

Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Agricultural Education

Michael Bertelsen
Executive Director

Office of International Research, Education, and Development
Virginia Tech

August 20, 2013 – Kampala, Uganda




USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE



“One of the strongest factors conditioning post-conflict reconstruction and setting it apart is the pervasive sense of urgency. Yet peace building is a long-term activity” (Buckland, 2004)

Outline

- Goal is to give context to our workshop
- Some general lessons learned from post-conflict environments
- Avenues to building peace on the ruins of conflict – through agricultural education
- Stimulate our thinking about general and specific strategies for different countries to meet their development challenges



Some General Lessons Learned

- **Macroeconomic factors contributing to conflict**
 1. **Low levels of per capita income (PCI)**
 2. **Stagnation in per capita income growth**
 3. **High dependence on primary commodity exports**
- **Violent conflict typically reduces GDP by 15%**
- **40% of post-conflict countries return to conflict within 10 years**
 - PCI of \$250, likelihood 15%
 - PCI of \$600, likelihood 7.5%
 - PCI of \$1250, likelihood 4%
 - If PCI *drops* 5%, likelihood increases to 12% next year
- **Stimulating economic growth must be a top national priority**



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

General Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Although all post-conflict situations are unique, in general:
 - Human and institutional capacity is much reduced
 - Physical infrastructure severely damaged
 - Severe short-term food security and medical care issues
 - Remaining pockets of active conflict
 - Youth unemployment a major problem
 - Gender-related problems may be exacerbated
 - In the education sector:
 - » Primary education has stagnated
 - » Secondary education seriously affected
 - » Higher education largely destroyed
 - » Skilled teachers and administrators scarce
 - » “Knowledge economy” adoption delayed



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

General Lessons Learned (cont.)

- **In the agriculture sector**
 - Domestic input and output markets seriously disrupted
 - International input and output markets destroyed
 - Agriculture information service providers severely damaged or destroyed
 - Indigenous agricultural knowledge may be forgotten
 - Land tenure and access to land and water resources may be greatly complicated
 - Natural resources may be under threat
 - Labor shortages due to absence of young men
 - Steep productivity declines
 - Subsistence food scarcity exacerbated



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

Building Peace on the Ruins of Conflict through Agricultural Education

- **Given the importance of economic growth and the condition of the economy, what can be done?**
 - **Why Agriculture?**
 - Primacy of need for food security
 - Preponderance of sector within economy
 - Vast majority of national employment
 - 80% of incremental growth in employment due to Ag and its multipliers
 - Safeguard natural resources
 - Undo policy legacy of the past (e.g., urban bias)
 - Need to demonstrate competence of post-conflict governance structure (get early wins)



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

Building Peace on the Ruins of Conflict through Agricultural Education

- **Training or Education? (“know how” vs “know-why”)**
 - Need for training more obvious than education
 - High unemployment, especially among young men
 - Short-term training programs for scarce and immediately needed skills
- **Different times, different skills needed**
 - Some post-conflict, high skill needs are temporary (not needed in ‘normal society’).
 - Best provided by specialized international organizations:
 - Resettlement, emergency food/medical programs
 - Accelerated learning programs
 - Leave once immediate the post-conflict emergency is over



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

Building Peace on the Ruins of Conflict through Agricultural Education

- “Outsiders” cannot provide the internal skills necessary for rebuilding civil society and long-term growth and peace
- Education priorities
 1. Basic (primary)
 - Easiest to re-start
 - Learned skills translate to many, broad areas
 - Millennium Development Goals
 2. Secondary
 - Enhanced basic skills and knowledge
 - Involve vulnerable youth
 - More expensive to re-start
 3. Tertiary
 - Longer term/most expensive
 - Future oriented
 - Need educated agricultural population



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

Conclusions

- **Post-conflict country development is unique in complexity and requires special attention**
- **Both Training and Education are required**
 - **“Clean slate”?**
- **Agricultural training and education is a major driver of short and long-term agricultural development**
 - ***Must be* a high priority in post-conflict developing countries**
 - **Predominant size of agriculture sector**
 - **Employment generator**
 - **Incomes producer**
 - **Essential to food security**
 - **Improves health and productivity**
 - **Facilitates continued peace and wide-scale development**



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE

Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Agricultural Education

Thank you for your attention

Questions/Comments?



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

innovATE