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VERTICALLY INTEGRATED PEACE BUILDING AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE REDUCTION IN HAITI

TIMOTHY DONAIS AND GEOFF BURT

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

Post-conflict peace building has emerged as a crucial global governance challenge and has become increasingly institutionalized — especially with the formation of the UN Peacebuilding Commission — as the centrepiece of the UN system's peace and security agenda. The post-Cold War record of peace building is, however, uneven at best; much remains to be learned about how international actors can best assist war-torn societies in the transition to sustainable peace.

Drawing on the concept of vertical integration — a notion that underlines the need for greater coherence and coordination of peace-building efforts among actors working at international, national and local levels — this project aims to generate policy-relevant research that leads to improved peace-building practices by multilateral actors.

ACRONYMS

CNDDR	Commission nationale de désarmement, démantèlement et reinsertion
CVR	Community Violence Reduction
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
HNP	Haitian National Police
HSI	Haiti Stabilization Initiative
ICG	International Crisis Group
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PBP	Peace-building Partnership
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gang-driven violence in the urban slums of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, has been a preoccupation of international peace-building efforts for the past decade, yet continues to pose a serious threat to peace and stability in the country. These communities have, in recent years, been the site of an ongoing series of experiments, involving a range of different actors, aimed at reclaiming them from armed gangs; however, the isolated and fragmented nature of these interventions has reduced their cumulative impact. This paper makes a case for greater coherence and coordination between bottom-up community violence reduction efforts and top-down police reform, based on a broader argument around the importance of "vertically integrated peace building." Based on field interviews with community leaders as well as officials from both the UN and the Haitian government, this paper suggests that, in the public security realm as elsewhere, the careful integration of top-down and bottom-up efforts represents an important avenue for strengthening state-society relations, increasingly recognized as a crucial component of any sustainable peace-building process.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1994, the establishment of a professional and public service-oriented national police service has been the centrepiece of international peace-building efforts in Haiti. While there has been some progress in building institutional capacity, the ability of the Haitian National Police (HNP) to provide security at the community level remains limited, particularly in the urban slums of Port-au-Prince, which remain the epicentre of the country's ongoing gang-driven security crisis. Although an assertive campaign (the essence of which was captured by former Haitian President René Préval's 2006 "disarm or die" ultimatum to gang members) on the part of the Haitian police and UN peacekeepers temporarily disrupted gang activity and led to the arrest and incarceration of hundreds of suspected gang leaders, recent events have exposed the limits of a repressive police response. The aftermath of the 2010 earthquake — during which hundreds of these same gang leaders escaped from the damaged national penitentiary — saw a resurgence of gang activity and gang-related violence, leading to an uneasy and unstable stalemate as the HNP has struggled to cope with a shifting and increasingly fluid security environment within the country's most marginalized communities.

In recent years, in response to Haiti's unique context of urban insecurity, a number of "community violence reduction" initiatives have also emerged across a range of poor Port-au-Prince neighbourhoods. These initiatives have tended to view gang violence as more of a social problem than a law enforcement problem, and have sought to address underlying causes — including social exclusion and economic marginalization — rather than direct manifestations. The overarching goal of such projects, from the community-level dialogues organized by Concern Worldwide in the St. Martin neighbourhood to the local peace accords facilitated by the Brazilian non-governmental organization (NGO) Viva Rio in Bel Air, has been to reintegrate vulnerable youth as contributing members of the community, rather than dispatch them into Haiti's clogged and dysfunctional criminal justice system. While the grassroots, participatory nature of these programs makes them inherently complementary to state-building and peace-building processes at the national level, they have, to date, remained largely disconnected from the existing top-down reform effort (as well as from each other), raising questions about the durability and sustainability of such efforts.

In this paper, the case is made for greater coherence and coordination between bottom-up efforts to reduce community violence and top-down police reform, based on a broader argument around the importance of "vertically integrated peace building." This case is made through an analysis of one failed effort at vertical integration, and through an examination of a range of discrete initiatives aimed at confronting community-level insecurity in the Haitian context. Furthermore, the paper argues that community-policing strategies, which are gradually being reintroduced in Haiti, may provide an important opportunity for renewed engagement between top-down and bottom-up peace-building strategies, at least in the particular context of Haiti. Consistent with recent scholarly literature questioning the viability, or even the wisdom, of top-down, centralized coordination in peace-building contexts, the focus is on opportunities for more coherent and integrated approaches to emerge as a product of evolution rather than of engineering (Andersen 2011, 16; de Coning and Friis 2011). In this sense, community policing — while hardly a panacea for Haiti's ills — provides one mechanism through which law-and-order and social inclusion approaches can begin to be reconciled, state-society relations can be gradually improved, and top-down and bottom-up approaches to reducing violence and building peace can be brought into productive conversation with each other.

TOWARD VERTICALLY INTEGRATED PEACE BUILDING

Considerable attention has been devoted in recent years to the imperative of integrated peace building. Indeed, the effort to bring some measure of order and coherence to a highly decentralized and poorly coordinated peace-building system — comprised of myriad actors, from multilateral institutions to grassroots NGOs, all with different goals, priorities and operating procedures — continues to preoccupy both students and practitioners of peace building. Underpinning this preoccupation are ongoing concerns that the failure of the broader international community to act in a minimally coherent fashion has undermined peace-building efforts across a range of postwar environments (de Coning 2007).

The distinction between horizontal integration and vertical integration provides one way of understanding two very different dimensions of the integration challenge. Horizontal integration involves the search for more effective — and more strategic — coordination of effort across the broad range of international actors involved in peace-building operations. In contrast, vertical integration refers to the need for improved coherence and coordination up and down the chain of relationships that link international-level, state-level and local-level actors in peace-building contexts. Where horizontal integration focusses on coherence across the relatively "narrow" set of international actors involved in peace building, a vertical integration approach acknowledges the importance of coordination across the international-local divide and, in addition recognizes that bridging top-down and bottom-up peace-building strategies represents an important component of the broader peace-building challenge.

To date, much of the thinking and many of the institutional innovations undertaken in the name of integration have emphasized the horizontal dimension. From the creation of integrated peace-building missions — drawing together various elements of the United Nations system under unified country-level leadership — to the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, which, despite its mandate to bring together "all relevant actors," remains preoccupied with the intergovernmental and interagency dimensions of peace building, in practical terms the focus of integration has been on smoothing out differences and fostering greater coordination *among international actors*. Similarly, much of the scholarly literature in this area limits itself to consideration of how the peace-building efforts of the lamentably *incoherent* international community can be improved (Paris 2009; Stanley Foundation 2010; de Coning and Friis 2011). To be sure, even at this level of analysis the integration challenge remains considerable. As Roland Paris (2009, 53) has observed, while calls for improved coordination have become something of a mantra within the peace-building community, the procedural debate that has ensued has, in fact, obscured the reality that despite a broad international consensus around liberal democracy as an overarching peace-building framework, there remains considerable *dissensus* among key international actors about how precisely to go about building peace in war-affected states.

This emphasis on horizontal integration underlines the ongoing presumption on the part of international actors that they, and not the citizens or the governments of war-torn states, remain the key actors within post-conflict peace-building processes, although this is beginning to change. The uneven track record of liberal peace building has exposed the limitations of an externally driven, social-engineering approach to peace building, while recent literature on both local ownership and hybridity has shown that the nature of the complex and often contested set of relationships that exist across the international-local divide are, in fact, central to whether peace building succeeds or fails. At least two crucial consequences flow from this "unsettling" of the liberal peace-building paradigm. First, as Oliver Richmond and Jason Franks (2007) have suggested, the assumption that local actors — in all their variety — will either uncritically accept the desirability and inevitability of the liberal democratic framework as the only legitimate path toward peace, or, at the very least, can be compelled, convinced or coerced to do so, has been revealed to be little more than a manifestation of liberal hubris. Thus, if the inevitability of liberal peace building can no longer be taken for granted, each peace-building context must involve an ongoing search for the broadest possible consensus, among the broadest possible range of relevant actors, around what kind of peace is to be built. Second, liberal peace building's preoccupation with the formal, mechanistic processes of institution building — part of a broader tendency to equate peace building

with state building — is also being challenged by a more nuanced conception of state building, one which locates "a state's relationship with society" at the very heart of the state-building process (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] 2011, 13; Pouligny 2005). Recasting state building in this manner, therefore, raises important questions about the appropriate role for "outsiders" in facilitating improved state-society relations and, ultimately, in fostering a renewed social contract between state and citizen.

The notion of vertical integration, therefore, generates a more expansive vision of the coordination *problématique*, and prompts a shift from a narrow emphasis on relations among international actors to a broader consideration of the triangular relationship among state, society and international community. Building both on John Paul Lederach's (1997) well-known argument that peace must be built simultaneously from the bottom up, the top down and the middle out as well as on the emerging debate on "hybrid peace governance" (Jarstad and Belloni 2012), it also compels us to reflect on how consensus on both the means and the ends of peace building can be constructed along the vertical axis linking key international state-building actors, state-level actors and local, community-level actors.

In what follows, some of the practical implications of thinking in terms of vertically integrated peace building are considered through a case study of ongoing efforts to counter violence and insecurity in contemporary Haiti. The complex, multifaceted nature of insecurity in Haiti — centred around urban, gang-led violence in the slums of the capital, Port-au-Prince — requires equally complex, multifaceted and long-term responses involving a range of different actors; the myriad responses aimed at building local-level peace and security have failed to decisively alter the trajectory of urban violence in Haiti, in large part because they have operated mostly in isolation from one another, have been informed by different assumptions about the root causes of violence and have been insufficiently attuned to longer-term questions of sustainability. In recent years, violence reduction efforts have variously emphasized inducement, enforcement and engagement, without due regard to the complementarities — or contradictions — among different approaches. Finally, the central role of state-society relations and the necessity of bridging top-down, state-centric initiatives (particularly around police reform) with bottom-up, society-focused efforts (centred around the practices of community violence reduction) are also emphasized. In this context, community policing is examined as one possible strategy for bridging the gulf between top-down and bottom-up approaches; in the absence of a clear consensus on how to achieve vertical integration, the renewed emphasis on community policing in the Haitian context offers at least the potential

for the non-hierarchical evolution of security cooperation among both conflict-affected communities and formal security providers.

HAITI'S SECURITY *PROBLÉMATIQUE*

After a period of positive momentum, Haiti's urban security environment has deteriorated markedly in the last several years. UN statistics and independent household surveys from 2012 indicate that violent crime increased in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake (and the subsequent escape of hundreds of incarcerated gang members from the National Penitentiary), particularly in a handful of slum neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince (United Nations Security Council [UNSC] 2012; Kolbe and Muggah 2012).[1] Such trends offer a marked contrast to pre-earthquake trends, which saw a steady decline in incidences of rape, robbery and murder following the violence and disorder of the 2004–2006 period (Muggah 2011).

Haiti's security situation is clearly marked by conflict, but does not feature traditional elements of a peace-building environment. While conflict in Haiti is marked by both class-based and ideological elements, it is far more difficult to identify "parties to the conflict" with clear political goals or even representative leaders. There is, similarly, no peace accord around which to organize the reintegration of former combatants, or to facilitate a longer-term process of national dialogue and reconciliation. The dynamic is instead one of persistent insecurity and instability driven by a confluence of factors including urban violence associated with criminal gangs and episodic political unrest stemming from widespread poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

Underpinning all of these factors is a profound lack of economic opportunity, a reality that has driven large numbers of Haitian youth toward gang activity. Peace-building interventions attempting to produce a "peace dividend," either through job training or labour-intensive infrastructure projects, have been temporary and unsustainable, failing to generate enough jobs to change the economic reality of poverty and unemployment or to decisively alter the incentive structures faced by marginalized youth.[2] All relevant actors — including the international community, the Haitian government[3] and representatives of local civil society — accept that without economic opportunity, there can be no sustainable solution to the structural violence facing these neighbourhoods. Reinforcing this view, studies of youth in Cité Soleil have found that many see violence as their only means of securing both resources and respect within their communities (Willman and Marcelin 2010).

Urban violence in Haiti's slums also has a political dimension, fuelled by a history of social exclusion and political manipulation. Many *baz*[4] leaders were part of President Aristide's patronage network, and began to see themselves as political actors and representatives of their communities. The practice of treating *baz* leaders as political actors, which continued under the Préval administration, has abruptly ended with the rise to power of President Martelly. Any formal relations with the *baz* that existed under Préval have disappeared entirely under Martelly. There is also a sense among law enforcement officials and some community leaders that gangs have become less political and more economically motivated (although such motivations may shift according to the electoral calendar). At the same time, there has been a shift in the way gangs are structured, with a proliferation of smaller, less hierarchical gangs featuring less discipline and greater fluidity.

In spite of a consensus on the general conditions outlined above, the various peace-building programs operating in Haiti do not share a common strategy of how to tilt the economic and social trajectory of these neighbourhoods toward durable and sustainable peace. The underlying social, economic and political dynamics of Haiti's urban violence and gang criminality make them resistant to unidimensional responses and limit the effectiveness and sustainability of patchwork interventions targeting only one of these conditions. MINUSTAH, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, has, in recent years, attempted to re-orient the efforts of the broader UN presence in Haiti around a common goal of community violence reduction. Despite such efforts, however, the current situation remains comprised of programming operating on parallel tracks, based on different understandings of conflict and the nature of gang violence, working on different (and non-mutually reinforcing) levers of change.

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1   According to UN figures, from March to July 2012, 65 percent of all homicides in Haiti occurred in Port-au-Prince, with 85 to 90 percent of those taking place in the city's marginalized areas (UNSC 2012, 3).

2   For instance, in Cité Soleil, only 26.4 percent of men and 11.8 percent of women interviewed in one survey were working, with only 14.1 percent reporting that they earned enough to feed their households (Marcelin 2011, 25).

3   For instance, the former president of the Commission nationale de désarmement, démantèlement et réinsertion (CNDDR) stated in 2007 that it would be impossible to convince former gangsters to lay down their weapons if they couldn't be assured that they had alternative means to support themselves and their families.

4   The Haitian word "*baz*" or "base" is often translated as "gang," although this term assumes a criminal orientation that many Haitians argue is unwarranted.

THE UN STRATEGY FOR VERTICAL INTEGRATION

Recognizing the relationship between poverty and social exclusion on the one hand and crime and conflict on the other, in 2006 MINUSTAH significantly reorganized its efforts to combat urban insecurity, and adopted an integrated approach to peace building, which combined law enforcement interventions led by UN soldiers and police and their Haitian counterparts with community-oriented conflict prevention, disarmament and economic development activities. UNSC Resolution 1702 directed MINUSTAH to reorient its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) program away from its previous focus on former members of the Haitian armed forces and toward a comprehensive community violence reduction program. The resolution called for initiatives to "strengthen local governance and the rule of law and to provide employment opportunities to former gang members, and at-risk youth, in close coordination with the Government of Haiti and other relevant actors, including the donor community" (UNSC 2006). The UN's revised peace-building strategy was intended to target the underlying social, economic and political dynamics fuelling crime and insecurity by pursuing a simultaneous top-down and bottom-up approach. UN actors were to work in concert, with MINUSTAH carrying out measures to reinforce the Haitian state's violence reduction capacity — the "top-down" element — while the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was to undertake a bottom-up effort to reinforce communities and local authorities in terms of violence reduction (UN 2007, 4).

The CNDDR, established in September 2006 to facilitate national ownership of the disarmament process and to act as an essential intermediary between the international community, national government and local communities, was to be the key Haitian state counterpart to the armed violence reduction strategy. Its mandate was to engage in the process of dismantling gangs and reintegrating their former armed elements by helping them secure sustainable alternative livelihoods.[5] The CNDDR was intended to be a lynchpin of the UN's integrated peace-building strategy, reintegrating members of armed groups and creating links between the state and the community.[6] This strategy was supported by a military/police response, led by MINUSTAH, designed to dismantle armed gangs while retaking former "red zones" and augmenting security through increased police patrols.

This combination of programs represented an early attempt at vertical integration, emphasizing a coordinated approach built around the broad priorities of enforcement (military and police response), engagement (reinforcement of communities and local authorities) and inducement (CNDDR).

From the beginning, the UN's integrated approach suffered from limited coordination between its top-down and bottom-up components. Key elements of the UN's integrated peace-building strategy — the UNDP, MINUSTAH's Community Violence Reduction (CVR) section and the CNDDR — proved unable to work collaboratively. The shared strategic vision laid out in UN planning documents never materialized. Instead, the relationship between the UN and the CNDDR was characterized by friction, inflexibility and lack of clarity over which organization should be responsible for setting strategic priorities. The CNDDR's *Final Report*, published in 2011, describes the dysfunctional relationship among the three bodies. When the UNDP and CNDDR were unable to agree on a plan to mobilize community security fora — which were part of both organizations' mandates — the UNDP opted to proceed unilaterally with a plan that sidelined the CNDDR. The CNDDR, in turn, operated a similar program in isolation from the UNDP.[7] MINUSTAH CVR's decision to halt funding for a vocational training facility used by the CNDDR's programs was described in the CNDDR's *Final Report* as evidence of "bad faith" on the part of the international community.[8] Even before the CNDDR was shuttered in 2011, it was clear that the first concerted attempt at a vertically integrated peace-building strategy in Haiti had failed.

Despite operating in isolation from the other pillars of the UN's peace-building program,[9] there is reason to believe that the CNDDR did help facilitate the conditions for at least a temporary peace in Port-au-Prince's conflict-affected communities. It created a kind of separate political ecosystem with endogenous political actors, including the community leaders and liaison agents tasked with negotiating with armed gang leaders. These micro-political actors derived political legitimacy through their

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5   The CNDDR's reintegration program provided gang members with a choice of nine months of vocational training followed by job placement or business management training and a grant to facilitate micro-enterprises like motorcycle taxi operations. Participants received a monthly allowance of US$60 in order to support their families (University of Bradford 2008).

6   Interview with community leaders, Viva Rio, July 13, 2012.

7   The CNDDR and UNDP were originally intended to work together to create local-level community security fora. However, they disagreed on how and with whom to work in Port-au-Prince's "red zones" and could not agree on a methodology and implementation plan (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada [DFAIT] 2009). In the end, the UNDP opted to proceed unilaterally, and the community security committees it created operated in parallel with the 11 local security forums established by the CNDDR.

8   The CNDDR's relationship with the UNDP was even more problematic. In 2009, the CNDDR asked the Canadian government to investigate its claims that the UNDP mismanaged funds intended for the CNDDR (CNDDR 2011).

9   Starting in July 2008, the CNDDR had minimal contact with either the UNDP or MINUSTAH CVR (ibid. 2011).

ability to deliver peace, or at least reduce armed violence, and to provide economic goods to their communities. The decision to close down the CNDDR removed the funding that sustained this ecosystem, stripping these leaders of the political influence and legitimacy that they previously enjoyed, in addition to depriving them of the financial resources required to grease the wheels of the CNDDR process.[10] Interviews with community leaders suggest that since the CNDDR was shut down in 2011, cutting off funds for reintegration, violence has returned to nearly pre-commission levels.[11] In the end, although the longer-term effects of the CNDDR remain unclear,[12] it failed — along with MINUSTAH CVR and the UNDP — to generate the kind of positive momentum for change envisioned in the original strategic documents.

The UN mission's integrated peace-building strategy represented an ambitious attempt to coordinate programming at the international, national and local levels. The failure of this strategy underlines the need for operational flexibility, and a commitment to compromise, negotiation and mutual respect. It also highlights that in complex environments, the need for collaboration among operational actors should be considered integral, not ancillary, to an organization's theory of action (Ricigliano 2003); while "going it alone" may, in many cases, represent the path of least resistance, such a strategy often imposes a high cost in terms of strategic coherence and long-term effectiveness. In particular, the failure to marry the short-term economic incentives of the CNDDR process with a longer-term agenda for socio-economic transformation raises serious questions about the sustainability, and wisdom, of rewarding armed elements without inducing permanent behavioural change. The willingness of the UN and CNDDR to allow the peace-building strategy — so carefully integrated on paper in the UN's planning documents — to fail over issues of leadership and strategy suggests limited actual buy-in to the integrated strategy, in spite of their intellectual endorsement of the concept.

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10   Interview with Grand Bel Air community leaders, Viva Rio headquarters in Bel Air, July 13, 2012.

11   Ibid.

12   Although the post-CNDDR return to violence perhaps illustrates the approach's unsustainability, it remains to be seen whether there was some value in the connections it was creating between the government and members of the community. As Kolbe and Muggah (2012) note, since the decision to close down the CNDDR in 2011, the Haitian government has made no organized effort "to sustain channels of communication with marginal urban neighborhoods which were carefully cultivated by the previous administration and the now-defunct [CNDDR]." Community leaders involved in the CNDDR process maintain that they have a significant role to play in controlling armed violence, and want to cooperate with the government, a sentiment clearly not shared by the Martelly administration. Despite its flaws and its antagonistic relationship with international actors, the abrupt cancellation of the CNDDR has put at risk any extant progress made through the process, and may have contributed to an already-deteriorating security situation.

PEACE BUILDING FROM BELOW: COMMUNITY-LEVEL PEACE-BUILDING PROGRAMS

Port-au-Prince is home to a variety of community-level peace-building programs funded and facilitated by international actors and focussing on the social, political and economic dimensions of urban violence. The three programs examined below — the USAID-supported Haiti Stabilization Initiative (HSI) in Cité Soleil, Concern Worldwide's Peace-Building Partnership (PBP) in St. Martin and Viva Rio's ongoing community development efforts in Bel Air — have each made significant contributions to their own geographically delineated areas of operation. There has, however, been a lack of any upward dynamism, whereby lessons learned in one context are transferred to other neighbourhoods or through which successful programs can be scaled up. Instead, there are three distinct programs, each with its own theory of change and conflict management methodology. Each initiative is informed by different strategies to confront gang-based violence, support community engagement, deliver a sustainable peace dividend and build the capacity of relevant Haitian counterparts. There is currently no coordinating body that can direct the different peace-building programs in a strategic way, or even facilitate information-sharing among them;[13] nor has any systematic effort been made to carefully integrate these programs into MINUSTAH's post-2006 urban security strategy. As the acting chief of MINUSTAH's CVR section noted, all of the different actors concentrate on their own individual piece of the puzzle and although they do try to help one another, more could be done to create a shared vision through which the various pieces could be fit together as a coherent whole.[14]

ENGAGING VIOLENT ACTORS

Among all of the actors involved in peace building in Haiti, including MINUSTAH (in both its military and police manifestations), the HNP and international NGOs, there is no shared understanding of the term "gang" or "*baz* (base)," with actors disagreeing on what differences — if any — exist between the two terms.[15] Senior UN Police (UNPOL) officials described a certain level of naiveté on the part of international NGOs in dealing with hardened criminals, even raising concerns that their programs could undermine the rule of law or promote impunity. Compared to community peace-building

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13   Interview with Thomas Kontogeorgos, acting chief of MINUSTAH CVR, July 9, 2012.

14   Ibid.

15   See Kolbe (2013) for one effort to categorize the different kinds of armed elements that currently operate in Haiti.

programs, UNPOL draws much clearer lines about who can be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society and who should be arrested and incarcerated. Even the various community-level peace-building programs differ fundamentally in terms of deciding who they engage with and how, with strategies toward gang leaders ranging from explicit avoidance (HSI) to making engagement with gang members an integral part of their programming (Concern Worldwide). As in more traditional peace-building and DDR processes, a fundamental (and hitherto unresolved) question is whether peace processes should include parties to the armed violence and, if so, what past actions should be deemed too egregious to allow participation in reintegration programs?[16]

The HSI was deliberately structured to avoid engagement with gangs or gang-related structures. According to one report, the initiative "explicitly avoided the option to 'negotiate' or 'engage' directly with gangs and criminal actors — preferring instead to focus on undermining their sources of legitimacy and enhancing the credibility of the municipal structures and the police in recovered 'under-governed spaces'" (Muggah 2011). The HSI's specific projects included helping to establish a permanent police presence by rebuilding physical infrastructure, while funding labour-intensive infrastructure projects to give local inhabitants a viable alternative to gang membership.

Viva Rio's stance toward the *baz* structure is much less black and white, and has prioritized engagement over enforcement, recognizing that beyond their criminal elements, *baz* structures fulfill a number of economic and social needs for marginalized youth, providing social status, protection, a sense of community and dignity, and access to resources (Willman and Marcelin 2012; Lunde 2012). Attaching themselves to a *baz* may, therefore, represent a survival strategy for youth lacking a support network from family, school or community. The theory of change associated with Viva Rio's community security initiatives challenges the HSI's more binary conception of the role of the *baz*, and offers a "critical perspective on the interaction and relationships between community leaders, political actors, and so-called 'criminals' or 'gang leaders'" (Moestue and Muggah 2009, 52). Reflecting this understanding of *baz* leaders as potential sources of local leadership, Viva Rio created a set of peace accords in 2007, signed by 12 community leaders from Bel Air and brokered by the CNDDR and Viva Rio (Neiburg, Nicaise and Braum 2011). Since 2007, these peace accords have been signed on a regular basis and have provided economic incentives for peace, with monthly lotteries delivering scholarships and motorcycles to communities experiencing fewer than two

violent deaths. As Muggah (2011, 337) writes, "instead of marginalizing gangs, they explicitly brought *bazes* into an iterative process of negotiation, dialogue, and ultimately self-regulation." For the leaders who engaged in the peace accords process, "the respect for the terms of the agreement shown by the people from their *baz* became a measure of their own leadership" (Neiburg, Nicaise and Braum 2011).

Similarly, Concern Worldwide's PBP in St. Martin has aimed to establish an "inclusive, organic, and interconnected [peace] process" at the community level, with particular emphases on community-level social cohesion, cross-sectoral dialogue, conflict resolution training, and the development of sustainable livelihoods.[17] The initiative was built around a core group of community-level peace builders (as well as six sectoral "peace committees"), tasked with identifying key drivers of violence in their community, as well as engaging in a dialogue across a range of different socio-economic cleavages in the search for sustainable solutions. The PBP made a conscious effort to engage current and former gang leaders in the dialogue, in the hopes that their influence and legitimacy among the *baz* could be used in the interests of violence reduction and peace building. While no financial inducements were provided to local actors in exchange for their participation in dialogues or peace committee work, the PBP did include a livelihoods component designed to ensure that a peace dividend flowed from successful community-level conflict resolution efforts. Unfortunately, the dialogue component of the project always ran well ahead of the livelihoods component, leading to some frustration among community participants, including some former gang members, who felt that their own investments in peace were failing to translate into tangible benefits for themselves or their community.

DELIVERING A SUSTAINABLE PEACE DIVIDEND

This imperative of delivering a peace dividend, either endogenously, using the resources available from within the community, or exogenously, using resources secured from international organizations and donors, has been a key dynamic facing each of the initiatives discussed here. These different approaches raise questions of both viability and sustainability. Concern Worldwide's PBP project, for example, left a mixed legacy after winding down in 2012. On the one hand, the initiative helped launch ongoing institutional innovations, such as the Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in St. Martin (3PSM), a coalition of business people and community leaders working to increase investment and employment opportunities in the neighbourhood. Another outcome has been the establishment of the Lakou Lape Peacebuilding

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16 The literature on "spoilers" is also relevant here, particularly in the context of whether spoiler management strategies should emphasize co-optation or marginalization (see Stedman 1997); ongoing discussions about whether, and how, to include the Taliban in negotiations about Afghanistan's future are a current case in point.

17 A more detailed account of the PBP can be found in Donais and Knorr (2013).

Institute, which aims to build on the PBP's experience with training local-level peace facilitators by creating a national network of Haitians trained in facilitation, mediation and conflict resolution. At the same time, however, gang-driven violence in St. Martin continues — and insecurity may even be increasing — raising significant questions about the ability of a dialogue-intensive community-level peace-building process to definitively alter deep-rooted structural conditions, as well as about the extent to which factors external to the community — such as incursions by rival gangs from neighbouring communities — can undermine even the most carefully planned grassroots peace-building initiatives.

Bound up in the ability to generate a peace dividend are questions of sustainability. It remains to be seen whether the HSI and Viva Rio approaches, both of which were supported with significant international resources, will generate a self-sustaining and durable peace dividend once the program funds expire. While each of these programs has achieved tangible results in its area of operation, the International Crisis Group's (ICG's) report on police reform argues that no program has managed to "introduce transformative change into the daily lives of a long-deprived population" (ICG 2011, 4). The economic incentives offered through the peace process seem to be essential but also inherently problematic. As noted above, serious questions persist as to whether gangs and gang leaders who take part in incentivized peace processes are really changing and becoming socialized to a different way of operating, or are merely adjusting to different short-term economic incentives.

In addition to its community security initiatives, Viva Rio's integrated approach included simultaneous development efforts delivering employment in labour-intensive infrastructure projects targeting water delivery, solid waste collection, canal clearing and demolition and rubble removal. Other interventions include programs in reforestation, health, education, sports and culture. Both Viva Rio's management and outside observers agree that the organization has succeeded in providing inhabitants of Bel Air with a level of service delivery they haven't received from the government in the past.

The success of these programs in delivering services to the community has, however, raised unexpected issues. Some observers note that community members have come to see Viva Rio and other similar NGOs as substitutes for local government, looking to them for jobs, services, water, health and other public goods. Viva Rio leaders described the NGO's situation as being overwhelmed by the needs of the community, being "absorbed" by the community and needing to retrieve Viva Rio from Bel Air's community leaders. Viva Rio must eventually engage with local authorities in order to transfer responsibilities to them.[18] Concerns about Viva Rio replacing, rather than reinforcing, domestic governance structures are a reminder that Haiti is often described as "the republic of NGOs," and raise questions about the role — and the capacity — of the Haitian state vis-à-vis the necessarily long-term challenge of curbing urban violence.

STRATEGIES FOR VERTICAL INTEGRATION

Of all of the peace-building programs discussed in this paper, Viva Rio's approach does, however, come closest to the vertically integrated approach described above, marrying inclusive local-level programming, engagement with national actors including local politicians and the HNP, and financial and operational relationships with international actors like MINUSTAH CVR. As Moestue and Muggah (2009, 52) write, "Viva Rio's efforts in Bel Air were also an attempt to demonstrate how an integrated programme might genuinely marry security and development from the local to the international levels."

At the local level, Viva Rio sees local inhabitants as the agents of community change and problem solving. They describe their own role as that of a "catalyst," which allows the skills, leadership qualities and potential of local actors to flourish. Viva Rio's community security initiatives are organized around a group of 105 community leaders, 15 from each of the seven blocks that constitute Grand Bel Air, divided into three committees — a committee against violence, a committee to facilitate development and a committee on mediation and conflict resolution.[19] According to Muggah (2011), "Viva Rio was able to engage communities early on in an informal way, establishing formal and informal relations with MINUSTAH and the HNP, which were more directly involved in stabilization."

One promising vehicle for local-national-international engagement and dialogue are the regular community security fora convened by MINUSTAH's Civil Affairs section, which holds regular meetings in different conflict-affected neighbourhoods with key stakeholders. In Bel Air, similarly, Viva Rio's mediation/conflict resolution committee, made up of local community leaders, meets with all of the actors involved in security and peace building — including the HNP, MINUSTAH, the mayor's office and other representatives of the state — to evaluate the security situation in Bel Air. While these community security fora have proven useful in terms of information sharing, opening lines of communication and generating goodwill between the police and the community, their potential as an instrument of integrated peace building is

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18   Interview with MINUSTAH CVR, Thomas Kontogeorgos and Stephanie Ziebell, July 9, 2012.

19   Interview with Jude Pierre, Viva Rio manager, Bel Air, July 11, 2012.

limited by several factors. First, international actors remain the key instigators and facilitators; representatives of the Haitian government play at best a secondary role, and there is currently no plan in place to phase responsibility for coordination over to the Haitian government.[20] Second, the process for selecting community representatives has been problematic. The acting chief of MINUSTAH's CVR noted that many of the leaders participating in these meetings are essentially self-appointed; different organizations have different individuals as focal points who are sensitive to their interests and who they want included as community leaders. This points to a broader issue raised by a vertical integration approach (one which has not been adequately resolved by the competing approaches to building community leadership in the Haitian case): who precisely are the legitimate representatives of conflict-affected communities, and by what processes are they selected? Third, and finally, because the fora have evolved more as arenas for communication and information sharing, they have not, generally, dealt with deeper issues, such as how to reconcile differing philosophical and strategic approaches to community violence reduction, or how to more effectively integrate existing initiatives as part of a more coherent whole.

POLICING AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

Writing about El Salvador's peace-building process in the 1990s, Alvaro de Soto and Graciana del Castillo (1994, 74) described the disconnect between the peace-building priorities of the United Nations and the macroeconomic priorities of the international financial institutions this way: "It was as if a patient lay on the operating table with left and right sides of his body separated by a curtain and unrelated surgery being performed on each side." Two decades later, their analogy remains apt as a way of describing the gulf separating community-level efforts at urban violence reduction in Haiti and more conventional law enforcement approaches aimed at addressing the same problem. Whereas community-based approaches see the issue as a manifestation of a wider problem of structural violence, with gang members seen simultaneously as victims and victimizers, policing responses focus on responding to direct violence perpetrated by hardened criminals. Whereas programs such as Concern Worldwide's PBP have sought to transform gang leaders into community leaders, the overriding priority of the police has been the removal of such individuals from the community. As one community leader in Cité Soleil noted, these different approaches can also be framed in transitional justice terms, with community-based violence-reduction initiatives emphasizing restorative justice while

the HNP follows a retributive justice script.[21] Arguably, then, if sustainable solutions to the problem of gang-driven violence are to emerge, much more attention will need to be paid to this conceptual-operational divide, and to the need to reconcile community peace-building priorities with law enforcement ones.

With the dismantling of the Haitian military in 1995, the HNP has emerged as the country's key security institution, and policing has been the primary focus of the international community's security sector reform efforts in Haiti for the better part of the past two decades. The HNP is also — particularly in the context of ongoing community-level insecurity and chronic weaknesses within local governance structures — a key interface between state and society in contemporary Haiti. For better or worse, police officers represent, for the majority of Haitians, the most visible manifestation of the Haitian state, and whether the police are seen as oppressors or public servants matters a great deal to the ongoing process of renegotiating a new social contract between state and citizen. At this stage of the HNP's evolution, therefore, questions about what kind of police force is being created — and whether this force serves the public, the regime in power or private or political interests with the resources to buy police protection and loyalty — are no less germane than questions about whether the HNP is in the process of becoming a viable, national-level institution.

It is also unquestionably true that the HNP has a leading role to play in any anti-gang strategy; indeed, it is difficult to imagine any sustainable violence-reduction strategy that doesn't include a central role for Haiti's key public security institution. Given Haiti's current context, it is also difficult to avoid the conclusion that robust enforcement operations may — at certain junctures — be necessary components of such a strategy, both as a means of combating impunity and as a way of creating conditions in which other kinds of violence-reduction programming can unfold. Joint MINUSTAH-HNP operations against gang elements in slum neighbourhoods in 2006-2007, for example, not only diminished the presence and authority of gangs through a conscious strategy of decapitation, they were also instrumental in facilitating many of the community violence reduction programs described above. As one United States Institute of Peace report noted, "muscular 'stabilization' operations — while heavily criticized by human rights agencies and researchers — appear to have generated meaningful reductions in violence" (Dziedzic and Perito 2008; Muggah and Calpas 2009). Even today, organizations such as Viva Rio maintain close relationships with MINUSTAH on the assumption that a blind commitment to "peace by peaceful means"

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may not always be the most appropriate response to on-the-ground realities.[22]

Ultimately, however, there is also a compelling argument to be made that police forces (as distinct from military ones) should be more than an armed vanguard specializing in heavily armed clear-and-hold operations. Indeed, while the joint military-police campaigns against gangs in Port-au-Prince succeeded in restoring order and creating security space, militarized approaches also carry considerable downsides, particularly in terms of alienating local communities (DFAIT 2009). The reality, as one community leader in Cité Soleil recently noted, is that Haitian police continue to be seen by the residents of poor communities as symbols of oppression, while a wall of fear and suspicion stands in the way of improved police-community relations; this sentiment was strongly echoed by a second community organizer, who laughed at the very idea of the police seeing themselves, or being viewed by the wider public, as public servants.[23] At the same time, the resurgence of gang activity in recent years has displayed a different character from its pre-earthquake manifestations: gang dynamics are more fluid, leaderships are less stable and previous relationships between gangs and the government have dissolved. Gang activity is increasingly motivated more by economics than by politics. In such a context, the decapitation approach that succeeded in 2006-2007 by targeting senior gang leaders may no longer be the most appropriate strategy; indeed, current policing strategy may be best described as a form of "liddism," where police only enter troubled communities — and only in force — when violence threatens to spin out of control. Given this new context, as well as the ongoing evolution of the HNP as an institution, it is worth pondering the possibilities for the emergence of a second-generation law enforcement strategy that brings policing into closer contact — and potentially closer alignment — with other aspects of the urban violence reduction agenda.

It is also of more than passing interest that community policing has recently been re-introduced onto Haiti's police reform agenda. Long associated with the democratic policing tradition, community policing is premised on the idea of police-community partnerships as the key to sustainable crime prevention and community security; as *The Economist* once noted, the community policing model views policing as something done *with* people, rather than *to* people (cited in World Bank 2011, 47). More precisely, as Robert Davis, Nicole J. Henderson and Cybele Merrick (2003) have suggested, there are four key elements to any basic community policing framework: the decentralization of authority, a commitment to problem-

oriented policing, public participation in priority-setting and the empowerment of communities through crime-prevention programs. While community policing can include everything from regular community-police dialogues to neighbourhood watch programs, perhaps the central pillar of the community policing model is the beat cop, who patrols (usually on foot) a relatively small neighbourhood precinct and works proactively to establish relationships and build trust with community members and preventively to solve problems as a central part of his or her mandate.

The idea of community policing is not new to Haiti; indeed, the approach was a key focus of initial international efforts to build up the HNP after Haitian democracy was restored in 1994. However, the combination of a lack of high-level political will, resistance on the part of police themselves (whose ranks were dominated at the time by ex-military personnel, more at ease with repressive than collaborative forms of policing), and escalating political unrest doomed Haiti's first experiment with the approach (Davis, Hendersen and Merrick 2003, 293). A range of factors, however — including a restoration of relative political stability in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake and subsequent national elections, and growing concerns about the inability of conventional policing to control gang activity, and reduce gang violence, in the crowded streets and alleyways of the capital's slums — have led to a resurgence of interest in the potential of community policing in Haiti. The latest iteration of the HNP development plan, for example, calls for the institutionalization of community policing at the heart of the police service, while community policing modules are gradually being integrated into training for both new recruits and senior police managers. Two new pilot projects on community policing also began rolling out in Port-au-Prince in 2013. The first project, undertaken with the explicit support of the HNP's Direction Département de L'Ouest draws on the experiences of Haitian-American officers from the New York Police Department; an early success — at least in public relations terms — has been the deployment of HNP bicycle patrols across a range of urban neighbourhoods, including Cité Soleil. The second project — currently underway in the troubled Bel Air neighbourhood, and involving a partnership between MINUSTAH's CVR initiative and Viva Rio — represents perhaps the first systematic effort to link police reform to community violence reduction through the organization of community-police dialogues.

It is tempting to be cynical about the prospects for community policing in a context such as Haiti, and indeed there is no shortage of lessons — from Haiti and elsewhere — about the difficulties of making the practice work in fragile, insecure and post-authoritarian contexts. All too often, police managers have viewed community policing less as an ongoing exercise in improving police-community

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22   Interview with Maryan Yazdani, Viva Rio project manager, Port-au-Prince, February 2013.

23   Interviews with Cité Soleil community organizers, Port-au-Prince, February 2013.

relations and more as a narrow instrument for criminal intelligence gathering. Similarly, the decentralization of authority that is an explicit component of community policing — and the related idea of local policing priorities being set by front-line officers in close consultation with community members — often sits uncomfortably with the realities of rigid police hierarchies and existing top-down management practices. And there is little question that the community-policing model faces serious challenges in contexts — such as Haiti — where mutual mistrust and fear have long been the defining characteristics of police-community relations.

Despite such challenges, which underline the reality that community policing offers no short-term panacea for the problems of urban insecurity in Haiti, there remains merit in taking the concept seriously as one component of a broader and ultimately more integrated approach to public security provision and community violence reduction. First, advocates of community policing within the HNP make a compelling argument that, increasingly, there is no viable alternative to community policing as an anti-gang strategy. In the narrow warrens of Cité Soleil or Martissant, members of the *baz* have always enjoyed a relative home-field advantage in their encounters with police, easily evading arrest by disappearing down labyrinthine alleyways; even for the not-so-nimble, a weak and corrupted justice system offers various opportunities to regain their freedom. Combined with the increasing fluidity of Haiti's post-earthquake gang landscape, traditional law enforcement strategies aimed at containing gang-driven violence through identifying, rounding up and incarcerating senior gang leaders now face daunting challenges, in particular since there is no shortage of new recruits willing to fill voids in gang leadership from the ranks of the disenfranchised. As one senior official within Haiti's National Police Academy suggested, given such realities, there may be no alternative to establishing relationships of trust and confidence across the police-community divide if a more systematic, informed and sustainable response to gang violence is to emerge.[24]

Implicit in such an argument is that policing represents but one component in what must ultimately be a broad, multi-actor and multi-level approach to the problems of urban violence and insecurity in Haiti. A second, and (for the purposes of the argument being developed here) perhaps more important rationale for community policing in Haiti, therefore, is that it offers one potential bridge linking what have to date been parallel — and occasionally conflicting — approaches to the same set of problems. Police have pursued enforcement strategies without much consideration — beyond their ongoing participation in community-level fora aimed at sharing information among relevant actors — for the experiments in social integration

being attempted by NGOs such as Concern Worldwide or Viva Rio in the same neighbourhoods, while these latter experiments have been undertaken without fully thinking through the appropriate role of policing in the long-term maintenance of community security. Similarly, employment and income-generation schemes — from post-earthquake cash-for-work programs to the incentives offered under the CNDDR — have also unfolded according to their own unique logic, and in some cases, may have ended up strengthening the hand of armed elements. Whatever else it offers, therefore, community policing may provide a platform through which various actors with community security mandates can productively interact, and through which the tensions among enforcement, inducement and engagement approaches can be progressively reconciled. As Kolbe and Muggah (2013) have noted, a useful starting point in this context would be to unpack what is meant by the term "gang." Rather than dismissing all *baz* formations as coalitions of bandits and thugs, developing a better, empirically informed understanding of the range of armed elements that exist within the urban slums of Port-au-Prince, as well as the functions they perform and the goals they pursue, may be a necessary prerequisite to developing more effective strategies for furthering the community security agenda.

Finally, in the absence of a significant state presence in the communities most affected by urban violence, experiments in community policing have the potential to create space through which — over time — the state could gradually be "brought back in" to the urban slums of the capital in a more constructive and sustainable manner. Already, there are signs that the renewed debate on community policing within the HNP itself is beginning to unsettle conventional assumptions about the role and responsibility of the police in Haitian society; as trained champions of community policing rise through the ranks of the HNP in the coming years, this debate is likely to become ever more vigorous. Similarly, the experiment in police-community rapprochement unfolding under the auspices of Viva Rio in Bel Air, for example, will, at the very least, provide opportunities for enhancing mutual understanding and facilitating dialogue between police and community leaders. Absent a grand national dialogue capable of confronting Haiti's troubled past and laying the foundations for a new social contract between state and citizen, it may well be that community-level fora offer the most viable way of inching toward renegotiated relationships across the state-society divide on a community-by-community basis.

CONCLUSION

Advancing the so-called "coherence agenda" (Andersen 2011) in post-conflict peace building remains an ongoing puzzle for scholars and practitioners alike. As this paper has demonstrated with regard to the ongoing challenge

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24   Interview with HNP official, Port-au-Prince, February 2013.

of confronting urban violence in contemporary Haiti, incoherence and malcoordination continue to present serious obstacles to efficient, effective and sustainable peace-building processes, and often result in discrete peace-building interventions adding up to significantly less than the sum of their parts. Despite growing consensus around the desirability of establishing, either in whole or in part, "a common strategy, based on a common understanding of the problem, a common theory of change, and an agreed synchronized plan for implementing and evaluating such a strategy" (de Coning and Friis 2011, 249), the reality is that there are no easy fixes to coordination and coherence failures in peace-building contexts. Even if the broader international community succeeds in "getting their act together" in terms of creating effective strategic frameworks for peace building (Smith 2004), coming to terms with vertical integration — the imperative of ensuring coherence among international-level, state-level and local-level actors as well as between top-down and bottom-up approaches — will continue to represent a formidable challenge.

As Cedric de Coning and Karsten Friis (2011, 245) have suggested, the decentralized nature of the peace-building enterprise — and the reality that the activities of different actors are motivated by different mandates, philosophies and theories of change — imposes real limits on how much can, or should, be expected from the coherence agenda. Indeed, the short history of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission offers a cautionary tale in this regard; the commission has struggled to find its place within the UN system, and is widely seen as yet another actor in an increasingly crowded field, rather than as a crucial coordinator of system-wide peace-building activities. One lesson to be drawn from this — as well as from the ongoing failure to close the gap between aspiration and practice on the coordination question — may be that the utopian search for "master" peace-building strategies should give way to more modest efforts to create space for coordination to evolve, from the ground up, through actual practice. Such efforts would correspond to what Robert Ricigliano (2003, 446) has termed "networks of effective action," aimed at encouraging individual agencies and organizations "to see peacebuilding not just through the narrow lens of their own core competencies, but in a holistic way that would consider the peacebuilding needs of a situation at the systemic level and how their individual efforts relate to those of others."

Over the past several years, the urban slums of Port-au-Prince have been the site of an ongoing series of experiments, involving a range of different actors, aimed at reclaiming these neighbourhoods and communities from armed gangs. While some of these experiments — notably those directed by Viva Rio — have involved a degree of integration, the broader narrative is one of *dis*integration, with each discrete intervention focussing on one element

of the broader security puzzle and with substantial differences persisting among relevant actors concerning core issues, the most important and contentious of which surrounds the question of what constitutes appropriate engagement with armed actors themselves. Lessons about the consequences of ineffective international coordination are well known; however, this paper has also suggested that focussing solely on coordination failures among international actors risks missing the larger issues at stake. Specifically, despite the current influence of international actors in the Haitian context, over the longer term the key processes of negotiation, contestation and adaptation will necessarily take place at the interface of Haitian state and society. In this context, the reintroduction of community policing as a key element of the police reform process in Haiti, combined with more specific initiatives such as the Bel Air experiment in police-community rapprochement, may offer important opportunities for dialogue at a critical juncture of the state-society interface. To the extent that international actors can facilitate an ongoing and constructive process of negotiation among Haitian actors themselves (eventually widening the process to include other state institutions, especially those with socio-economic mandates) — on the understanding that neither community-based social cohesion strategies nor state-based enforcement strategies offers, on their own, complete answers to the ongoing problems of urban violence in Haiti — this may ultimately offer a more sustainable path to reducing insecurity and improving lives within Haiti's most vulnerable communities.

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