn’t captured in existing CR literature and is only hinted at in many existing conflict and peace analysis models.

Peace process mapping clearly needs to go beyond PCIA and EWS. PCIA and EWS afford little in the form a framework that can help map and understand the dynamics of an on-going peace process. With an emphasis on project design and implementation with regards to PCIA and an emphasis on quantitative and qualitative indicators of conflict with regards to EWS, these two frameworks do not give the range of tools needed to capture the tenets of a peace process. Though comprehensive EWS can feed into PCIA and in turn lead to conflict sensitive project implementation which in turn mitigates violent conflict and creates necessary foundations for peace, mapping a process requires data capture and analysis tools and frameworks different to that of mapping conflict *per se*.

⁷ http://www.safhr.org/peace_audits.htm
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A range of different issues need to be carefully charted in order to ascertain the timbre of the process at any given moment. The author submits a process of mapping needs to involve, *inter alia*, the following:

- (1) A combination of quantitative and qualitative data, including public releases of process mapping systems already in operation
- (2) Mapping of existing output from actors in the peace process (from Track 1 to content generation by civil society and the grassroots)
- (3) Analysis of communications and media strategies and statements by key actors in the peace process (from semantic analysis to a statistical model that gives weightage to statements based on seniority, geographical location, constituency, locale, local, regional or international actors and others)
- (4) Gender and role of women in the peace process
- (5) Data from Early Warning Systems already in operation (in the North-East and through data from peace committees etc)
- (6) Data from social peace audits and surveys (PCI, KAP, models from peace audits conducted by SAFHR in South Asia)
- (7) Technical expertise in the design of databases and information network support (including systems design for peacebuilding) to support the mapping activities, including the provision of advanced Geographical Information Systems (GIS) that can plot the geo-political vectors of an ongoing process

There is also a necessity for a close relationship between theorists and practitioners. Theorists need to be challenged by practitioners about which of their theories best explains violent situations and which best helps them design processes for dealing with them. Practitioners, interested in helping parties devise durable solutions to their problems also need to be informed about which practices work and which do not and what is likely to reinforce or undermine agreements.

Peace process mapping is not necessarily linked to the political fortunes of Track 1 actors. While the process may stagnate because of the intransigence of various key actors, mapping process dynamics must continue unabated. It is expected that the continuous development of mapping the process may influence to some degree the renewal of Track 1 negotiations based on options generated by the mapping process itself.

This obviously feeds into the generation of future scenarios and future scenario models. The development of "outside-in" future scenario models can be supported by the comprehensive mapping of peace processes. Such future scenario models can feed into multi-track dialogues and

peace support activities and should be freely distributed in Sri Lanka to be appropriated by as many stakeholders as possible who support desirable futures which include just and sustainable peace.

There are several issues that arise with regard to the perception of the mapping exercise in polity, civil society and the general public in Sri Lanka.

- Any mapping exercise is about the design of tools and frameworks that support peacebuilding, the search for determinants of trust to bring peoples together and the never ending search for creative ways to prevent and mitigate violent conflict.
- Initiatives that map a peace process must themselves encourage participation and ownership in the process. A mapping framework that is driven by a few can be perceived as a partisan effort. CSOs, especially national level NGOs, need to be included in mapping efforts and more importantly encouraged to develop a shared ownership of the mapping exercise. Without an emphasis on the development of a shared ownership, it is unlikely the mapping exercise will be able to fully capture the complex textures of NGO and civil society activism and its impact on the peace process.
- The mapping process must be driven by stakeholders who are accountable to people. If ownership of any a peace process rests upon its broad acceptance by society, an exercise that maps and proactively informs the design and implementation of such a process needs to be as transparent and accountable as possible to outside actors. While a middle path will have to be struck between the need for proprietary ownership of data sources and certain analyses, the emphasis should always be on a principled process wherein financial and human resources are expended in a manner that is beneficial to the larger process and does not use it as a means of self-aggrandisement or personal gain.
- The mapping process needs to ensure that the accurate perception of the mapping exercise is maintained through the lifetime of the project. Changing political and ground dynamics affect the perception of various actors and initiatives in an on-going peace process and it is vital that the process mapping exercise is not seen as an appendage of a donor or party for partisan gain.
- The mapping process itself should grow in a modular fashion. Trying to devise the a sophisticated mapping framework may be conceptually desirable, but run into problems in its implementation on account of human resource shortfalls and resource constraints. As noted earlier in this monograph, it is important to begin with a sustainable set of core mapping frameworks and then develop them into a larger, more comprehensive activity that

grows in tandem with the development of resources at organisations who are part of the process.

Final thoughts

Attempting to draw upon a variety of existing resources to envision a new practice, this monograph calls for a cartography of peacebuilding that builds on the strengths of existing practice and theory to create comprehensive mapping frameworks that can complement long term conflict transformation.

The lacuna in existing literature on process mapping is indicative of the need to explore this topic further in order to influence peace process praxis and design.

Mapping itself needs to be looked at carefully. The system employed, the issues, data nodes, mapping platforms and technological foundations need to be carefully assessed in order to create frameworks that are both resilient to the vicissitudes of a peace process and flexible enough to encourage on-the-fly changes to reflect changing circumstances on the ground.

All considered, the importance of creating frameworks that help us understand the multi-faceted dimensions of a peace process may also help us in regaining the fuel that underpins any process of conflict transformation.

Hope.

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