

***Frontlines of Peace*, by Séverine Autesserre  
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From the preface:

The very concept of working at the grassroots to address tensions that may affect only a few hundred people (but are connected to broader conflicts) was utterly foreign to them. So was the idea that the individuals most affected by violence – and not outsiders – should figure out what it would take for them to feel safe and how they can achieve this goal. (8)

This is a great definition of what we've discussed as "peacebuilding" in the past, and I like it because it acknowledges the agency of people in conflict zones. Often, they know best what will make them safe, and the Western interventionist mindset precludes this possibility. Sure, some people will lie about what is needed because they are serving their own interests. But that should not mean categorically dismissing the input of people on the "frontlines" referred to in the title.