ENGAGING LEADERS FOR STATEBUILDING:
THE CASE OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Michael Lund and Howard Wolpe
The Project on Leadership and Building State Capacity was established at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2005, by then Director Howard Wolpe and Consulting Director Steve McDonald. The Leadership Project seeks to promote holistic and sustainable approaches to international conflict resolution, prevention, and post-conflict recovery. The Leadership Project’s founding methodology is based on the importance of inclusivity, interest-based negotiation training, and demonstration of interdependence to help rebuild fractured government systems and create greater collaborative capacity in post-conflict countries. Under the leadership of Steve McDonald, key Leadership Project programming consists of in-country training interventions for leaders in societies emerging from violent conflict, designed to rebuild trust and foster better communication and negotiation skills. Additionally, the Leadership Project convenes Washington-based public events and country-consultations on specific conflict-prone or affected states which bring together experts, practitioners, and policymakers to provide clarity on complex issues and encourage informed decision making on some of the most persistent policy challenges. Finally, the Project has just launched a major research effort on “Southern Voices in the Northern Policy Debate: Including the Global South,” funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York, that will engage Africa-based research and policy institutions in providing a southern perspective for the American policy makers on the mutual challenges faced by North and South. The Project on Leadership and Building State Capacity works in close collaboration with the Woodrow Wilson Center’s Africa Program, also under McDonald’s direction.

This report was produced by Consulting Project Manager Michael Lund, with the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Howard Wolpe
Ambassador Robert Oakley

FOCUS

Since the early 1990s, major governments and international bodies have become increasingly involved in the humanitarian and other problems of countries affected by conflicts and of weak or failed states. After the events of September 11, 2001, this activity greatly intensified with the realization that states that are weak or experiencing conflict can export serious threats such as terrorism and drug trafficking to other parts of the world. The public media, especially in the United States, have focused largely on military aspects of the struggles to rebuild states in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, for many years in numerous other countries affected by violence and weak institutions, legions of international professionals have been carrying out a wide range of programs that seek to achieve security, peace, and development.

Since January 2006, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars’ (WWICS) Project on Leadership and Building State Capacity and Africa Programs have carried out an initiative with a distinctive approach to peace-building in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as it has sought to emerge from two major wars. The central purpose of this initiative has been to provide training in conflict management skills to Congolese leaders in order to strengthen their ability to work together in consolidating the peace envisioned by the Sun City agreement that was reached between the Congo government and rebel forces in April 2002. The initiative, known as the Initiative for a Cohesive Leadership in the DRC, and by the French acronym ILCCE, uses a training methodology similar in some respects to certain projects that have been carried out in other conflict-affected countries and are generally described as conflict transformation. The commonality lies in the elicitive form of engagement and experiential learning process that encourages leaders to interact and engage in dialogue in order to mutually examine and overcome the divisions in their societies.
However, the ILCCE project in the DRC (hereafter “the Initiative”), like a similar project implemented earlier through the WWICS in Burundi, has been carried out on a considerably greater scale compared to other such projects. More than forty workshops have been conducted over several years and at several levels of society. Hundreds of leaders have experienced its methods for engagement. Consequently, there is reason to believe that this greater scope and intensity has represented a “second generation” of initiatives that build conflict transformation skills among a country’s leaders.

The present study describes in detail the ILCCE’s approach and activities and identifies and weighs the chief results it has achieved and the factors that led to these results. The overall aim is to determine the comparative advantage this type of third-party engagement may have in transcending conflicts and meeting the challenges of post-conflict countries. What distinct value does this method bring that other types of engagement may not possess? What conditions are conducive to its being most effective? Based on this analysis, the study draws implications for the further application of the ILCCE approach in the DRC and in other post-conflict contexts. How can it complement other types of international and local activities in post-conflict countries and be complemented by them? The study is part of a research project supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, whose purpose is to draw lessons about such collaborative approaches and their full potential within the diverse and growing field of peacebuilding.

THE INTERNATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

While focusing on the Initiative’s DRC experience in fostering collaboration among national leaders, this study also seeks to deepen understanding of three ideas that have emerged as the international community has endeavored in post-conflict countries to improve its effectiveness in achieving peace and development: conflict-sensitive development, local ownership, and integrated peacebuilding strategies. Because key elements of the ILCCE approach are seen as enhancing these ideas in the policy milieu, the study affords an opportunity to explore within its parameters the potential of these ideas.

One international perspective with which the ILCCE approach resonates has to do with the need to adapt development programming to the multiple sources of intra-state conflict. International agencies have come to recognize that in order to achieve a sustainable peace in post-conflict settings, a variety of development programs are required that need to be adapted to the specific contexts of these countries. In the early post–Cold War years, the dominant in-
International perspective on post-conflict countries saw them as mainly in need of peacekeeping forces to ensure the cessation of armed hostilities. Normal development could then be applied. However, as the number of peacekeeping missions that have been required has grown tremendously, and yet conflicts have often broken out again in some of the same countries, it has become accepted that if a post-conflict country is to move toward durable peace, a wider range of policy instruments are needed than simply a military presence to enforce a ceasefire.

In one sense, this means that much more is required. International practice has shifted from a focus solely on keeping the peace to a broad array of economic, social, and political programs that treat the deeper sources of conflict, as well as those on the surface. A broad consensus has been reached that post-conflict require attention to a number of interacting socio-economic, political, and governance deficits. In failed states as well, the ascendant view is that an array of security and development policies are needed to deal with threats like terrorism and organized crime that can find their breeding grounds in such ungoverned areas. Indeed, current policy papers now seek to commit international actors to no less a goal in these settings than building legitimate and effective states, to the extent they are lacking.

Yet the more complex understanding of what is required in conflict-affected and weak state settings has also concluded that, in a certain sense, less is required. The challenge is not simply to add more programs and resources in their usual forms, but to design and implement programs that are tailored to these unstable environments. Concerns regarding the inappropriateness in conflict environments of the standard international programs first arose in the early 1990s when humanitarian relief such as food aid and refugee camps were sometimes used by rebel or government forces to serve their own military and political aims, thus prolonging the conflicts. With the outbreak of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, despite that country’s progress in economic reforms, the development community was shocked into the realization that conventional development objectives such as poverty alleviation are not sufficient for dealing with the particular political dynamics that often characterize many developing countries. Indeed, it is now recognized that standard development and economic reform policies often can actually worsen the conditions for conflict and thus can be harmful. In the ensuing years, awareness has spread that other international programs as well, such as promoting democratic elections, can be ineffective or even destabilizing, at least in the short run.

As a result of this awareness, attention is now being given to how the whole gamut of international programs—as diverse as programs for the environment,
economic value chains, and media—must be deliberately designed for these contexts so at least, they do no harm, and ideally, they can do some good in actively reducing, ending, and even preventing conflicts. Increasingly, relief and development are expected to work in or around conflict, even though conflict imposes constraints on those efforts. Programs also should intentionally work on conflict, as the problem to be targeted and hopefully alleviated. Key criteria for their design must include, for example, how the allocation of program benefits affect the existing distributions of material advantages among the major ethnic groups that may be competing in a society for prerogatives and power. To help fashion such programs, special conflict units have been set up within bilateral and multilateral development organizations that seek to integrate, or mainstream, anti-conflict objectives and impact criteria into the whole spectrum of sectoral programs that operate in developing countries. Numerous analytical frameworks have been devised for doing assessment, program design and planning, and program evaluation through a conflict lens or from the standpoint of a fragile states framework.

This impetus to retro-fit the existing array of development and other international policies so they are conflict sensitive has had limited success so far. Economic aid, trade, democracy-building, and other programs are still generally shaped by their respective separate agendas. Nevertheless, improving international efforts in conflict-affected countries is no longer seen as simply a matter of increasing the volume and variety of assistance to the affected societies.

The ILCCE approach is consistent in a particular way with the recent effort to contextualize international policies to the conditions in post-conflict and failed states. The Initiative does not aim to directly reduce all the various short-term and long-term drivers of conflicts, such as lack of economic opportunities, disparities of income between regions and groups, lack of strong institutions, and so on, that are part of the typical profile of intra-state conflicts and are increasingly being addressed by diverse programs under the emergent international policy orthodoxy. Instead, the ILCCE approach reflects conflict sensitivity through the attention it devotes to a dimension that cuts across those various sources and programs but is often neglected in post-conflict programming. This dimension has to do with the actual interactive processes through which the leaders in these countries are expected to address the problems in their countries. As against the particular goals and content of development programs, this approach addresses the inter-personal and inter-group relationships and processes that determine whether and how post-conflict policy agendas are carried out. Thus, its focus on sensitivity lies with the existing outlooks and motivations of the actual human beings who are the putative agents of change in these societies.
In particular, the Initiative seeks to call international attention to the typical lack of internal cohesion among a given country’s leaders as they approach domestic politics and administration. With regard to this gap, it sees the need to employ deliberate, hands-on methods and procedures to overcome the social and political divisions of a host nation’s people and institutions and build their collaborative capacities. Accordingly, it involves the application of training techniques that aim to foster more productive interactions and relationships among the leading domestic actors who are expected to take the lead in post-conflict peace processes. The project believes that by engaging such leading players and cultivating more constructive attitudes and smoother relationships among them, it can empower them to better meet their various state-building challenges.

It is true that development programs occasionally do include training in conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive program evaluation for the local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who implement some of the international development and peacebuilding programs. But rarely do these training sessions include the most influential political leaders at the national or local levels in the societies. Indeed, many of the NGO programs in peacebuilding are perceived by such leaders as threatening to their interests. For its part, however, the ILCCE seeks to “give leaders a chance.” It contends that the improvement of leaders’ skills for conflict resolution, mutual trust, and collaboration are prerequisites to real progress in mitigating any of the wider basic post-conflict problems. “Absent collaborative capacity, all the technical skills in the world will contribute little to the building of a durable peace and democracy.” Whether such problems are ultimately resolved depends on the dispositions and relationships of the political leaders themselves who have the prime responsibility for facing them.

The second prominent international theme that resonates with the ILCCE approach is the common refrain in current policy rhetoric that local buy-in or ownership of peace processes must be engendered in order to ensure sustainability of peace and development. Although this aspiration of all major governments is repeated as a mantra, it is seldom actually carried out in a meaningful way. Reinforcing this idea is also the more recent increasingly influential notion of “responsible sovereignty.” This posits that host nations themselves should undertake the tasks of peace and development in ways that are accountable to their people’s welfare. The idea was further developed when the United Nations Summit of Leaders in 2005 adopted the norm of “Responsibility to Protect.” This principle affirms that all nations are obligated to act as the primary protector of their own peoples from threats to their security, and that the
The international community has the responsibility to act when these governments cannot fulfill this function.

The ILCCE approach intersects with this motif through its conviction that the key to sustainable peace lies with motivating a nation’s own leaders to work together to set their own course. More conventional approaches to assistance bestow material goods or technical assistance whose goals and means tend to be driven by mandates set outside the country, and thus tend to reflect Western goals and institutions. Unhelpfully in these fractured societies, moreover, they often put a premium on political competition rather than cohesion. This “outside-in” approach typically leads to a stove-piped menu of often scattered programs within which the country’s leaders are expected to operate.

Instead, the ILCCE takes an “inside-out” approach that seeks to evoke these leaders’ own sense of responsibility and desires for their country, and demonstrates how their interests can be achieved through more collaborative ways of dealing with each other. Rather than imposing an external agenda of pre-selected sectoral needs and remedies (within which some deference to local ownership may be shown), the Initiative’s non-directive and elicitive methods of engagement and its experiential learning techniques engage these leaders to set their own agendas and enable them to begin to pursue them. Because the Initiative regards it as crucial that international efforts tap into the internal outlooks or mindsets within a country in order to encourage a transformation in leaders’ attitudes and behavior, it also echoes another similar theme emerging in recent international discourse that stresses the importance of influencing “hearts and minds” if peace and development are to take root in such societies.

Finally, current international discourse is also focusing on how to involve the “3 Ds” (development, defense, and diplomacy) in more integrated, holistic, or “whole of government” strategies that pull together all the relevant policy sectors and tools of international actors. There is growing international recognition that external actors need to better coordinate their multiple programs in a given country if effective overall state-building is to be possible. A “whole of community” approach is also mentioned, so as to include NGOs and civil society. Paralleling these themes have been calls for greater harmonization and cooperation among all the donors that are active in a given country, and by extension, among the other activities in a country of their respective governments. It is argued that ideally such multi-actor coordination or at least complementarity should be guided by joint assessments of the problems facing the particular country, so that outside efforts can be selected and melded to add up to the most cost-effective results possible.
The Wilson Center initiative believes it has something to offer this perspective as well. As an offshoot of the field activities in the DRC, the Wilson Center has begun to explore modest ways to apply the process approach to engender closer collaboration among the principal international actors that are operating in the DRC so as to encourage a more grounded, coherent, and effective overall country and regional strategy. This has been started through convening informal, inter-agency “country consultations” in Washington, as well as meetings in Kinshasa among donors and ambassadors. The aim is to probe the extent that joint analysis and information sharing can uncover ways that international programs can find and fill gaps and create positive linkages between development, diplomacy, and security policies in the DRC.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The three themes discussed above—internal leadership cohesion, local ownership, and integration of strategy—are illustrated and assessed in the following sections. Section II first reviews the DRC country situation and the legacy of conflicts that constitute the problematic context the ILCCE is addressing and in which it operates. Section III elaborates on the distinctive theory of change the Initiative brings to this setting, the aims and content of the workshops it has carried out thus far, and the specific interactive techniques they use. Section IV assesses the kinds of impacts this mode of engagement has achieved, based on available evidence. It also identifies key factors that help explain its leverage, as well as its apparent limitations.

The conclusion sums up the basic contribution of the Initiative within the overall range of policies being used to advance the DRC peace and state-building process. This section then suggests certain ways to build upon the achievements so far through modifications that might maximize the full potential and comparative advantage of this particular approach to state-building. In that discussion, it briefly discusses the international consultations that the Wilson Center programs have inaugurated and their initial results, and it elaborates on the ways that international actors could make fuller use of the Initiative’s methodology to promote and implement overall country-specific state-building strategies that are generated by DRC actors themselves.

The analysis in this study is based primarily on interviews conducted during two trips to the DRC in November 2007 and December 2008 to speak with participants and to observe a typical project workshop. The analysis is also informed by background reading of program materials and political analyses on the DRC, as well as the lead author’s experience in doing conflict assessments.
and program evaluations of development and peacebuilding programs in other conflict-affected countries in the Balkans, Caucasus, Central and East Asia, Latin America, and sub-Saharan Africa. Resource and time constraints made it infeasible to do a scientific sampling of workshop participants’ views, collect baseline data, or organize control groups, so the findings need to be viewed as grounded hypotheses that bear further testing. Though not intended as a comprehensive evaluation, this study hopefully can contribute to an overall understanding of ingredients needed for effective peacebuilding.
THE CHALLENGES OF POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Any consideration of the challenges of peace and development in the DRC has to take into account the sheer scale of the problem arising from the country’s physical size and ethnography. With a territory of 2,345,400 square kilometers, the DRC is the third largest country by area in Africa. It sits at the center of the continent, bordering Angola on the southwest; Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda on the east; the Republic of Congo on the northeast; the Central Africa Republic and Sudan on the North, and Zambia on the South. Surrounded by nine neighboring countries along a boundary of 10,730 kilometers, the DRC has long been affected by transnational ethnic, economic, and security issues. Internally, its vast areas of dense forest and mountains have made transportation and communication difficult, thus giving to its many rivers flowing to the east a major role in knitting the country together.

In 2008, the DRC had an estimated population of 66,514,500. Most of these people live in the large cities and relatively accessible areas such as the city of Kinshasa, along the Congo River and other main rivers, and in the southern and eastern border regions. The country’s population is highly heterogeneous.
The main ethnic groups are the Kongo, Luba, Mongo, and Mangbetu-Azande, although there are an estimated total of 242 local languages spoken in the DRC. This linguistic variety is bridged, however, by widespread use of the official language French and regional languages such as Kongo, Tshiluba, Swahili, and Lingala.

Most of the DRC’s population is very poor. The GDP per capita is estimated at US$300 in the DRC, giving it the rank of 174th among the countries of the world. Significant income disparities exist between the national capital and the provinces. These conditions cannot be explained by any ill fortune due to nature, however, for the DRC is endowed with a bounty of natural resources that hold the potential for vast wealth, such as copper, industrial diamonds, petroleum, gold, and timber, in addition to hydropower. Although many of these resources have yet to be fully explored, the country’s history, politics, and conflicts have been vitally affected by competition over them. Disputes and violence over the exploitation of the resources have dramatically reduced national output and government revenue, along with increasing external debt. The economy of the DRC has declined drastically since the mid 1980s and was further affected by its two recent major wars.

RECENT HISTORY AND CONFLICTS

The Congo emerged independent, but marked by a brutal colonial legacy, after winning its independence from the Belgian colonial administration in 1960. Since that time, the political history of the independent Congo, the Zaire, and later DRC, has continued to be defined by recurring periods of war and political instability.

Following independence, the country experienced a great deal of violence as rival national and regional leaders vied for power. After Colonel Joseph Désire Mobutu ousted President Kasabvubu in 1965 and declared himself president, he remained in power for 32 years by accumulating personal wealth and unchallengeable power through corruption, mineral wealth exploitation, brutal subjugation of opposition, and cozying up to Western supporters during the Cold War era. The US, along with certain European powers, gave massive support to the country, through its president, in exchange for his staunch opposition to communism. Most of that support went into Mobutu’s personal accounts and fueled his ability to manipulate, buy off and eliminate pockets of dissent. In 1997, his tenure ended when he was overthrown by a rebellion, led by Laurent Kabila, supported widely by Congolese opposition leaders and backed by the neighboring states of Rwanda and Uganda in the
aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the massive refugee flows into the Eastern Congo.

Kabila renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but in August 1998, after a rift with his allies, particularly Paul Kagame, who he suspected of trying to overthrow him, his regime was, in turn, faced by its own insurrection, this time of Congolese Tutsi rebels organized, armed and supported by Rwanda and Uganda. This “World War” of Africa, as some observers termed it at time, included troops from seven nations with Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe supporting Kabila’s regime, and Rwanda and Uganda supporting the rebel forces. A cease-fire was signed in 1999 in Lusaka between the DRC, the various armed rebel groups, and the major national protagonists. The accord called for a ceasefire, the deployment of UN peacekeepers, the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the launching of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue to form a transitional government. Kabila drew increasing international criticism for hindering progress toward its implementation, including blocking the deployment of UN troops and suppressing internal political activity. He was assassinated in January 2001, and his son Joseph took power. Within on-going fighting and violence against civilians, Joseph Kabila relaunched the peace process and was successful in negotiating the withdrawal of Rwandan forces occupying eastern Congo, culminating in the Sun City Peace Agreement in December 2002 which provided for a broad-based transitional government and a timetable for democratic elections. UN peacekeepers, known by their French acronym as MONUC, finally arrived in April 2001. The MONUC presence has since grown to become the largest UN peacekeeping effort in the world. Even so, the conflict was reignited in January 2002 by ethnic clashes in the northeast, and both Uganda and Rwanda then halted their withdrawal and sent in more troops. Talks between Kabila and the rebel leaders led to the signing of a peace accord in which Kabila would share power with former rebels. By June 2003 all foreign armies except those of Rwanda had pulled out of Congo. Since the beginning of the second Congo war in 1998, reports of as many as 5.4 million deaths have been attributed to the conflict, mostly civilians affect by war-related famine and disease, making it the deadliest conflict since the Second World War. At least 1.5 million have reportedly been internally displaced.

A transitional government was set up in July 2003 by the international community with Joseph Kabila as president and four vice presidents representing the former government, former rebel groups, the political opposition, and civil society. The transitional government held a successful constitutional referendum in December 2005 and elections for the presidency, National Assembly, and provincial legislatures in 2006. Kabila did not win a majority in the August
presidential elections. Subsequently, fighting broke out in Kinshasa between Kabila’s supporters and those of his main opponent, Jean-Pierre Bemba. After a second round of voting, Kabila won the presidency and was inaugurated in December 2006.

Despite negotiated ceasefires, peace agreements, and demobilization efforts in the east, many armed militias have remained active, and insecurity due to inter-ethnic tensions and sporadic conflicts has remained high. One of the principal threats to the safety of the populations in the eastern Kivu provinces has been the FDLR, remnants of the Hutu genocidaires who had fled to the DRC following the 1994 Rwanda genocide. In trying to reduce violence and protect the civilian population against such armed groups, MONUC often has been ineffective and has lost considerable credibility, as has the weak and often predatory Congolese Army (FARDC).

In 2005 and 2006, a former army commander, Laurent Nkunda, formed his own army in defense of the local Tutsi population and began to carry out attacks on the FDLR. Although Nkunda was often more effective against the FDLR than MONUC or the FARDC, the ruthlessness of Nkunda’s CNDP forces encouraged the growth of local Mai Mai militias in North Kivu in reaction to “Tutsi violence.” He soon was seen as the government’s principal enemy and was widely regarded as a fifth column for Rwanda. However, successive campaigns by the FARDC against the CNDP in 2007 and 2008 were unsuccessful and deeply humiliating to the government. Nevertheless, the renewed fighting and perils faced by the civilian population in the east brought the DRC back to wider attention.

In a dramatic turn of events in early 2009, Presidents Kabila and Kagame of Rwanda unexpectedly agreed to cooperate in a joint operation to capture Nkunda and take action against the FDLR. While Nkunda was taken captive, and the FDLR temporarily dispersed, the joint action failed to eliminate the threats from the FDLR and other armed groups, much less to resolve the deeper problems of development, governance, and reconciliation. In addition, the military campaign has displaced many more thousands of civilians, adding to the humanitarian tragedy.

THE DRC PROBLÉMATIQUE

The DRC is no longer at war, but neither is it at peace. It is a post-conflict country only in the sense that civil war has ceased, a peace agreement was signed, and elections have been held. But limited effective control has been achieved over local fighting and over governing institutions. The continuing
high levels of violence and insecurity in North and South Kivu, and in other pockets of the DRC, is a manifestation of the weak capacity of the central government, which has yet to extend its authority throughout the country. To assess the objectives and approach of the ILCCE, it is useful to identify the fundamental tasks that have faced the government and international actors since 2006, as they sought to implement the Sun City agreement that concluded the Congolese civil war and called for establishing a new DRC constitution.

In a nutshell, the central challenge confronting the Congolese is to establish capable state authority that can peacefully manage internal conflicts, serve the general population’s basic needs more effectively, and be seen as legitimate by the population. This challenge has required attention to several immediate priorities:

- Reducing local violent conflict and ending the use of violence as a political tool.
- Building a legitimate, professional, and effective national army.
- Strengthening the administration of basic public services throughout the sovereign territory of the state, including control over the exploitation of natural resources that have fueled local conflicts.
- Establishing a functioning system of government in Kinshasa and the provinces.

**Establishing physical security.** The most pressing immediate priority is the termination of the armed conflicts still recurring among various uncontrolled armed groups in North and South Kivu, and ending the horrible atrocities and abuses such as rape being inflicted on civilians. This violence is symptomatic of the intense inter-communal suspicions and mistrust that has characterized relations among the various actors in the east. Many Congolese have argued that greater security will be realized only when certain leaders who had committed crimes against humanity are brought to justice. However, the role of criminal indictments and prosecutions amid still-fluid conflicts is a matter of continuing debate.

**Building a credible army.** A major element of the Congo’s difficulties is the absence of effective, professional, and legitimate security forces. During the election campaign, this deficit was reflected in harsh measures taken by security forces against peaceful demonstrators, which resulted in the killing or maiming of many civilians. In the west, the election campaign erupted in violence when
peaceful protests by opposition parties were met by harsh measures of poorly trained security forces. A broader, still unresolved question is the integration into the national army of the armed militias, and the building of an effective national command structure that is inclusive of all key elements.

**Achieving responsive public services.** In many parts of the country, government administration is either not functioning or corrupt. The task is to build effective governmental institutions out of degraded agencies that have been under-resourced and pervaded by patronage practices, favoritism, and often predatory officials, rather than serving the general population in accordance with standards of public service. Staff and officials are poorly paid, often untrained, and decision making, spending, and revenue flows are opaque. Local governance in the east especially is composed of various formal and informal authorities who co-mingle in providing differing degrees and forms of security and services and are dependent on tenuous relationships with armed groups and influential local figures. Because the east also lacks effective judicial authority and law enforcement, local land rights are often abrogated for no legitimate reason. One crucial part of this challenge in the east is the need to establish legitimate public control over the mining and export of valuable natural resources, so that the revenues no longer fuel local conflicts, and instead are used to support basic needs such as health, education, and infrastructure.

**Establishing legitimate authorities.** Notwithstanding the adoption of a new national constitution, the respective roles and decision-making prerogatives of the executive offices and legislators at the national and provincial levels, as well as the division of revenues and responsibilities between the levels of government, remain unclear and often contested. Though the provinces have new powers on paper, they are not sure how to exercise them. In the Kivus, the political culture has not adapted to increased local autonomy. As a result, officials often seek personal advantage from their offices in anticipation of stricter future controls and are often at loggerheads in addressing important policy issues.

Reflecting and contributing to these problems is the sparse, unreliable, and politicized media, especially outside of Kinshasa, and a fragmented civil society. Although allowed to operate since the liberalization policies and subsequent pluralism of the early 1990s, the print and live media lack financial support and are highly subject to political pressures, money, commercial interests, and group loyalties. They require certification by the state and have little protection from it. Journalists have to find sponsors such as politicians to finance them but may not reveal their source of support. Some journalists allow
themselves to become hostages to a politician, who, for example, may permit someone to own a radio station as long as they are not critical. As a result, the media does not abide by professional ethics, such as objective, fact-based reporting and remaining neutral during election campaigns.

At bottom, these challenges facing the DRC are reflective of a largely privatized state shaped by a clientelist political economy and thus one that does not perform the basic functions of regulating, representing, and reconciling competing interests in society through agreed-on procedures and rules. Instead, it is subject to manipulation by those with wealth or military and political power. In that sense, peacebuilding in the DRC has required state-building. As highlighted by the ILCCE country coordinator, an overarching cause for the extent and dimensions of violence including the foreign aggressions, indeed the “mother of all reasons,” was the “absence of a functional and impartial state.”
THE INITIATIVE, 2006 TO PRESENT: RATIONALE AND ACTIVITIES

VIEW OF THE PROBLEM

The WWICS Initiative was developed and first applied in Burundi and has been adapted to the DRC. Although the methods of engagement in the two countries are similar, the prospect of working in the DRC posed new questions. Project managers have had to take into account the unique challenges faced by the Congolese as they seek to transition to democracy. Government is weaker in the DRC than in Burundi, while the country is no less than 84 times larger in size. Though there is sensitivity about pressure from and dependence on the international community, the government recognizes it needs help, whereas in Burundi it wanted the UN to leave. The peacekeeping mission has had some latitude because of the threat posed by Nkunda, but working with the ministries is more difficult and highly political. As a consequence, a distinct set of objectives has been identified, different groups have been targeted for inclusion in the training workshops, and a Congo-specific strategy has been developed. From the project’s reports and interviews with project staff conducted by the investigator, it is possible to discern a distinctive conception of which aspects of the larger problems the ILCCE in particular should focus on, and how the ILCCE’s approach could contribute to the transition.

During a scoping mission undertaken by the WWICS in February 2005 at the invitation of the UK Department for International Development, the diplomatic community and a broad cross-section of Congolese leaders responded positively to the concept of a leadership training initiative that was designed to strengthen the capacity of Congolese leaders to manage the economic and social reconstruction of their country. The basis of this response was a view that major sources of the Congo’s difficulties lay in certain basic characteristics of the political elite:

1. First and foremost, both the diplomats and the Congolese leaders agreed that the conflicts in the DRC have led leaders to adopt a winner-take-all,
zero-sum political paradigm in conducting politics, have fractured relationships and trust among the key leaders, and have encouraged confrontational modes of discourse.

2. The Mobutu era produced an extraordinary commercialization of the Congolese political culture. Many of the “key players,” who are rather distant from the humanitarian consequences of Congolese conflicts, appear to be more content with what is for them a generally profitable status quo and they hold a short-term view of how they can personally gain by simply preserving that situation. Congolese leaders are thus unable to imagine a situation in which they might work collaboratively with others.

3. Whereas the DRC is a relatively wealthy country in terms of natural resources and agricultural, tourism, industrial, and manufacturing potential, the gross corruption of the political class and the collapse of state institutions since the Mobutu era has meant the impoverished general population has been deprived of services and the means of livelihood.

4. As with any failed state, there is a long-term challenge of building a unified sense of political community among the Congolese.

5. There is a regional dimension as well to the continuing volatility of the Kivus. A sustainable peace in this area would ultimately require the engagement of Rwandan and Ugandan as well as Congolese political actors, all of whom have been invested in supporting one or another militia. The continued presence of the Rwandan-based FDLR has been a major source of regional instability and conflict.

Certain other issues were understood to be crucial, but were not pursued until after the elections of 2006 and the signing of the Goma Accord in January 2008:

1. Security sector reform at the national and provincial levels—involving the integration of armed groups, the building of a professional army, and the development of a cohesive command structure—is urgent. The army remains a hollow shell, both corrupt and ineffectual, and a source of instability rather than of stability.

2. The building of institutional capacity at the provincial level is essential to combat corruption, imbue confidence in local populations, and implement development and poverty reduction strategies.
3. Refugee and internally displaced populations in the border area spanning Rwanda and the eastern Congo must be re-integrated into their respective communities.

4. The Rwandan and the DRC governments are the essential players—along with Uganda—and every effort must be made to build on their increasing cooperation, instill a common vision of the way forward, and develop an understanding of the need for agreement among them to address the problems of the east.

While this wide range of problems at local, national, and regional levels have been identified as blocking the consolidation of peace and the ability of the DRC to make progress on its post-war reconstruction, the Initiative’s various documents treat a particular conception of the problem as the heart of these challenges. That core deficiency is the war-induced, zero-sum paradigm born of insecurity and fear and leading to distrust that pervades the mentality of leaders as well as ordinary Congolese. A common attitude and practice at all levels has encouraged taking personal advantage to achieve short-term minimal gain, and an aversion to potentially risky initiatives that may require trusting others. The view of the Initiative is that leaders tend to trust only themselves and their families or at best their immediate ethnic-based or other personal networks. By the same token, actions taken by others are viewed with suspicion as they present threats to one’s own designs.

A prominent participant in the workshops observed that such attitudes and practices actually pre-date the recent wars. He pointed out that the Congolese educational system established during the colonial period had done fairly well in providing basic education to over half of the school-age population, although skills at higher levels such as doctors and engineers were in very short supply. But the main failing was that education did not encourage people to take initiative and make decisions. Though efforts were made at one time to develop business acumen, subsequent nationalization of the large enterprises led to lost revenue due to their pillaging by government officials and their cronies. The economy thus became composed mainly of small-scale businesses that lacked management capacities and little motivation or knowledge of how to create larger enterprises.

A similar legacy he mentioned arose after the common struggle for independence, when power struggles and the eventual creation of a state-led patronage machine killed the spirit of social cooperation. In this view, this mentality is reinforced by the Congolese Diaspora, who have been divided along ethnic lines and have spread on the Internet distorted views of every
new turn in the country’s situation. They have had undue influence based on the assumption that they are sophisticated Europeans, with a more informed perspective than that coming from local residents of, say, Goma. These observations suggest deeper sources of the Congolese problématique than simply the recent violent conflicts.

THEORY OF CHANGE

How does the project see itself addressing these complex problems? The Initiative focuses on the lack of trust and fractured relationships among Congolese leaders. As introduced earlier, the Initiative’s principal objective is the building of their “collaborative capacity.” The Initiative seeks to change those attitudes and mistrust by strengthening communication and negotiation skills among key individuals, helping the leaders comprehend the value of collaboration, and building a new consensus on “rules of the game.” The training tries to shake participants’ conviction that no one else can be trusted. It encourages leaders to discover that other Congolese whom they do not ordinarily know or respect may actually love their country as much as they do.

Changing values and attitudes mean that leaders’ self-concepts shift from being based primarily on an ethnic or regional identity, or on the following of a self-aggrandizing “big man” whose authority is based on personality-based rule and patronage, to a concept of a public servant’s responsibility to the nation. It seeks to engender a different way to understand the leaders’ needs and interests; that is, as having common stakes. In one program document’s words, the aim is to help leaders learn how to “bake a bigger cake” in a given arena of their lives. Or as the country coordinator expressed it, the project helps leaders to discover the “miracle of simultaneous ambition.”

Underlying this intention is the belief that, despite all the events of recent years, Congolese leaders actually possess strong but dormant feelings of national pride for their country, as well as wariness toward any foreign involvement, and that these latent national aspirations can be uncovered by creating an opportunity for them to share and act upon such sentiments. In the present circumstances, other such evangelical messages of idealism are also vying for their loyalties, such as the appeal Nkunda held for Congolese Tutsis. Contending actors each hold their own self-justifying views of the situation and their roles in it. The Mai Mai, for example, see themselves as more patriotic than others. Nevertheless, a mutual process of discovery will, it is hoped, create a momentum among the leaders who participate that they will convey to their respective circles and, by extension, their wider constituencies. If those
involved can be persuaded that they need not fear each other, and that together they can get beyond the daily pressures to merely survive in their stations and take what they can grab, that could create a wider and more constructive political dynamic.

Further, the theory of change underlying the Initiative is that converting key groups of leaders to this different way of thinking and creating trust among them will stimulate cooperative behavior in their wider pursuits, and thus by these efforts and example become implanted in various spheres of activities in the overall reconstruction of the country. What starts the process is a critical mass of strategically selected actors, or three or four such nucleuses, to set such dynamics in action. From these nucleuses might grow a body of actors who feel a special sense of responsibility for the course of their nation. It seeks to create a cohesive network of key leaders at very high levels in diverse sectors who are inclined and prepared to work effectively together to guide the DRC’s post-war reconstruction.

How is this theory of change linked to the tasks of state-building outlined earlier? The particular entry points chosen are at the leadership level, with regard to the attitudes of these leaders toward each other, their ways of relating to each other, and abilities in working together. The Initiative seeks to build a network of Congolese leaders who could potentially influence policy and political decisions, and to prepare them with the requisite skills that enable them to address the many challenges they face, possibly including negotiating solutions within and between their own structures. The Initiative for Cohesive Leadership is not directed at the resolution of specific issues between defined parties, nor does it aim to organize venues to negotiate particular issues. But the participants’ changed attitudes and relationships are expected to have ripple effects in such forums.

Buttressing the Initiative’s argument is the view that its approach fills a gap in existing international approaches to peacebuilding. While the international community is quite good at identifying desired end-states for a post-conflict country, it is deficient in identifying and supporting the processes through which those end-states can be achieved. It gets leaders to sign agreements that commit to achieving those end-states. These agreements are often based on what makes for stable democratic Western states. Checklists of such objectives are formulated for a given post-conflict country, for which the international actors provide various kinds of technical and material resources. A multitude of development programs divide up the work into sectoral and sub-sectoral segments such as rule of law, elections, decentralization, and civil society, or economics and enterprise development. To support activities toward those ends, they use various means such as providing financial support, training in techni-
cal skills, or equipment and technologies, and building physical infrastructure and enforcing international protocols.

The program’s analysis implies that many of the usual approaches to diplomacy and development tend to impose external notions of what needs to be done and how to get there, and thus are in effect coercive, whether explicitly or implicitly, or are perceived as being so. As a result, they are not sufficiently respecting and enhancing of endogenous feelings of self-respect and national pride. Such modes of assistance also often ignore the fact that divided societies lack a strong common sense of nationhood and that a process is needed to foster a sense of common interest and purpose among those who are the object of such programs.

One of the ILCCE’s donors expressed the difference as one of greater concreteness or practicality. Other peacebuilding activities may organize conferences and talk shops, he said, but they do not build the skills of leaders and encourage their working together through actual exercises such as team building. In this view, there is a need for a “softer side” to build skills through a participatory approach in order to gain acceptance, and thus not taking a political position or putting pressure on participants as international mediation does. In that sense, the approach is similar to development programs that offer positive incentives such as benefits with few conditions. Yet it does not work officially through the government like many development programs do, and so in a way, it is more direct. The engagement occurs at what has been called the “track two” or “track three” levels of diplomacy. But unlike most earlier versions of such initiatives, it is not targeted at resolving the issues to reach a peace agreement, but rather at empowering key individuals to undertake together the implementation of post-agreement transitional tasks such as applying the constitution and building state institutions.

In short, the Initiative sees a missing link in most other approaches between development and state-building. That link is the internalization of the values and goals of peacebuilding and state-building by those in the country itself who are expected to pursue them. The complaint sometimes heard in international circles about the “lack of political will” by host nationals in such settings ignores the need for specific ways to engender a deep sense of ownership of the challenge within the hearts and minds of those from the country who are in the immediate position to do something about it and ultimately are expected to follow through. To fill that gap, the project seeks to instill in leaders that sense of what they could gain from not only taking charge of that responsibility but seeing it as in fact a great opportunity. Its way to reach those more general peacebuilding goals is to work with small groups of influential people to help them find ways to leverage the situation, piece by piece, through their own
pursuits. In this way, the theory of change represents one way to operationalize the international discourse and rhetoric that development should instill “local ownership” so as to better ensure sustainability through building capacity among host country people and institutions.

**ACTIVITIES OF THE INITIATIVE**

As it has evolved, the Initiative has become active at three levels within the DRC and the region. The core activity works through selected Congolese leaders who have participated in a series of workshops and who either reflect a cross-section of various sectors or are chosen from specific national institutions such as the National Assembly. Less visible but increasingly important are various catalytic tasks that have sprung from organizing the workshops, such as networking, briefing international visitors, and informal diplomacy in between workshops, undertaken primarily by the country coordinator. A third level of activity has come into play in more recent years whereby international actors have been convened, both in the DRC and in Washington DC, in ongoing assessments of developments on the ground and the range of international activities addressing them.

**The workshops.** The central activity of the ILCCE is a series of training workshops that target key Congolese leaders and are designed to build their collaborative capacity. After a local office was established and international support was solicited, a three-step procedure was followed to organize and conduct the initial workshops. The first step was defining for whom and where workshops would be held and recruiting strategically placed participants for them. The project normally identifies possible participants by first asking key contacts for a list of people they regard as the most influential leaders in the country, either actually or potentially. In the DRC, the ILCCE started such a process but has now turned to a more informal process that draws on the country coordinator’s knowledge, and on the recommendations of some of his principal interlocutors. A pool of such individuals was created that took into full consideration a diversity of gender, professional, geographical, and ethnic backgrounds. From this pool the initial program participants were selected.

The second step was the conduct of the training workshops themselves, which continue. The initial workshops constitute retreats that are divided into two parts: the first three days focus on communication and negotiations skills and relationship building through the various simulations and other interactive exercises. In the last two or three days, the participants are asked to identify
what they believe to be the principal challenges they face, and then to use the tools, skills, and relationships they have developed to analyze these issues, identify solutions, and construct an “action plan” of next steps and personal commitments. Approximately two to three months after the initial workshop retreat, participants are invited to attend a follow-up workshop for two to three days. The purpose of this workshop is to reinforce the skills learned in the retreat, to create a space for participants to reconnect, to share the lessons learned in the initial retreat, to consider how these lessons apply to their professional and personal lives, and to continue mapping out solutions and action plans to the key problems identified in the retreat but as yet unresolved.

The third task of the Initiative is the maintenance and reinforcement of the emerging national network of Congolese leaders that have graduated from the workshops and consequently share a common orientation to collaborative activity and the transformation of conflict.

**Training methodology.** The training strategy involves experiential learning and is participant centered, employing multiple interactive exercises and simulations. All these methods are aimed at enabling the participating leaders to shift from a zero-sum paradigm of winners and losers to one that recognizes interdependence and common ground; to develop mutual trust and confidence; and to strengthen the skills of communication and negotiation required for effective collaboration.

The kinds of skills that a typical workshop seeks to impart include active listening, sensitization to common interests as a society, mutual respect for others’ points of view, equitable win/win procedures, negotiations, and respecting rules. Workshops give particular emphasis to techniques enabling the participants to put themselves “into the shoes of the other.” This entails seeing each other as individuals and not merely as members of hostile groups. Consequently, effective communication is a major workshop focus. Participants learn the role that communication plays in developing or destroying trust (meaning that messages can be meant in one way and received in another), and the danger of acting on the basis of untested assumptions. An ultimate training objective, as mentioned earlier, is to form a climate of mutual trust. This is because sustainable agreements among competing parties require not only a sense of shared interests but also a set of working human relationships.

To help transform the way in which participants define their self-interest, so that they can see their long-term security and welfare as being not in opposition to, but directly dependent upon, the larger collectivity of which they are part, the participants are engaged in interactive negotiation exercises, simulations, and role-playing. This requires understanding the concept of “interest-based
negotiations,” in which decision-makers learn to distinguish their “positions,” or idealized aspirations, on the one hand, and their underlying “interests,” or fundamental needs, on the other.

The ways in which decision-making and the distribution of resources are handled also send messages that can affect inter-group attitudes. Thus, a powerful lesson that a workshop seeks to demonstrate through the simulations is that durable solutions to issues driving conflict can only be found through inclusive, participant-based processes—that is, through means that are essentially democratic if not labeled as such. The assumption is that sustainable decisions are far more likely to result from a decision-making process that turns not on attempts to impose one’s position on others but, instead, on the search for means of accommodating the priority interests of all.

Building on that notion, the workshops seek to move toward building consensus on new “rules of the game,” such as how power will be organized and decisions will be made. When the workshops shift from the initial “process training” to substance, participants are encouraged to apply the tools and skills they had developed to the current problems facing them and the DRC. However, the workshops stop short of actual decision making or the formal mediation of policy or political disputes.

The methodology thus does not depend on “book learning” or a cognitive understanding of concepts. The Initiative’s view is that a collaborative mind-set cannot be taught but must be experienced. Trusting relationships also involve personal emotional investment and will develop only over time. Likewise, an appreciation of the importance of process will emerge only through direct experience with others. What the training provides is an opportunity for experiential learning—through interactive exercises, simulations, and role-playing—all designed to enable the participants to learn and build upon their skills, not only through lectures and reading but also through their own experiences. The description that follows on pages 33-37 details how the exercises relate to the skills being developed.

Participants and venues. From 2005 to 2009, 36 ILCCE DRC workshops were carried out, the majority of which were held in Kinshasa and Goma, while others were held in Bukavu, Matadi, and Butembo. The initial series, known as the Nganda Process, was begun in January 2006, and continued through May 2007. Eight workshops were held in Kinshasa involving primarily national-level leaders such as government officials, political party campaign leaders, journalists, and National Assembly members. A second track was begun in March 2006, soon after the first began, and eventually grew to be the larger of the two. It involved a series of more than 11 workshops in particularly
volatile regions such as Goma and Bukavu in North and South Kivu and in Bas Congo and were composed primarily of communal, civil society, and political leaders at the provincial and local levels, including for example, leaders in Butembo, Uvira, and Minembwe, and the 8th and 10th Military Region with FARDC Commanders (Goma and Bukavu).

The Kivus are seen as the most volatile region, and diplomats and Congolese leaders alike urged the Initiative to concentrate their attention in the east. The most serious political divisions exist in these areas, and the Initiative felt it needed to do work at that level, such as with the newly elected Provincial Assemblies of North and South Kivu. Though all the military regions of the national army have representatives in Kinshasa, the weaknesses in its poor command structures and performance in the field are most evident in the east, where conflicts continue to erupt sporadically. Some participants in the National Assembly workshop in May 2007 also came from the east. However, while these workshops were done with the intent of alleviating the Kivu crises, the Initiative sought to ensure that all the work in the east was done with a concern for the need to knit closer relations with Kinshasa, such as within the National Assembly, Senate, provincial and military actors, for Kinshasa has been deeply implicated in the violence and instability of the Kivus.

More recent workshops in 2007-8 have been held with a variety of groups including the 10th Military Region with FARDC Commanders (Bukavu), Goma Peace Accord Signatories (January 2008), and a variety of civil society and political leaders, including a number of dissidents. Two years into the program, a “Training of Trainers” workshop was also held in order to build indigenous training capacity. The twenty Congolese who were involved were expected to work within their own diverse constituencies and with illiterate populations, playing the role of facilitators and mediators of conflict when needed.

From 2006 to January 2008, a total of 36 workshops had engaged over 600 Congolese participants. As of mid-2009, future workshops are planned with a mediators group in Kinshasa, Ituri Leaders, the Goma Accord-originated Amani Provincial Commissions, the National Army high command, the security sector, a joint DRC/Rwanda Assembly gathering, the Inter-parliamentary Governing Commission, the Senate, and Katanga Leaders. One workshop is planned for a mixed group of Congolese provincial and national leaders and expatriate business interests, in an effort to build a more cohesive network of key economic stakeholders and a more coherent economic framework.

**Trans-workshop networking.** An aspect of the Initiative that is associated with the workshops but is less explicit and visible has to do with what the country coordinator has done informally in between the many workshops.
A TYPICAL WORKSHOP WEEK:
AIMS AND EXERCISES

1. “Petrol Pricing”: Collaboration vs. Competition

Following welcoming remarks and a description of the leadership initiative’s origins and purpose, the participants are plunged immediately into a simulation, known as the “Price of Petrol”/“Petrol Pricing.” The simulation, involving two oil producing countries that must establish the price at which they will sell their oil on the world market, is designed to demonstrate that self-interest may be more effectively protected through collaborative rather than competitive strategies. Thus, two countries that have confidence that neither will try to under-sell the other will be able to maintain high prices and high profitability; however, if there is an absence of mutual trust and confidence, there is a tendency for one or both countries to opt for a pricing strategy that minimizes risk but also yields much lower returns. This generally results in “a race to the bottom.” Corollary lessons that emerge from this exercise are the importance of understanding the point of view of the other or “putting yourself in the shoes of the other,” the danger of sending messages that may be misunderstood and have the unintended consequence of elevating suspicion and mistrust, and the danger of acting upon the basis of untested assumptions.

2. Participant Expectations

The “Petrol Pricing” exercise usually turns into a major ice-breaker for the workshop—with many of the participants finding themselves allied, in the course of the simulation, with people that they either had not previously known or with whom they had been previously antagonistic. Moreover, they often appear quite taken by the simulation exercise, finding it different from anything they had previously experienced. Consequently, when the participants are subsequently asked to identify their own expectations for the workshop, they are more relaxed and open in stating their hopes and aspirations for the remainder of the training experience. Each participant shares their expectations, and the trainers record them on the PowerPoint slides projected on the screen at the front of the room.
3. Ten Element Framework For Decision Making

Following the identification of participant expectations, the trainer turns to the question of how to approach a negotiation involving persons with diverse interests and perspectives. The first, second, and third keys to successful negotiations is “to prepare, to prepare, to prepare.” There are 10 variables that must be considered if one seeks to develop sustainable agreements that take into account diverse interests and perspectives. These 10 elements can be grouped in terms of the three dimensions central to any negotiation: who needs to be considered, what is the negotiation about, and how will the negotiation be conducted.

4. Active Communications: Building a Consensus

Effective interest-based negotiation depends on both recognition of common or shared interests, and on working relationships where leaders have the confidence that it is in fact possible to negotiate sustainable agreements with persons whose interests may be quite different from their own. This, in turn, requires the ability of individuals to communicate with, and to trust, one another. They must be able to see each other not as members of hostile groups or blocs, but as individuals, each with their own fears and aspirations, their own feelings and perceptions. Each participant must be able to really “hear” the point of view of “the other,” and to place him or herself in the shoes of the other. Several workshop exercises therefore seek to strengthen the ability of participants to communicate effectively with one another.

Demonstrating the difficulty inherent in all human communications, participants are introduced to “The Rumor” exercise, wherein they are asked to whisper a short report to one another. By the time the whispered report goes around the circle of participants it is greatly distorted, and bears little resemblance to the initial message that had begun the whispering chain. While a cause for collective amusement, the participants do not miss the essential lesson: human communication is fraught with distortion—either because people do not speak with precision, or because they do not listen very carefully, or because memory and perception are affected by inaccurate assumptions and/or stereotypes.

Another communication exercise to which the participants are exposed, “The Woman,” is designed both to demonstrate the power of conditioning on perceptions and to strengthen participants’ communication skills. At the beginning of the exercise, each participant is provided with a card displaying the image of a woman. After briefly viewing the card, the participants are then
asked to estimate the age of a woman whose image is projected on a screen. Participant estimations customarily range from 18–90 years old; and, almost without exception, each participant expresses absolute confidence in the accuracy of his/her perception.

What the participants do not realize is that when they view the cards distributed prior to the projection of the screen image, one-half of their number are shown a sketch of a young woman, while the second half are presented with a sketch of an old woman. A composite image of the two sketches is subsequently projected to the entire group. The earlier brief exposure to the image on the card successfully conditions the participants to see only that to which they had been exposed. Thus, a situation is created wherein several individuals view the same reality and yet see very different things.

This dramatic demonstration is used to deepen participant understanding of how perceptions are conditioned by life experiences. It is because of their conditioning that two individuals of different socio-economic backgrounds and experiences can understand the same reality in very different ways, thereby drawing contradictory conclusions. It is pointed out to the participants that if only a 10-second exposure to an image can produce such firm, contradictory perceptions, one can only imagine how entire lives lived in very different circumstances can lead to a conditioning of fundamental attitudes and perspectives. The starting point of effective conflict resolution is the recognition that both parties to a conflict are equally sincere in the claims or grievances they advance; while they may both be looking at the same reality, because of their different conditioning they will see that reality in very different ways.

The old woman/young woman demonstration is also a helpful prod toward a constructive humility: it is useful to be reminded of the extent to which our own perceptions and beliefs are conditioned. In effect, both parties to a conflict can be wrong; both can be right. It all depends on one’s perspective.

5. SIMSOC: Simulated Society

The third day of the workshop is taken up with an all-day simulation. SIMSOC (short for “simulated society”) is a complex simulation designed by William Gamson to provide insight into the dynamics of social and political conflict. In brief, SIMSOC consists of a single society comprised of four regions—Red, Green, Blue, and Yellow—with a very unequal distribution of resources. Participants spend an entire day coping with the challenge of personal survival while building a viable society. They must do so under conditions that closely parallel those of the real world. These conditions include extreme inequality between individuals and groups, a lack of sufficient subsistence for some
individuals, major communication barriers between regions, a lack of shared experience and expectations, and a diversity of personal goals.

The members of SIMSOC must subsist; they must secure employment; and they must decide how to allocate whatever resources they possess—whether to invest in industry, or in public welfare programs, or in the creation of police forces. Rioting is also an option.

All of the decisions participants make, individually and collectively, determine whether the national indicators rise or fall; and this in turn determines whether the income available to the society’s basic institutions increases or declines. If any of the national indicators falls below zero, the society collapses. The success or failure of SIMSOC turns on the ability of its members to resolve conflicts arising from resource scarcity and the unequal distribution of both power and wealth—and to develop a broad national vision that transcends their regional boundaries and identities. However, this is not easy: there is a tendency for the members of SIMSOC, as in the real world, to think and act on the basis of their parochial (regional) interests, and (usually without substantive foundation) to mistrust the intentions of people from other regions. The fact that the cleavage between the society’s “haves” and “have-nots” largely corresponds to regional boundaries (the poor Reds versus the rich Greens) only compounds the mistrust and aggravates societal tensions. What matters in SIMSOC is not one’s real-life ethnicity or regional origins (in assigning participants to the four regions, care is taken to ensure that all regions are ethnically, politically, and socially diverse), but whether one is a Green or a Red. Within SIMSOC, as within the DRC, divisions and conflict are a reflection of the uneven distribution of societal resources, and are the direct consequence of poor inter-group communication and the absence of an inclusive process by which national decisions are made.

As a result of their common experience in SIMSOC—in which people find themselves often allied with former real-world antagonists in confronting issues of inequality, communications, trust, and power—participants are able to acquire new insight and understanding of the challenges facing their own real-world societal reconstruction. They are now able to approach these challenges with far greater objectivity and less defensiveness, and with much greater sensitivity to the perspectives and feelings of those they had previously seen as untrustworthy adversaries. The day following the playing of SIMSOC participants are invited to share in writing two or three of the most important lessons they drew from the simulation.
6. Application of Tools to the Analysis of DRC Challenges

On the workshop’s fourth day, attention shifts from theory to practice—with participants being asked first to identify the principal obstacles that they believe lay in the way of a more cohesive Congolese state and society, and then to diagnose these obstacles or problems and begin the search for alternative solutions to these real-world concerns.

The initial step in the process is a brainstorming exercise, in which the participants are asked to identify every conceivable obstacle to the building of greater societal and state cohesion. Next, the participants are asked to vote on their sense of the most critical obstacles. In the end, four broad subjects are selected as areas of priority concern.

The participants are then presented with the Four Quadrant Analytic Tool for problem-solving—identifying the problem, examining its causes (diagnosis), considering alternate solutions, and deciding on the best course of action. They then divide into four working groups, to apply the tool to an examination of the four key obstacles the participants have identified as lying in the way of building a cohesive Congolese state and society.

7. Concluding Day: Identification of Next Steps and Concrete Actions

On the workshop’s concluding day, the participants are invited to review their original list of expectations, to reflect on what they are taking away from the workshop experience, and to brainstorm possible next steps they wish to take to build on what has been accomplished over the five days of working together, and then to identify concrete actions they individually intend to pursue. These ideas may be listed on a board and refined by the group.
Here we refer not simply to recruiting participants and organizing workshops. This meta-workshop role includes networking and brokering specific communications among former participants or between them and key officials on the process dimension of particular emerging political and policy issues of concern to them. One notable example is the extensive discussions that occurred concerning how best to approach the Goma peace conference. The role also involves advising participants on policy or political issues of concern to them, and occasionally providing constructive talking points for key Congolese actors or prominent visitors from outside the country. By conveying the current mood and by suggesting certain choices of words, these communications seek to avoid misunderstandings and to knit the actors together.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Three different entities are involved in operating the Initiative and thus carrying out any given workshop. The Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington remains the overall design and conceptual partner, maintains control of the schedule and is the guarantor of the finances. The Institute for Research and Education on Negotiations in Europe (IRENE) of ESSEC Business School in Paris is the primary provider of trainer-facilitators for the retreats. The ILCCE in Kinshasa assures the day-to-day execution of the activities, such as planning the chronology of events and undertaking the choice of participants. The Washington team. The project is operated under the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars’ (WWICS) Africa Program. The director, Steve McDonald, a former Foreign Service Officer with a wealth of several decades of experience in implementing democratization programs, including with the National Endowment for Democracy and the African-American Institute, provides high-level presence and training assistance at the 5-day retreat workshops. He maintains liaison with key management and training team members, Congolese leaders, and members of MONUC, UNDP, and donor representatives to assure successful implementation. In Washington, he stays in contact with ILCCE management and training personnel, donors, and diplomatic mission representatives. A Washington staff manager also handles administrative and logistical liaising, initiating and supervising report preparations, problem solving with the management and training teams, and occasionally attending training events in the DRC. Several other Washington-based staff people handle administrative tasks such as grant management, contract servicing, travel, payments, and financial reporting. They provide workshop
backup on the ground as required, particularly to run SIMSOC software at the retreats and assist the country team in workshop management in general.

**Trainers.** The Initiative’s non-traditional, interactive pedagogy is conducted by trainers who are skilled in the techniques of institutional and conflict transformation, and who have experience working with both private sector and public institutions in creating more cohesive and effective organizations. The Initiative uses a cadre of trainers who are experienced in the DRC and with the methodology. They are drawn from IRENE which is part of the Paris-based ESSEC and the Boston-based CMPartners, with whom the WWICS also partners in training in Burundi. At each retreat workshop, two senior trainers or one senior trainer and one assistant trainer conduct the trainings, depending upon their complexity, prepare exercises, and provide work product such as PowerPoint slides and evaluation data after the conclusion of trainings. Follow-up workshops generally employ one trainer.

**The country team.** In Kinshasa, the country coordinator oversees all local preparations and workshop implementation, consults with past participants on the selection of participants for future workshops, conducts interagency liaising with the UNDP and the international community in the DRC, provides program guidance and insight, and maintains the Congolese consultative network. He is assisted by a deputy, who supports the coordinator and manages the local office, overseeing all staff, finances, and operational systems.

The ILCCE has recruited on a short-term basis host-national freelance consultants in the Kivu Provinces. These individuals are identified from former workshop participants who are selected for their ability to grasp individual and collective dynamics in the course of leadership training workshops, and their ability to sum up in Swahili the highlights of the workshops. Three such consultants have been used who had further training at the Training of Trainers workshop in Bukavu. Using them allows Congolese consultants to remain involved in their usual activities between the workshops, and thus to remain attuned to local developments and dynamics. It also encourages them to replicate the cohesive leadership approach within their permanent institutional bases.
MEASURING IMPACTS

Part III described objectives of the Initiative that seek to transform the mentality of participants in the workshops and encourage them to translate their new skills into various actions outside the workshops. What is the evidence that such results have been achieved in the first years of the project?

To gauge the results of such an approach, explicit criteria are needed that measure, in concrete terms, whether and how a project’s activities affect the wider environment and dynamics of the post-conflict transition that they sought to address, or peace writ large.

Reasonable measures must steer a middle course between a wholly “inside-out” approach to assessment, and a wholly “outside-in” approach. The former use as their measure only “inputs” such as number of events organized, or “outputs” of those activities such as the number of people who were reached and their sense of satisfaction. Such indicators show no clear connection to the possible influence on the broader problématique that is being addressed and does not ask how much that problem has been affected. At the other extreme, the “outside-in” approach seeks to hold a single program accountable for achieving unrealistic measures of the immense post-conflict problems as a whole. A more appropriate middle way is to define certain intermediate effects on the larger problem that a given activity may actually be able to achieve. Impact indicators are needed that are proportionate to the nature and scale of the activities being evaluated. Therefore, a number of efforts have been made to define plausible accomplishments by which conflict transformation initiatives in conflict transformation can be evaluated. However, the few existing studies that have been done use differing measures and thus make the accumulation of knowledge difficult.

In the present study, the main activities under scrutiny are a series of many workshops with several leadership groups at national, provincial, and local levels over three years. In ILCCE discourse, these activities are intended to lead to certain conditions expressed by terms such as “cohesion,” “trust,” and “collab-
orative capacity.” Though mentioned frequently, however, these intentions and expectations lack precise meaning, thus reflecting the difficulties inherent to any enterprise that starts with individual transformation. The external evaluators of the Initiative pointed out the lack of sufficient specificity regarding the final aims of the project. But this leaves ambiguous the standards by which the Initiative should measure its performance. “Cohesion” could variously mean, for example, that workshop participants deal cordially and civilly with one another, that they let down their guard against each other and speak frankly, that they stay in frequent communication with one another socially, that they agree with one another on political issues, that they take public actions together, or that the country’s politics they handle are as a whole conducted with less rancor and violence. These attributes are each somewhat different and might not always be compatible with one another. Some may be more significant for achieving peacebuilding than others. Which of these results—or other measures that might reflect its valued objectives—does the initiative aspire to?

Aware of this need, the Initiative has made several efforts to state appropriate notions of its goals in order to see whether they are being achieved. These frameworks have sought to distinguish among distinct primary, secondary, and tertiary impacts that arise from a workshop or a series of them. When evidence was being gathered from interviews for this study, for example, the country coordinator suggested that interviewees might be asked about the following kinds of effects:

1. Changes in the convictions and perceptions of the participants;

2. Compromises—signs that participants find it possible to come to a position on a particular issue with an adversary that is different than what they otherwise would have wanted;

3. Change in how participants behave in their own jobs or circumstances;

4. Whether participant A can get participant B to persuade non-participant C; and

5. Creating a critical mass of former participants, who together undertake some kind of collective action.

This framework imagines a set of concentric circles or ripple effects that may proceed out from an individual participant in a workshop. Another framework offered by a member of IRENE, the training organization in the Initiative,
focuses more on aspects of the participants’ environment that training might have affect. It outlined the following possible impacts:

1. On individual participants
   - Personal, immediate “eye-opening”
   - Personal, lasting, sustainable

2. Relational, internal to the network
   - Among key leaders who are participants
   - With family and close colleagues
   - On subordinates
   - On principals (superiors)

3. Institutional
   - Limited to a single institution
   - Inter-institutional—such as dealing with government sectors like security

4. Societal, such as through the media

These two sets of criteria overlap in some respects. The following framework draws from these outlines and others to assemble the evidence that was gathered from interviews and the donor-sponsored evaluation about the kinds of impacts the ILCCE has had in the DRC. This analysis helps to discern what linkages may have occurred between the impacts of the Initiative and the major challenges of state-building in the DRC that were previously enumerated.

**IMPACTS OF THE INITIATIVE**

A first set of impacts pertains to changes that occur in the attitudes and behavior of individual workshop participants.

**Impacts on participants’ attitudes and interactions.** A common observation heard from several interviewees who had participated in the initial Nganda workshops was that they brought together in one room people from differing groups or organizations, however defined, who ordinarily would not have met and talked with each other. The effect of meeting people with whom one had not spoken was to disabuse participants of certain views toward the others. The mingling clearly had the effect of removing certain impressions or prejudices.
that members of one group might have held toward people from other groups. One participant stated, for example, that the Initiative was a huge success in bringing all the sides contending for influence in the Congo, including government and opposition, together. The Initiative’s mid-term program evaluation concluded that the three most important attitudinal areas affected were the perception of the other, suspicion with regard to political action, and the realization of common interests. Another participant said that the workshops changed the perceptions and prejudices between government and civil society because they hadn’t known each other previously.

Their simply being convened together in the same place, however, would not necessarily have changed their attitudes, were it not apparently for the methods used and exercises they engaged in, which required direct communication. For one thing, speaking with one another on a first-name basis helped to place everyone on the same level and thus do away with formal barriers. The workshop exercises weaned them away from imagining all kinds of suspicious things about each other. In one participant’s view, while at first, the atmosphere was stiff, by the second day of exercises, the climate was relaxed. He believed that others as well had felt that their perceptions had changed. Another participant said that they discovered they had more to win by working together than by hating each other. A third participant noted that training methods used allowed them “to see that they were stronger together, so it was different by the end.” Another observed that the initial guarded attitude fell away after the first few games, as they soon realized that they needed to work together. A high government official participating in the journalists’ workshop was initially opposed to it, but after the petrol pricing exercise, he loosened up and laughed, recognizing that it is important to understand the other person.

Similarly, another participant described his unprecedented opportunity to speak directly with other politicians as being “like a wall coming down.” He realized that he and the others were part of the same nation, and that the similarities in their views and feelings were much greater than their differences, which became minor. This prompted him to wonder why they were fighting. He now finds that it is hard to have enemies, and believes that all conflicts are due to the lack of interaction and that solutions can be found by getting together.

Similarly, another noted that a workshop in North Kivu was unprecedented in bringing together Tutsis, Hutus, and other individuals, for they ordinarily met only within their own ethnic groups. He was sure that the participants had benefited from the workshop’s focus on what was positive about people in the other groups. At one point, the head of the Tutsi group even made a joke about being a Tutsi, which was remarkable. Another from the Kivus didn’t under-
stand the purpose of the workshop at first but then saw its value, as people from differing backgrounds spoke to one another openly. He said that the leaders in the Kivus don’t talk with one another, but make plans based on pre-conceived notions and see plots in others’ actions. It helped to overcome that problem by providing a place to discover they were wrong. The workshop with military leaders revealed to them their common complaints and attachment to the nation. This helped to dispel the suspicion arising from past incidents that some of them wanted to dismember the country.

Another participant stated that the concepts and principles conveyed through the exercises definitely got the attention of the participants, even shocking them at times, with the experience of seeing things differently. The session with the old lady and young lady pictures was especially intense in one person’s view, for some of the participants clung to seeing the pictures in one way. But when they then saw it the other way and realized how their perceptions had been influenced, the revelation was very powerful and emotional. Another participant observed that the pedagogy made them realize they had to work to find solutions together.

The tension reduction was sometimes quite palpable. In one workshop, the participants did not know beforehand what it was about or who would be attending. When the participants saw they were with the other groups, and that Americans were involved as well, whose government was seen as supporting Rwanda, the participants were very apprehensive and didn’t know what would unfold. The mistrust was clearly apparent when they initially sat only within their own groups for the evening meal, as some had even heard rumors that they could be poisoned if they sat with another group. But after the workshop exercises, the tensions dissipated.

One author’s direct observation of a workshop with military officers in Bukavu suggested that it was quite successful in helping the participants grasp the basic concepts. The sessions were well-prepared, the subjects appealed to everyone, and they helped to open them up to better listening and learning. They became especially enthusiastic about the normative values and principles they were being exposed to. The Initiative’s message emphasizes that cooperation best serves the self-interests of participants, rather than simply appealing to altruism. Yet notwithstanding how the workshops emphasize how collaboration can be in one’s self-interest, eliciting the reaffirmation of higher ideals also seems to form an important part of the experience. Many of the responses of these hardened fighters who were used to working under difficult conditions in the bush were surprisingly idealistic in tone, such as honoring the idea of sacrificing for the country and one’s community. Thus, normative values play a part, such as tapping into the nationalism of participants.
**Impacts in individuals’ lives.** An essential question after a workshop-type project like the ILCCE concerns the “re-entry” problem. Do the new skills, attitudes, and commitments gained in the workshops actually translate into subsequent behaviors after the participants part company and return to their normal lives? One modest way this carryover would become evident is in changes in the way participants act in their home and work environments.

Several participants noted that they applied the various norms and skills they learned in the workshops outside the workshops in their own immediate relationships at home and in their workplaces, both with respect to subordinates or principals. A poll by the evaluators indicated that 80% of the participants questioned said they had retained the techniques and arts of negotiation after the training, which suggests that their capacity for negotiation was reinforced following the training. One participant said the methods in the workshop led him to change his teaching methods, so that he now practices and teaches his students the skill of active listening. He applies it also now in his personal relationships, which his wife had noticed. Another reported using the methods and materials in his teaching and in meetings. A third said he now applies skills he gained from the workshops, such as what he calls the “game of exchange,” in everything he does. He noted that he used the workshop techniques when he moderated a meeting on economic policies for the Congo and the role of international partners.

**Impacts on ongoing relationships.** One of the objectives of the Initiative is to build up a critical mass of leaders who could permeate the structures of power. Have such nucleuses been created? The new relationships engendered during the workshops were reported to carry over to some extent by fostering new relationships outside the workshops. Ninety-seven percent of individuals polled by the evaluators wanted to maintain a positive momentum after their training, and a little more than half said that they actually were in some network among participants. One participant said that the initial Nganda workshops created an atmosphere of a new club. To another, the main value was building bridges among those who didn’t know each other after the Sun City agreement, thus helping to prepare the country’s political class for the challenges they were facing. Because it reduced apprehensions between people, they can now pick up phone and call each other. One continues to call others whom she met at the workshop and discusses what she heard them say on the media, or she has been called. This contact was facilitated by preparing a telephone book and a directory of e-mail addresses for all participants, which high percentages of participants reported having used since their respective workshops.
Another observed that when civil society leaders who participated now meet with government officials who also participated, there is an unspoken “complicity,” an implicit bond. Although he was from civil society, when he met with government officials who had participated, the attitude between them was different. They had a sense of sharing the training when they met later in formal meetings, a certain solidarity during their discussions. Another noted that two participants, one a Nande and the other a Tutsi, who met at a workshop became friends and visited with one another, which he thought also had some impact on their communities by the example it set. These examples provide some indication that the workshops helped to create among participants a degree of solidarity and self-consciousness that they shared a certain special identity.

Impacts on resolving differences. A further effect would come if the new relationships made it possible to resolve specific disputes that existed between the participants. The time spent together seems to have led some participants to feel that they could more easily come to consensus on specific issues with others in the group with whom they normally would not expect to be able to agree. The sense of sharing the training made it easier to agree when they met later in formal meetings, providing an opening that made it easier to compromise. Several testimonials indicated that the use of the tools of the training contributed to a peaceful succession to the presidency of the Transitional National Assembly between the former president and the new one, for they were both participants of the first training organized by ILCCE. In another such instance, a high official in Katanga province had resisted anyone from another province coming in, although there was a conflict there, whereas a central government minister insisted that any Congolese had an equal right to do so. They spoke at the workshop and those in the room saw a change in their relationship. Some of the participants were supporters of President Kabila, others of his opponents, but they saw the two belligerents reconciling in their approach to Katanga. One participant also noted that key individuals such as Vice President Ruberwa (a Tutsi from the eastern Congo) seemed more conciliatory in his behavior toward former opponents. In a third instance, a participant had been friends with another participant before the war but they became foes when he assumed an important position in the government as it carried out the war against a neighboring country. However, the workshop allowed them to meet and shake hands again. Because of his former position, people still questioned him as to why he no longer advocated going to war against the former enemy.
Impacts on other conflicts. A further step that might be taken after a workshop would be for individual participants to act, either as individuals or together, to manage or resolve disputes and relationships that lie primarily outside the workshop group. Between 25 and 40 percent of respondents in the evaluator’s poll believed that the workshops had contributed to reducing tensions in their conflict environments.

An especially important early instance when participants became active in managing a conflict occurred in response to the fighting in Kinshasa between supporters of Kabila and Bemba after the first round of presidential voting. The first electoral round found that neither candidate had obtained a simple majority, but Kabila had the lead. Violence broke out in the streets of Kinshasa between the two parties and Bemba’s residence was assaulted, despite the presence of the diplomatic community within the residence. Police and MONUC seized control of the city but not before there were a large number of casualties on both sides.

At the time, fortuitously, the ILCCE was holding a workshop in Kinshasa involving representatives of the main belligerent parties and of both eastern and western DRC. Workshop participants decided to hold a joint press conference, to demonstrate on TV that it was possible for leaders to come together and to overcome the tensions of the moment. The ILCCE initiative received wide coverage, and helped reinforce the appeals of MONUC and others to end the fighting and resume a peaceful dialogue on consolidating peace and stability. A wide spectrum of participants in ILCCE joined to call for commitments to national cohesion, economic recovery, and sustainable peace. In addition, some of the network participants decided to carry their message of peace and reconciliation to traditional leaders throughout the Kivus.

There were other such instances where the Initiative may have succeeded in actually helping to stop more people from being killed. Several individual leaders who had been trained acknowledged that they used the talents they had acquired to diffuse tensions that they faced on later occasions. During the election campaign in Katanga, militants of the Union for the Nation, and the Alliance for the Presidential Majority (AMP) avoided confrontations between their partisans, using the list of telephone numbers distributed to all participants at the end of the training to communicate directly with leaders and settle the situation. The peaceful resolution of a succession conflict in the Hutu community of North Kivu was due to the mediation of a former participant, who was later on elected president of that community. In another instance, an official of the National Information Agency (ANR), who had participated in a training workshop, intervened to avoid the stigmatization of the Banyamulenges in their places of religious worship. During tensions in Minembwe, a Munyamulenge
workshop participant was able to call another participant in Bukavu to get precise news about an alarming rumor that members of the Banyamulenge community were being disarmed. The information enabled the Bukavu person to dissipate the panic within that community. Finally, during the seizure of the town of Sake in late 2006, a group from North Kivu was created to mediate between Laurent Nkunda and President Kabila.

An example of resolving a political issue that could have led to tensions and fighting arose in connection with politics in North Kivu. There are no Tutsis in the provincial assembly there, but surprisingly, its deputies elected a Tutsi as a senator for the National Assembly. This came about through the influence of participants in an Initiative workshop. The governor, who led the major party in the province, realized that the party could not govern effectively without the participation of the Tutsis. However, no Tutsis had served as deputies in the provincial parliament. Consequently, they brainstormed and decided to fill the gap by trying to elect a Tutsi as one of their MPs to the National Assembly.

Obtaining enough votes for this choice was difficult, however. It required persuading the local chiefs from various other ethnic groups in the province to support the idea so they would influence their deputies. The workshop participant who was given that task went around to the chiefs and suggested that they could only live peacefully in North Kivu if they had a Tutsi senator. He was convinced that he was able to persuade them because many of the leaders had participated earlier in the Initiative’s workshops in Goma. In the training, they had engaged in the SIMSOC exercise, the main message of which was that a society as a whole can survive only when the groups within it cooperate. The leaders were receptive to the need to cooperate by supporting the Tutsi as an MP. The election of a Tutsi senator in that region reflects a notable willingness to take the route of inclusion and to share power.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of how the Initiative helped to avert further killing arose with regard to the Goma peace conference, held in January 2008. The idea for some kind of Goma peace conference came about through the initiative of the participants in several workshops that had been held in Goma in 2006 and 2007. Discussion had occurred among Kivu participants and in the Initiative about holding such an event, for it could allow local leaders, including traditional chiefs and provincial authorities, to talk together about peace, security, and development. Several of those participants felt the need for some kind of larger conference so that people in the region would be able to talk openly together. Such a conference could take up refugee issues, for example, in a balanced way. One prominent national leader from the region expressed the view in late 2007 that the Initiative could help to promote implementation of the Nairobi agreement, such as by holding a conference on the
Kivus. Because the FDLR and illegal armed groups such as Nkunda’s CNDP and the Mai Mai remained obstacles to implementing Nairobi agreement, they felt such a gathering might help in getting armed groups to be more flexible and perhaps foster a split in the FDLR. That would require a concrete plan to disarm them, but there was a lack of will in the government and a weak capacity of FARDC to engage them.

The question was how to approach the design of the conference so it would be fruitful while not be dominated by any one perspective. There was awareness that President Kabila had an incentive to show some results before the local elections. Yet it was felt that if the organization of the conference was left to the government, for example, the moderators chosen would tend to take extremist views and seek publicity. The event would require people who knew the Kivus and the region to lend a moderate voice and facilitate the conference. One way to organize the conference, for example, would be to divide it into four topical groups, each of which would be provided some training and then develop a plan.

Ultimately, it was decided that the Initiative would train a small group in the Kivus who would then lay out a plan for the conference as well as spread the influence of the training through the conference. At the conference, approximately 250 of the 1000 participants were ILCCE alumni, and these individuals played a key role in facilitating the negotiation of the Goma accord.

The resulting Goma peace agreement called for a ceasefire and outlined a number of next steps to ensure lasting peace in the Kivus. Notwithstanding the return of war later in 2008, the Goma conference was clearly one of the most impressive results from the Initiative as a whole. One participant said that in part due to the workshops, the local population no longer linked Nkunda and the Tutsis, but distinguished between them. If this were to continue, the leaders would no longer incite the population to use machetes against each other. In a similar view, although the Goma peace conference did not produce peace, the renewed fighting was not due to local armed groups. They had been changed, and in fact, were “born again” in the previous workshops. They had developed a different attitude, one with trust and vision, and this in turn affected the Goma conference. In this view, if the event had not been held, the local killing would have been on a wider scale, because it was harder to spread hate messages. One participant summed up the event as “a miracle.” Another was sure that it would not have occurred except for the moderating influence of the ILCCE. A representative of one major Western government said that “you have done work we should have done.”

**Impacts on policies and institutions.** Do the workshop graduates take actions that influence policies that are followed by an institution or government as a
whole? In fact, another offshoot of the workshops has been the influence some participants have had in reshaping the procedures, regulations, and policies of particular organizations, in the wider polity, and of the state. One participant mentioned a small non-political group that meets together periodically and makes use of what they learned in the workshop to reflect on the future of the Congo and speak informally to deputies or ministers occasionally about the changes they believe are needed. Participants seek to strengthen the group and give it a more deliberate role, possibly in the provinces or between the provinces, but without the involvement of the ILCCE. A media participant said that after her workshop, she had meetings with fellow journalists to convey what she had learned. Workshops and seminars were organized to show journalists how to try to resist the pressures on them, such as from the organizations’ owners.

One well-placed workshop participant was consulted by the chairman of the African Union (AU) about the continuing conflicts in the east. Inspired by the workshops, he forcefully stated in his written report that a lot of the problem lay in how the government tended to talk about Congolese Tutsis as if they were not their countrymen. He suggested that the Tutsis should be acknowledged as having the same rights as any other Congolese. The report urged the president to task his government officials with openly affirming that Tutsis, Hutus, and others are our brothers. He sought to change the mindset of the public and educate them that the future of the nation may even lie with members of minority groups becoming its leaders. He expressed the view that the DRC was being tested by the Tutsi issue to become pluralistic, just as South Africa had dealt with relations between blacks and whites. The AU chairman took the report to the president. He reportedly was surprised that the author had changed so much in his views, but he said he agreed with him “80 percent.” The National Assembly president also received the document and said he agreed 100 percent.

This participant also worked with a major in the army who had participated in a workshop to help him identify the causes of rebellions in the FARDC. Based on the workshop, they did a mapping of the conflicts and came to the conclusion that the rebellions arose because the army was not receiving their salaries and lacked mentorship, and so they organized themselves to earn income from the mines. It was not an ethnic issue. The new relationships also produced agreements on joint actions. One civil society participant mentioned that getting to know others facilitated his ability to carry out a modest step with a government official concerning the government budget. In another instance, an initiative was started to create a national structure regarding transparency in the extractive industries, and the official called him to help with the effort.
Impacts on civil society capabilities for peace. Relatively fewer impacts were cited by participants that relate to efforts to influence the wider public discourse or the general civil society, such as through the media or by creating a broad-based constituency for peace. However, a notable exception was the media peace campaign in which participants engaged following the Kinshasa post-electoral violence. Also, the editor of a major Kinshasa newspaper who participated in the media workshop said the biggest lesson he had gained from it was that one has to consider more than one’s own interests in a given issue. In his analyses for the paper, he urges readers to take others’ positions into account, such as Rwanda’s in relation to the DRC’s.

THE BROKERING FUNCTION

While its workshops to build collaborative capacity among DRC leaders constitute the main focus of the Initiative, those activities do not completely capture all the effects of what the Initiative has actually achieved. The value of the Initiative does not lie solely in the workshops and whatever results flow from them through the participants. It also comes from informal activities that the country coordinator and the program director have been able to do in between and beyond conducting the workshops through less visible networking among DRC leaders and international bodies. For example, following the Goma conference, the French foreign minister on a visit to the DRC and accompanied by the Congolese foreign minister asked that the ILCCE bring together a cross section of participants in Goma to speak to him about the future of security and development in the east as a result of the conference. These nodal functions the Initiative performs informally and in a low-key way assists the international community in carrying out more effective international actions and fosters better relations between them and DRC leaders.

The fact that several donors fund the Initiative provides in itself a kind of common focal point for them, for they have been eager to show some results in a gigantic country that has barely begun to establish a functioning state. Given that, the country coordinator has provided a trusted and reliable source of nuanced information shared on a discreet basis about the latest political currents, and thus a potential resource to guide their decisions. At times, the country coordinator has seized opportunities for advancing peace and sought to arrange ways to address it. In one instance, for example, he arranged for officers from a scheduled military workshop to make contact with an armed group in their region, and for their helicopter flight into the bush.
On his part, the program director has met with ambassadors and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) when in Kinshasa to share information on the changing situation and hear their concerns and suggested ways that the initiative might help. He has occasionally also communicated messages informally from Washington, such as when the US State Department asked him to urge the governments of Burundi and Rwanda to buy into the Tripartite Commission.

KEY FACTORS ACCOUNTING FOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

It is important in assessing the initiative to extract the features that were especially crucial to achieving the reported results.

Program ingredients. Clearly, any detached view of the initiative would judge that among the most important factors that have enabled the Initiative to exert influence are the skills, persona, and temperaments of two of the principals: the program director and country coordinator. Their balanced approach, open personalities, and good reputations gained from their respective experiences in the country and region were crucial in gaining respect for the Initiative and enhancing its gravitas. Among other things, the personal enthusiasm of the program director has been a strong selling point.

On the ground, an essential element behind the successes of the Initiative is the persona of its country coordinator, who has been fully committed to the work and pursues it constantly. His years of work in the country as a humanitarian official during the war give him great credibility. His modesty and sensitive demeanor have earned him the trust and respect of a large number of Congolese influentials. He has been able to gain a deep understanding of Congolese culture and its outlook on the wider world, as well as the perspectives of individual personalities who are shaping the fluidities of Congolese politics. Because he has worked in the UN system, he understands it well, and so is frequently asked about the Congo by UN and other international officials, enabling him to have some indirect influence over the direction of their policies. The working relationship among the three implementing organizations is also good, and the project has a strong institutional base in the WWICS.

In addition, with regard to the impact of particular workshops, the effectiveness of competent and congenial trainer-facilitator relationships have been critical. The trainers used by the Initiative are world-class—highly professional and very sensitive to the complex social-psychological environment in which they operate. Such reliance on recognized and talented individuals is sometimes
erroneously considered a weak spot from the point of view of conventional development program concerns about replicability. However, that ingredient can be built in by involving other individuals with these valuable characteristics as a key to a successful program in different country contexts.

Another key advantage compared to development programs that stay within one sector or other or one region is its flexibility. The workshops engage a considerable range of groups with differing roles in the peace process. The fact that the program operates on several fronts in a country and on a long-term basis also helps to instill trust in it on the part of the participants and others in the country who observe it at work. Closely related, an important factor without which the Initiative could not achieve its results is the Initiative’s ability to bring into its orbit an exceptionally diverse group of Congolese leaders, from all social sectors. The fact that the Initiative deliberately selects as participants influential individual leaders means by definition that its participants were generally likely to be already highly talented in certain relevant respects. Indeed, some of the participants who were interviewed were already somewhat disposed to the Initiative’s way of thinking. In one case, for example, a participant who had been so inspired by a workshop to take actions on his own had written a book on peace and conflict a few years before. One was a Ph.D. in psychology who had held a high position in the Ministry of Education. Another was a professor.

**Contextual supports.** Other important factors leading to the Initiative’s results have to do with its context. One participant pointed to the end of the war and several years of peace under an accord as a basic condition that permitted the possibility of engendering new relationships. The Initiative is informally but deliberately linked to a larger multi-faceted international and domestic peace process that has considerable momentum behind it. In addition to the critical presence and visibility of the UN through its peacekeeping force, MONUC, for example, other international agencies are carrying out a variety of actions to help prepare for the elections, such as sponsoring media training and promulgating and enforcing a code of conduct on political candidates and the media during the initial phase of the Initiative. The code excluded media from coverage for a certain number of days if they violated it. In between the first and second round of elections in 2006, the code of conduct was discussed with representatives of the two candidates so it could be improved and a committee was set up to immediately respond to any problems that arose.

In addition, the early support given to the Initiative by top officials of MONUC and of an international diplomatic body set up in the DRC, the
International Committee in Support of the Transition, known as CIAT, helped to sustain the Initiative and to guide its strategic planning. CIAT was a diplomatic coordinating body involving France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and South Africa that was created under the Sun City Peace Agreement in 2002 to accompany the transition. Although the UN Security Council’s interest in the DRC waned after the elections, CIAT continued to play a monitoring and guiding role for some months afterwards. All the parties saw the necessity for a third-party international body to help rebuild trust, guarantee implementation of the peace agreement, support transition, and facilitate consensus building. Connected to MONUC through the SRSG to the DRC, who chaired the CIAT, the members shared the mandates of establishing interim government, transitioning warring parties to political parties, and demilitarization. Thus, CIAT constituted an important diplomatic mechanism by giving advice, exerting pressure, and managing tensions to support the demilitarization of politics in a coordinated way.

The Initiative consulted extensively with CIAT members when first deciding whether to start the project in the DRC. Although CIAT did not issue a formal endorsement of the Initiative, it received strong support from key individual members, including the SRSG. As one member put it, CIAT was a “willing accomplice,” and thereby added important gravitas to the undertaking. After that start-up, moreover, each time the program director or other Washington staff visited the DRC, the ILCCE always met again with a broad range of CIAT and other ambassadors, particularly the British, American, French, South African, and Angolan.

International actors representing the major countries promoting the DRC peace process have also played other roles supportive of ILCCE activities. Most notably, the Goma conference design made provision for a group of international observers representing the UN and other non-Congolese parties, who were designated as “external facilitators.” They attended the proceedings and made suggestions to the conference moderators; they also suggested possible international support that could be put behind such ideas. In their preliminary report to the conference moderators, the observers noted that the proceedings were characterized by great dignity, a spirit of mutual respect and openness, and willingness to listen. They noted a consensus that the time for war had passed, that the Constitution and democratic institutions should be respected, and that all foreign armed groups should be repatriated. They urged the conference to seek a “quick win” and suggested that a call could be made for a durable ceasefire by all armed groups, foreign and domestic. They also suggested that the conference could make a strong call to implement the Nairobi communiqué (previously negotiated between Rwanda and the DRC) to lead
to the peaceful resolution of the FDLR problem and thus the presence of other foreign armed groups.

Civil society groups who were not necessarily represented by participants in the workshops, such as clergymen, also became active. Some domestic interest groups were active in responding promptly to the fighting in Kinshasa through press releases, rallying around the message that pulling the parties back to the negotiation table and resuming peaceful dialogues on consolidating peace and stability was the only way out of the current turmoil. Although relatively few international NGOs were prominent actors in the DRC because of the size of the country, Congolese institutions such as churches and small domestic NGOs were playing peacebuilding roles. Finally, the project could not hold any workshops without the implicit agreement of the president of the DRC. He apparently saw the workshops as at least a way to calm the situation.

A less obvious factor that is conducive to achieving the objectives of the Initiative was the reservoir of latent values that the Congolese people still harbor, despite years of conflict and destitution. It became clear in observing the military workshops, for example, that that was not the first time the participants were exposed to ideas about working toward greater good. Five days of workshops alone would not have produced the kind of emotional reactions to such values that were evident among even these battle-hardened officers. In fact, they had undoubtedly heard the sentiments before in school, or in church, and from the nationalist ideals in the past. The workshop’s values resonated with their own highest military ethic, such as patriotism and the need to “care for the lost sheep” in the battalion when in the field. Significantly, a senior participant said at the end, “thank you for “reminding us of these things” [emphasis added].

**LIMITATIONS**

The study also brings to light what the Initiative has not been able to achieve. Such shortfalls and the reasons for them help to gain an accurate characterization of the inherent potential and realistic limits of efforts of this type of engagement, within overall efforts to address post-conflict state-building.

Obviously, not all workshop participants can be expected to be equally affected by the experience. Even with regard to the most widely reported impacts, in the attitudes and closer relationships of the participants for example,
one participant expressed skepticism, saying “their talking and eating with
one another does not mean they trusted one another.” Another surmised
that some of the participants were clearly unmoved by the experience, and
that they still “had on the old clothes.” As to whether everyone carries the
skills and attitudes into their own personal relationships and jobs, follow-up
workshops have seen participants lay out very concrete initiatives they had
taken to extend their learning to others. But one participant pointed out
that this was often quite difficult. When they return to their home areas, it
is very hard to pass on what they have learned beyond simply talking about
the happy experience they shared. The media participant who held meetings
with fellow journalists to convey what she had learned and to encourage
them to resist the political pressures on them said these were informal occa-
sions and lacked materials and clear goals, so she found it difficult to get the
message across.

Another participant underlined the same problem: putting into action
one’s commitments, such as to meet together again. Each participant makes
a commitment to do something in their own community or institution to
bring people to sit down together. The relationships have only occasion-
ally carried over to further agreements or participants working together on
an ongoing basis. As another participant noted, after the first few meetings
with another participant on an issue, they ceased meeting. He affirmed that
his meetings with his counterparts needed to continue, but it was not clear
whether they did or how they would occur. As to the workshops’ effect on
the will to compromise, a participant opined that they provided an open-
ing but the “open hand was difficult.” Also, the nature of projects emerging
from the workshops has sometimes been quite modest. One participant com-
mented that the results of the activity he was involved were not dramatic and
did not influence the peace.

A further criterion has to do with the objective of creating a network or
cadre of leaders and policymakers who have committed themselves to an in-
clusive, collaborative, and cohesive decision-making process that can manage
the transition and govern the country. In a recent document, the Initiative
itself judges that while it has been successful to date in training hundreds of
Congolese leaders from a wide spectrum of political, institutional, ethnic,
and regional backgrounds, it has yet to create a sufficient “critical mass.” It
thus sees the building of mutual trust and collaborative capacity among key
Congolese leaders, both inside and outside of governing institutions, as a work
in progress—with further effort especially required to engage key leaders as
yet not involved.
 CONSTRAINTS

Implementation Challenges. The Initiative’s shortfalls have arisen from a variety of factors, some of which were within its control and a matter of choice, and thus possibly constitute missed opportunities. As an example of the former, one participant felt that when they stopped seeing each other, a workshop’s trainees lost the vision that they had seen. His sense was that one cannot create the “spirit of Nganda” without deliberately continuing the process. He likened the workshop experience to being converted to a religious faith. As with such an experience, to keep it going, he reflected, one needs to practice it by, in a sense, “praying.” Then each person can continue to preach the good news. But if the participants don’t meet more or less regularly, they won’t continue to feel the faith. Apparently, it is unrealistic to expect many to reconvene on their own.

One participant felt that the fact that their workshop commitments did not always work out was due not only to lack of trust but to the lack of a means to organize. “We separate and then forget. Events occur quickly that interfere.” Another said the Initiative lacks a follow-up structure, some organization of trained people to help the participants put into practice what they have learned. Everyone goes back to work in Parliament, the army, or the government, he said, so it takes effort from all sides, and a leader is needed. One participant noted that the Training of Trainers group had not had time to meet to discuss plans regarding the changing situation in North Kivu.

The evaluators also noted that the Initiative’s follow-up activities are irregular and unsystematic. The lack of any systematic follow-up to maintain the bind between participants of the same workshop on one hand, and participants of all the workshops combined on the other hand, was seen as a weakness in planning and execution that could affect its results. In the same way, there is a lack of a sustained and harmonized connection at the liaison level with the goal of keeping all the donor partners informed and gathering their opinions and inputs.

A similar gap in follow-up arose after the Goma conference. The international observers had urged the Goma conference to think ahead to ongoing mechanisms for dialogue and concertation that would be needed to carry forward its work, such as a standing conference structure and strengthening existing mechanisms. They suggested that steps toward such agreements could be “seeded” within the ongoing conference structure and get its blessing, such as in the plenary sessions. They affirmed they were ready to lend their weight and expertise to follow-up mechanisms. International support might be provided, for example, to local peace committees to investigate and mediate potential ceasefire violations. These ideas apparently were not pursued. One participant
noted that there was a period of two months between the conferences and the outbreak of new fighting when the participants could have met. Some did take initiative to speak with the president, but they did not organize themselves.

A different regret concerned the methods of the Goma conference workshop. A participant liked the practical exercises for their relevance to current affairs, but was disappointed with the reluctance of the project to get into actual specific local problems, which he thought was due to not wanting to offend anyone. He thought this limitation needed to be faced.

While some of these shortcomings were partly matters of choice among competing priorities, they were also undoubtedly affected by constraints on how much the Initiative could do in view of the lack of sufficient resources and staff. To its credit, the Initiative has been able to gain the confidence of several donors on a more or less ongoing basis. Ordinarily, donors tend to feel more comfortable when a funded project can state specific measures and indicators of expected impact. This is difficult when an activity has to have its eyes and ears fixed on the changing political developments and look for opportunities to influence them in positive directions, thus being ever flexible with regard to its next steps. But donors’ philosophical and financial support have continued to sustain the Initiative over several years. Their continuity of support was helped by the fact that the UNDP Kinshasa managed a “trust fund” that was created to receive funds from donors and partners of the project for the first few years of the project.

At the same time, however, the project has faced the continuing difficulty of locking-in long-term funding commitments. Donors also sometimes take considerable time between pledging and actually providing the promised funds. As a result, there have been periodic cash-flow problems. These sometimes affect the flexibility and the speed of the workshops, for considerable time and effort is diverted to constant cultivation of donors and fundraising. All the Wilson Center implementing partners need support for their own institution building; moreover, and coordination across partners to raise funds is difficult to arrange. The decision-making process scattered across three continents makes the regular running of the project complex and labor intensive.

Regarding staffing, unsurprisingly, the ILCCE is greatly overworked. The problem is not entirely lack of funds. Some positions have been budgeted for, but it has been difficult to find staff with several needed attributes: a profound understanding of the political environment, ability both with regard to political know-how/gravitas and language skills for communicating with both local and international players and donors, lack of a strong political bias, and the ability to manage a local office well. Another staffing problem is the absence of a trainer resident in the DRC who can adapt to the vagaries of Congolese
politics so as to be utilized at any moment. Overall, the time absorbed by these various immediate tasks has also caused the project to sideline consideration of longer-range plans.

**Contextual factors.** A number of factors external to the project’s implementation also have limited its pace, scope, and impacts. For one thing, the immense size of the DRC makes it extremely difficult to create the critical mass required for cultural and/or institutional impact. The process requires far more time and intensive efforts in such a vast country than in a smaller one.

Other expectable constraints are nonetheless vexing. The issue of getting approval from officials of the host national governments is often a major problem. Scheduling workshops may require months of work following up with people just for them to read a letter of request. This frequent problem impedes programming on a regular basis. In one instance, the project was unable to get a governor’s approval for a workshop for almost seven months, although it sent numerous letters and attempted to contact him using many avenues. It finally got his attention when a journalist who knew the governor well met with him and encouraged his staff to pay attention to the request. An American acquaintance who knew him also called him to set up a phone call with the country coordinator.

Certain political events also intruded that slowed down progress and created barriers to continuing relationships and cooperation. Most notably, the two rounds of presidential and legislative elections in 2006 slowed down ILCCE activities. Part way into the second series of workshops, the national elections were held in July and the run-off elections for the presidency and provincial parliaments were held in October. The different ballots that led to the Third Republic completely monopolized the time of the leaders who were targeted for the planned workshops.

The elections also introduced a possible weakness in the Initiative’s theory of change. One participant felt that the benefits of closer relationships were thwarted during the electoral campaign periods. Another said that “time passed and the elections brought new confrontations.” People were at loggerheads even from the same party, and some disputes got out of control. Most notably, despite the fact that representatives of the Kabila and Bemba camps had participated in the Nganda workshops, whatever they had gained did not prevent the election violence, perhaps because it did not filter up to their respective leaders. However, although violence during an election season is not uncommon in fragile states, some interruption of the workshop process would come from even peaceful elections, for they can bring about personnel changes. Because many participants in the earlier workshops lost their positions as officials or
their relative influence, the change in the government caused the Initiative to lose some of the value gained in its initial workshops.

More fundamentally, although the elections were an integral step by the DRC toward achieving peace, as the ILCCE analysis itself has pointed out, they can have the effect of creating new divisions in a country’s politics. In the DRC, many of the participants in the Nganda process that was held before the elections were prominent. Some had well-recognized family names, such as Tshombe, Mobutu, and Lumumba. However, the elections brought to power a new group of elected politicians and brought the country to a new phase in its politics. While before the elections, power was exercised by influential individuals without clear authority, the newly elected incumbents at least nominally in charge had a more definitive evidence of the legitimacy of their authority. At the same time, this was a new political class, most (but not all) without known names, and generally young and inexperienced. Therefore, the new incumbents were motivated to build names for themselves.

In the same vein, some constraints on participants being able to agree with each other and act on issues together came about simply by commonplace differences among them due to their competing professional interests and organizational roles. For example, a natural resources partnership set up after an earlier workshop was apparently scuttled: “The election came and now we are separated.” Such slippages have little to do directly with the larger ethnic divisions and conflicts in the country. They are a function of the emerging new institutional divisions of labor, whether or not the participants deeply distrusted each other on account of previous conflict. For example, some participants belonged to political parties that took conflicting positions. Opponents in election campaigns would not be expected to associate with each other frequently, if at all. Also, the post-election legislative process may require normal political tactics by competing party heads to outmaneuver opponents such as to get laws passed.

A similar expected source of separation was seen in the reaction of the civil society members of a joint government-NGO commission to the fact that they were not taken seriously there. As in any other society, they felt their most effective work would be done independently, outside that structure. This follows a common notion in a complex society of the proper structuring of roles between governments and NGOs. Another natural reason that differences persisted between participants was their differing regional experiences. The local differences in the Kivus were said by one participant to be considerably harder to overcome, due to deeply ingrained and more traditional social structures, than those among residents of Kinshasa, where relationships are more fluid. Their relationships may also simply reflect the cultural styles typical of differing regions of a country.
In sum, the unfolding process of post-conflict peacebuilding and national integration was itself creating obstacles, perhaps inevitably, that hampered the achievement of certain meanings of the Initiative’s goal of creating “cohesion.” Thus, a distinction needs to be made between, on one hand, deep mistrust that arises out of the divisiveness of a less-integrated society with a troubled history of conflict, and, on the other, the ordinary distance that exists between individuals in a more stable and complex society who have a lot at stake professionally in competing with one another or at least working along separate lines.

The problem cited most frequently by participants and staff as hampering the Initiative from achieving its desired impacts was the lack of involvement in the workshops of the very top leaders, such as the president and his principal advisors. A serious limitation arose from the absence of the leaders who were shaping the main events in the country, indicating some lack of leverage over them. In the project in Burundi, former presidents and heads of ministries are involved and are seen to be working together more effectively. But many such powerful officials have not participated in DRC workshops. In the election campaign, the two leaders of the groups that had clashed with each other did not participate in the training, despite several invitations addressed to them. In the Goma conference, as one participant pointed out, while Ruberwa was present, Bemba was absent.

It was clearly not for lack of effort that some top DRC leaders have not honored the Initiative with their participation. From discussion with several participants, President Kabila is aware of the ILCCE’s work due to result of Nganda I, and it would not be able to do its work without his implicit approval. He has clearly sanctioned the work and in fact, has expressed his pleasure and support to visitors. But he has not explicitly endorsed it, which would increase its impact. Nor has the president ever met with the coordinator, despite the project trying many ways to arrange an appointment. In addition, a long-sought consultation with President Kabila and the parliamentary leaders on the content of the program and the participants has never taken place. It seems that the presidency and other leaders have not always judged this initiative to be essential or desirable, indicating some lack of political will preventing the Initiative from reaching all levels of DRC leadership.

The reason also seems to go beyond the normal problem of it being difficult to keep high-profile leaders involved in a complete workshop of five days or two days for a follow-up workshop. One participant who had met with the president had given him the certificate from the workshop and suggested he feel free to use the trainees as specialists in conflict resolution. Before the fighting broke out again, another participant honored a commitment he had made at the workshop, and went with a delegation to visit the president, where they
urged him to talk to the rebel groups. Though he spent five hours with him, the Initiative did not discernibly change his direction.

One participant opined that the reason for the diffidence was pride: “They do not want to change their ways.” He thought that a group of “untouchables” seem to consider themselves above the other leaders. Such a view may also explain why some of the Initiative’s activities have not had their desired impact on DRC conflicts. Despite the progress that had been made on the ground by the Goma conference, for example, the president’s decision in January 2009 to cooperate militarily with Rwanda in capturing Nkunda showed a disregard for building on those recent interim developments in the Kivus. The president’s change in direction apparently came about because of repeated military defeats and on the Rwandans’ side, an exposé in December 2008 of Rwanda’s support for armed groups.

More widely, the Office of the Presidency is viewed as something of a black box even by diplomats, who have been unable to fully comprehend its internal political dynamics. Hardliners within the Office of the Presidency, and the president himself, have disregarded negotiated peace agreements by re-launching military campaigns against Nkunda. Apparently, the Presidency has been most reluctant to see itself as one of the belligerents to the conflict, and rather, has sought to place itself above the conflict. This might explain why it has kept some distance from the cohesion-building work that was ongoing at deputy, intermediate, and local levels.

In any case, one participant blamed the continuing conflicts in the east on the lack of responsible leaders. In his view, because these leaders are not able to do reconstruction of schools and roads or punish the exploiters of the country’s resources, they have an interest in continuing the war. As a participant stated it, the workshops in North Kivu have helped the province, but the war is not at that level. As one put it, “those who fight never participate in workshops,” like Kabila, Rwanda, and the FDLR. In North and South Kivu, the government chose the option of war so that the peaceful activities of the trainers had no place and were not considered. Another believed that it was an open secret when the Amani agreement was signed that the president was already preparing for war. So the military campaign did not arise from local people but from higher-level leaders.

At the same time, however, such attitudes may be slowly changing. One participant reported meeting with President Kabila in 2008. When he mentioned that North Kivu MPs were going to meet with Rwandans, the president’s first reaction was feeling uncomfortable and said that the mistrust will persist. However, upon reflection, he was more receptive to the idea.
Finally, there were constraints that no amount of shared experience with the Initiative’s norms or training in its skills could by itself overcome. With regard to the effort in Kinshasa to contain the factional fighting during the election, for example, while some workshop participants were active in this effort, the relevant set of actors was considerably larger than the workshop group and had to involve very high-level players, including the ambassadors of all the major countries active in the DRC.

The difference in scale became evident in the Goma conference. The external facilitators suggested that the conference alone was unlikely to be able to resolve the most sensitive issues being discussed there, such as the presence of foreign groups on DRC soil. They urged that the ceasefire be followed immediately by steps toward disengagement and demilitarization, possibly backed by MONUC deployments to protect civilian populations and assure humanitarian assistance. For such complex issues to be resolved, additional specific mediation processes would be needed to agree on precise modalities for disengagement, brassage, and repatriation of foreign armed groups. Such formal and high-level diplomacy could only be handled in other, wider arenas. Other governmental players would be required to undertake the challenges, beyond those that the Initiative had produced through its workshops. Thus, even if consummated, agreements need to be implemented through strong security guarantees and economic or other incentives to overcome the reluctance to follow through. Unfortunately, in this instance, the international players did not follow through on the agreed Goma provisions and the ceasefire did not hold.

The workshops typically urge the participants not to revert to the habit of blaming Congo’s problems on others, including higher-ups or on external factors such as the Rwandans or the international community. Instead, they are urged to think about and take responsibility for things they themselves could do in the coming months. Nevertheless, participants themselves correctly pointed out that some of the problems they were identifying did require the engagement of others with greater authority and power. They often felt unable to change their wider environment, which thwarted their ability to apply the norms and commitments they were affirming. They attributed the above constraints to the behavior of those at higher levels of power. A similar point was made by a participant at another workshop, who noted that any initiative will not always be able to affect the “real actors” who act as “spoilers,” for they are not always evident and stay hidden.
THE UPSHOT

The ILCCE has established itself as a credible and trusted entity that is seen to have only the interests of Congolese at heart. Having trained over 600 Congolese leaders at national, provincial and local levels—from local elders to military commanders to a vice president of the Republic—it has introduced to a multitude of key actors who are able to influence major currents in DRC society the alluring idea that mutual understanding of shared interests, effective communication, and negotiation skills and the building of trust offer practical means to resolve ethnic, political, and policy disagreements and to achieve overall progress in ways that yield concrete benefits for them individually as well as for their nation. The Initiative can cite plausible evidence that the participants’ exposure to the training experience has had discernible consequences in their subsequent outlooks, motivations, and behavior. A number of the participant leaders are known to have taken specific actions, individually and collectively, in important arenas that have created an environment more favorable to state-building, such as by averting political tensions, resolving specific disputes, promoting certain policies, and mitigating certain conflicts that probably saved lives.

Moreover, the findings presented above represent only what could be gathered through a limited opportunity to study the Initiative in retrospect. Inherent to an activity that has involved so many people, it can only skim the surface to pull out illustrative impacts. The practical inability to trace all the ramifying impacts should not be read to mean that only the reported results occurred. A more extensive study could more fully identify many other impacts that the Initiative may have had through the actions of hundreds of its “graduates.”

Evidently therefore, the ILCCE does bring to the world of peacebuilding an innovative and productive approach that few other efforts in the field provide except perhaps incidentally and partially. The ILCCE’s particular methods
and tools provide a uniquely valuable ingredient—a missing link—in standard overall peace processes by convening key influentials who, while often interacting directly, seldom develop trusting relationships even after a peace agreement and by engendering a collaborative mindset that motivates and encourages them to address specific problems in consolidating the peace. What it achieves that other more technocratic approaches do not, is to lubricate and expedite the indigenous but poorly-functioning processes for making political and governing decisions and implementing them so that they address issues, disagreements, and tensions earlier and more quickly, frontally, and smoothly, and thus more productively. Without this jumpstart, the relationships within the governing processes would be even more susceptible to the turbulent, dissonant, unilateral, and often coercive politics of post-conflict failed or weak states, during which misunderstandings, misperceptions, suspicions, and resentments frequently lead to disruptive disputes or passive aggression that slow down or block progress.

Obviously, technical and financial support through development and other programs is still needed to build the DRC’s physical and institutional infrastructures. But the Initiative creates a bridge between the hearts and minds of the society’s leaders and those technical tasks by offering a venue, collaborative-oriented relationships, and set of skills and tools for the leaders to work out their own reasons to dedicate themselves more fully to dealing with those challenges, emboldened by the awareness that they are not alone in the effort. As one participant stated, the Initiative appeals to national pride by “showing us the way to break the hold of the West and charting the course to our own aspirations.” While not a substitute for international diplomacy through official channels either, it can ease the task of domestic consensus-building by creating a platform and atmosphere that allows participants to undertake their larger tasks through adopting more constructive standards of behavior.

MOVING FORWARD: FROM TRUST-BUILDING TO STATE-BUILDING

Notwithstanding its several accomplishments, the Initiative’s influence on the overall peacebuilding and state-building process has been limited, especially with regard to government actions and policies. This is due not entirely to its own limited resources but more fundamentally to the dominance of larger forces that are shaping events in the post-conflict and transitional environment. These forces include everything from the need to get official approvals for holding workshops from busy or wary officials to the workings of high national
politics and perceived regional strategic considerations as exercised through the power and prerogatives of top leaders. Given these constraints, are there any changes in the way the Initiative approaches its task in the coming years that might utilize its methods to greater effect? Staying within the general bounds of its current methods, theory of change, and scale, what steps might increase its effectiveness so as to have even more impact on peace writ large?

The preceding study gives rise to certain suggestions both for the Initiative itself and for other international actors in the DRC, as well as possibly for policies in other post-conflict settings. While enhancing the value of the ILCCE in particular, these steps also point to ways to advance the three international concerns that were introduced at the outset of this monograph: integrating conflict-sensitivity into international policies; engendering local ownership through country capacity-building; and generating tailored and integrated peacebuilding strategies.

**Program steps.** Some donors perceived the Initiative as essentially providing a needed “therapy” for the country’s leaders, as one ambassador put it. This acknowledges an ILCCE contribution but also implies a limitation. The Initiative definitely has identified and helped to remedy deficiencies in self-confidence, motivation, mutual trust, and communication that hamper the peace process. Beyond such influence, however, the Initiative can be even more effective if it adds onto the standard repertoire of mainly social-psychological methods in the workshops additional ways to apply the experiential learning that the participants gain in order to tackle selected substantive policy or organizational problems and/or conflicts.

While the Initiative is gradually growing a group of energized and committed leaders, it recognizes it has not yet created a sufficiently wide and robust leadership corps to undertake in a new way the challenges of the DRC’s transition to effective government. Its chief remedy is to seek to build mutual trust and collaborative capacity among additional numbers of key Congolese leaders and sees this as still necessary if significant progress is to be realized. That is, the Initiative tends to look for opportunities to spread its approach to more and more individuals and groups, rather than to work in more depth with particular groups, such as those it has already trained.

Instead of continuing to bring its basic messages to ever-wider circles of initiates and unfolding the same methods to new gatherings, however, the Initiative arguably could be more effective by probing more intensively into specific and urgent issue areas using the skilled people who are now within its fold. Trying to increase national cohesion in the 12th largest country in the world at multiple national and provincial levels may be overly ambitious.
With a staff of four, it may not be feasible to address the issue of cohesive leadership even in the provinces now envisioned—North and South Kivu, Ituri, Katanga, and Bas-Congo—while also working with national level players in the Senate, National Assembly, and Armed Forces. The country’s size, ethnic diversity, and centrifugal geographic, political and economic forces create an immense expanse for a once-over approach. But an alternative that might yield more cost-effective and discernible benefits is to pursue certain selected but especially critical problems and policy issues in a more intensive way through more depth and less breadth. This alternative approach would mean that, once the project establishes trust and instills its skills and values in a particular professional group, it concentrates the energies of the same workshop groups and their immediate colleagues on one or two key issue areas of special strategic value to the country at the present moment.

Several participants interviewed expressed in differing ways the desire for moving in this kind of direction. One workshop participant stated that in view of the enormity of the problems in the Congo, more time was needed. Another observed that not only ethical but also technical and professional skills are needed. A third participant liked the issue focus at the end of the workshop but suggested convening the workshop group subsequently to pursue some particular issue, which he suggested might be at the local level, and even meeting on site in the affected area. A related policy issue could be the respective prerogatives of the central and provincial authorities.

Other participants suggested numerous foci for the more in-depth workshops of this kind. The two participants who had been inspired by a workshop to do a mapping of a conflict concluded that beyond holding the conflict transformation workshops, the lack of mentorship in the army and the army’s exploitation of the mines needed to be addressed. Others suggested the application of this approach to substantive issues as diverse as forestry (“The DRC is the world’s second lung”), emerging social fault lines, Katanga, different plans for security sector reform such as views of the Ministry of Defense versus the army, improving education to remedy the poor human resources of the country, the administration of justice (“We have laws but they are not respected”), and the economy (“It is too dependent on prices of goods in external markets”). Still other issues mentioned were the problem of who controls local land and resources, mining concessions, and decentralization.

Regarding some of these issues, specific disputes or contentious conflicts may exist where lack of agreement is blocking progress. The external project evaluators of the Initiative indicated that it was unclear whether the project’s ultimate aim is seeking technical transfer to build a new leadership, or aiming for the creation and implementation of mechanisms of conflict resolution. To
the extent the aim is the latter, an approach more centered on specific antagonisms might be advisable, such as relationships between the central and provincial government, between the national and provincial assemblies, the presence of the FDLR, land conflicts, identity questions, or the role of neighboring countries in the Congolese conflict.

Along these lines, one of the participants recommended that the graduates from the Training of Trainers workshop form a group to devise a plan of action to meet with protagonists to conflicts without journalists present. These steps could include actually facilitating the resolution of such conflicts using some of the several methods of informal non-official “track-two” methods of conflict resolution, which have been extensively used in peacebuilding contexts. Such workshops would draw on the initial concepts from the workshops but take them further by actually applying the skills of facilitation, mediation, or negotiation to particular conflicts.

The further step suggested here for translating changed attitudes into concrete collective practices could also be pursued by addressing certain policy or implementation problems, either within particular functional or sectoral issue areas. These would involve the corresponding organizations with those purviews such as specific ministries, as was followed in Burundi with the armed forces. Alternatively or in tandem with such a sectoral focus, this more-focused approach could be pursued within certain geographic areas. An illustrative example of the latter would be to foster local government-citizen processes that tackle given local issues in each of several chosen local communities. Assuming there is sufficient security in a locale, participatory community development processes involving both government officials and ordinary citizens would provide models for promising local citizen-government joint vehicles for local problem-solving. A civic education component could also be included, in anticipation of upcoming elections, as long as it is joined with other local activities that stimulate and enforce more responsible governance.

In specific terms, this issue-targeted, problem-solving approach would entail bringing together selected graduates of one or more given workshops to tackle designated issue areas in a structured way so they can generate concrete suggestions needed to get changes actually implemented. The shift to more substantive foci would build on the trust and relationships achieved in order to focus on tasks of state-building. The foci chosen need to relate to specific issue arenas where leading bottlenecks to overall state-building progress lie but could be removed through more deliberate attention. The Initiative could be actively looking for such opportunities to carry out more technically focused and institutionally rooted activities. The Initiative could experiment by giving one group guidance and special training for taking the next steps toward developing
appropriate and agreed course of action and seeing how far it could go. In short, this is also a missing link, which the program itself could seek to provide.

These activities also need to work out explicit rules as to who is accountable for what, such as spelling out performance standards for officials and civil servants. The conjunction of citizen pressure with transparent government rules and regulations can translate changed attitudes into demonstrable, visible, publicly enforced, and sustained changes in basic DRC policies and practices that operate in given institutions or places.

Somewhat different methodologies are needed to get at the issues in this more intensive agenda. In fact, several workshop methodologies exist that can be used for tackling particular policy or organizational issues. Organizational and institutional development methodologies could be used that seek to adopt changes in an organization’s standard operating procedures or in its practices at the “business end” of its work (e.g., how a unit of the army treats the local population and whether it seeks to use peaceful diplomacy in dealing with armed groups, or other institutional interfaces with the conflict environment).

Another tool that has been successfully used in many other countries engages participants in particular agencies in identifying the political and organizational assets and obstacles affecting the implementing of specific policies, analyzing stakeholder interests and concerns, assessing public and private sector capacity to carry out policy changes, engaging citizens, increasing transparency, and resolving disputes associated with policy change. The techniques provide specialized expertise to assist national leaders in converting general policies into actions under difficult circumstances by applying policy management tools to address such challenges. Applied across a range of sectors and political settings and spanning the gamut of policy, legal, and regulatory reform, this methodology approaches the managing of policy change as distinct from managing projects and programs. It regards the context as political, and assumes that needed resources are rarely in hand and nobody is fully in charge. It could also guide networks of organizations charged with implementing particular policies.

In any case, the main impediment that is seen to stand in the way of moving in this direction is not a lack of techniques or knowledge about how to proceed. Rather, it is lacking the further means to undertake more focused and sustained actions in structured venues. Unless specific mechanisms and incentives are created to organize action at this more intensive level, the *ad hoc* individuals and small groups who participate in the workshops are not in a position to form themselves sufficiently to make much of a knowable and measurable difference. The expectation that voluntary individual efforts will issue in such post-workshop collective activities relies on the random emergence of a congruence of interests between two or more individual participants, even though
they may come from differing walks of life and return to rather separate professional stations. It is highly unpredictable whether ideas for further actions among assortments of individuals will happen to “click” in such a serendipitous manner. Nor will those that emerge necessarily be the activities that contribute to the most important priorities of the peace process.

It is true that, on the last day or two of a workshop, the participants are asked to take the analytical tools, problem-solving frameworks, transformed relations and communications skills, and, after being broken down in small working groups, identify the institutional and political challenges they face and ways in which they can be addressed. They then report those back to each other in plenary, where an often rich discussion ends with their own individual commitments as to how to move forward. However, this disperses their attention in many scattered directions and does not take the next needed step to maximize their momentum. That step would be to pick one or two issues and begin in a later workshop to devise and implement actual options for solving them in some collective manner. Day Five of a week-long workshop is not sufficient for the participants to identify and work through concrete and feasible solutions to specific organizational or policy issues, and that in turn may be connected to wider policy issues that affect “peace writ large,” such as security sector reform. As a result, the new skills are given insufficient outlets for their full expression and application.

Several literatures bearing on social change support the general point here that individual and small group attitude change needs to be reinforced if it is to be sustained and result in wider behavioral change. Those bodies of knowledge deal with such topics as the factors that determine whether media public service messages lead to changes in individual behavior, how tipping points occur in typical social situations, and the need for concrete incentives in order for individuals to mobilize for collective action. Extrapolating from the basic theme of such studies suggests that free-floating training exercises for ad hoc assembled groups of individual leaders alone—unless they are connected to specific outlets for exercising their newly gained commitment to collaborative values through more or less organized collective activities—will tend to have significant impacts only occasionally and by accident. Unless the gains in their outlooks are deliberately plugged into specific avenues that reinforce and apply the attitude and relationship changes, they likely will make little if any difference, or do so only randomly. Further structured opportunities and incentives are needed if individuals will be likely to work together in a sustained way on specific issues.

The alternative is more attitude- and relationship-focused workshops with new groups that can only be hoped will translate into significant impacts. Even
though those participants are strategically placed people in a society, to make claims about isolated, short-lived, individual actions whose nature is so dispersed that their significance in achieving peace and development cannot be assessed, is to rely mainly on faith in seeking results. Instead, a missing link could be added that provides further venues in order to sustain and reinforce the changes in attitudes so they issue in concerted efforts that make headway in solving specific problems that are clearly significant in the overall peace process.

Within this modified approach, the ILCCE would maintain its distinctive methods by contributing the needed trust- and relationship-building ingredients at the outset—encouraging the participants to come to terms in their own way with the advantages of doing things differently. But having sensitized participants to the pitfalls of misperception and miscommunication, to the importance of empathetic listening, to the realities of unequal resource distribution, and so on, that training needs to be followed up on with the same participants to engage them in deeper-focused attention to resolving particular conflicts or policy issues.

**The role of other international actors.** What would this extended approach entail for how donors and other international actors in the DRC operate? The proposed approach to extending the workshops’ focus more deeply into specific conflicts and/or policy issues will soon bring the Initiative right up against situations where political interests and policy prerogatives come more directly into play. Because the participants’ and other vital interests will be at stake, the effort will inevitably encounter possible resistance, subversion, or cooptation.

To show how the role of international actors needs to come into this expanded approach, we need to briefly revisit the definition of the problem of state-building that was introduced earlier. Though part of the problem of post-conflict state-building is lack of communication, working relationships, and trust, it also entails the problem of reconciling deeply conflicting political and material interests within a set of newly emerging but as yet unformed and uncertain political and institutional arrangements. Sometimes sheer survival, whether monetary, political, or physical, is at issue. As outlined in the introduction, the problem in the DRC is not simply, or is no longer only, a matter of the lack of interpersonal trust among key individuals who are engaged in conflicts with each other. Indeed, in post-conflict situations like the DRC where violence is at least abating, peace agreements have been signed, and peace processes are ostensibly implementing their provisions, the main tasks then become maintaining security, forming and operating a government, and stimulating social and economic development.
Given the continuing dominance of politics in the economy, these post-war tasks entail the risk of serious political and economic loss for some and the prospect of gain for others. The political elites that survive into these post-war regimes find themselves linked with each other under new power-sharing arrangements and other provisional governing relationships that are supposed to lead to new, more formal institutions and delineations of authority that are envisioned by peace agreements and public, as well as international, expectations. However, as yet these designs are not fully reflected in standardized daily decision-making routines or in consistently functioning services that actually serve the needs of the general population. In the interim, old or new informal allegiances based on ethnic, regional, party, or other patronage practices and clientelist networks are what still largely determine the allocation of power, authority, and resources, thus deciding what public business does or does not get done and how it is transacted.

In other words, the problem is not simply a lack of trust, cohesion, and relationships, for those do exist within certain forms based on mutual interest within the new evolving proto-governments. But these allegiances and arrangements of convenience are not only largely unaccountable to a public, they are shifting and unstable. The basic problem is the lack of sufficiently predictable and rule-governed relationships and procedures that operate within formal institutions and can thus substitute for the personal rule and other informal ways that elites as well as putative citizens still mainly use to pursue their interests. The current risk avoidance, rent-seeking, and beggar-thy-neighbor habits in politics and the economy do not persist simply because there is some cultural habit to behave that way, and thus it has to be removed from individuals’ minds first before the system will change. The dominant overall system lacks the kinds of enforceable rules that in more productive societies effectively govern and channel behaviors so as to encourage public and private activities that produce wider benefits to society. This requires efforts to adopt and put into effect superordinate rules and public policies, such as laws that make possible enforceable contracts, that are reliable enough to make possible and encourage “risk-taking” in the form of private sector enterprise that is economically productive and public sector behavior that is public-regarding.

The Initiative’s methods introduce the idea of cooperation as mutual gain, but they cannot directly themselves transform those prevailing informal rules of the game, which in the DRC and other such societies are pervasive and systemic. Corruption, for example, is not a result of estrangement among people, but the lack of alternative sources of income, competition over existing ones, and the inability of individuals to curb the general practice through enforcing alternative customs. These practices present daily pressures on the workshop
participants once they leave the workshops in order to maintain their positions and sources of support.

However, this basic problem can be alleviated over time by the possibility of adding attractive substitute incentives for taking further steps with the force of numbers to follow more extensive rule-governed behavior. This is where other bodies in the international community can come into the picture. Their role would be to help carry forward the more substantively focused approach being proposed here. International support can be made ready to support not only the initial workshop “curriculum” and treatment but also the follow-up augmentation to the program that is suggested above.

The way to make the link to bigger issues of state-building is to consider supporting the most strategic and workable proposals that come out of the initial workshops, the establishment of task-defined working groups on those defined problems, and any subsequent policy changes that are designed and that fulfill the need for rule-governed state practices. The reinforcement of material incentives is needed to pursue these efforts so they can institutionalize rule-governed policies, and these can come from donors providing grants or other financial support. They might include paying officials and civil servants, which can provide substitutes to the usual patronage and clientelist ways of conducting public and private business. In short, donor support would provide not only the political space but also the positive incentives for the process to be completed from start to finish in producing concrete visible changes in host country practices.

To achieve these more significant impacts, donors need to readjust their policies so they pursue the following kinds of steps. Currently, donors and diplomats tend to see the ILCCE as a discrete project operating alongside their many programs in various sectoral areas. They do not envision ways its methods can be built into their overall development strategies by being used more directly to further the goals of the other programs. Thus, this points to a further missing link that can be supplied. First, some sort of joint conflict and fragile state analysis needs to be undertaken (although under a positive rubric such as “opportunities and obstacles to development”). This procedure is essential for arriving at a common sense of the main problems and policy priorities in the peace process overall, and thus it needs to be updated periodically. Ways to involve DRC leaders themselves in such an exercise should be explored. Possibly civil society could inaugurate a participatory analysis unofficially so as to produce a national strategy, such as by using envisioning techniques.

In any event, this joint analytical process would pinpoint the key areas where conflicts, disputes, political interests, or other constraints stand in the way of making substantive progress. The Initiative would then engage key leaders as
it normally does, but look for people who are active primarily in those priority areas. To build trust and working relationships, the usual set of methods would be applied as appropriate. Then, once the process has generated the ideas for next steps at the end of the initial workshop, more focused working groups could be organized to work on the obstacles identified as standing in the way of political consensus, dispute resolution, policymaking, or effective implementation. Support and technical assistance would be provided for these procedures. Relevant and feasible plans to fulfill the leading priorities and with accountability measures built in would be encouraged from these working groups. As an incentive, the possibility would be offered of support being provided to those that are most sound and crucial to advancing the national priorities. The new policies or institutions thus produced also then need to be preserved through building in some process of public accountability, to avoid the obvious dangers of corruption or capture and so as not to be pulled back into the debilitating or destructive environment that would return to the earlier, less constructive practices. On their part, the diplomatic community in the host country would be made aware of these working groups’ goals and achievements and would use its official channels to urge the host government to support their work by fulfilling the meritorious plans that are being supported.

In short, such a procedure puts the leaders of the DRC more in the driver’s seat and also holds them accountable, thus taking a real step toward honoring the international norms of local ownership and responsible sovereignty.

The products that flow from extending the activities of the Initiative in this way could also have multiplier effects. Entailed in the approach would be disseminating the achievements of a successful funded further activity, such as a resolved conflict, as a demonstration project that others could follow. Particular successes that are measurable can in turn provide the inspiration and prototype that others might seek to emulate in their own spheres. The media could come into play in this regard. The results could be covered by a reporter who writes up the experience in an article or live media program. In fact, one participant suggested that the workshops should be brought before the public through the media. A related benefit of having such models out in the public realm is that it would gain more committed attention from the highest leaders. Their hearing of the results of these well-conceived steps would attract more high officials to want to be identified with this activity and to participate in it. Among other things, the needed approvals from officials would likely be easier to obtain.

All in all, this analysis suggests there are ways to provide further opportunities for workshop participants to apply their skills in concrete and more aggregated ways that will more demonstrably affect the large challenges of state-building. This is possible if international development strategies are modified
so as to allow the Initiative to build upon its accomplishments and stature by creating more systematic links between its initial activities with leaders and the foci of the principal external actors that are active in the DRC.

As a result of this linking of the Initiative to locally driven but strategic and transparent peace priorities, the third major current theme in international peacebuilding that was introduced at the outset, integrated national strategies, would also be furthered. The joint formulation of more coherent peacebuilding strategies by the international community is another link that is missing. The Wilson Center has begun to explore modest ways to tie the normally rather segmented development and diplomatic processes in the DRC more closely together with the host nationals’ frames of reference. The notion is being contemplated that some of the same methods that were being used for engendering collaboration among the DRC’s leaders might be appropriate as tools to foster through a non-official, informal process more coherence among the international actors as well. Three WWICS-based “Country Consultation” meetings on the DRC were held in Washington, and one in Kinshasa. While these activities were not taken under the auspices of the ILCCE per se, they were closely related to its purposes. Each facilitated consultation involved some updating on the evolving situation in the country. Although these modest steps to create a common community of interest around the DRC among agencies in Washington have been received enthusiastically, it is too early to judge whether such meetings are helping to adjust existing decision-making. This represents an unusual role for non-governmental actors, and were it to produce significant results, it would amount to an innovation in international peacebuilding practice.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michael Lund, senior associate for Conflict and Peacebuilding, Management Systems International, is author of Preventing Violent Conflicts (USIP Press, 1995) and co-editor and contributor to four books, including Critical Connections: Security and Development (Lynne Rienner, forthcoming 2010). His research for the Project on Leadership and Building State Capacity of the Woodrow Wilson International Center and for the US government, UN, the EU, other regional organizations, and NGOs has examined the sources of violent conflicts and fragile states and evaluated diplomatic, development, and military policies for preventing conflicts and consolidating peace in post-conflict countries, principally in sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, East Asia, the Balkans, and the Caucasus. Lund was the founding director of the Jennings Randolph Fellows Program and senior scholar at the US Institute of Peace and has worked in the US Congress, federal agencies, and the Urban Institute. He has an MTh from Yale University and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Chicago and has taught at Cornell, UCLA, the University of Maryland, George Mason University, and Johns Hopkins SAIS.

Howard Wolpe, a former seven-term Member of Congress, was appointed in 2009 to serve as Special Advisor for the Great Lakes Region, a post similar to the one he held under President Clinton. He was until his appointment director of the Africa Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and of the Center’s Project on Leadership and Building State Capacity, directing post-conflict leadership training programs in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Liberia.
### ANNEX I

**LIST OF WORKSHOPS: COMPARISON OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES WITH THE ACTIVITIES REALIZED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Scheduled Dates</th>
<th>Actual Dates</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Nganda 1</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>January 16–21, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>The first workshop three months after the start of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up Nganda 1</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>February 19–20, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Nganda 2</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>February 20–25, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma 1</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>March 20–25, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up workshop Nganda 1-2</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td>May 1–2, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up workshop Goma</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td>May 5–6, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>S. Kivu</td>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td>May 8–12, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Directors</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>June 2006</td>
<td>June 28, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butembo</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>July 8–9, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uvira</td>
<td>S. Kivu</td>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>July 12–13, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minembwe</td>
<td>S. Kivu</td>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>July 15–16, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguma Electoral Cohesion Workshop</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>August 2006</td>
<td>August 19–20, 2006</td>
<td>Treasury tensions between August and November 2006 only allowed 3 workshops to take place instead of the 6 initially scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>October 2006</td>
<td>October 23–24, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>End of November 2006</td>
<td>December 1–2, 2006</td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>March 5–9, 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td>On time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Scheduled Dates</td>
<td>Actual Dates</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental and parliamentarian</td>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
<td>This workshop was pushed back due to the second round of elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental and parliamentarian</td>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
<td>This workshop was pushed back due to the second round of elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security sector actors (Army)</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This workshop was pushed back due to the second round of elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial actors in Ituri</td>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
<td>This workshop was pushed back due to the political context and to the events in Kinshasa March 2007 (Bemba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security sector actors (Police)</td>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
<td>This workshop was pushed back due to the political context and to the events in Kinshasa March 2007 (Bemba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders from Katanga and Kasai</td>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pushed back for reasons tied to the political context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University experts from the 4</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>May 2007</td>
<td>Postponed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>S. Kivu</td>
<td>April 23–27, 2007</td>
<td>Post-electoral activity replacing the scheduled activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>May 21–25, 2007</td>
<td>Post-electoral activity replacing the activities scheduled above but not completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>N. Kivu</td>
<td>May 26 &amp; 29, 2007</td>
<td>Post-electoral activity replacing the activities scheduled above but not completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leadership specific</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>January 26, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting of French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner with Kivu Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>January 28–</td>
<td>49 participants represented the signatory parties of the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>February 1, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goma Act of Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILCCE Special workshop</td>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>February 6–9, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>ILCCE moderator of a high ranking session on the Rasta phenomoneon (Life &amp; Peace Foundation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Scheduled Dates</td>
<td>Actual Dates</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>March 1-2, 2008</td>
<td>March 1-2, 2008</td>
<td>56 officers of the 10th Brigade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>March 5–7, 2008</td>
<td>March 5–7, 2008</td>
<td>42 participants represented the signatory parties of the Goma Act of Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>April 27–30, 2008</td>
<td>April 27–30, 2008</td>
<td>47 participants represented the signatory parties of the Goma Act of Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>April 23–25, 2008</td>
<td>April 23–25, 2008</td>
<td>43 FARDC and CNDP officers of 8th Brigade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bas-Congo crisis special workshop</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>May 13, 2008</td>
<td>May 13, 2008</td>
<td>12 key actors in the Bas-Congo crisis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political &amp; community special workshop</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>May 14, 2008</td>
<td>May 14, 2008</td>
<td>National deputies of North Kivu, member of the Banyamulenge community with Ben Affleck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training of Trainers Workshop</td>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>June 7–13, 2008</td>
<td>June 7–13, 2008</td>
<td>18 specially selected Congolese, from all walks of life and levels of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local leadership training workshop</td>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>June 23–26, 2008</td>
<td>June 23–26, 2008</td>
<td>29 new South Kivu provincial authorities in Bukavu (members of the provincial government, parliamentary committee chairs, civil servant officials, civil society leaders, and national staff from the mineral company BANRO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILCCE special workshop</td>
<td>Bukavu</td>
<td>June 27, 2008</td>
<td>June 27, 2008</td>
<td>Students, the ILCCE, and IRENE facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and military leadership</td>
<td>Goma</td>
<td>June 30–July 2, 2008</td>
<td>June 30–July 2, 2008</td>
<td>Baraka Consultations/preliminary sessions with Civil Society, Babembe leaders, FARDC, FRF, and other Banyamulenge dissidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media, governmental, and parliamentarian leadership</td>
<td>Kinshasa</td>
<td>July 5 &amp; 7, 2008</td>
<td>July 5 &amp; 7, 2008</td>
<td>Media people, parliamentarians and civil actors on the challenges of Leadership in the DRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political, military, and civil society leadership</td>
<td>Baraka</td>
<td>September 8–12, 2008</td>
<td>September 8–12, 2008</td>
<td>5-day session with 52 participants from Civil Society, Babembe leaders, Yakutumba militia leaders, FARDC, FRF, and other Banyamulenge dissidents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX II
SELECTED REFERENCES


# Annex III

## List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMP</td>
<td>Alliance for the Presidential Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANR</td>
<td>National Information Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Africa Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIAT</td>
<td>International Committee in Support of the Transition (in the DRC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNDP</td>
<td>National Congress for the Defence of the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>The Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARDC</td>
<td>Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDLR</td>
<td>Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILCCE</td>
<td>Initiative for a Cohesive Leadership in the DRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRENE</td>
<td>Institute for Research and Education on Negotiations in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONUC</td>
<td>United Nations Organization Mission in DR Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIMSOC</td>
<td>Simulated Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRSR</td>
<td>Special Representative of the Secretary-General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWICS</td>
<td>Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>