

The Bases of Community:
Three Keys to Community Success

History

Needed: A sense of place in history -- roots

How: Local historians, oral histories, local sites, local data bases and libraries, commitment to full accounting.

Community Identity

Needed: Identity and shared goals

How: Communication, shared planning, incorporation of history and cultural matters in planning, administrative and technological tools

Culture

Needed: *Locally generated* activities that support the community and honor its history

How: Support of arts, music, educational programs, historic sites, and community programs that create a sense of vibrant, purposeful activity based on values of inclusion, creativity, and mutual support. An environment in which community needs are equal to individual or economic demands.

The Bases of Community:
Three Keys to Community Rebuilding

Historical Context

Needed: A multi-vocal description of what happened in massacres – in which all sides figure

How: Local historians, oral histories, local sites, local data bases and libraries, commitment to full accounting to the global level.

Community

Justice/Accountability

Needed: Full Accountability, justice, *and* commitment to community infrastructure and shared goals

How: Intra-group assessment prior to inter-group work; planning, leadership training based on post-massacre conditions and for community benefit

Cultural Cures

Needed: *Locally generated* cultural materials that support rebuilding – in everyday life and morals, the arts, and religious practice. Finding within cultural heritages ways to balance grief and rage with the needs of community

The left box works best with communities that have a modicum of social solidarity and calm, and some cultural cohesion, even if there are economic stressors. In areas where there has been a breakdown of serious dimensions – disenfranchisement of some groups, discrimination, violence, and finally massacres, for example, rebuilding is required and the left box irrelevant or naïve. In the beginning after massacres or other group on group violence, the emphasis cannot be on what is “right” about the place until certain elements of what were or went terribly wrong are addressed. The categories of history, community, and culture are relevant in both cases, for in both cases they form the necessary basis of community life.