

SUSTAINABLE PEACE: AN ADDED DIMENSION TO SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Recent discourse about the contribution international businesses can make to global conditions necessary for peace has been gaining momentum. This paper advocates for increased inclusion of mining companies in these discussions. More specifically, this paper explores how or if outcomes from mining company-community dialogue can be rendered more productive or satisfactory for all stakeholders with a shift in the paradigm that governs the relationship between mining companies and communities. The paper investigates how the paradigm of peace, the theory of peacebuilding and the practices of conflict transformation could be useful when mining companies and proximate communities engage one another so they are able to more successfully create and maintain conditions of sustainable peace, leading to greater opportunities for reaching more sustainable outcomes from conflict situations.

Introduction

Discourse about the contribution international businesses can make to global conditions of peace has been gaining momentum in the current millennium (Hettiarachchi, Holdaway, & Gündüz, 2009; Nelson, 2000). Recent publications by the IISD, the IFC and two leading mining companies have begun to invoke the terms 'peace' and 'sustainable peace' (Anglo American, 2011; Goldcorp, 2011; IFC, 2010; IISD, 2010). However, with the important exception of an International Alert Publication, *Conflict-Sensitive Business Practice: Guidance for Extractive Industries* (Banfield, Barbolet, Goldwyn, & Killick, 2005), the inclusion of mining companies in discussions about responsible business practices related to 'business and peace' has been slower than in the case of the oil/gas, timber and other resources industries (Samset, 2009). This may be due in part to more scholarly interest in understanding the linkages between mining and violent conflict, as in the DRC, Sierra Leone, and Cambodia, than there has been in mining and peace (de Lopez, 2002; Hintjens, 2006; Le Billon & Levin, 2009). As an alternative to focusing on violent conflict and minerals extraction, this paper expands the platform for dialogue about business and peace as specifically related to minerals operations.

When mining companies and communities engage one another, situations regularly arise where mining activities are likely to result in conflict between mining companies and proximate

communities, from exploration phases through to after mine-closure. Such conflict has the potential to generate a number of different outcomes. This paper takes the position that those outcomes might be improved for all stakeholders by including 'sustainable peace' as a shared sustainable development goal. Towards that end, this paper inquires whether peacebuilding methods of conflict transformation have potential to create conditions necessary for sustainable peace in the mining company-community space. First, this paper will describe a particular peacebuilding theory that may have value in the mine-community space. Secondly, peacebuilding methods of conflict transformation are nominated as having potential for addressing mining company-community conflicts. Key to understanding why peacebuilding has value in the mining company-community space is that sustainable peace makes an increasingly relevant addition to the suite of sustainability goals undertaken by mining companies. This paper concludes that the goal of sustainable peace and peacebuilding processes of conflict transformation could improve conflict outcomes in the mining company-community space.

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding originated with the United Nation's (UN) efforts to rebuild the international world order following World War Two. This term originally described activities that helped States: recover from armed conflict; establish stable civil society, non-coercive governmental structures; and promote the model of a Western-style, liberal, democratic ideal. The UN's definition at inception was: "peacebuilding refers to activities aimed at assisting nations to cultivate peace after conflict"¹. The current OECD definition of peacebuilding is within the parameters of the original UN use of the term.

[Peacebuilding] includes activities designed to prevent conflict through addressing structural and proximate² causes of violence, promoting sustainable peace, delegitimizing violence as a dispute resolution strategy, building capacity within society to peacefully manage disputes, and reducing vulnerability to triggers that may spark violence (Blum, 2011, p. 2).

Scholars within the discipline of International Relations have continued to expand the range and sweep of peacebuilding to encompass a wide variety of meanings and activities that include mitigation of both violent and non-violent conflict at local, State or inter-State levels (Bellamy, Williams, & Griffin, 2006).

Peacebuilding can include a suite of activities involving actors from civil society, the business sector, and advocacy groups (Jeong, 2000). These actors employ a wide range of strategies: helping disputants identify core and peripheral issues, assisting disputants in their own design of jointly-held

¹ <http://www.un.org>, [Accessed: 11 October 2010].

² Proximate causes of violence are immediate precipitants or catalysts of violent episodes.

goals for both the short and long term, and teaching disputants an ongoing mutual engagement process imbued with the qualities of integrity, non-violence and fairness. This paper builds on the idea that the peacebuilding strategies mentioned above can be successfully expressed at the local level – even and perhaps especially when a conflict has not yet become physically violent. It is Galtung (Galtung, Jacobsen, and Brand-Jacobsen 2002) and Lederach’s (Lederach 2003) perspective on the local applicability of peacebuilding activities which serves as further inspiration towards investigating their relevance in the mining company-community space.

This paper proposes that versions of peacebuilding strategies are already being used in the mining company-community space where both sustained and episodic, non-violent³ conflict is underway and that they could be used even more effectively if understood within a paradigm of peace. Importantly, these strategies may not currently be labeled by mining company or community stakeholders as ‘peacebuilding activities’. However activities and processes such as community consultation (Amat y León & Velarde, 2005), Free-Prior-Informed-Consent (Martin, 2007), Mine Development Agreements (Gibson & O’Faircheallaigh, 2010), participatory water monitoring (Atkins, 2008), and similar activities are consistent with peacebuilding strategies and an overall paradigm of peace.

In *From Pacification to Peacebuilding* (2010), Francis proposes that the primary condition of peace is to cultivate a particular quality of relationship between parties. Relationship quality is critically important to mining companies and communities. When relationships are conducive to peace, it means that they are not coercive or violent in nature. They may be intensively persuasive, but there is no underlying or overt use of force to maintain the integrity of the relationship.

Francis’ argument is that there are two ways to view the world, and that these opposing worldviews affect how people will enter into relationships. The way people look at relationships can be divided into one of two categories: a view that privileges the idea of interdependence and mutual need; or, a view that sees life as a competition.

Peacebuilding, as understood through conflict transformation, begins from the worldview in which interdependence is the point of departure, orientating [*sic*] people and institutions towards peacebuilding as cooperation, while the worldview that sees life as a matter of eating or being eaten leads to ... ‘pacification’ (2010, pp. 73-74).

³ Violence breaks out in a minority of mine sites around the world in any given year. However, all mine sites at one time or another experience a range of less-violent yet still significant mining company-community conflicts. Although notions of peace and peacebuilding are relevant in both sets of conflicts, it is the larger group of conflicted but non-physically-violent mining company-community conflicts about which this paper is primarily concerned.

The long-term benefit of the interdependence worldview is the focus on the quality, mutuality and continuity of a relationship which will need to adjust to any number of conflicts during its life. The long-term benefit of the eat-or-be-eaten worldview can also result in the cessation of conflict, but control and violence are options to be exercised while people in the process are considered expendable instruments, useful only in-so-far as they help achieve goals. Applied in the context of mining, where mining leases may run anywhere from 10 to 100 years, the 'long-term' view emphasizes looking at the entire life-cycle of a relationship between a mining company and a community in addition to valuing the achievement of shorter-term goals.

This paper prefers Francis' recommendation for genuine peacebuilding rather than for pacification as the perspective from which to evaluate the potential to achieve sustainable peace in the mining company-community space. History has repeatedly shown that when mining companies and their supporters, which sometimes include government bodies, prefer practices of 'pacification' such as the more metaphorically muscular and financially or legally persuasive methods of engaging conflict, the mining company-community conflict is not resolved in the long term and often results in recurring negative outcomes throughout the lifecycle of a mine. Examples of these methods can be found in early community engagement activities at the Cerrejon mine in Colombia (Bond, 2009; Ringwood, 2011) where there was violent and forced resettlement and in the history of mining at multiple sites in Indonesia where environmental hazards were created that destroyed livelihoods, waterways and ecosystems (Ballard, 2001). Conversely, when mining companies and communities have chosen practices synchronous with long-term, non-violent peacebuilding methods, there has been greater success in realizing acceptable outcomes from conflicts experienced during the lifecycle of a mine (Bichsel et al., 2007). Examples of these methods can be found in scholarship about the Tintaya *Mesas de Dialogo* in Peru (Barton, 2005; Echave et al., 2004) and promising recent developments at the Ahafo mine in Ghana (Jones et al., 2011).

Finally, peacebuilding is an activity that can and does take place before, during and after a conflict of whatever size (Alger, 1999; Boulding, 2000; Graf, Kramer, & Nicolescou, 2007; Lederach, 2005; Vayrynen, 1999). Therefore, conflict transformation practices can intentionally create the conditions for sustainable peace by prevention as well as by helping disputants engage current conflicts or the aftermath of conflicts. This is because peacebuilding, according to Miall et al. (2006), works at the cultural, structural and social levels of two or more groups who are experiencing conflict about opposed positions, interests and needs. Since conflicts are always within distinct social environments this paper advances the idea that the social environmental context of mine-community relationships is fertile ground for exploring how aspects of peacebuilding would improve the outcomes of those types of conflicts for all parties involved.

Admittedly, the history of mining in the 20th century alone reveals a legacy littered with outcomes that are not peaceful such as involuntary resettlement, waterway pollution, significant health effects, poor labor conditions, environmental impacts, changing the contours of landscapes

significant to indigenous peoples, and more. These effects have been felt acutely by communities in the Global South. However, this paper strongly recommends that the 21st century mining industry develops the will and a holistic strategy towards both addressing these negative legacies and mining responsibly into the future. Peacebuilding practices of conflict transformation could provide a vehicle by which to achieve these goals in co-operation with communities.

Methodological approach from peacebuilding: Conflict Transformation

It is important to differentiate conflict transformation methods from conflict management methods. Conflict management, a popular term in contemporary mining industry discourse, often seeks to suppress, contain or otherwise avoid the consequences of conflict. Instead, conflict transformation acknowledges that conflict is part and parcel of enduring relationships and that its energy can be harnessed to effect positive results. About conflict transformation, Lederach, one of the seminal scholar-practitioners in contemporary peacebuilding, says the following:

A transformational perspective is built upon two foundations: a capacity to envision conflict positively, as a natural phenomenon that creates potential for constructive growth; and a willingness to respond in ways that maximize this potential for positive change (Lederach, 2003, p. 15).

Conflict transformation is therefore less about a prescriptive set of steps that can be applied universally to conflict situations. Conflict transformation is more about an attitude, a willingness, for parties to honestly⁴ enter and engage a relationship space. Indeed, the parties intentionally commit to finding an outcome that both enhances the long-term quality of the relationship as well as finds a mutually agreeable solution to the current conflict.

In addition, peace scholars who work at the local or regional level have found that conflict transformation, not management or control of a conflict, is effective for creating the conditions necessary for sustainable peace (Adrian-Paul et al., 2007; Dayton & Kriesberg, 2009). A focus on conflict transformation allows disputants to address underlying sources of conflict so disputants can actualize mutually beneficial or productive outcomes.

Transformation as a concept is both descriptive of the conflict dynamics and prescriptive of the overall purpose that building peace pursues both in terms of changing destructive relationship patterns and in seeking systemic change.

Transformation provides a language that more adequately approximates the nature of conflict and how it works and underscores the goals and purpose of the field. It

⁴ Not all mining companies have the leadership or the desire to honestly enter and engage relationships with communities proximate to their mines. However, for those companies which have the will and the vision to conduct their business differently, conflict transformation processes could provide a useful vehicle towards that goal.

encompasses a view that legitimizes conflict as an agent of change in relationships. It describes more accurately the impact of conflict on the patterns of communication, expression and perception (Lederach, 1995, p. 18).

Therefore, conflict transformation does not try to control, manage, manipulate or stop conflict. However, it does take conflict and change the direction and the methods of its expression by channeling its energy into more productive processes and outcomes.

The term *transformation* may initially appear curious to those outside the disciplines customarily associated with peace studies – such as those in the sustainable development space within the mining sector. However, within the disciplinary area of peace studies, transformation is a word that indicates a move away from using the word resolution in respect to conflict. Resolution, in peacebuilding terms in particular, refers to a process that relies on professional specialists intervening in particular ways as, hopefully neutral, third parties to achieve a compromise between disputants (Vayrynen, 1999).

Thus, the use of the term conflict transformation addresses two issues related to conflict engagement. The first issue is that when using skilled third parties as conflict resolution specialists, it is worth noting that they are rarely hired on long enough of a term to address source(s) of conflict between disputants. Conflict transformation, on the other hand, is a way of looking at conflict that disputants can learn and use effectively even without the ongoing presence of a third party. The second is that conflict resolution techniques have a tendency to emphasize legal methods and processes such as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), certain forms of Negotiation or even legal processes of Mediation which may be indicated more strongly in physically violent conflict situations (Brigg, 2003). Alternatively, conflict transformation methods emphasize non-judicial, narrative and traditional mechanisms, reserving legal methods for use only when necessary (Portilla, 2004).

There are three other aspects of transformation. Putnam says that transformation “refers to moments in the conflict process in which parties reach new understandings of their situation, ones that redefine the nature of the conflict, the relationship among the parties, or the problems they face” (2004, p. 276). In other words, transformation usually refers to the need to adjust how social relationships are construed. Second, according to Vayrynen, “Conflict transformation aims to redefine and rearrange key parties and their coalitions, issues, rules and interests in a manner that the conflict becomes less violent and destructive” (1999, p. 151). So transformation also includes the potential of reconfiguring social networks to allow conflict to be viewed and responded to differently. Third, transformation also refers to the observation that conflict is both dynamic and sustained. Lederach refers to this aspect as having a “dialectical nature” (1995, p. 17), the property of restructuring relationships and realities as part of the process of engagement. Given the social and dialectical nature of conflict transformation, the paper argues that the heart of conflict transformation is the empowerment of all disputants while honoring the context of their ongoing, evolving relationship (Cheldelin, 2003).

Sustainable peace as an important aspect of sustainable development activities in the mining context

As mentioned above, there have been some important recent additions to the concepts of 'peace' and 'sustainable peace' in mine-community space. It is worth noting that to use these terms in the mining sector represents a broader shift that is beginning to take place in the international policy space. At the UN, a task force has begun research into enshrining the rights to *peace* and *peace education* as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2011). Their inclusion has the further potential to add to the ongoing Human Rights agenda of the Ruggie Mandate of the UN (Ruggie, 2008) which is now being operationalized (Ruggie, 2011b), and will likely result in judicial and non-judicial, practical application steps that can be taken by businesses active in communities.

The international mining community is included in the Ruggie mandate to 'Protect, Respect and Remedy', even though they are waiting – as many international businesses are – for interested parties to finish interpreting how to operationalize Human Rights commitments of international businesses (Knox, forthcoming). Nevertheless, according to Foley Hoag, "key elements of [the Ruggie mandate's] Guiding Principles have [already] been incorporated into the updated OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and into ISO26000."⁵ Both of these instruments are already applied in the mining sector. Adding strength to the influence that the Ruggie principles may have for mining companies, mining giants Anglo Gold Ashanti, Cerrejon, Barrick Gold, and Goldcorp have already publicly expressed philosophical commitment to implement the Guiding Principles in the coming years (Ruggie, 2011a). Therefore, the trajectories of interest in human rights and interest in sustainable peacebuilding are converging and will have implications for the mining sector in the near future. Despite the fact that human rights are increasingly honored by international business, and some businesses have begun to see linkages between honoring human rights and creating the conditions of sustainable peace, what remains to be articulated more fully is the nexus between the concepts of sustainable peace and sustainability in the mining context. It is this nexus which this paper argues has potential to be featured in the sustainability activities related to conflicts between mining companies and communities.

Sustainable Peace

Pearce states plainly that, "the most important steps towards a sustainable peace are those which foster and strengthen local capacity to deal with the past, to engage with the present, and to shape the future in ways which do not exclude, oppress, or divide" (Pearce, 1997 448). In other words, creating the conditions for sustainable peace means deconstructing structures, situations and

⁵ Accessed at: http://www.csrwire.com/press_releases/32647-Author-of-U-N-Guiding-Principles-on-Business-and-Human-Rights-to-Join-Foley-Hoag, on 26 September 2011.

relationships that cause conflict while building structures, situations and relationships that support peace. Although few people categorically oppose the idea of peace, the reality is that peace is an elusive concept which loses focus quickly as soon as people start to say what it is or is not (Aall, 2011). This paper proposes that however peace is defined as a 'good' to be achieved, its durability or sustainability reflects the conditions necessary for communities and businesses to thrive.

In peacebuilding literature, there are two basic categories of peace: positive peace and negative peace. Negative peace simply means that there is no overt expression of large-scale physical violence (Galtung, 1969). Negative peace relies on the threat of or potential for violence; expressed in western societies at the hands of the state in the police, national guard, and criminal justice system. Whereas positive peace refers to the conditions chosen by people, in relationship with one another, at any level in society from local to national, who are actively working together to generate conditions of peacefulness. It is more than just the absence of violence but the intentional creation of conditions of peace and well-being for the whole group. The achievement of positive peace has been referred to by Lederach and his colleagues as the activities of peacebuilding which effect positive social and cultural change using conversation as the primary means of transforming conflict (Lederach, Neufeldt, & Culbertson, 2007). The objective for positive peace is to resolve deeply rooted causes of conflict so that conditions for violent conflict are removed or resolved (Sandole, 2003). Therefore the establishment of a strong, long-term, durable, positive peace requires the cooperation of number of stakeholders attending to a wide range of variables on a number of levels, depending on how complex or entrenched the conflict situation is or might become. Ultimately, positive peace refers to, "a holistic vision of peace that includes well-being, as well as right and just relationships and structures" (Neufeldt et al., 2006 30).

Therefore sustainable peace is where the values of positive peace are featured which necessitate finding different solutions to conflict than ones which are found in structures of pacification, or negative peace. Sustainable, positive peace does not use violence in any form – whether structural, cultural, economic, legal or physical – to resolve conflict. Expressions of violence, although they may halt a particular instance of conflict and restore the semblance of order, affect the ongoing quality of a relationship between parties (Paffenholz & Spurk, 2010; Pearce, 1997). If this relational quality deteriorates as a result of how the conflict was handled, the prospect for sustainable peace is reduced and the motivation for renewed and increasingly violent conflict is escalated (Francis, 2010).

If no violence is used in the handling of a particular instance of conflict, the quality of the relationship between the parties may in fact improve through processes of conflict transformation where both parties learn to view one another and the contested issue or item in a different light. In this transformational space, new solutions can be devised between the parties which have a greater likelihood of benefitting all concerned (Werhane, 1999). Non-violent conflict transformation is not a linear process nor is it a swift solution, but it is a durable solution that contributes to sustainable

peace. Therefore, a shared commitment to sustainable peace is more likely to provide the foundation for achieving a wide range of sustainability or sustainable development goals before, during and after the operation of a mine.

Sustainability as understood by the Mining Industry

The International Council of Minerals and Metals (ICMM) has led the development of the concept of sustainability in the mining industry. The ICMM “brings together 20 mining and metals companies as well as 31 national and regional mining associations and global commodity associations.”⁶ Its mining company members all publish sustainability reports as part of their commitment to this peak industry body and the communities in which their operations may have an impact. The ICMM’s understanding of ‘sustainability’ in relation to mining is not to deny that particular mines have a finite life. They do. However, “the ability to discover additional resources, to recover metals from lower grade ore bodies, to recycle and, if necessary, to find substitutes means that resource depletion is simply not an issue for the indefinite future and maybe not ever” (Wilson, 2001, p. 4). Therefore discussions about sustainability are relevant in the mining environment. The question remains, what is being sustained if it is recognized that particular mining operations cannot be indefinitely operational?

Although sustainable development is a contested term (Boutilier, 2005), most definitions of sustainability in the mining/extractive industry space consider that sustainable development is about creating the conditions for a range of activities related to ongoing ‘human thriving’ at the personal, group, collective and cultural levels. Another way of putting it is that whether ‘sustainability’ or ‘sustainable development’ is preferred, the use of these terms by mining companies refers to corporate activities that achieve “environmental, economic and social sustainability in the minerals and hydrocarbon industries” (O’Faircheallaigh, 2009, p. 463). Indeed, the need to address and publish responses to increasingly mandatory sustainability practices is becoming more accepted amongst large mining companies. One result of this, as part of the industry’s commitment to ICMM principles and in response to increasing demand from consumers and stakeholders, is that many of the large international mining companies (and some junior companies) have incorporated sustainability reporting according to standards of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) (Umlas, 2009). Where this reporting has become required at the State level, according to Serafeim and Ioannou, a greater positive effect is seen on aspects of sustainability related to “social responsibility, sustainable development, employee training, efficient supervision of managers by corporate boards, and bribery and corruption [mitigation]” (Ioannou & Serafeim, 2011, p. 4).

Greg Babe in *Embedded Sustainability* takes the concept of sustainability one step further by arguing that it “has matured from the concept of conservation in the 20th century to the concept of stewardship in all its forms – social, economic and environmental” (Laszlo & Zhexembayeva, 2011, p.

⁶ International Council of Minerals and Mining, <http://www.icmm.com>

ix). Laszlo and Zhexembayeva further suggest that sustainability has been reshaped by three interconnected and interdependent trends: (a) declining resources⁷ including water, energy, metals and minerals among others; (b) growing standards of radical transparency by NGOs, activists and the media; (c) increasing expectations, from customers, employees, investors and regulators. The more businesses address these three areas of concern, the more they “embed sustainability into their core business” (Laszlo & Zhexembayeva, 2011, p. 224). As companies respond to these three trends, the paper argues they should also proactively consider thinking strategically by link sustainability responses to the bottom line as well as to future strategic planning. Considered this way, mining activities could indeed help create conditions for sustainable peace.

This paper highlights the window of opportunity that exists between communities and the mining industry to incorporate a paradigm of peace and principles of sustainable peace into sustainable development practices. This shift in perspective has potential to enhance both mining company adherence to norms and standards as well as encourage more robust and satisfactory practice in terms of their community engagement. International Alert has published a *Practice Note Series* called ‘Peacebuilding essentials for economic development practitioners’ which, in issue No. 6, addresses Natural Resource Governance in Conflict-Affected Contexts (Grundel, 2010). In it, sustainable peace is explicitly mentioned as something mining companies need to pay attention to especially when vulnerable groups who live in proximity to mining operations perceive reduced or no benefit. In particular, the *Practice Note* mentions the following four sustainable development practices as a minimum for establishing the conditions necessary for sustainable peace: commit to transparency and accountability; involve civil society – especially at the local level; improve wider governance conditions; and, adopt and implement international standards such as the EITI⁸ and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Companies⁹. This is an encouraging and actionable list of items that mining companies can strive towards as a minimum upon which to create the conditions of sustainable peace with proximate communities and within which processes of conflict transformation can be put into place as part of a sustainable development plan.

Adding weight to this suggestion, International Alert has published what they call a ‘resource pack’ for small and medium enterprises (SME) called *Sustaining Business and Peace* (Hettiarachchi, et al., 2009) which describes in some detail a community relations methodology that can be used to increase the positive impact businesses can have on social, economic and political environments by reducing activities that cause instability and instead advocate peace. Even though the resource pack is for a different scale of international business than multi-national mining operations, the principles can still be used for much larger corporations. Joan Shankelman (Shankleman & Myers, 2007) in *Oil, Profits and Peace* which, although not targeted to the minerals industry, is relevant to all extractives

⁷ Declining resources refers to overuse and exhaustion of particular commodities.

⁸ For more information, see <http://eiti.org/> [Accessed 1 October 2011].

⁹ For more information, see www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_34889_1_1_1_1_1,00.html [Accessed 1 October 2011].

operations particularly in regards to creating the conditions for peace before conflict emerges. She makes a case for prevention of physically violent expressions of conflict and encourages extractives companies to create the conditions that make for stability and peace. International Alert has two more publications which advance the partnership of businesses with local communities to build peace, *Local Business, Local Peace: the Peacebuilding Potential of the Domestic Private Sector* (Killick et al., 2006) and *Conflict Sensitive Business Practice: Guidance for Extractive Industries* (Banfield, et al., 2005). In both, substantial practical steps are laid out for both communities and mining companies who choose to make the joint commitment to building a sustainable peace as a shared expression of sustainable development. Finally, the United Nations Global Compact makes a similar case for peace as a primary goal of conducting business, in alignment with the Global Compact Principles¹⁰ in: *Doing Business while Advancing Peace and Development* (Powell & Chung, 2010), *Enabling Economies of Peace* (Ballentine & Haufler, 2009 [2005]) and *Guidance on Responsible Business in Conflict-affected and High-risk areas* (Powell, Gardaz, Chung, & Liu, 2010).

Therefore, the resources are definitely available and more are being published each year for minerals operations interested in combining sustainability practices with a long-term vision for sustainable peace benefitting both companies and communities who may be affected by their operations. The future of mining will belong to those who have the motivation and the ability to think outside traditional mining company-community oppositional position and consider new ways to structure that relationship.

Conclusion

When mining companies and communities engage one another, situations regularly arise where mining activities are likely to result in conflict between mining companies and proximate communities, from exploration phases through to after mine-closure. Such conflict has the potential to generate a number of different outcomes. This paper takes the position that those outcomes might be improved by including the concept of sustainable peace and using processes related to peacebuilding. Versions of peacebuilding strategies are already being used in the mine-community space where both sustained and episodic, non-violent conflict is underway and this paper argued that they could be used even more effectively if understood within a paradigm of peace. Importantly, these strategies may not currently be labeled by mining company or community stakeholders as 'peacebuilding activities'. However, if sustainability activities can be linked to sustainable peacebuilding practices, before, during and after conflicts between mining companies and communities the outcomes for mine and community stakeholders could improve. Therefore, this paper proposed that conflict transformation practices can assist with intentionally creating the conditions for sustainable peace both by prevention as well as by helping disputants engage current conflicts or the aftermath of conflicts. Conflict transformation is therefore less about a prescriptive set of steps that can be applied universally to conflict situations. Conflict transformation is more

¹⁰ <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

about an attitude, a willingness, for parties to honestly enter and engage a relationship space where conflict occurs. Indeed, the parties intentionally commit to finding an outcome that both enhances the long-term quality of the relationship as well as finds a mutually agreeable solution to the current conflict. Given the social and dialectical nature of conflict transformation, the paper argues that the heart of conflict transformation is the recognition of the perspective of all disputants while honoring the context of their ongoing, evolving relationship.

Whether interpreted positively or negatively, the social, economic, and ecological effects of mining are nearly always described as a transformative process. These transformations are the target of public policies for allocating the costs of mineral extraction, capturing and distributing its potential gains, and determining the conditions under which extraction will take place” (Bridge, 2004, p. 225).

Creating the conditions for a positive and sustainable peace means deconstructing structures, situations and relationships that cause conflict while building structures, situations and relationships that support peace. This paper highlights that some actors in the mining industry are already starting to incorporate a paradigm of peace and principles of peacebuilding into sustainable development and sustainability guidance documents. Therefore, continued efforts to encourage the creation of conditions of sustainable peace by using processes of conflict transformation could add value for both mining companies and communities which experience conflict as a result of mining activities.

Post-script: This paper reflects early-stage research and only begins to formulate some of the issues that could be considered as relevant to conflict engagement strategies in the mining company-community space. Subsequent critical research is needed to investigate if the theoretical strength of peacebuilding principles are applicable in practice, especially in situations where mining has left a disturbing and negative legacy for Global South communities in vulnerable situations. Additional research and debate is needed on how to incorporate peace into sustainability goals, given that sustainability is understood and committed to variously by mining companies, communities and other interested parties. Despite the complexity involved, this paper argues that a shared goal of sustainable peace is worth critical consideration by mining companies, communities and other interested parties to improve long-term sustainability outcomes for all.

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