David Francis, ed. 2012. When War Ends: Building Peace in Divided Communities

Author(s):

Rasul Ahmed Minja .

Abstract

This multi-authored volume offers the opportunity to comprehend the whole process of reconstructing post-conflict war-torn societies. It is an important volume, which besides capturing problems, challenges, and opportunities associated with the reconstruction process, offers in-depth analyses of the nature, dynamics, and complexity of the process. Contributions in this volume reveal the lack of consensus on the definition of peacebuilding. Some authors show preference for a narrow definition whilst others opt for an all-inclusive, broad conceptualization. However, one characterization that in my view comes close to providing a close description of the process holds that "in effect, though peacebuilding has a normative orientation, i.e. reconstructing a secure, peaceful and developed society, it is a largely value-laden project that apportions disproportionate powers to those who prescribe, fund and implement peacebuilding programmes" (p.5). The volume adopts the label "Liberal Peacebuilding" because of the predominant emphasis on neoliberal political and economic principles. The West African country of Sierra Leone that has had a significant share of peacebuilding programmes, is covered in great detail. Some comparative analyses.