



Dag Hammarskjöld  
Foundation

# Inclusivity and Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding: Issues, Lessons, Challenges

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## Introduction

The inclusion of the full diversity of local perspectives is a familiar challenge in peacebuilding processes. While for many grassroots peacebuilders, reference to 'inclusive peacebuilding' may sound like a pleonasm, much debate in policy and practice has focused on the bounds of inclusiveness to make peacebuilding workable, leading to descriptions such as 'sufficient inclusion' or 'collaborative and inclusive-enough coalitions' for peacebuilding (Darby 2001; World Bank 2011). Achieving higher levels of inclusivity in peacebuilding processes has also been associated with more sustainable peace (Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Campbell et al 2009).

While there is a certain record of discussions about inclusivity, the concept has received renewed attention in international policy circles in recent years. Such revival is illustrated by the pledge of donors in the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States to ensure local ownership and leadership in peacebuilding processes. What is more, in his report "Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict", United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasizes that "inclusivity needs to be applied throughout peacebuilding, from analysis, design and planning to implementation and monitoring" (United Nations 2012: 12).

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However, the recent attention on inclusivity so far has not translated into major changes in the way international actors operationalise peacebuilding. A recent review of two decades of peacebuilding practice came to the conclusion that such practice “has failed to be context sensitive, oriented towards the long term, inclusive or accountable to local constituencies” (Paffenholz 2013: 14).

Given the gap between guidance and action, it is timely to step back for a moment and review practice trends and selected case evidence of inclusive peacebuilding. This Paper identifies key issues, lessons and challenges that need to be taken into consideration for strengthening and deepening the uptake of diverse perspectives in peacebuilding processes. The Paper makes several observations:

- Inclusivity can best be achieved by aligning engagements in multiple, overlapping processes at various levels by multiple actors at the same time.
- Every context is unique and effective peacebuilding starts from a series of common elements that are adjusted to a specific setting. Contextualisation of a strategy is key – a one-size-fits-all strategy on inclusivity won't work.
- From a field perspective, it has become increasingly clear that the role of international actors in peacebuilding contexts should mostly be limited to one of a catalyst and facilitator. While the New Deal provides a normative framework for such roles, there has been little uptake into operations of international actors.
- International actors need to improve their capacity to build and maintain relationships with local actors. Long-term relationships at various levels within a country allow for better understanding of the context and ultimately ensure relevance on the ground.

This Paper draws on the expert meeting *Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for Inclusivity: Strengthening the Role of Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding* on 14-15 May 2013, in Uppsala, Sweden, organised jointly by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (See Annexes 3 and 4). It is also an input for a larger initiative led by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation that aims to develop a sector-wide strategy for strengthening and deepening the uptake of diverse perspectives in peacebuilding processes. This initiative entails (a) the conduct of country case studies to contextualise the key issues raised in the expert meeting on inclusivity in peacebuilding, and (b) the development of a set of policy recommendations (see also the Conclusion).

Annex 1 shows initiatives of inclusiveness in Burundi, Israel, El Salvador, Nepal, Kenya and Somalia. The objective of these examples is to provide a contextual analysis and to highlight several key factors of inclusiveness in specific contexts.

The term 'local' used in this Paper may be perhaps best understood as an imprecise yet useful marker for being as close as possible to the problems and solutions, inclusive of varied voices and interests, excluding international staff working on the ground. The perspectives of 'local' actors first and foremost come from conflict-affected communities and constituencies from civil society, the private sector, traditional leaders, women and youth.

## 1. The *who, when and how* of inclusivity of local perspectives in peacebuilding

When talking about including local perspectives in peacebuilding processes, two dimensions of inclusivity can be identified:

- The inclusion and participation of the relevant local actors in a specific peacebuilding context, and
- How local perspectives are included and how much of the local resonates at the international level.

While the former relates to *who* and *when* to include in inclusive peacebuilding on the ground, the latter relates to *how* local perspectives are or can be included in international peacebuilding initiatives.

Depending on the context, the visibility of groups other than government actors or well-organised civil society can be limited, as well as their awareness and access to peacebuilding processes. Such limitation may arise from actors such as geographic circumstances, societal fragmentation, patriarchal and patronage cultures, or the lack of education (United Nations 2012: 12f). This lack of visibility particularly affects women, youth and victims that are often marginalised in peace processes.

Besides deciding about the actors that should be part of the process, it is critical to ask who selects this pool of people (i.e. who is the 'includer'). Many peacebuilding experts argue that the people affected by conflict and peacebuilding processes themselves ought to decide who is and is not relevant to the process. Third parties (international players, such as United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) or international mediators) can provide support by facilitating the engagement of marginalised groups.

In Burundi, the Centre of Alert and Conflict Prevention (CENAP) played a key role in promoting the inclusion of the voices of the otherwise "voiceless" extra-parliamentary Democratic Alliance for Change, the ADC-Ikibiri, by facilitating dialogue with the government (see Example 1 in Annex 1). Additionally, the Burundian example responds to the question of who should act as the 'includer'. A local civil society organisation, CENAP had the advantage of knowing the context and both parties well and was seen as an impartial player, which allowed for its role as facilitator.

In April 2012, the two largest gangs in El Salvador – the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and the Mara Dieciocho (M-18) – decided to halt gang violence by implementing a truce (see Example 2 in Annex 1). From March to December 2012, the homicide rate subsequently decreased from 68% to 26% and daily murders from 14 to 5 or 6. The Salvadoran truce underlines a so far successful but still fragile example of inclusivity as current gang members and more importantly gang leaders play a crucial role in making peace, wishing to play their part in ending decades of social marginalisation and exclusion.

Next to the questions of who ought to be included by whom, it is important to ask *when* and *how* to include. In fact, not every actor or group has to be present at the table at the same time; sometimes it may not even be politically appropriate. Furthermore, a group's presence in dialogue sessions also depends on its knowledge about the situation as well as its capacity and willingness to engage. It thus also depends on the 'includees' and on at what point they feel at ease with participating

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*A group's presence in dialogue sessions may also depend on its knowledge about the context and its self-confidence to engage*

or whether they prefer alternative ways of engagement. In this regard, not every process itself has to be inclusive, it is important to construct multiple processes that combined represent inclusive peacebuilding.

Example 3 (see Annex 1) shows how a previously excluded and self-marginalised group can be engaged. The orthodox movement Shas saw the need to first get better informed about the context prior to engaging. Including Shas in the peace talks and peacebuilding process in Israel therefore occurred through previous study programmes and English language training. This example thus underlines how a group's knowledge about the context and its self-confidence determine its willingness and ability to engage.

Discussions on inclusivity in peacebuilding tend to focus on local communities and the grassroots level. However, there is a risk to romanticise local civil society and the grassroots level as homogenous and inherently good entities (Paffenholz 2013: 15f). In light of this risk, it is important to understand that peacebuilding is essentially a process of state-formation, of narrowing the vertical space between the authorities and the population and thereby restoring the compact between the state and society. It is therefore crucial not to circumvent but to bring in the state.

In the context of Nepal (see Example 4 in Annex 1), a main reason why inclusivity is not yet properly operationalised – despite many well-intended efforts – relates precisely to the gap between state authorities and the population. Nepalese peacebuilding initiatives are characterised by horizontal rather than vertical inclusivity, resulting in a lack of a national-local connect. In addition, there is a lack of coordination and coherence between national and local level peacebuilding efforts as well as between donor agencies and local and national CSOs. Moreover, a lack of a 'linking and learning' culture from the local to the national level results in a strong domination of a top-down approach in peacebuilding.

## **2. Local analysis capabilities: Understanding conflict and actors**

Local actors affected by conflict – communities, civil society, the private sector, traditional leaders and women's, youth and victim groups – intrinsically have more information about their specific context than outside actors. Indeed, "the ability of external agents to gain knowledge of the complex social systems we are dealing with in the peacebuilding context is inherently limited" (De Coning 2013: 4). Local context-specific information thus plays a critical role in a process of actor-and-issue-mapping at the outset of a peacebuilding effort to identify relevant actors and issues. At the same time, advocating for local analysis can facilitate local ownership of the peacebuilding process to come. If needed, international actors can provide technical and process-oriented (non-content-oriented) support. As a fragile context may change over time, mapping exercises or conflict analyses need to be carried out continuously in order to adapt to the evolving reality.

In the context of the March 2013 elections in Kenya (see Example 5 in Annex 1), the Kisumu Peace and Security Task Team – established by a local partner of Saferworld, "Local Capacities for Peace International (LCPI)" – was strongly involved in sharing early warning information, monitoring and observing the electoral process as well as responding to conflict risks that arose. The task team also developed a risk map of the

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county, identifying potential conflict hot spots in Kisumu County. The initiatives were undertaken jointly and in consultation with the police and the provincial administration.

“The need for more local ownership has been recognised and discussed in the statebuilding and peacebuilding literature for at least a decade” (De Coning 2013: 1). However, despite this recognition, many would argue that local ownership has not become more of a reality because it is inherently difficult to achieve, partly because of the lack of capacity of many local actors to govern themselves. In addition, international actors rarely have a full understanding of the dynamics of local politics, such as who has which needs and interests and who represents these needs and interests?

In addition, locally-led peacebuilding initiatives are sometimes viewed as impossible to “scale[...] up sufficiently to make a significant impact” (Hayman 2010). This may be another reason why local capacity for peacebuilding is viewed as marginal rather than constituting a central element of peacebuilding strategies. “Ripples into waves”, co-published by Peace Direct and the Quaker United Nations Office, argues that “‘insiders’ (local players) are at least as important as ‘outsiders’ (international players) in building peace that is sustainable” (*Ibid*: 1) and presents four locally-led, large-scale case studies: Somaliland (where outsiders were never involved), Mozambique (where outsiders only stayed for a short time), Kenya (where outsiders arrived after the local initiative had begun) and Guyana (where outsiders made the conscious effort to find and mobilise local capacities).

Based on these case studies, “Ripples into waves” sets out a four-step approach on how “‘local first and local large-scale’ could be turned into an operational policy” (*Ibid*: 10) and which is restricted to a specific context:

- (1) Use locally-led continuous conflict analysis;
- (2) Build conflict analysis into an active (voluntary) platform for peacebuilding;
- (3) Allocate dedicated funding to the platform; and
- (4) Take a long view.

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<sup>1</sup> For Lederach's theoretical shift towards local actors, engaging in a context sensitive way, respecting the local culture and taking a long-term approach, see Lederach (1997). For insights about UN missions and local people, see Pouligny (2006). For the issue papers resulting from the 'Reflecting on Peace Practice' project of the Collaborative for Development Action, see [http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project\\_profile.php?pid=RPP&pname=Reflecting%20on%20Peace%20Practice](http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=RPP&pname=Reflecting%20on%20Peace%20Practice). For a discussion of the organisational implications of participatory peacebuilding the shortcomings of the UN and other international organisations in this regard, see Campbell (2008) and (2009). For a critique of liberal peacebuilding, see Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (2011).

***Actor-and-issue-mapping needs to be an ongoing and continuous process in order to be able to adapt to the evolving country-specific context***

*There is a need for voluntary self-restraint of international actors in order not to undermine the local capacities for self-organisation*

### **3. Tensions between local ownership and international self-interest**

Differences between local preferences and international self-interest are a common dilemma in the peacebuilding sector. The case of Somalia is no exception. Example 6 (see Annex 1) highlights the tension between local ownership and the international community's agenda.

Despite the commonality of local-international tension, only few actors recognise this impediment and fail to properly take the tension into account as they operationalise engagement in peacebuilding contexts. International actors often stand in their own way by competing for funds as well as local partners. In this regard, De Coning (2013) highlights the need for voluntary self-restraint of international actors and the need to re-affirm 'local ownership' as the starting point for peacebuilding and statebuilding processes. In this way, the international community could play the role of a catalyst and facilitator to create the space needed for conflict-affected societies to develop their own capacities for self-organisation. Additionally, horizontal learning could help to avoid the duplication of international efforts.

By safeguarding the space for peacebuilding and statebuilding, international actors also support the multiplicity of existing overlapping efforts that are happening simultaneously. A challenge is to find the appropriate balance between international support and home-grown solutions.

### **4. The United Nations' engagement with local contexts**

The United Nations is a body of nation-states. Its peacebuilding architecture provides an intergovernmental meeting space. The architecture is composed of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) but remains difficult to access for civil society organisations (CSOs). One of the tasks of the PBSO is to garner international support for nationally owned and locally led peacebuilding efforts.

While the UNSG report cited at the outset of this Paper underlines the importance of inclusivity in peacebuilding, the reality on the ground shows that UN engagement mainly operationalises peacebuilding with national governments, but is less systematically engaging local CSOs. What is more, there are a series of procedural deficits of UN Departments and agencies that prevent them from working in a more contextual manner. There is a need to rethink international engagement in peacebuilding contexts in order to ensure a greater degree of context sensitivity.

To ensure national ownership, the PBC negotiates agreements with the governments of the countries in question. However, "ownership must extend beyond the government to include meaningful civil society participation" – a key component to restore the social, vertical contract between the state and society (GPPAC 2010: 5). In a policy paper about the civil society perspective on the PBC's five-year review in 2010, GPPAC found two challenges for engagement in the field. The first challenge is to ensure PBC relevance on the ground and to have timely, relevant information feed into PBC activities in New York. The second challenge is to ensure genuine local ownership and an internationally-led peacebuilding policy (*Ibid.*: 4). In this regard, the consistency and continuity of engagement and managing partnerships with various actors on the ground (including but not limited to civil society) is highly important.

*There are a series of procedural deficits of UN Departments and agencies that prevent them from working in a more contextual manner*

Establishing and maintaining partnerships with civil society organisations is crucial from the very beginning of PBC engagement, for example, participation in the development and planning of country-specific peacebuilding policy. Such civil society participation can ensure that the PBC's work is relevant to the local reality. Secondly, such relationships may also provide access to local populations that the PBC or the national government may not have access to otherwise. Not restricted to the United Nations but concerning all international actors, there is a strong need to ensure feedback mechanisms within the limits of project funding given a current lack of capacity in this regard.

Several initiatives (see Annex 2 for a non-exhaustive list) aim at bridging this gap between the local and the international (or UN) levels. For example, several organisations are committed to bringing local CSOs and their perspectives from conflict countries to the policy-making centres, such as in Washington, D.C., and in New York. Others aim at giving local peacebuilding initiatives a "louder" voice by including their perspectives in media reporting and online platforms. Furthermore, network approaches between civil society organisations, regional inter-governmental organisations and the United Nations, among others, additionally create a platform for more effective action from the community to the global level.

## **5. Barriers to inclusivity**

According to many peacebuilding practitioners, the very essence of peacebuilding is about the local level. While there is a growing recognition to include local perspectives in peacebuilding policy and practice, the structural reality of international organisations, like the United Nations, faces several barriers in this regard.

Within the United Nations, there is no formal way to consult with local peacebuilding actors. In order to include local perspectives, the UN's operating procedures and the reporting style would need to change to incentivise seeking perspectives from different groups, including local actors. Even though the extent varies among UN agencies, a general impediment to inclusivity of local perspectives is the strong focus on the delivery of results, for example results that one can easily show rather than more time-consuming ones, such as building trust and relationships as well as engaging in meaningful dialogue and consultations.

In this context, one of the major challenges to achieving meaningful inclusivity is the nature of peacebuilding itself. Regular interaction, building trust and relationships, addressing the root causes of conflict and engaging in trauma-healing, are all activities – among many others – that need to be carried out with a long-term vision, that require flexibility in setting and adapting the targets and where results are not easy to measure. However, the priorities in peacebuilding often do not match those of international donors. On the one hand, civil society organisations face the difficulty to receive direct funding from the United Nations due to donor requirements and agreements. On the other hand, funding systems tend to be too inflexible and insufficiently long-term to build local capacity. In this regard, network organisations, such as GPPAC, strive to have funding available for the implementation of plans, which are developed by regional networks. However, convincing donors of such needed flexibility is becoming increasingly difficult.

At the level of national government, achieving true inclusivity also faces several challenges, which are often political and can be characterised as a lack of capacity

***Consistent, continuous and long-term engagement and management of partnerships is crucial to ensure relevance on the ground***

***Current funding systems by international donors tend to be too inflexible and insufficiently long-term to effectively build local capacity***

*There is a need to re-think the engagement and the institutional set-up of several international organisations to truly operationalise inclusivity in peacebuilding*

or a lack of political will to carry out inclusive processes. At the level of the local population, there are a number of additional barriers to inclusivity. These are that societies in fragile or conflict-affected contexts are often polarised, asymmetric (in knowledge, power and self-confidence) and determined by social hierarchy. These factors as well as language barriers may self-marginalise local actors. What is more, local actors (from different community groups or grassroots civil society organisations) often do not have a coherent opinion or vision. In this context, this issue requires defining a viewpoint internally in order to be able to send a representative afterwards that speaks on behalf of the whole group/organisation or defining alternative processes to allow for differing perspectives to flow into the peacebuilding process.

## **Conclusion and the way forward**

This Paper underlines that inclusivity is about engagement at various levels by multiple actors at the same time. Such engagements occur through multiple, overlapping processes that in their totality define levels of inclusivity. In a sense, inclusivity does not only refer to when to include whom in the peace process leading up to a peace agreement in the aftermath of violent conflict, but to the connections between the multiple processes at various levels of society as well as in different places driven by a diversity of actors.

Reaching higher levels of inclusivity is therefore associated with finding an action framework that is based on multi-layered, multi-level and multi-stakeholder designs. It is necessary to engage at various levels, establish a mechanism to link them, extend beyond the level of the national government but at the same time extending beyond civil society organisations and communities. In this regard, flexibility and continuity are important factors in order to enable adapting to the local context and promoting local ownership.

The current institutional design of several international organisations, in particular the United Nations, makes it very difficult to effectively operationalise inclusive peacebuilding. Consequently, there is a need to re-think the way these organisations engage with and operation in local peacebuilding contexts. On a practical level, generating greater buy-in among decision-makers is needed to operationalise true inclusivity in peacebuilding processes.

In order to contextualise some of the key issues raised on inclusivity in peacebuilding, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, with input and participation from other interested peacebuilding organisations, will be conducting a series of country case studies. These studies will explore elements of different inclusivity strategies in specific environments, starting with a desk review of existing reports, articles and other secondary data sources. A preliminary analysis will then be deepened through interviews, stakeholder consultations and field visits to the areas in question. Case study countries under consideration include Liberia, Burma, Somalia, East Timor, and Kenya. This selection is based on a consideration of experiences and presence on the ground by partner organisations, the phase of post-conflict recovery, geographic diversity and capacity of the state versus civil society.

Outcomes of the case studies will be combined with further input from experts to identify practical strategies for supporting sustained inclusivity of local voices in peacebuilding processes. The output will be a set of policy recommendations aimed



at decision-makers within the United Nations as well as international and national peacebuilding practitioners working in conflict-affected contexts.

## **Annex 1: Examples of inclusiveness in specific contexts**

### **Example 1 - Burundi: Facilitating dialogue between the government and the opposition parties to include the voices of all stakeholders**

In the 2010 electoral process, the majority of the opposition asserted that the communal election was flawed and boycotted the subsequent presidential and legislative elections. As a result, the opposition – which regrouped under the Democratic Alliance for Change, the ADC-Ikibiri – is not represented in Burundi's elected institutions at the national and local levels and has no institutionalised platform to express its views. The government, on the other hand, lacks formal points of communication to consult with the opposition parties. This deadlock through lack of political dialogue contributed to an escalation of violence in 2010-2011, which caused the majority of the opposition leaders to flee the country.

In the context of a 2012 draft law by the Burundian government on the legal status of the political opposition, consulting with the ADC-Ikibiri was important to ensure the inclusion of the voices of all stakeholders in the process, which is ultimately crucial in order to establish a legitimate government.

The President of the National Assembly, Pie Ntavyohanyuma, asked Interpeace's local partner in Burundi, the Centre of Alert and Conflict Prevention (CENAP), to facilitate a workshop between the extra-parliamentary opposition and the ruling party. This meeting on 28 March 2012 constituted the first direct and public dialogue since the opposition boycotted the elections in 2010.

Source: Interpeace and its local partner, the Centre of Alert and Conflict Prevention – CENAP; see also <http://www.interpeace.org/2011-08-08-15-19-20/latest-news/2012/283-burundi-cenap-engages-the-extra-parliamentary-opposition>

### **Example 2 - El Salvador: Inclusion and gang-related violence**

In April 2012, the two largest gangs in El Salvador – the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and the Mara Dieciocho (M-18) – decided to halt gang violence and establish a series of 'peace zones' by implementing a truce. In exchange, the agreement apparently involved the transfer of the gang leaders from a high-security to a normal prison (Hope 2012). Due to the truce, the homicide rate decreased from 68% to 26% and daily murders from 14 to 5 or 6 from March to December 2012.

Despite a hostile society and 'mano dura' policies that are still in force, this case represents a so far successful but still fragile example of inclusivity. Not only former gang members, neighbours, relatives, civil society, policy-makers and the government are relevant actors – current gang members and more importantly gang leaders play an even more important role in making or breaking the peace. Seemingly having realised the damage they had done to society, the older generation of gang leaders initiated truce negotiations by asking their families to approach two individuals as mediators.

*By playing a facilitator role, CENAP promoted the inclusion of voiceless parties in the peace process*

*The gang truce set in motion peacebuilding efforts to end decades of social marginalisation and exclusion*

While the Salvadoran truce underlines the importance of inclusive dialogue, it reveals the need for an alternative strategy for inclusivity in the case of gangs, at the same time (Does & McElligott 2012: 4). More precisely, the gang leaders themselves seem to have initiated the truce negotiations and have not been included by other actors (Wennmann 2013). In addition, Isabel Aguilar Umaña, Director of the Central American Youth Programme of Interpeace, highlights the further need to “increase the political incentives for politicians to advocate for and participate in such processes” (Does & McElligott 2012: 4).

### **Example 3 - Israel: The Shas movement**

The Shas movement in Israel is both a social movement (since 1983) and a political party (since 1984), composed of orthodox Jews from the Middle East or North Africa that make up about 20% of the total Israeli population. Until 2004, the Shas movement was traditionally excluded from the peace talks or was self-marginalised. On the one hand, peace talks focused on the security dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and did not pay much attention to the religious one. However, there is slowly growing recognition of the value of an involvement in a conflict resolution process as prominent religious leaders may convince a significant part of the population if they support a specific solution to the conflict. On the other hand, Shas was self-marginalised because its members of orthodox Jews dedicated their time to religious studies and were thus not informed about political questions and the ongoing conflict as well as due to a minimal command of English, especially among men, even though many speak Arabic (Interpeace 2009: 14f).

The UN-Interpeace programme Base for Discussion (B4D) in Israel was the first attempt to institutionally engage Shas. The movement answered positively to the programme’s question whether they wanted to become part of a process within Israeli society to create greater internal convergence around possible solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Prior to engaging, however, Shas saw the need to first get better informed. In a subsequent study programme, 35 self-selected members of the orthodox movement learned about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, went on relevant field visits, and followed a module on conflict management and mediation that allowed them to become officially recognised mediators as well as participated in English language courses. Through this and further such information programmes, Shas felt more knowledgeable and confident to engage in the peacebuilding process. Based on this, B4D, representatives of Shas and with the blessing of its highest religious leader, Rabbi Ovadia Youssef, jointly formulated the goal to articulate “a vision for the geopolitical future of the region, strengthening the capacity of the community’s leadership to become active participants in the public debate on the issue, and in the policy processes that define the country’s position”

Source: UN-Interpeace programme Base for Discussion - B4D, see <http://www.interpeace.org/programmes/israel/ongoing-activities>.

### **Example 4 - Nepal: Challenges and Opportunities of Inclusive Peacebuilding**

With first peacebuilding initiatives dating back to 2001/2002, a broader range of peacebuilding initiatives has been initiated in Nepal since early 2006 when the country’s civil war between the government and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) was heading towards settlement.

*The orthodox Shas movement in Israel felt the need to boost its knowledge about the context as well as its self-confidence prior to engaging in the peacebuilding process*

Peacebuilding initiatives in Nepal can be divided into two parts: NGO-donor-initiated and government-initiated peacebuilding programmes. The former primarily include educational and advocacy activities, such as trainings, workshops and socio-political dialogues on various conflict and peace-related issues.

With regard to the latter, many of the activities operated under the Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction (MOPR) contribute to promote peacebuilding, even without carrying the specific title of 'peacebuilding programmes'. For example, the Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF), a government-donor joint funding mechanism, has allocated 39% of its current budget to the Constitution Assembly and peacebuilding initiatives. In addition, the Emergency Peace Support Project (EPSP) aims at providing support for the victims of conflict and the communities affected by armed conflict. The Local Peace Committee (LPC) is another peace infrastructure with a nationwide network, which was created to make peace implementation processes participatory (by including local people, civil society organisations, political leaders and various government agencies in the districts). Moreover, the government has formed a Peace Working Group and few other thematic groups at the national level with the participation of national and international peacebuilding organisations, professional groups and concerned agencies.

Despite many good efforts, peacebuilding initiatives in Nepal face a few general criticisms:

- Most of the peacebuilding trainings and workshops have been conducted in the capital and the regional and district headquarters and are often attended by the same set of people;
- No peacebuilding mechanism truly connects local and national peace initiatives;
- A lot of money has been spent on trainings, advocacy work and campaign-driven activities, without substantial results in favour of the neediest groups from the conflict-affected communities and the direct victims of the conflict;
- There are very few peacebuilding initiatives that could contribute to the socio-economic uplifting of needy people;
- There has been a lot of overlap and duplication while funding and implementing peacebuilding projects.

There are several reasons why inclusivity is not properly operationalised in Nepal: (1) over-politicisation and a lack of policy direction of the existing groups and committees, (2) horizontal inclusivity rather than a vertical one resulting in a lack of a national-local connect, (3) a lack of coordination and coherence between national and local level peacebuilding efforts as well as between donor agencies and local and national CSOs, (4) overfunding of several initiatives (e.g. dialogue and advocacy work) while underfunding important others and (5) a lack of 'linking and learning' culture from the local to the national level, resulting in a strong domination of a top-down approach in peacebuilding.

Source: Prakash Bhattarai (PhD Candidate in Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago, New Zealand).

***In Nepal, many peacebuilding efforts are characterised by horizontal rather than vertical inclusivity – resulting in a lack of national-local connect***

*The 2013 general elections in Kenya were accompanied by inclusive strategies to prevent violent conflict*

### **Example 5 - Kenya: The Peace and Security Task Team in Kisumu County**

Kisumu has traditionally been considered a volatile area particularly in reference to political violence as depicted in the 2007-2008 conflict. Kisumu County had been identified as one of the conflict hot spots likely to experience violent conflict if residents felt aggrieved by the results of the general elections held in March 2013. In view of this, Saferworld – through a local partner “Local Capacities for Peace International (LCPI)” – supported the formation and operationalisation of a peace and security coordination forum in Kisumu County. The process of formation included consultations with members of the community, the provincial administration, peace committee members, youth groups, civil society organisations, the council of elders, the police and the media who shared their views and ideas on the role and function of the peace and security forum. Among other things, the members noted the importance of sharing early warning information that could be acted upon at the community level, by community members and the police. Furthermore, the media would play an important role in relaying information through various media outlets to diffuse tension and pacify the public in the county.

As a result, the Kisumu Peace and Security Task Team was established and was strongly involved in sharing early warning information, monitoring and observing the electoral process and responding to conflict risks that arose. The task team developed a risk map of the county, identifying potential conflict hot spots in Kisumu County that consisted of Kisumu East, Nyalenda/Manyatta, Bus Park, Obambo, Kondele, Otongloo, Muhoroni, Nyakach/ Kericho border and Nyando at Awasi. The task team was significantly efficient in gathering and sharing information relevant to reducing conflict with relevant peace and security actors. For instance, the team played an important role in pacifying community members to maintain peace after the realisation that there would be a delay in announcing the presidential election results and during the hearing of the election petition at the Supreme Court. The Peace and Security Task Team was also able to detect and share information with the police regarding spoilers who wanted to instigate violent clashes and take advantage of the chaos to vandalise and steal property.

The initiatives undertaken were done jointly and in consultation with the police and the provincial administration, which represents the government. The biggest challenge the team faced during the elections was appealing to frustrated voters to remain calm as well as managing their expectations regarding the presidential results. It was extremely helpful that community members were represented on the task team as their representatives shared information on any developments and initiatives undertaken through the task team as well as also sharing feedback from the communities with the other task team members. Overall, the Peace and Security Task Team continues to be active at the county and community level. In addition, it has maintained structures at both levels which have been instrumental in information sharing and coordination of joint peace and security initiatives. Saferworld will seek to improve this model with a view to sharing it with stakeholders at the national level and in other counties where it can be adopted and replicated.

Source: Bonita Ayuko (Project Coordinator, Kenya Programme, Saferworld)

### **Example 6 - Somalia: The role of the international community**

The involvement of international actors in the Somali context since Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected President in September 2012 highlights a tension between local ownership and international self-interest. On the one hand, the Somali President needs to legitimise his role internally and aims at leading the peace process according to his vision for Somalia. Furthermore, the Somali institutions need to build trust and confidence with the population, a process that needs to be inherently Somali-owned. On the other hand, the international community plays a powerful role in being able to provide the resources necessary to build peace while at the same time having very specific ideas about how the Somali President should go about this. Consequently, the already limited governing capacity of the Somali President and its government "is being overwhelmed by the transaction costs of needing to engage with each of these international actors" (*Ibid.*). Additionally, too much international intervention may also undermine the government to be regarded by its population as legitimate and independent.

This situation highlights the strategic political, security and economic interests that stand behind the engagement of international actors, although they hold to be supporting the Somali Federal Government. What is more, international peacebuilding missions tend to undermine the ability of the local system to 'self-organise'.

Source: De Coning 2013.

***The tension between international self-interest and local ownership in the Somali context underlines how the international actors can undermine the ability of the local system to 'self-organise'***

## Annex 2 – Existing key initiatives and programmes on inclusivity

- **Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP):** A platform of 80 peacebuilding organisations in the United States and around the world, which seeks to connect both people and institutions for collaborative peacebuilding. The Members of AfP are directly engaged in applied conflict prevention and resolution. More precisely, AfP is committed to bringing the voices of local civil society organisations to the policy-making level in the U.S. (<http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/?page=workcollaboration>)
- **European Peacebuilding Liaison Office:** A platform of European NGOs, networks of NGOs and think tanks, EPLO aims at influencing the European Union to promote and implement measures, which lead to sustainable peace between states and between state and society. One of EPLO's Ad Hoc Groups focuses on "EU support for peace processes" with one of its focal themes being EU support to the participation of civil society organisations in peace processes (<http://www.eplo.org/eu-support-for-peace-processes.html>).
- **Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC):** With its approach of 15 regional networks, GPPAC seeks to strengthen effective collaboration between civil society organisations, state actors, regional inter-governmental organisations, the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders. Through the network approach, GPPAC aims at "develop[ing] a common platform for effective action on conflict prevention from the community to the global level" (<http://www.gppac.net/about-us> & <http://www.gppac.net/network>)
- **Insight on Conflict** (<http://www.insightonconflict.org/>): An online platform, published by Peace Direct, which aims at showcasing hundreds of local peacebuilding initiatives around the world, organised by country area or specific themes. It also provides a monthly newsletter with latest research and publishes a blog that provides a space for exchange and discussion among expert contributors, aid sector professionals, academics, policy-makers as well as local correspondents in the field (<http://www.insightonconflict.org/blog/>).
- **International Alert:** Through the Peacebuilding Issues Programme, International Alert seeks to provide the national government and international levels with more insight into the practical consequences of their decisions in conflict-affected regions. More precisely, International Alert works to ensure that the perspectives and priorities of its local partners are represented at the highest international levels and to provide specialist support on the ground (<http://www.international-alert.org/ourwork>).
- **Interpeace:** Two of Interpeace's five peacebuilding principles throughout its programmes are local ownership and reaching out to all parties in the process. The former relates to ensuring that peacebuilding priorities are determined locally, by including local people in the definition of the problem. The latter relates to participatory processes that are at the core of Interpeace's peacebuilding approach, in which the local partners reach out to all relevant groups in society during dialogue and priority setting processes (<http://www.interpeace.org/about-us/our-peacebuilding-principles>)
- **Peace Direct:** With its vocal approach, Peace Direct aims at giving local peacebuilding initiatives a voice and to make those voices heard and included in media reporting on conflict as well as political decision-making at all levels (<http://www.peacedirect.org/about/our-approach/>).

- People's Peacemaking Perspectives project:** In an 18-month project (October 2010 – March 2012), Conciliation Resources and Saferworld jointly carried out 18 studies, including country-specific and regional analyses. Furthermore, the project aimed at building local capacity to articulate needs, views and ideas to decision-makers in the European Union, through advocacy training, in-country meetings and visits of local actors to Brussels and other EU capitals. This way, PPP “aimed to raise awareness among local actors that their views and ideas are legitimate and to convey to policy-makers the need to listen to local voices” (Saferworld and Conciliation Resources 2012: i). For more information on the project itself, see <http://www.c-r.org/PPP> & <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/news-and-views/case-study/13>. The project additionally produced a short film (<http://www.c-r.org/video-and-audio/peoples-peacemaking-perspectives>) and a report ([http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/PPP\\_conflict\\_analysis\\_peacebuilding\\_impact.pdf](http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/PPP_conflict_analysis_peacebuilding_impact.pdf)). Even though conflict analysis is not a phase of peacebuilding as such, one of the key messages of the PPP project is that it “should be at the heart of international engagement in all conflict-affected and fragile contexts” (Saferworld and Conciliation Resources 2012). In this regard, Saferworld and Conciliation Resources intended to broaden consultations beyond the ‘usual suspects’, thus including evidence and experience from local people that have limited opportunity to make their voices heard. Additionally, the project aimed at supporting capacity-building of local civil society organisations as well as helping them to build relationships with decision-makers, even beyond the duration of the project.
- Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO):** One of the priority thematic areas of work of (QUNO) in New York is the role of civil society and the inclusion of local perspectives in peacebuilding. Seeing itself as a bridge between the field and the United Nations agencies in New York, it hosts and facilitates informal, non-public meetings (“quiet diplomacy”) between civil society representatives, UN experts and UN Member States at the Quaker House.
- Saferworld:** One of Saferworld's issue focus areas is “Supporting inclusive political processes for peace”, working towards peace settlements and daily decision-making that is representative of all voices and interests. For concrete examples in this area from Somalia, Georgia and Yemen, see <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/what/inclusive-processes>. One recent example is the work of Saferworld and its partners in Puntland and South-Central Somalia to include civil society voices in the recommendations to the Federal Government of Somalia and the international community for the May 2013 London Conference on Somalia (<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/735> & <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/LondonSomalia2013-short-SW-briefing.pdf> ).
- Social Science Research Council – African Peacebuilding Network (APN):** The APN brings together research and policy on conflict-affected areas in three broad ways: (1) supporting thematic research by joint researcher and practitioners teams, (2) hosting workshops that bring African researchers and practitioners in policy institutions together, and (3) using the on-line discussion forum ‘Kujenga Amani’ (<http://forums.ssrc.org/kujenga-amani/>) to facilitate the exchange of views between research and policy communities.

## Paying attention to local views and initiatives in international development

Acknowledging that peacebuilding and international development are inherently different, two initiatives from the development field can be useful in shedding light on the importance of listening to and including local perspectives, at times even prioritising them over those of the international community:

- “**Local First** is a development approach that looks first for the capacity within countries before bringing in external expertise and resources, recognises that much of this capacity is found outside the central government, and understands that local people need to lead their own development” (Peace Direct 2012: 3). In this context, the initiative argues for the following types of efforts:
  - **locally led:** the local partner formulates the approach, supported by the international agency that may provide resources and connections to relevant organisations,
  - **locally owned:** an outside approach with determination to hand over the ownership of the initiative to a legitimate local organisation, with the goal of transforming the programme into being locally led,

in contrast to those that are:

- **locally delivered:** an outside approach that is implemented by a local organisation, without prior involvement or consultation of the latter and without hand-over of ownership.

While Local First puts emphasis on local capacities, it does not equate with 'local only'. The case studies illustrated in the book (Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Timor-Leste) illustrate examples of cooperation and successful partnerships between local and outside organisations as well as cases where outsiders provided support and added value, without taking over (*Ibid: 4f*).

- The book **Time to listen: Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid** is based on the Listening Project that was established in late 2005. During this project, the authors engaged in conversations with 130 local organisations and captured the experiences and voices of over 6.000 people across society (i.e. government officials, aid agencies, civil society organisations, local leaders, academics and businessmen), who have (1) received international assistance, (2) observed the effect of such efforts or (3) been involved in providing assistance. One among many key findings of the book is to focus on local priorities instead of the needs that have been identified externally.

Even though the two above initiatives study the field of international development, their key messages also apply in the peacebuilding field. Local people usually know their particular context and conflict best, which is why first focusing on local capacity before providing support from the outside may be more effective. In addition, local priorities cannot only be defined in the capital and by government officials – engaging with all relevant actors is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the peacebuilding effort.



## **Annex 3 – Programme of the Meeting “Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for Inclusivity: Strengthening the Role of Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding” on 14-15 May 2013**

### **Tuesday, 14 May 2013**

#### **Session 1: What we know and don't know**

*Tour d'horizon* on existing practices, approaches and evidence-based lessons learned

#### **Session 2: Identifying the elements**

Drawing together key constituents elements of inclusive peacebuilding strategies

### **Wednesday, 15 May 2013**

#### **Session 3: Contextualising the elements**

Applicability of key elements in different contexts and what that means for developing strategic and comprehensive policies

#### **Session 4: Next steps**

How do we best move forward with efforts to strengthen the influence of local voices in national peacebuilding processes?

## **Annex 4 – Participants of the Meeting “Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for Inclusivity: Strengthening the Role of Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding” on 14-15 May 2013**

- **Bernardo Arévalo de León** (Deputy-Director General, Research and Development, Interpeace)
- **Jenny Aulin** (Programme Manager Action Learning, Human Security and Preventive Action, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict)
- **Bonita Ayuko** (Project Coordinator, Kenya Programme, Saferworld)
- **Prakash Bhattarai** (PhD Candidate in Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago, New Zealand)
- **Susanna Campbell** (Post-doctoral Researcher, Centre for Conflict Development and Peacebuilding, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies)
- **Camilla Campisi** (UN Representative, Quaker United Nations Office, New York)
- **Anna Crumley-Effinger** (Intern, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation)
- **Antonia Does** (Research Assistant, Geneva Peacebuilding Platform)
- **Marika Fahlén** (Consultant, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation)
- **Sigrid Gruener** (Programme Manager, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation)
- **Carolyn Hayman** (Chief Executive, Peace Direct)
- **Diane Hendrick** (Associate Representative, Peace and Disarmament, Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva)
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- **Maarten Merkelbach** (Head of Leadership in Conflict Management Programme, Geneva Centre for Security Policy)
- **Henrik Persson** (Intern, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation)
- **Alexander Ramsbotham** (Accord Series Editor, Conciliation Resources)
- **Fiona Rotberg** (Senior Programme Manager, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation)
- **Sarah Smith** (Intern, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation)
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- **Achim Wennmann** (Executive Coordinator, Geneva Peacebuilding Platform)

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## **About this Paper and the author**

This Paper is a distillation of the main points raised during the meeting "Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for Inclusivity: Strengthening the Role of Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding". The meeting was jointly organised by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (DHF) and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (GPP) on 14-15 May 2013 in Uppsala, Sweden. The views expressed in this Paper relate to the interventions made during the meeting in Uppsala.

Antonia Does works as a Research Assistant at the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform. She acted as the rapporteur for the meeting "Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for Inclusivity: Strengthening the Role of Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding."

## **About the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation**

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation was established in 1962 in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. An autonomous foundation, its mission is to catalyse dialogue and action for a socially and economically just, environmentally sustainable, democratic and peaceful world. In the spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld, we generate new perspectives and ideas on global development and multilateral cooperation. We build bridges between actors and provide space for those most affected by inequalities and injustice. Our current work programme focuses on security, development and civil society in transition with a particular focus on the Global South. [www.dhf.uu.se](http://www.dhf.uu.se)

## **About the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform**

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform is an inter-agency network that connects the critical mass of peacebuilding actors, resources, and expertise in Geneva and worldwide. Founded in 2008, the Platform has a mandate to facilitate interaction on peacebuilding between different institutions and sectors, and to advance new knowledge and understanding of peacebuilding issues and contexts. It also plays a creative role in building bridges between International Geneva, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in New York, and peacebuilding activities in the field. The Platform's network comprises more than 2500 peacebuilding professionals and over 60 institutions working on peacebuilding directly or indirectly. As part of its 2012-2014 Programme, the Platform provides policy-relevant advice and services, ensures the continuous exchange of information through seminars, consultations, and conferences, and facilitates outcome-oriented peacebuilding dialogues in five focus areas. For more information see <http://www.gpplatform.ch>.

## **The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform is a joint project of four institutions:**

The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Interpeace; and the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva (QUNO).

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