

Innovations in Peacebuilding: International Norms and Local Dynamics in Conflict-Affected Countries Project

What is it?

“Innovations in Peacebuilding” is a two-year research, dialogue, and policy project that explores innovative ways in which international organizations, donors, governments, and local non-governmental organizations conduct activities aimed at conflict prevention and management, peacebuilding and reconciliation. The project explores this research question: How do norms affect mobilization dynamics in local settings in conflict-affected countries, and what are the implications for peacebuilding practice and effectiveness? The methodology includes new empirical research on Nepal and South Africa – two commonly cited peacebuilding successes – together with regional research on South and Southeast Asia, East and Southern Africa, and Latin America – compared to generate cross-national findings.

The project – supported by a partnership research grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – features partnership between the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen, Norway, the Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative (NPI), and the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV), South Africa. The project team is led by Professor Timothy D. Sisk at the Korbel School, Dr. Astri Suhrke, senior researcher at CMI in Bergen, Dr. Hugo van der Merwe, director of research at CSV in Cape Town, and Subindra Bogati, Chief Executive for NPI in Kathmandu.

What will be the Impact?

Findings and recommendations will be interactively disseminated to policy makers and civil society actors at the United Nations, in the United States and Norway, and in the Global South through close interaction with peacebuilders working regionally in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

To broaden the scope of the project beyond these two countries, and to generate findings and implications that have broader application, the project also features a series of regional workshops with international and local peacebuilders convened by the global South partners. Our Global South peacebuilding partners in this project will design (in collaboration with the coordinators) a regional workshop of peacebuilding organizations. We envisage two regional workshops, to be held for reasons of economy and cost containment closely following the country-specific workshops

The project culminates with dissemination events with target audiences of policy makers focused on governments, global and local civil society, and regional and global-reach international organizations planned for Oslo and New York. The project will also see two regionally focused dissemination events to engage Global South policy makers and international organization and bilateral professionals working across countries.

The Korbel School will also conduct research that evaluates the “international norms, local dynamics” themes in conflict-affected countries with a dedicated thematic paper on gender equality and women’s empowerment.