

SIX ELEMENTS OF POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

(adapted from materials by the U.S. Institute of Peace – www.usip.org)

Security: After a conflict, a state needs to ensure its citizens' safety from internal and external threats. There must be a level of security sufficient to allow the recovery of the economy and society. The state must reestablish the rule of law, provide an effective police force, protect its borders, carry out disarmament, safeguard the infrastructure, dismantle repressive government institutions, respond to emergencies, and suppress internal conflicts and armed rogue groups.

Humanitarian Relief: A state needs to provide its citizens the basics needed for survival. Immediately after a conflict, thousands of people may be injured, refugees, or otherwise unable to provide themselves and their families with food, water, medical treatment, shelter, and other living requirements. Also, the destruction of the infrastructure means that even people who are healthy and have remained in their homes may no longer have water, electricity for cooking, etc. Therefore, international relief organizations must be allowed to assist in resolving humanitarian and refugee crises until the government can reestablish basic services to its people.

Governance: A system of governance must be created to provide security and make fair political decisions.

Infrastructure: Armed conflict destroys or disrupts the physical elements of a modern society, such as transportation systems (roads, bridges, railroads, airports, etc.), power supplies, water and wastewater treatment, telecommunications, and basic sanitation.

Economy: Economic reconstruction is necessary to ensure that people have jobs and are able to provide for their families. A government must address the consequences of illegal or underground economic activities (black markets) as it reestablishes banks and other financial institutions.

Social/Cultural: Schools, arts, medical, and religious organizations need to be reestablished after a conflict. The social groups most affected by the conflict need help to reestablish their social and cultural institutions, and the means of bringing about a reconciliation among competing groups will be important to achieving a lasting peace.