

through economic interactions, and forced coexistence compels urban citizens to develop trust and practice mediation, tolerance, and understanding as a way to avoid conflict.<sup>51</sup>

There are three types of social capital: *bonding capital* refers to relationships among people who see themselves as sharing a common background; *bridging capital* refers to relationships between people without a common background; and *linking capital* refers to relationships among people of different power levels.<sup>52</sup> Research suggests that a failure to pursue all three elements of social capital can generate *negative social capital*. Programs that aim to build only bonding social capital between members of the same age group, for example, may only serve to strengthen urban gang cohesion and social isolation where their membership overlaps, if bridging and linking capital with other groups are not built simultaneously.<sup>53</sup>

Field research suggests that social capital is a key factor in the development of conflict-resilient cities. Urban social capital developed between potentially antagonistic communities can help buffer particular cities against conflict dynamics before they emerge or escalate. Resilient cities with strong levels of trust between communities can provide an immune system against outside viruses at the state or global level, such as identity-based violence. For example, Lucknow and Surat, two Indian cities with vibrant and mixed urban civil societies, were able to avoid the urban violence that plagued the more segregated Hindu-Muslim cities such as Aligarh and Admedabad.<sup>54</sup> A study of three communities in Greater Belfast since the 1960s found that only the community with high levels of bridging social capital – with mixed associational and sports clubs – was able to avoid the human insecurity that was plaguing much of Northern Ireland.<sup>55</sup>

## Resilient cities and peacebuilding

As noted in a recent Tufts University Humanitarianism and War Project study, "As conflict recedes, local people move quickly beyond their need for protection from violence (physical security) to a wider range of needs, including employment, health care, and education (human security)."<sup>56</sup> Cities represent the level of governance closest to populations. As such, they can be an effective focal point for peacebuilding activities because they are accessible entry points for peacebuilding that recognize the natural capacities of cities and their residents, and empower the provision of human

<sup>51</sup> For more information on the idea of social capital, see Snoxell et al. (2006).

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>54</sup> Varshney (2002), p.228.

<sup>55</sup> Darby (1986).

<sup>56</sup> For more information, see <http://hwproject.tufts.edu/pdf/sr48.pdf>.