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Civil Society and Peacebuilding
Potential, Limitations and Critical Factors



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ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|--|
| CBO | Community-Based Organization |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DFID | United Kingdom Department for International Development, |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| GPPAC | Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict |
| GTZ | German Agency for Technical Cooperation |
| ICRC | International Committee of the Red Cross |
| I-NGO | International Non-Governmental Organization |
| LPI | Life and Peace Institute |
| NORAD | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PBI | Peace Brigades International |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | UN Development Programme |
| UNESCO | UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNHCR | UN High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNIDIR | UN Institute for Disarmament Research |
| UNOCHA | UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| UNOSOM | UN Operation in Somalia |
| UNRISD | UN Research Institute for Social Development |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The role of civil society in peacebuilding has gained increased recognition in the last decade. Today the main question is no longer whether civil society has a role to play in peacebuilding, but how it can realize its potential, what are the roles of various actors, what are critical factors and pre-conditions for their effectiveness, and how can external actors best provide support? Despite great interest in civil society peacebuilding activities, considerable challenges, and doubts about sustainability and impact, there is little: (i) systematic analysis of civil society's potential, limitations and critical factors; and (ii) guidance on how to support civil society initiatives. What does exist is a wealth of largely descriptive accounts of specific civil society peacebuilding initiatives, as well as reflections on the conflict implications of development and humanitarian programs.

This report develops a new analytical framework to better understand the functions of civil society in peacebuilding. Civil society contributions to development and peacebuilding can be categorized in a variety of ways, but donors largely employ actor-oriented perspectives. This report proposes to move toward a functional perspective, centered on the roles that different actors can play in conflict situations. Such a functional perspective would enable donors to better analyze existing and potential forms of civil society engagement in peacebuilding. In particular, it would help clarify policy and programming objectives, select civil society partners, and help to set outcome indicators to improve monitoring and evaluation.

The analysis shows that civil society has a unique potential and can make many positive contributions to peacebuilding and conflict mitigation. It can do so independently, as an actor in its own right, or in relation to peacebuilding processes and programs led by governments or the international community. Despite many successful initiatives, and as civil society actors readily acknowledge, civil society is not a panacea. The mere existence of civil society cannot be equated with the existence of peacebuilding actors. Similarly, strengthening civil society does not automatically contribute to peacebuilding. Although civil society organizations (CSOs) are frequently actors for peace, they can also be actors of violence. So far, outcomes and impacts of different civil society peace interventions have not been sufficiently evaluated. Civil society and donors need to more strategically identify the objectives and demonstrate the relevance of the approaches to different phases of conflict/peacebuilding. Without greater clarity on objectives and intended impacts, and without addressing institutional constraints and distortions, activities run the risk of being well-intentioned but unlikely to achieve sustainable results.

Main conclusions and recommendations of the report are:

- Civil society can make unique and distinctive contributions to peacebuilding. Direct external support can help strengthen civil society peacebuilding at various levels.
- Local ownership and partner-led program identification are key, as are a solid understanding of the “intermediary chains” and “insider-outsider” partnerships.
- Support to civil society peacebuilding needs to be based on a broad conception of civil society that goes beyond NGOs and formally constituted organizations.
- Referring to the set of seven civil society core functions proposed in this report can help set clearer objectives and intended outcomes of civil society peacebuilding support.
- The programming of support must be built on rigorous analysis, including the conflict and political setting, civil society itself, its enabling environment; and its peacebuilding experience and constraints.

- Supporting civil society peacebuilding should take into account necessary complementary measures to improve the enabling environment (external factors) and the interactions with the state.
- Outcome and impact evaluations should be more stringently carried out. Concept and methodology development in this area should receive additional support.
- Further research is required on the comparative advantages of CSO types, their contributions in different conflict phases, and critical success factors. Research should be coordinated, with a well-defined interface between researchers, practitioners, policy-makers and external support organizations.
- Donors need to develop shared frameworks and better coordinate approaches in country programming.

INTRODUCTION

In numerous armed conflicts, rebellions and civil wars, citizens and civil society groups show that they can be more than victims, refugees and impotent by-standers—women in Kashmir organize dialogue across ethnic divides; NGOs document human rights violations in Nepal; international peace brigades protect trade union leaders in Colombia; a religious community facilitates peace negotiations in Mozambique; the Inter-Religion Council in Sierra Leone brings warring factions to the negotiation table; a Rwandan NGO organizes peace camps and soccer games for mixed Hutu and Tutsi teams. This report looks at civil society contributions to peacebuilding and at ways in which external support can help strengthen prospects for peace.

Civil society's role in conflict-affected countries is now widely acknowledged, including at the global level. The latest and most prominent indication is the UN Security Council statement (September 2005) highlighting the comparative advantage of civil society in facilitating dialogue and providing community leadership (UN 2005). A recent UN-Civil Society conference on the role of civil actors in peacebuilding further established the issue on the international policy agenda.¹

The main question in the international debate is no longer whether civil society has a role to play in peacebuilding, but how it can best realize its potential. What are the roles of various actors? What are critical factors and pre-conditions for their effectiveness? How can external actors best provide support? Despite the great interest in the peacebuilding activities of civil society, there is little systematic analysis of its potential and limitations, and little practical guidance on how to support it. What does exist is a wealth of largely descriptive accounts of civil society peacebuilding initiatives, as well as reflections on the conflict implications of development and humanitarian programs. The discourse on civil society contributions to peacebuilding is still nascent, with codification of knowledge, critical analysis and good practice still evolving.

Objectives

The objectives of this report are to: (i) develop a better understanding of the potential contributions of civil society to peacebuilding; (ii) analyze comparative advantages, limitations, risks, and critical factors; and (iii) provide guidance to external actors supporting civil society initiatives for peacebuilding.

Methodology

The report followed four steps: (i) literature review on civil society, peacebuilding and their links; (ii) development of an analytical framework to help understand civil society roles in peacebuilding through a functional approach; (iii) examples to illustrate the seven core functions of civil society peacebuilding and identify further lines of intervention; and (iv) conclusions and recommendations for donor support.

Audience

The report targets the donor community and international agencies, including international NGOs (I-NGOs). Although recommendations are directed at the donor community, the report may also be of interest to governments and civil society organizations (CSOs) in conflict-affected countries.

Scope and Limitations

This report focuses on independent civil society initiatives that aim to mitigate conflict and build peace to gain a better understanding of the issues, clarify concepts, and propose a framework of civil society peacebuilding functions. It reviews experience and analyzes the strengths, limitations

¹ Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, New York, July 19-21, 2005.

and risks of such approaches. The report cannot do justice to the many peacebuilding domains in which civil society is engaged, and does not address the issue of conflict-sensitivity or the role of civil society in humanitarian assistance and development more broadly. The report also does not address the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict and in peacebuilding—a topic that to do it justice would justify a separate report.

Acknowledgement

This World Bank report follows on the heels of many experienced and highly committed organizations and individuals who have led work in this area, in practice and in theory. National and I-NGOs have often been the innovators, practitioners and leading thinkers in this field, while a number of donors and UN agencies have been instrumental in developing and promoting civil society and its contributions. Since direct World Bank support for civil society in peacebuilding has been very limited, the report relies heavily on the experiences, discussions and analyses of these organizations and individuals.

Overview

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 describes the conceptual underpinnings of the civil society and peacebuilding discourses. It reviews key definitions, issues and practices. It sketches the evolution of civil society roles in peacebuilding, and underlines the need to clarify concepts, objectives and approaches. Chapter 3 introduces a new framework of seven civil society functions in peacebuilding, illustrating civil society initiatives in each of these functions. It analyzes how conflict impacts civil society and its enabling environment, and discusses institutional constraints and distortions. Chapter 4 concludes with key issues and lessons for external support, while Chapter 5 presents recommendations targeted at donors.

PROVIDING CONCEPTUAL CLARITY

Peacebuilding and civil society have assumed a prominent role in public policy debates of the last two decades. A substantial discourse and practice have emerged in both areas. Today, no one questions that a vibrant civil society is critical in the pursuit of good governance, democratization and poverty reduction. Although the high human and material costs of conflict are well documented, the question of civil society's contribution to peacebuilding is a comparatively new and under-researched topic. This chapter provides conceptual background to explore civil society and peacebuilding themes, and sketches the growing involvement of civil society organizations in peacebuilding.

Civil Society

What is Civil Society?

The concept of civil society remains elusive, complex and contested. There are different meanings and interpretations and, over time, different schools of thought have influenced theoretical debates and empirical research. This report conceives of civil society as the “arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values”.² As a public sphere where citizens and voluntary organizations freely engage, it is distinct from the state, the family and the market, although since civil society is closely linked with these spheres, strict boundaries may be difficult to establish.

CSOs are the “wide array of non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations.”³ The term goes beyond the narrower (and to many donors, more familiar) category of development-oriented NGOs, and depicts a broad range of organizations, such as community groups, women’s association, labor unions, indigenous groups, youth groups, charitable organizations, foundations, faith-based organizations, independent media, professional associations, think tanks, independent educational organizations and social movements.

The term civic engagement refers to the participation of private actors in the public sphere, conducted through direct and indirect CSO and citizen interactions with government, business community and external agencies to influence decision making or pursue common goals. The term is widely used by social capital theorists to refer to individual participation in civic life (Putnam 2000). This report will occasionally use the term civic engagement to capture individual and informal civic activities, in addition to those carried out by formal CSOs. Highlighting this conceptual distinction is particularly appropriate in the context of peacebuilding, where local peace activities frequently rely on the initiative of a few committed individuals.

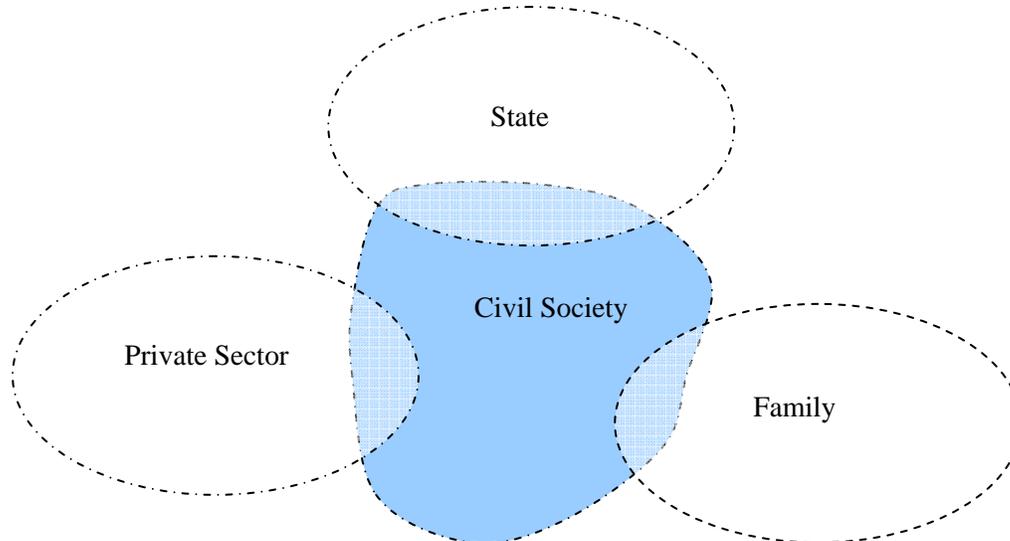
This report conceptualizes civil society as arena or sphere. It provides space for diverse societal values and interests to interact, where people come together to debate, discuss, associate, and seek to influence society and political processes. This arena is populated by an array of diverse actors, including formal and informal associations, organizations and movements. Civil society is located between other key societal spheres: political (state, political parties and parliaments), economic

² Broadly following the London School of Economics definition. See also Merkel and Lauth (1998) and Douma and Klem (2004a).

³ See website of the World Bank Social Development Department: <http://worldbank.org/participation>.

(companies and markets) and private (family) (Croissant 2003; Merkel and Lauth 1998), although the boundaries are often blurred and sometimes overlap.⁴

Figure 1: Civil Society as Intermediate Sphere



Membership in civil society is determined by an actor's function and activity, rather than organizational form. This report places less emphasis on organizational forms and allows for a broader focus on the functions and roles of informal associations, movements and collective citizen action. In reality, actors can move among spheres (or inhabit more than one), depending on their function. For example, private firms can pursue profits in the market and act as part of civil society when lobbying to remove discriminatory tax provisions.

Civil society is a political space, where governance and development (including peacebuilding) goals are contested. This perspective is distinct from third sector or non-profit sector approaches, which focus primarily on the economic role CSOs. Third sector debates tend to center on service delivery, typically asking what kind of services can best be provided by what kind of organization (state, private or non-profit).

Civil society cannot be analyzed in isolation from the state—they are interdependent. Although independence from the state is a defining feature, civil society interacts closely with the state and is shaped by the enabling environment defined by the state. The state sets the legal and regulatory framework and in some cases funds civil society activities. Civil society in turn acts as a link between the state and citizens, in promoting values, accountability, voice and channeling information. While civil society initiatives and organizations often emerge when states and markets fail, they cannot fully replace state functions and formal political processes (Croissant et al. 2000; Merkel and Lauth 1998).

⁴For example, cooperatives (that have profit- and value-based goals) and the media can straddle civil society and the market. Parastatals are considered a borderline case between the state and the market. Political parties and parliaments are sometimes seen as straddling the state and civil society. Some authors question family as separate sector, but see it rather belonging to civil society; others consider business as part of civil society in some instances rather than being a sector on its own (Glasius 2004).

Conflict and state fragility pose challenges for civil society. Lack of state capacity to control parts of its territory or to deliver public services often prompts civil society to fill the vacuum, delivering services and emergency relief or supporting displaced populations. When CSOs are fulfilling functions usually performed by the state, care must be taken to avoid further undermining state capacity. In emergency and conflict situations, a critical judgment is required on the allocation and sequencing of external support, i.e., how much and how long to rely on CSO service provision, and when to shift focus to strengthening state capacity (World Bank 2005d).

Civil society practices and discourses have developed in all regions, but concepts and practice vary greatly. In Western Europe and later North America, the concept of civil society initially articulated elite demands for civil rights in the 19th and 20th century, and subsequently expanded to encompass collective action by a broader range of societal actors (women, working classes, farmers, students) and movements (civil rights, peace, environment) seeking to address social injustices and public concerns (Lauth 2003). An important perspective was added by social capital theorists, who see social networks, a rich associational life and norms of reciprocity and trust as the core elements of civil society. For them, the characteristics of civil society and civic life are a key determinant of democratic development and the performance of social institutions (Putnam 1993, 2002). In Latin America, the concept of civil society has been framed primarily by the fight against military dictatorship in the 1960s and by socio-economic exclusion (Birle 2000). In Eastern Europe, the concept was shaped by collective actions to overcome authoritarian regimes and establish democratic structures (Merkel 1999).

Some have questioned the relevance and applicability of the concept of civil society in non-western countries (Lewis 2002; Harnett-Sievers 2005). There is a substantial debate on the relevance of the civil society concept for Africa and the need to adapt it to the regional context, particularly by taking into account the role of traditional institutions and community-based organizations (CBOs) (Lewis 2002). Most authors assess the influence of Africa's civil society on political processes as limited, due to its fragmentation, lack of political space and weak links among CSOs (rural and urban, traditional and modern) (Pinkney 2003; Schmidt 2000).

The 1990s saw a significant rise in international CSOs and the emergence of a nascent global civil society. International CSOs and networks have placed global issues on the international agenda, successfully launched international campaigns (e.g., to ban landmines and blood diamonds, publish-what-you-pay) and partnered in key international conferences and consultative processes (UN 2003). International CSOs have also made efforts to network with domestic organizations, to advocate for development issues and present alternatives to official government positions. Their involvement in the UN system has been institutionalized and continues to expand and evolve (UN 2003). The nature and impact of this global civil society, however, is debated (Kaldor 2003). Some see it as a reflection of globalization processes (Cardoso 2003) and likely to improve global governance by promoting debate and bridging societal divides (Clark 2003), while critics question their legitimacy and claims that such organizations are representative of international civil society (Anderson and Rieff 2004).

Identifying Actors

Given the diversity of civil society, it is difficult to categorize CSOs in a meaningful or comprehensive way. Despite this limitation, a wide range of CSO typologies have been developed based on characteristics such as organizational form, purpose, scale, scope and activities. From a donor perspective, it can be useful to make a basic distinction between membership-based organizations (trade unions, women's groups, self-help groups, social movements, networks) and non-membership or intermediary organizations (NGOs and support

organizations).⁵ Another distinction can be made based on the level at which a CSO is established and functions (community, local, regional, national or international). I-NGOs can provide valuable support to domestic CSOs, but in many cases are not considered as part of that country's civil society. Development organizations attribute a range of democratization and development functions to civil society. The World Bank for example highlights: public service delivery; improving governance and promoting participatory decision-making; influencing policy formulation; and peacebuilding and conflict management (World Bank 2005d).⁶

The great variety in civil society and its organizational forms and functions requires a broad and inclusive conceptual framework. It is particularly important to avoid inadvertently introducing a Western bias when analyzing civil society, as would be the case for example by focusing exclusively on formally constituted or registered organizations, and excluding informal associations or traditional manifestations of collective action.⁷ Civil society and CSOs can and do exist in every context.

The rich diversity of civil society and CSOs requires a practical and empirical approach that considers objectives, functions, capacities, constraints and relationships to other actors. Donors interact predominantly with intermediate organizations at the national or international level, and rely on them to channel support to a broader range of CSOs or to coordinate interventions involving multiple CSOs. Donor funding is often limited to a small sub-set of CSOs (in particular development-oriented NGOs), while social movements, mass organizations and trade unions are often neglected as potential partners. Donor preferences for financing CSOs on a project-by-project basis give CSOs limited opportunities to develop capacity, specialization, strategic planning, and long-term investments in beneficiary communities.

Such networks and support chains are also affected by a range of weaknesses, obstacles and constraints. It is important for donors to understand the nature and dynamics of relations between intermediary and ultimate beneficiary organizations, to clarify and facilitate support relations, and to understand how such support impacts civil society. Donor interventions frequently label any form of funding to national (or even international) NGOs as support to civil society, without adequate analysis of the impact of such support.

Civil Society Roles in Peacebuilding

Beyond Diplomats: Expanding Conceptions of Peacebuilding

This report defines peacebuilding as activities aimed at preventing and managing armed conflict, and sustaining peace after large-scale organized violence has ended. The scope of peacebuilding covers all activities that are directly linked to this objective within a 5-10 year period. Peacebuilding should create conducive conditions for reconstruction and development efforts, but should not be equated and thus confused with these concepts. Peacebuilding differs from peacemaking (the use of force to end violence), and peacekeeping (the threat of the use of force to prevent actors from re-engaging in armed conflict). There are three phases of peacebuilding: prevention prior to the outbreak of violence, conflict management during armed conflict, and

⁵ Donors often also distinguish between operational and advocacy, but this classification is becoming less meaningful as an ever widening range of actors, including operational organizations, become involved in advocacy activities.

⁶ Bilateral donors use similar functions, e.g., DFID: (i) strengthening voice and accountability; (ii) providing services and humanitarian assistance; and (iii) promoting awareness and understanding of development.

⁷ For example, definitions of civil society that focus on organizations (e.g., Chazan 1992; Foley and Edwards 1996; Salamon 1999) can fail to account for more informal and ephemeral forms of collective action (such as joining a street demonstration or belonging to an informal peace group) and fail to capture instances where most civil society associations are informal (or not registered).

post-conflict peacebuilding for up to 10 years after the conflict end. This report focuses on the conflict management and post-conflict phases, although recognizing that conflict prevention is a constant theme even in those phases.

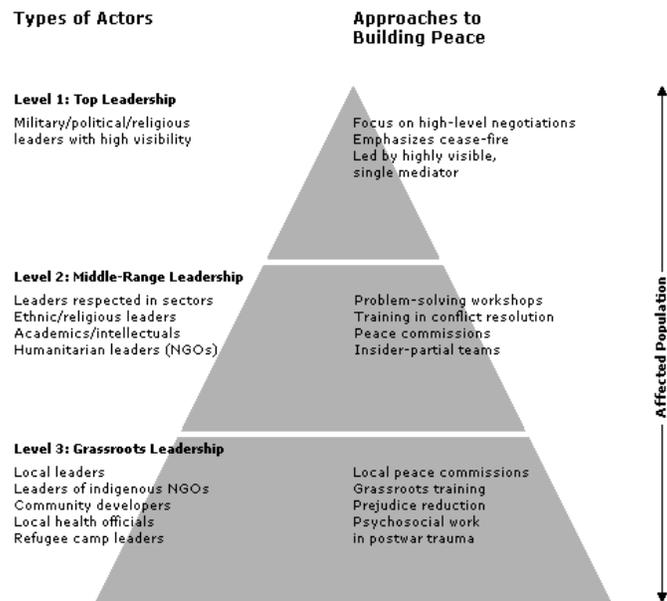
Analytical approaches to peacebuilding have shifted in recent years from outcome-oriented approaches to conflict management, to relationship-oriented conflict resolution, and to more comprehensive transformation approaches. Traditional conflict management approaches, practiced for example in the 1995 Bosnia-Herzegovina negotiations, aim at short-term management of conflict by identifying key representatives of conflict parties and negotiating or mediating peace accords (Paffenholz 1998, 2001). Key actors are governments and multilateral organizations, mostly the UN, sometimes supporting mediation efforts by threat of force (power mediation). By contrast, conflict resolution aims to address the underlying causes of conflict and mend the social fabric of conflict-affected societies. Peace facilitators under this approach typically hail from academia, and national or I-NGOs, and they aim to improve communications and inter-group relations (Bailey 1985; Stedman 1993). Multi-track diplomacy capitalizes on the synergies between these approaches (Diamond and McDonald 1996), distinguishing between different peacebuilding actors and processes according to tracks. Track 1 covers diplomatic conflict management approaches, Track 2 represents the original conflict resolution school, and the subsequent tracks cover additional actors within conflict resolution approaches.

Conflict management and conflict resolution approaches have a number of important weaknesses. Outcome-oriented approaches are likely to overlook deep conflict causes that may affect the prospects for sustaining peace accords (Hoffman 1992). In this vein, focusing on the leaders of conflict parties is likely to be too narrow (Lederach 1997), identifying the appropriate counterparts for successful peace negotiations can be very difficult, and mediating states are not always neutral (Ropers and Debiel 1995). The key drawbacks of conflict resolution approaches are the long time frame, which can appear at odds with situations of acute violence, and the fact that improving communications and building relationships does not necessarily end the violence (Bercovitch 1984). For example, the People to People peace program funded by Norway following the 1994 Oslo peace agreement between Israel and Palestine supported dialogue projects between Israeli and Palestinian groups. A recent evaluation found that activities resulted in better relations between the individuals involved, but had little impact on the peace process at large (Atieh et al. 2004).

Conflict transformation is now the leading approach to peacebuilding. Recognizing that conflicts are a key feature of everyday life, this approach combines short-term conflict management with long-term relationship building, and transformation of the roots of conflict (Rupesinghe 1995). A core element is the concept of peace constituencies that aims to identify mid-level individuals and empower them to build peace and support reconciliation (Lederach 1997). It assumes that mid-level empowerment will impact on both the macro and grassroots levels. The key role of third party intervention is to support local actors and coordinate external peace efforts, requiring an in-depth understanding of local socio-cultural dynamics, and a long-term time frame.

From a conflict transformation perspective, conflict-affected societies can be divided into three levels requiring different peacebuilding strategies (Lederach 1997). The top leaders can be engaged by Track 1 intervention and outcome-oriented approaches. The mid-level leaders can be engaged by more resolution-oriented Track 2 approaches, such as problem-solving workshops or peace-commissions with the help of prominent local individuals. The third level, where civil society tends to be most active, represents the majority of the population and can be engaged through a range of peacebuilding approaches, such as local peace commissions, community dialogue projects or trauma healing.

Figure 2: Lederach's Peacebuilding Levels

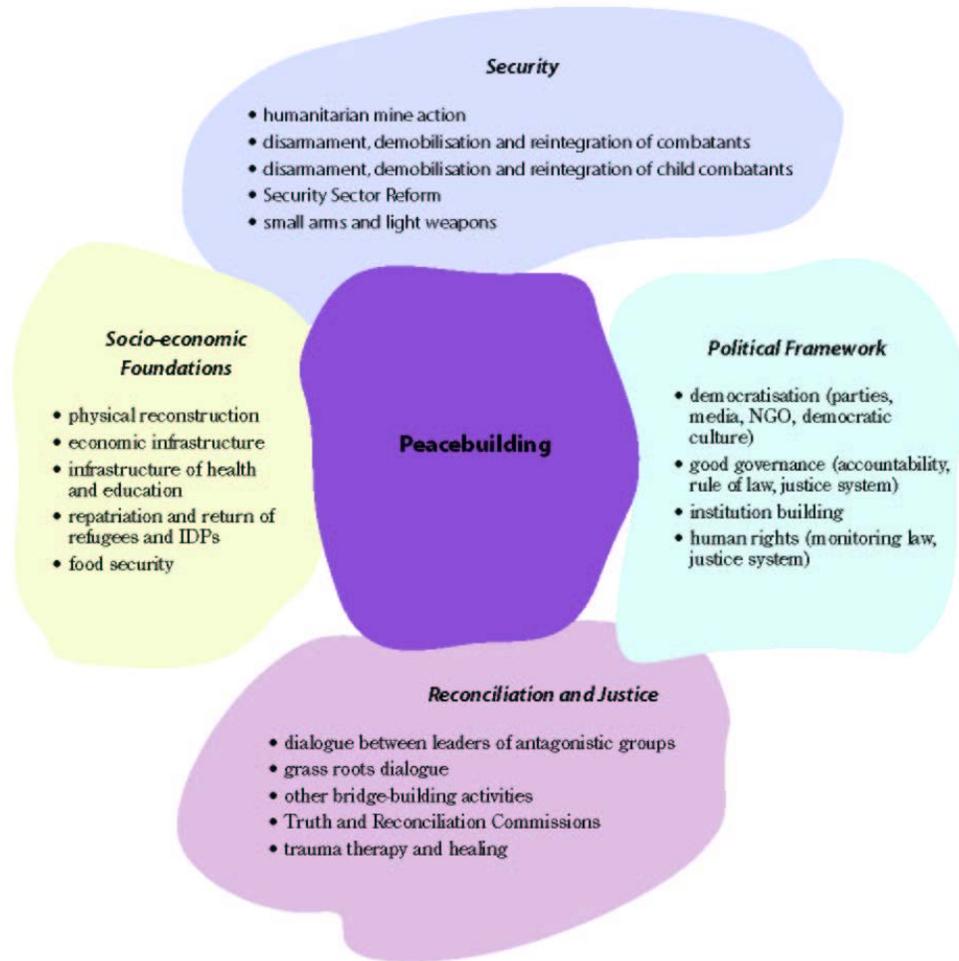


Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

Peacebuilding practice has also evolved in line with theoretical approaches. The first stage was the discovery of peacebuilding as a policy area in the early 1990s by donors and multilateral organizations. In 1992, the UN Secretary General's report *An Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1992) defined peacebuilding in a narrow sense, as activities aimed specifically at preventing large scale violence and its reoccurrence within five years. The 1994 Rwanda crisis and genocide, however, brought to the fore conflict prevention and early warning (Carnegie Commission 1997), culminating in the UN Secretary General's report *Preventing Armed Conflict* (UN 2001).

Peacebuilding approaches have shifted from a pure focus on security and peacekeeping, to establishing the socio-economic conditions for peace. This has been spurred by evidence on the linkages between poverty and conflict (Collier et al. 2003) and increased interest in conflict-related issues by development agencies. The 2004 Utstein Report is a good example of the broadening of the concept of peacebuilding. This influential report outlines a framework of peacebuilding activities, where providing physical security is as important as establishing good governance and the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace. It acknowledges that development, a return to democratic governance and the guarantee of a secure environment represent the most promising approach to post-conflict reconstruction. From this perspective, possible interventions are conceptualized as a tool box (Figure 3) of different elements to be configured depending on the context (Smith 2004). More recently, these discussions have been complemented by attempts to understand the conditions for aid effectiveness in fragile states, linking analyses of the nexus between conflict, peace and development with debates about professionalization and evaluation in peacebuilding (Paris High-Level Forum 2005).

Figure 3: The Peacebuilding Palette (Utstein Report)



Peacebuilding is now understood more broadly. It often covers all activities related to preventing outbreaks of violence, transforming armed conflicts, finding peaceful ways to manage conflict, and creating the socio-economic and political pre-conditions for sustainable development and peace. Such a broad concept of peacebuilding, however, suffers from including nearly all socio-economic development, poverty reduction or democratization efforts, making it difficult to determine when peacebuilding activities end and regular development activities begin. In this vein, implicit causal linkages are constructed between general development activities and peacebuilding objectives, but there is little evidence to substantiate these links. Service delivery, for example, is seen as conducive to peacebuilding by helping to establish conditions conducive to peace. As will be discussed below, however, the contribution of service delivery to political peacebuilding objectives seems to be tenuous and requires further exploration.

The Increasing Role for Civil Society in Peacebuilding

The changing approaches to peacebuilding have opened space for civil society participation. Until the 1990s, conflict management approaches focused on the top leaders of conflict parties, based on the assumption that a limited number of actors involved in peace negotiations facilitate negotiated settlements. Civil society mediators such as the Comunita di Sant'Egidio in Mozambique were an exception and their behavior often differed very little from official

governmental mediators (Paffenholz 1998; van Tongeren et al. 2005). The subsequent shift to conflict transformation approaches focused attention on the key role played by civil society. A key driver of this shift was John Paul Lederach, whose peacebuilding pyramid (Figure 2) has become the leading reference for most practitioner approaches to peacebuilding.

Many multilateral agencies and bilateral donors have affirmed the importance of non-state actors in peacebuilding processes. They have adjusted their policy frameworks⁸ and increased their operational support to civil society in peacebuilding. In 2005, for example, the UN Security Council underlined the potential contributions of a vibrant and diverse civil society in conflict prevention, as well as in the peaceful settlement of disputes (UN Security Council 2005). The growing importance attributed to civil society initiatives goes hand in hand with the recognition that peacebuilding entails numerous societal reconstruction tasks that official diplomacy and reconstruction programs cannot achieve. Cooperation between donors and northern and I-NGOs for peacebuilding is now often routine. In Germany, for example, the main governmental and non-governmental development and peace organizations and networks have established a joint working group to foster learning about peacebuilding and conflict sensitive mainstreaming (FriEnt: <http://www.frient.de>). A similar initiative exists in Switzerland since 2001 (KOFF: <http://www.swisspeace.org>).

There is wide agreement on the complementarity of non-governmental peace initiatives and diplomatic peace efforts. Lobbying by church-based development and peace organizations, for example, was instrumental in creating international awareness of armed conflict in Sudan. Cooperation between I-NGOs and domestic NGOs has helped give voice to actors from conflict-affected countries on the international stage. At the country level, civil society has served to link the wider public with official mediation processes through information campaigns and by transmitting popular sentiments to negotiating parties (Accord 2002). The official peace processes in Guatemala (Armon et al. 1997; Molkentin 2002; Greiter 2003, Stanley and Holiday 2002, see also case example in Annex 1) and Afghanistan, for example, were accompanied by parallel civil society processes and forums to raise issues related to the peace process and make recommendations to Track 1 negotiations. Civil society positions significantly influenced the nature and implementation of both peace agreements. While the Guatemala case shows that a genuine civil society process can have a strong influence on the negotiated settlement, the Afghanistan case suggests that externally-driven civil society involvement can also have considerable impact, including playing a role in the post-settlement phase (Paffenholz 2006).

The increasing recognition of the potential adverse effects of humanitarian and development aid on conflict has also reinforced interest in peacebuilding by I-NGOs (Uvin 1998, Paffenholz 2005b). Mary Anderson analyzed how aid unintentionally exacerbates conflict (1999): preferring recipients from one side of the conflict; fostering inter-group conflict through different benefits; funding war parties by not preventing theft of aid goods; releasing funds for war; destroying local markets; and legitimizing war factions.

Growing awareness of the potential to Do Harm had a number of important implications. First, humanitarian and development actors, which had become heavily involved in providing relief and services in conflict situations, began to develop ways to make their programs conflict-sensitive and conducive to peacebuilding. Do No Harm reviews and other conflict and peacebuilding tools, such as conflict analysis frameworks, were imported into the field of development cooperation. Second, donors and I-NGOs, often with a development cooperation background, started to fund

⁸ See for example, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Strategic Framework: Peacebuilding a Development Perspective*, 2004; German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation, *A Strategy for Peacebuilding*, 2005.

or implement interventions directly aimed at peacebuilding. This contributed to increased peacebuilding activities and the involvement of new actors, primarily NGOs.

A Multitude of Actors and Approaches

There is now a general consensus that national actors should take the lead in peacebuilding, and that outside intervention should be limited to their support (Lederach 1997). As part of multi-track peacebuilding approaches a wide array of non-state actors became increasingly involved in peacebuilding initiatives (European Center for Conflict Prevention 1999; van Tongeren et al. 2005; Richmond and Carey 2006). A number of different approaches and initiatives, such as peace funds, dialogue projects, peacebuilding training and capacity building programs for local actors, have been implemented during the last decade.

The broad range of members of civil society involved in peacebuilding work encompasses actors at the local, national and international level. Key actors subsumed under the notion of civil society include:

- NGOs, especially those directly supporting peace processes or capacity building;
- Human rights organizations, social justice advocacy groups and peace networks;
- Special or collective interest group organizations (faith-based organizations, women, youth and professional associations, trade unions);
- Community-based organizations (CBOs), institutions and initiatives (women and youth groups, farmer associations, self-help groups, traditional leaders, informal networks and associations); and
- Informational and educational CSOs (independent media, journalist associations, research and academic institutions and think tanks).

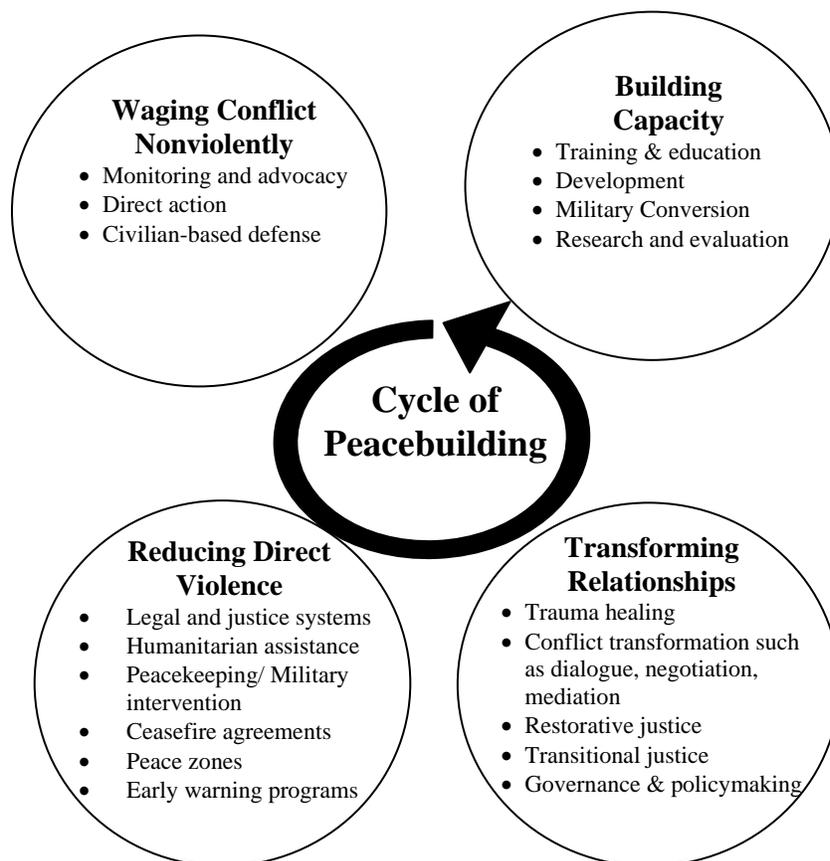
There are numerous typologies and ways to categorize CSO actors in peacebuilding. More important than finding the right classification, however, is to recognize the roles and peacebuilding approaches performed by various segments of civil society. The literature lists as the roles of civil society in peacebuilding as: (i) promoting reconciliation; (ii) engaging in non-violent forms of conflict management and transformation; (iii) directly preventing violence; (iv) building bridges, trust and interdependence between groups; and (v) monitoring and advocating in favor of peace, and against human rights violations and social injustices (Douma and Klem 2004; Barnes 2005; van Tongerene at al. 2005; Harpviken and Kjellman 2004).

Peacebuilding activities and approaches of different types of CSOs frequently overlap in practice. Figure 4, for example, synthesizes the main areas and peacebuilding activities of women's organizations, but many of these activities are also carried out by donors and other CSO types, including domestic and I-NGOs (e.g., trauma healing, human rights monitoring and advocacy, capacity building). This snapshot, however, illustrates that approaching civil society through an actor-oriented lens may not provide much clarity about the particular strengths and comparative advantages of CSOs in a given conflict situation. Also, comparative analyses, focusing on the particular strengths and potential of different types of CSOs, are still lacking.⁹

⁹ Comparative advantages of some CSOs seem more obvious. Faith-based or inter-religious organizations for example seem well placed to assume an active role: (i) in situations where religion is a significant factor of the conflict or in the identity of at least one of the conflict partners; (ii) when religious leaders on both sides of the dispute can be mobilized to facilitate peace; and (iii) in third-party mediation, when religious leaders or organizations are perceived as trustworthy and legitimate by both parties (Johnston 2005).

The increasing involvement of civil society in peacebuilding has not been complemented by research on the nexus of civil society and peacebuilding. Only a few studies deal explicitly with the subject. Some take an actor-oriented approach (van Tongeren et al. 2005) that describes the activities implemented by different actors. Others analyze roles and functions of different actors (mostly NGOs) in peacebuilding in general (Aall 2001; Barnes 2005; Pouligny 2005; Debiel and Sticht 2005; Douma and Klem 2004) or with reference to specific cases (Foley 1996 on El Salvador; Paffenholz 2003a on Somalia; Belloni 2001 on Bosnia; Patrick 2001 on Timor-Leste; Orjuela 2004 on Sri Lanka; Challand 2005 on Palestine). Another strand researches the effectiveness of NGO peace work in general (Anderson and Olson 2003). Evaluations of the impact of civil society on a particular peace process are still scarce, despite emerging conceptual frameworks (D’Estrée et al. 2003; Anderson and Olson 2003), a vivid discussion of the methodological difficulties and approaches (see Douma and Klem 2004 for an overview; Leonhard 2002), and increasing project-based outcome assessments (Ohanyan with Lewis 2005; Athieh et al. 2005; USAID 2001). However, as research questions and methodologies vary across the literature, it is difficult to derive general conclusions.¹⁰ This applies to guidance on the comparative advantage of civil society generally and with respect to particular activities.

Figure 4: A Peacebuilding Map: Peacebuilding Activities of Women’s Organizations



Source: Schirch and Sewak (2005)

¹⁰ A very early account of this problem is provided in Spencer (1998) trying to synthesize findings from 15 evaluations of peacebuilding projects undertaken by humanitarian agencies and conflict resolution organizations.

Intermediary Chains and Key External Support Mechanisms

Different CSOs and initiatives perform roles and activities at different levels. The analytical distinction between intermediary organizations, with whom most donors and external support organizations directly collaborate, and CBOs or membership organizations and initiatives, which people directly relate to and engage in, is instructive. Intermediary organizations, such as specialized NGOs, seem to focus more on funding and capacity building, as opposed to local level and human rights and advocacy organizations.

Donor support for civil society peacebuilding tends to be channeled through intermediary chains. Donors provide funding for multilateral agencies or I-NGOs,¹¹ while the latter usually provide funding to national NGOs who, in turn, cooperate with local NGOs. Multilateral agencies generally fund I-NGOs or national CSOs directly. Direct donor funding for local CSOs is very rare, except when donors set up special funding mechanisms such as peacebuilding or community development funds linking donors and local organizations.

Funding mechanisms include:

- Direct funding to I-NGOs or NGOs on request: I-NGOs submit proposals to donors, who often have dedicated budget lines or other funding mechanisms for issues they intend to support.
- Strategic partnerships: Bilateral European donors have engaged in partnership agreements with a number of I-NGOs frequently, but not always, from the donor country. These agreements often entail a mix of basic and project funding,¹² and can be combined with backstopping agreements for the donor agency. The main rationale for such arrangements is strategic—both partners either promote similar values and interests, with I-NGOs working toward the same political and strategic objectives as the donor, or they recognize that capacity limitations require close collaboration.
- Dedicated funding mechanisms: These include multi-donor trust funds for specific countries or single donor funds. Dedicated funds can be established at headquarters (e.g., World Bank's Post-Conflict Fund or GTZ's Peace Fund) or field level (e.g., UNDP Peace and Development Trust Fund in Nepal).
- Tenders: They are for specific purposes which can be international or national, and sometimes combined with funds from dedicated funding mechanisms.
- Smaller discretionary budget lines: These are frequently established in field offices or embassies to support smaller activities or organizations.

Support to civil society peacebuilding through intermediaries has strengths and weaknesses. Interactions with intermediaries are relatively easy to handle logistically and easier to monitor. I-NGOs tend to be flexible and may have a good understanding of the local context and partners, can therefore easily connect donors with domestic CSOs, and can also provide capacity building for domestic organizations. At the same time, intermediaries are easily driven by donor agendas at the expense of effective empowerment and local ownership, while I-NGOs can crowd out domestic actors. Local ownership and accountability of domestic actors are discussed in sections below.

Diasporas have considerable potential to incite violence or support peacebuilding. Remittances to conflict-affected countries can be significantly larger than donor flows and can have significant

¹¹ The term I-NGO includes northern NGOs, which have a constituency and main funding lines in a particular country, as well as genuine thematically oriented international NGOs with multiple funding lines and a global constituency.

¹² Such arrangements are most common for Nordic countries, DFID and Switzerland.

impact on war or peace. For example, the Eritrean and Sri Lankan diasporas in Europe and Australia have financed warring factions through an established diaspora tax system. The knowledge of foreign-educated diaspora can also be used for peacebuilding. For example, US Somali diaspora groups provided financial and human resources to support the peace meeting in Boroma/Somaliland that led to the successful peace agreement in the North-West of Somalia. Following the 2001 ceasefire agreement in Sri Lanka, the Australian Tamil diaspora supported rehabilitation of the North and East in cooperation with the LTTE. In the Afghanistan peace negotiations and the *Loya Jirga* processes, the diaspora played an important role in linking Western interests and knowledge with local knowledge and context. Diaspora groups, however, often favor one of the conflict parties, may have more extreme political views than domestic groups, and peacebuilding may be a lower priority than for local actors.

In situations of armed conflict, donors should clearly map the different policy objectives and motivations of their support. There is increasing recognition that different, and often conflicting, foreign policy objectives can affect civil society peacebuilding support (SID Development 2005), especially if they clash with the objective of strengthening opposition groups who may prioritize political issues over a peaceful settlement of conflict (Belloni 2006). In the end, it is the principle of non-violence that marks the difference between civil society peacebuilding support and a foreign policy support for democracy. Similarly, a discussion has started on how peace interventions which have been increasingly assumed by the international community affect and may disempower local peace capacities (Pearce 2005b). These emerging issues require further analysis and detailed case studies, which are beyond the scope of this report.

UNDERSTANDING CIVIL SOCIETY IN PEACEBUILDING

This chapter proposes a functional approach and outlines a framework of seven civil society peacebuilding functions, which can enable donors to better understand civil society initiatives, and plan their support more systematically and effectively. It may be of use as a basis for outcome and impact assessment and evaluation. The chapter also analyzes the institutional and political factors that shape the peacebuilding capacity of civil society, and highlights a number of challenges and distortions fueled largely by donor practices.

A Functional Perspective: Seven Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding

Focusing on civil society functions, instead of actors, can help better define outcome and impacts, improve planning processes, and set clearer expectations to facilitate monitoring and evaluation. Donors generally employ an actor-oriented strategy to support civil society, thus tending to focus on easily accessible, capital-based NGOs. This report proposes seven functions, which provide a comprehensive framework for disaggregating and mapping civil society contributions to peacebuilding. The framework would clearly benefit from further empirical validation, but as a functional perspective it has the potential to allow cross-cutting country or regional analysis, and the functions can be used as outcome indicators of civil society activities.¹³

The proposed framework combines elements developed by political scientists and CSO functions identified by development agencies. German political scientists have presented a model of five civil society functions derived mainly from democratization and transformation processes in Eastern Europe (Merkel and Lauth 1998; Merkel 2000; Croissant et al. 2000; Lauth 2003): (i) protection; (ii) citizen state intermediation; (iii) participatory socialization; (iv) community building and integration; and (v) communication and public opinion formation (Annex 3). Two dimensions (monitoring and service delivery) generally emphasized in development cooperation practice have been added. Other functions frequently attributed to civil society such as dialogue and advocacy on behalf of the poor (DFID 2001a, 2001b) are already reflected in the Merkel and Lauth model.

¹³ An important actor-driven approach is the Drivers of Change methodology and the related analysis of spoilers in conflict-settings. The framework proposed here is not intended to replace or challenge these approaches but rather to complement them.

Table 1: Seven Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding

| Function | Activities | Typical actors |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Protection | Protecting citizen life, freedom and property against attacks from state and non-state actors. | Membership organizations, human rights, advocacy NGOs. |
| Monitoring/early warning | Observing and monitoring the activities of government, state authorities and conflict actors. Monitoring can refer to various issues (human rights, corruption), particularly those relevant for drivers of conflict and early warning. | Think tanks, human rights NGOs, operational NGOs (in conjunction with CBOs). |
| Advocacy/public communication | Articulation of specific interests, especially of marginalized groups and bringing relevant issues to the public agenda. Creation of communication channels, awareness raising and public debate. Participation in official peace processes. | Advocacy organizations, independent media, think tanks, networks. |
| Socialization | Formation and practice of peaceful and democratic attitudes and values among citizens, including tolerance, mutual trust and non-violent conflict resolution. | Membership organizations. |
| Social cohesion | Strengthening links among citizens, building bridging social capital across societal cleavages. | CBOs and other membership organizations. |
| Intermediation/facilitation | Establishing relationships (communication, negotiation) to support collaboration between interest groups, institutions and the state. Facilitating dialogue and interaction. Promoting attitudinal change for a culture of peace and reconciliation. | Intermediary NGOs, CSO networks, advocacy organizations, faith-based organizations. |
| Service provision | Providing services to citizens or members can serve as entry points for peacebuilding, if explicitly intended. | NGOs, self-help groups. |

A number of points need to be kept in mind with respect to the proposed framework:

- Given the diversity and complexity of conflicts, the proposed framework is not intended as a blueprint or straightjacket, but rather as a guide that should be applied flexibly;
- CSOs may be active in one or more function, as they are often closely related (e.g., intermediation and facilitation, advocacy and public communication).
- Functions are not exclusively performed by civil society. Other actors can contribute or may have lead responsibility. For example, protection is mainly provided by the state, and socialization occurs not only in voluntary associations, but also in the classroom, family and political parties.
- Some functions build on unique CSO capacities, while others complement activities of other actors. Civil society tends to have a comparative advantage in functions related to socialization, culture of peace and social cohesion. Protection, monitoring and accountability, and advocacy and public communication functions tend to be complementary and their effectiveness depends on collaboration with other actors. Comparative advantage in intermediation and facilitation depends on whether intervention is geared toward conflict groups at the local level or to governments and formal peace processes. The comparative advantage of civil society in service delivery depends on whether it targets excluded groups and emergency relief, or are provided on behalf of the state or other external actors.
- Civil society takes on different functions and roles in the transition from conflict to peace, and in different conflict phases. During conflict or its immediate aftermath, priority tends to be on protection, monitoring, and advocacy and public communication. Reconciliation, culture of peace, and peace education functions are more long term, and thus likely more relevant in the post-conflict phase. As conflicts end and public institutions gradually recover, the dynamics between citizens, CSOs, and the state tend to

change. As donors begin funding the post-conflict transition, resources tend to shift from CSOs to the public sector, with CSO functions shifting from service delivery to facilitation, intermediation, advocacy, monitoring and accountability. A key challenge for CSOs and supporting donors is to fulfill the right functions at the right time and to carefully adapt to transition phases. In most post-conflict countries it is also important to ensure that the state is capitalizing on the experience of CSOs, while building government institutions that can co-exist with a vibrant civil society.

- The ability of civil society to play these roles hinges on internal institutional factors and the enabling environment in which they operate. These dimensions are discussed below.

The Seven Functions in Practice

The following section presents the seven civil society functions in peacebuilding, recognizing that civil society roles are complex and varied, and there are many gray areas and overlaps. However, the report argues that these seven functions encompass the core roles of civil society and that taken together offer a suitable framework to better understand the potential contribution of civil society to peacebuilding.

Protection

States weakened by armed conflict are often unable to protect citizens. Civil society initiatives frequently emerge during conflict and its aftermath to protect citizen life, rights and property against threats by conflict actors or the state. Protection functions are generally performed by I-NGOs that support domestic civil society either indirectly, through their presence as monitoring watchdogs (Orjuela 2003), or directly through international accompaniment. The NGO Peace Brigades International, for example, sends outsiders into conflict zones to protect national peace or human rights activists (Box 1 and Annex 1).¹⁴ Other examples are communities in the Philippines and Colombia that have negotiated zones of peace where no arms are allowed (Barnes 2005; Orjuela 2004; Eviota 2005).

Another aspect of protection is support to security-related interventions such as demining, small arms control, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants. In Mozambique, churches launched a follow-up demobilization campaign after the official UN demobilization process had ended. More frequently, however, CSOs collaborate with government or donor-led efforts (TRESA 2005).

Monitoring and Early Warning

Observing and monitoring the activities of conflict actors is a means to enhance accountability and a precondition for the protection and the advocacy/public communication functions of civil society. International and local groups can monitor the conflict situation and make recommendations to decision makers, provide information to advocacy groups, and provide inputs for early warning. This civil society function is relevant in all conflict phases and its impact is maximized when all actors coordinate closely.

¹⁴ Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP), conceived in 1999, is an international federation of 93 organizations which aims to increase the scale, scope and professionalism of civilian, unarmed peacekeeping. It is in the process of recruiting, screening, training and holding in ready reserve 500 civilian peacekeepers to be dispatched to conflict areas in partnership with the UN or other external stakeholders, and with the invitation or consent of the conflict parties (Carriere 2006).

Box 1: Protective Accompaniment, Colombia

The armed conflict in Colombia exposes human rights and peace advocates, union leaders and the rural population to politically-motivated violence, making people afraid to participate in civil society activities. Peace Brigades International (PBI) opens political space for civic engagement within communities by providing protective accompaniment. Volunteers act as unarmed bodyguards for individuals and communities, enabling leaders and activists to organize community activities. They never participate in meetings but document violent incidents. PBI also works with Colombian and I-NGOs to engage with authorities, security forces, civil society and the international community. This ensures that violence against local activists attracts international attention. PBI Colombia receives funding from international sources through PBI International and recruits volunteers from over 25 countries, mostly Europe and North America. Documenting human rights violations is highly sensitive, and requires diplomatic skill, neutrality and good relations with all actors, especially collaboration from armed conflict parties. Conflict parties must be concerned with their international reputation.

In the field of early warning, there is increasing cooperation between local, national and I-NGOs but also with regional organizations. In Nepal, national human rights organizations cooperate with local groups and maintain close links to Amnesty International. These international ties provide a safer space for local groups to perform their monitoring tasks. In the Horn of Africa, early warning systems of regional organizations (CEWARN) cooperate with local civil society groups in monitoring. In West Africa UNOCHA, ECOWAS and a regional NGO peace network have signed a memorandum of understanding for joint early warning (Annex 1).

Box 2: Human Rights Monitoring, Nepal

Key conflict factors in Nepal are pressures for political change, as well as political and economic exclusion. Human rights violations perpetuate a climate of fear and impede civic engagement. The Informal Sector Service Center monitors human rights through 75 human rights reporters (one in each district) and 50 local partner organizations. It disseminates human rights information nationally and internationally which other organizations use to lobby conflict parties. Nepal has over 40 human rights organizations active in monitoring, awareness-raising, and interactions with public prosecutors and courts. Initiatives are coordinated by the Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Coordination Committee. Most human rights organizations are supported by international donors, either directly or through I-NGOs. They have developed working relations with international organizations, especially with the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission, and coordinate closely with I-NGOs such as Amnesty International. Monitoring addresses the problem of impunity for human rights violations, aiming to improve prospects for peace and reconciliation. According to Amnesty International, the number of disappearances fell significantly in 2005 after international awareness was raised in 2003 and 2004, suggesting that monitoring, combined with effective communication and dissemination, can provide protection and promote accountability. Cooperation between domestic and international organizations can be a powerful tool. Effective domestic groups were instrumental in establishing the UN monitoring mission in 2005. Cooperation with I-NGOs can help build international awareness and provide protection for human rights defenders. A network of local human rights monitors, based in their communities, can ensure local coverage and enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of monitoring.

Advocacy and Public Communication

Advocacy is one of the core functions in peacebuilding (Aall 2001; Paffenholz 2003a) and primarily a role for domestic civil society.¹⁵ Civil society can articulate the interests of social groups, especially marginalized groups, and create communication channels to raise public awareness and facilitate the inclusion of issues in the public agenda. Most peacebuilding schools assume that the influence of civil society on conflict management is indirect and generally limited to an advocacy and communication role, as well as applying pressure on negotiating parties and

¹⁵ An interesting example is the recent mass mobilization against the King of Nepal that started as a political movement of the political parties and the Maoist rebels and developed into a country-wide peace and democracy mass movement.

advocacy for specific issues. Only in exceptional cases do members of civil society become mediators themselves.

International civil society can also take up important global advocacy functions. I-NGOs and civil society networks have succeeded in bringing specific conflict issues (land mines, child soldiers) on the international agenda or directing international attention to the plight of particular conflict countries (e.g., the church-based Sudan Focal Point initiative). The Swedish Life and Peace Institute (LPI) has advocated internationally for the need to adopt a people-based peace process in Somalia, the special role of women in peacebuilding and the need to fund people's involvement. Its main advocacy instrument was to continuously provide information and lobbying for a bottom-up solution to the crisis in various international forums, such as UN bodies (UNOSOM in the beginning), the Somali Aid Coordination Body and international conferences (Paffenholz 2003a).

Advocacy is relevant in all phases of conflict, but its nature will vary according to conflict phases. During conflict civil society tends to advocate for peace agreements, against violence and human rights violations, for broad based participation in the peace process, and for specific issues. Information campaigns and opinion polls can link the public at large with official negotiation processes (Accord 2002) or official parallel civil society forums can provide a more direct link to Track 1 negotiations as in Guatemala (Box 3) and Afghanistan (Armon et al. 1997; Molkentin 2002; Stanley and Holiday 2002; Greiter 2003). In the post-conflict phase, civil society advocacy tends to focus on implementation of the peace agreements, or specific conflict issues such as violence, gender, or the need for a culture of peace (Orjuela 2004; Jeong 2005).

Independent media play an important role in peacebuilding by reaching a broad range of the population, facilitating public communication, expanding the audience for advocacy campaigns (Rolt 2005), and raising awareness on the need for and feasibility of non-violent solutions. Disseminating objective and non-partisan information (on mass killings, human rights violations, and truth and reconciliation efforts) is a critical media contribution to peacebuilding. The media, however, can also be used to perpetuate ethnic stereotypes and fuel further hostilities and violence. In Rwanda, for example, radio Milles Collines preached hatred and helped orchestrate the genocide. An enabling environment for media should facilitate the emergence of independent outlets, including community radio, and promote high professional standards via self regulation. In Burundi, for example, UNESCO, UNDP, and UNHCR collaborated with the media to promote reconciliation and peace education, while Search for Common Ground supported the establishment of the country's first radio station in 1995 (Cheema 2005).

Box 3: Civil Society Participation in the Guatemala Peace Processes

The official UN-led Guatemala mediation process began in 1993, and a peace agreement was signed in December 1996. In 1994, the Civil Society Assembly (ASC) was established and given a mandate to make non-binding recommendations on all issues negotiated by Track 1 parties. ASC produced briefing papers with recommendations on key issues, and synchronized release with the Track 1 process. Despite its consultative status, the ASC placed important but previously neglected issues on the negotiation agenda, such as indigenous rights and identity, repatriation of displaced people, land, the role of the military in a democratic state, and constitutional reform. Most recommendations were directly or indirectly taken into account. Civil society involvement also brought forward and lent legitimacy to the negotiation process. Participation of ASC in the UN-led peace negotiations was funded by international donors. Some key enabling factors facilitated the establishment of the ASC: (i) civil society had demanded participation for many years prior to the beginning of peace negotiations; (ii) civil society organized effectively; (iii) the guerrilla party was relatively weak and hoped to gain civil society support; and (iv) all parties, including mediators, hoped to gain legitimacy from ASC participation.

Socialization

The socialization function of civil society aims to inculcate a culture of peace in divided conflict societies by promoting attitude change toward peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation. Most activities tend to adopt a conflict resolution approach and include dialogue projects, reconciliation initiatives, peace education, exchange programs and peace camps, conflict resolution training and capacity building.

Research suggests that civil society initiatives which support attitude change and a culture of peace are only effective when they can reach a critically large number of people (Anderson and Olson 2003; Paffenholz 2003a). Evaluations of dialogue projects in the Palestine/Israel conflict found that since dialogue processes mainly work at the level of individuals, as compared to society at large, it was difficult to establish a link between local initiatives and the macro peace processes.¹⁶ In response to this finding, the War-torn Societies Project supports Israeli/Palestinian groups separately and believes that each group first needs to be strengthened independently in their peace efforts and understanding, before developing joint activities.

Culture of peace activities tend to also be sporadic (Aall 2001) and uncoordinated, which further limits the potential to attain critical mass. The evaluation of a UNDP Peace Fund in Nepal found many good small initiatives with positive effects at the local level but without any influence on macro processes. Initiatives were scattered, not coordinated and failed to create a peace movement that could pressure for peace (Paffenholz, Damgaard and Prasain 2004). Even local impact was limited since it was very difficult to mobilize people for a long term culture of peace when they lacked basic needs (Paffenholz et al. 2004).

The work of LPI in Somalia demonstrates that a long-term engagement in promoting a culture of peace and reconciliation can have an impact on peacebuilding. In the absence of genuine CSOs due to war and social disintegration, LPI worked directly with local communities to empower community leaders and enable them to practice civic engagement, rebuild communities and promote peacebuilding. Although it started as an outsider, the LPI program quickly gained Somali ownership. LPI ran peacebuilding, leadership, and transformation training courses in Somalia for more than 10 years. Researchers who interviewed participants in the 2001 Somali peace negotiations in Djibouti, found that more than 60% had been LPI trainees (Paffenholz 2003a).

Box 4: People to People Dialogue in Israel/Palestine

Created in the framework of the Oslo Peace Accords of 1993 and 1995, and funded by the Government of Norway, People-to-People programs supported around 165 joint Israeli-Palestinian activities to enhance dialogue, personal relationships and individual involvement in the peace process. They included workshops, practicing hobbies, film festivals, environmental activities, book dissemination, journalist meetings, and school twinning. While projects involved a variety of Israeli and Palestine organizations, participants tended to be drawn from social elites. A program evaluation found that objectives had not been achieved (Taha 2003). There was a return to violence and most activities collapsed. Activities only affected individual perceptions and relationships but did not change personal attitudes toward the other group (the enemy), although this is a crucial element of reconciliation. This suggests that socialization toward a culture of peace is a long-term effort and may be affected by recurrence of violence at the macro level which undermines confidence-building efforts. Activities need to clearly specify how they aim to influence macro dynamics and may need to be first implemented separately among former conflict communities, before moving to joint activities. Trauma healing and confidence building within groups is likely to be a precondition for future reconciliation and necessary in the short term.

¹⁶ See Box 4 and summary of the evaluation of the People to People project in Israel/Palestine (case 4 in Annex 1).

Social Cohesion

Enhancing social cohesion is an important civil society function in peacebuilding, as conflict usually destroys bridging social capital. Restoring bridging social capital can help to curb inter-group violence, and revitalize group interactions, interdependency and solidarity (Paffenholz 2003; Orjuela 2004; Jeong 2005). Engagement and participation in voluntary associations has the potential to build and strengthen social capital, but rather than building bonding ties within groups, the aim should be to build bridging ties across adversary groups (Putnam 2002)—i.e., a ‘conflict sensitive social cohesion’ function. Main activities to enhance social cohesion focus on joint activities between adversary groups, such as joint associations (parents, journalists, teachers, multi-ethnic chambers of commerce), joint cultural events, and even mixed team football games. This can also include joint service delivery activities designed specifically to strengthen social cohesion through mixed user committees or joint development committees

Research by World Vision (O’Reilly 1998) confirmed the importance of bridging social capital, identifying how development projects helped increase levels of contact, interaction and communication across geographic, religious, ethnic, cultural and class divides. This in turn led to improved cooperation, unity and interdependence between groups. A qualitative and quantitative evaluation of peace education and peace camps in the Georgia/Abkhazia conflict found little impact on attitude change, whereas joint work initiatives were possible and perceived as fruitful by the adversary groups even without an explicit aim to change attitudes (Ohanyan with Lewis 2005). Although systematic evidence is lacking, it is possible that conflict sensitive social cohesion initiatives have greater potential to influence peacebuilding than culture of peace initiatives (see also the case of the Association of Independent Filmmakers in the South Caucasus in Annex 1). Research in India found that ethnically mixed organizations were effective in building bridging ties across ethnic groups, leading to an institutionalized peace system that facilitated the control of violence (Varshney 2002).

Intermediation and Facilitation

An important civil society function is to intermediate between interest groups and the state. In peacebuilding, intermediation and facilitation can take place not only between the state and citizens, but also between conflict parties, within groups and on different levels of society. The main activities within this function are facilitation initiatives (formal or informal) between armed groups, and between armed groups and communities or development agencies. Intermediation can be performed by international and/or domestic civil society.

Domestic civil society tends to have little involvement in direct facilitation between conflict parties, especially when it involves actual peace negotiations, as this role is primarily played by external parties, especially governments (Norway in Sri Lanka) or multilateral agencies (UN in Guatemala). In some instances this role can be taken up by international CSOs as in the case of Comunita di Sant’Egidio in Mozambique (Paffenholz 1998) or the Geneva-based NGO Center for Humanitarian Dialogue which facilitated the first negotiations in Aceh.

Box 5: Violence-Free Days in El Salvador

During the war, the Catholic Church of El Salvador facilitated negotiated with the conflict parties violence-free days in specific regions, which made possible a vaccination campaign, thereby highlighting the common interests of both conflict parties. The example illustrates that some members of civil society can represent common interests of the entire population. They have the potential to facilitate between conflict parties, and mitigate the impact of violent conflict. Such initiatives also have symbolic value and can remind conflict parties of what they have in common, and of the suffering of the population. This may open space for negotiations and rapprochement. In this example, linking a service delivery issue (vaccination) with a common interest (health of children) may have speeded up the peace process.

Domestic civil society can play a facilitation role at a number of levels:

- Between civil society and conflict parties at the village or district level (e.g., civil society representatives negotiated the release of citizens by armed groups in Nepal);
- To bring conflict parties to the negotiation table (e.g., the Inter-Religious Council in Sierra Leone managed to get government and rebels to agree to peace talks in the late 1990s), to negotiate peace zones or violence-free days (e.g., the churches in El Salvador negotiated peace days in order to carry out a child vaccination campaign) (Kurtenbach and Paffenholz 1994).
- Between aid agencies and conflict parties to deliver services directly to communities (Orjuela 2004). In some conflict zones local civil society acts as mediators or facilitators where government or foreign aid structures cannot operate (e.g., Nepal) or where national or I-NGOs need facilitation to better understand the local context (Jeong 2005).
- Civil society can also play a role by engaging different actors in dialogue processes in preparation for formal peace negotiations. This may be especially useful in building trust before formal processes begin and in ways that would not be possible for government actors or even difficult for international facilitators or mediators (e.g., Pax Christi's past and current role in the process leading to peace negotiations in Northern Uganda).¹⁷

Box 6: Humanitarian Corridors in Mozambique

The International Committee of the Red Cross provided humanitarian aid during the war in Mozambique. It could access government controlled areas during the war, but was only allowed access to Renamo areas after a draught in 1992. It negotiated with Renamo and the government to establish humanitarian corridors, which enabled humanitarian assistance, and curbed support to both conflict parties—Renamo lost control over the population and parts of its resource base, while the government could no longer rely on its military allies, as Zimbabwean troops were restricted to protecting the corridor. The initiative illustrated the potential impact of negotiations, showed to the population that a ceasefire was possible, put pressure on the conflict parties, and was thus likely an important step toward ending armed conflict.

Service Provision

Direct service provision to communities or their members is an important function for most CSOs. Particularly in weak states and during conflict, NGOs complement or substitute the state in service provision. However, the extent to which service delivery is seen as a function of peacebuilding is contested in the literature. Some authors see public service delivery as a separate civil society function because it saves lives and reduces suffering, which is needed to achieve peace (SIDA 2005). CSOs can not only be more efficient than the state, but they may also be more effective in reaching excluded groups which may be at the roots of the conflict.

Critics argue that service delivery has primarily economic or humanitarian objectives, and only indirect and limited relevance to civil society peacebuilding. Service delivery is thus not a civil society function *per se*, but rather a task of the state, the market or the third sector. There is no doubt that as the state weakens during conflict, service provision by CSOs is extremely important for war-affected populations, but it is only relevant for civil society peacebuilding if peace is an explicit objective. In the latter case, service delivery operates as an entry point for peacebuilding. In Sri Lanka, for example, an emergency education project in the North started following the ceasefire agreement formed a project management committee including the two conflict parties at the district level that had not been in dialogue with each other (Paffenholz 2003b), using service delivery as an entry point to improve social cohesion (Box 7).

¹⁷ Mark Barwick, personal communication. See also Saunders (1999).

Box 7: Building Community Trail Bridges in Nepal

Poverty rates are particularly high among marginalized groups such as lower casts, ethnic groups and remote rural populations. Swiss Development Cooperation and the implementing NGO Helvetas are supporting the construction of trail bridges. Local government authorities, local NGOs and the local community cooperate in the construction process. The explicit objectives are to improve living conditions of rural people by facilitating access to markets and basic services, and thereby address one of the causes of conflict. Constructing bridges is an entry point to reinforce social ties within communities that are divided by cast, gender and ethnicity. Marginalized groups benefit from this new infrastructure and participate in the project staff and user committees (see also Annex 1).

A related debate is on whether service delivery NGOs should incorporate a monitoring function, since they are on the ground and the additional function can be added easily. In Nepal a UNDP Trust Fund for Peacebuilding and Development funded peace, human rights and development activities by service delivery local groups. It was assumed that service delivery would create entry points to work with communities on other peace and human rights issues. An evaluation (Paffenholz et. al. 2004), however, showed that mixing roles was problematic. Groups that specialized in human rights were effective provided they were linked to national and international networks. In contrast, service delivery NGOs that took up new functions were far less accepted by communities and lacked expertise on these functions. Human rights groups also felt no need for other entry points as monitoring gross human rights violations was a priority for conflict-affected communities.

Institutional and Political Factors Shaping Civil Society Peacebuilding Capacity

External and Internal Factors Critical for Civil Society

A functional perspective improves the understanding of different types of civil society peacebuilding activities. It falls short, however, in understanding how conflict transforms civil society capacity to fulfill these functions, and the potential distortions created by interactions with external supporters. The extent to which civil society is able to fulfill these functions depends on a range of internal and external factors which define the enabling environment in which it must operate, as well as the internal characteristics and capacities of civil society.¹⁸

Key aspects of the enabling environment include:

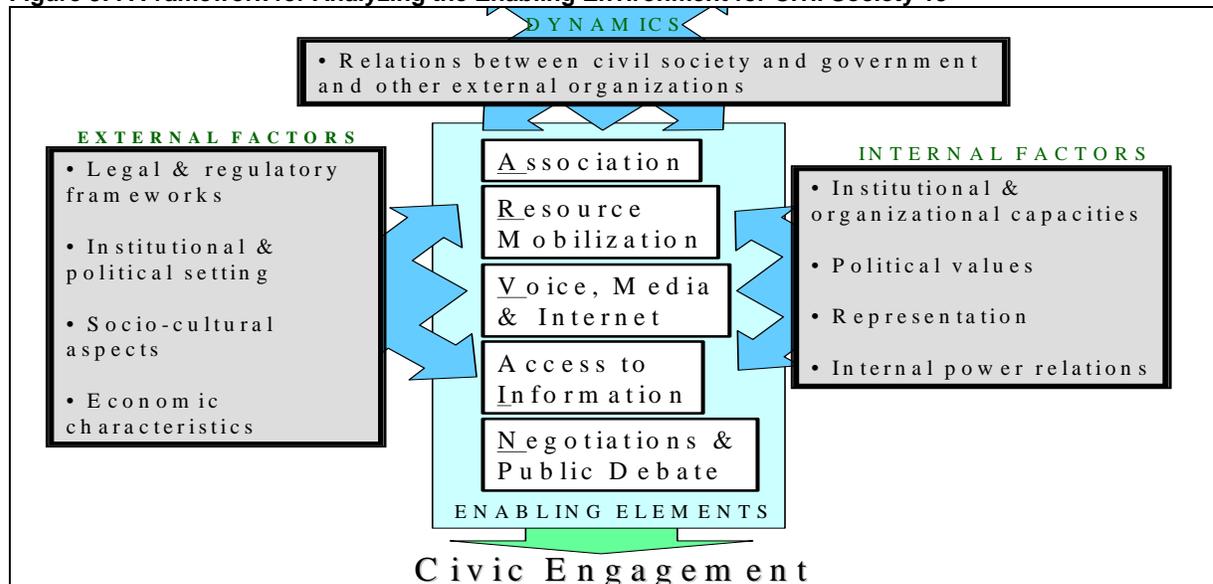
- The legal and regulatory frameworks (e.g., laws guaranteeing basic rights of association, expression, information and participation, and regulations on financing, tax status and registration);
- The political and institutional context (e.g., peace and stability, respect for political rights, governance institutions);
- Socio-cultural aspects (e.g., societal values and attitudes, trust and tolerance, levels of literacy) and economic factors (e.g., poverty and inequality); and
- The nature and dynamics of civil society relations with other societal actors, particularly the state.

¹⁸ See World Bank (2003) for a discussion of the enabling environment.

Key internal factors include:

- Institutional and organizational capacities (e.g., knowledge, skills, structures and systems, resources);
- Values (e.g., commitment to democracy, transparency, accountability and non-violence);
- Extent to which CSOs represent and answer to their constituencies; and
- Extent to which there is power-sharing, coordination and collaboration within and between CSOs.

Figure 5: A Framework for Analyzing the Enabling Environment for Civil Society 19



Conflict Transforms the Enabling Environment for Civil Society

Conflict dramatically changes the environment for civil society. Setting appropriate frameworks for civic engagement is a challenge for most governments, but even more difficult in fragile or conflict-affected settings (Cheema 2005). These countries are often unable to enforce policies and rules which affect CSOs, and in some cases, state emergency powers or rebel control effectively supersede legal and institutional frameworks. In other cases, laws and rules are dysfunctional or discredited, or in the extreme, the state may have completely collapsed. In weak or conflict-affected states, relationships between citizens and institutions are invariably seen through the lens of power and loyalties, and citizen trust and confidence in institutions is low. Insecurity and fear, induced by years of conflict, can hinder people from participating (Pearce 2005a), and CSOs are often suspected of subversion or collaborating with the enemy.

Conflicts also pose a challenge for the autonomy of CSOs. An example from southern Sudan illustrates the dilemma faced by NGOs, who had to coordinate their work with the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA), an arm of the Sudan People's Liberation Army. In 1999 the SRRA required NGOs to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which required NGOs to operate in accordance with "SRRA objectives". World Vision refused to sign and withdrew its operations (\$16 million), arguing that the MoU would violate Do No Harm principles and its neutrality (Riak 2002). The crisis raised questions on the impact of CSO support

¹⁹ World Bank (processed), *The Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT). A Methodology Note*, Social Development Department.

to a party to the conflict, when does cooperation infringe on autonomy and neutrality, and the impact of CSO alliances with parties on post-conflict relations.

Post-conflict reconstruction offers an opportunity to improve the enabling environment for civil society. It may open up space for more inclusive stakeholder interactions, which in turn can help build a constituency for key reforms and civil society strengthening. Incorporating excluded minorities in public sector institutions can be addressed by including CSOs in public administration reform (UNDP, Governance Foundations, cited in Cheema 2005). Working with the government to design mechanisms to allow NGOs to contribute to reconstruction and development, for example, was a key challenge for NGOs in South Africa (Pieterse 1997). NGOs found that adopting new legislation to promote civil society participation required pro-active engagement on their part. The Development Resource Center led this engagement, carrying out a study of the enabling environment in 1992 and engaging many NGOs in developing proposals and lobbying government. The process underscored the importance of NGO autonomy.

Although the post-conflict phase offers an opportunity to refashion the enabling environment for civil society, there are concerns that the dominant role of NGOs in the provision of humanitarian and post-conflict aid can further destabilize and weaken fragile state structures (Abiew and Keating 2004). It might also inadvertently enhance authoritarian regimes if NGOs lack the power to exert pressure or influence these regimes.

Conflict Affects the Internal Composition of Civil Society

Conflict affects civic life at all levels, changing attitudes and behavior of individuals, shifting social perceptions between groups, limiting economic and social exchanges, and shifting power relations within and between communities, regions and society. Conflict can polarize organizations along conflict fault lines and drive some to take sides in the conflict. A large influx of aid can contribute to changes in social fabric and power relations in and after conflict, and aid itself can have adverse effects on peacebuilding.

Conflicts tend to strengthen bonding social capital within identity groups, to the detriment of bridging social capital across groups. Communities resort to kinship, tribal, religious and traditional political structures, as a coping mechanism in the face of state fragility and conflict (Bogner 2004, Pouligny 2005). Such patterns may continue after conflict when civil society is still highly polarized and not all actors are working to build peace.

Societal actors change as they adapt to conflict, especially community structures, the nature of groups and the positioning of CSOs (Pouligny 2005). Where the state is weak or captured by special interests, the influence of uncivil or violent non-state groups is likely to rise (Belloni 2006; Schmidt 2003), limiting the impact of civil society peacebuilding. In post-conflict settings, non-state actors with a vested interest in continued conflict are unlikely to accept ceasefire agreements and might contest the re-establishment of state authority (Strand et al. 2003). During conflict civil society tends to fall into the same camps as the conflicting parties (Belloni 2006). Even if avoiding outright support to violent groups (armed factions, warlords, gangs) donors may inadvertently strengthen partisan groups or the political arm of warring parties. External actors, thus, have to carefully select those organizations that show a clear and credible commitment to peace and non-violence.

Donors need a basic understanding of the internal dynamics and environment influencing CSOs, not only to assess the commitment to peace and non-violence of CSOs and their capacity, but also to identify potential obstacles and the need for policy or institutional reforms. Especially where

the state is fragile or repressive, external support should carefully assess required changes in the enabling environment for civil society, and the limitations and the opportunities for CSOs.

Institutional Constraints and Distortions Related to External Support

CSOs face a number of limitations and constraints in any situation, but they are more challenging in conflict-affected settings. Key constraints and weaknesses include:²⁰

- CSO capacity is frequently uneven and limited. National CSOs often lack adequate human, financial, organizational and physical resources, and find it difficult to retain qualified staff and maintain a specialization (World Bank 2005d).
- Weak coordination and networking limit civil society effectiveness. While some countries have effective CSO networks, umbrella organizations and issue-specific alliances, they tend to be absent in most conflict-affected countries. Weak and underfunded networks are not able to fulfill key functions of communication, coordination, cross-fertilization and oversight. Since these organizations do not execute projects, they often have very limited access to core support or donor resources (Fowler 1997).
- Weak CSO legitimacy and accountability can also be problematic. Many national-level, urban-based NGOs lack a legitimate membership base or meaningful constituency links. Not all CSOs respect values of internal democracy, transparency and accountability. Weak internal systems and resource constraints can result in poor financial management and reporting. Accountability and transparency of CSOs to local communities is not always adequate. Often, CSOs are more accountable and responsive to donors rather than to communities and their organizations (World Bank 2005d).
- CSOs can be exclusionary and at worst reinforce divisions between groups. Vulnerable groups are not always represented, beneficiary participation is less widespread than commonly assumed, and in circumstances where oversight and self-regulation mechanisms are weak, fraudulent CSOs can take advantage of communities and beneficiaries (Fowler 1997).
- Donor engagement with CSOs is often fragmented and short-sighted. External funding and support is often limited to a small sub-set of CSOs (particularly development-oriented NGOs), while many local-level and membership-based organizations are bypassed. Donor preferences for funding CSOs on a project-by-project basis afford CSOs limited opportunities to develop capacity, specialization, strategic planning, and long-term community investments. Donors aiming to promote governance and democratization should help to create space through dialogue with reluctant governments and seek to address enabling environment factors. Donor-funded civil society support programs need to be based on stronger conceptual analysis and research (World Bank 2005d; Van Rooy 1998).

During armed conflict, I-NGOs and other external actors may find it difficult to support more political or advocacy oriented civil society peacebuilding initiatives. A World Bank report on CSOs in three conflict-affected states in Africa (World Bank 2005d) finds that CSOs are often driven into service delivery and away from advocacy and governance work. This is partly because governments regard advocacy less positively than service delivery, but it may also reflect donor preferences to avoid difficult political and advocacy issues.

²⁰ This section draws on the findings of a set of civil society assessments in conflict-affected countries (World Bank 2005) and the broader literature on civil society role in peacebuilding (Douma and Klem 2004; Harpviken and Kjellman 2004; Pendergast and Plumb 2002; Fitzduff 2004; Barnes 2005; OECD 2006b).

Although under certain circumstances service delivery may be an entry point for peacebuilding, using CSOs mainly as service providers may weaken their peacebuilding contributions. Support to non-state actors is erroneously equated with contributions to peacebuilding. Given the tenuous nature of enabling environments in conflict-affected and fragile states, CSOs involved in large scale service delivery programs find it difficult to engender the kind of civic engagement processes they are assumed to trigger by virtue of being non-state actors. In addition, engagement in public service delivery may attract talented and motivated citizens who would have otherwise joined social and advocacy efforts that could contribute to political peace processes (Belloni 2006).

Peace work became more professionalized and commercialized as the space for civil society peacebuilding expanded. Critics argue that urban-based and I-NGO peacebuilding monopolizes peace work and take attention, knowledge and motivation away from the local level. This ‘NGO-ization’ of social protest (Orjuela 2004) leads to a taming of social movements (Kaldor 2003), weakening peace movements and grassroots civic engagement. Evidence from El Salvador (Foley 1996), Timor-Leste (Patrick, 2001), Bosnia (Belloni 2001) and Sri Lanka (Orjuela 2004) shows that donors tend to support mainly moderate, middle class groups that often act as ‘gatekeepers’ (Paffenholz 2001b) for other civil society groups (Belloni 2006:21). This has resulted in a ‘colonization of space’ by national and I-NGOs (Jeong 2005; Pouligny 2005; Paffenholz 2001b). I-NGOs are criticized for parachuting into conflicts and using culturally and contextually inappropriate conflict resolution techniques (Sorbo et al. 1997), which mainly speak to the language and expectations of donors (Belloni 2006).

Many new urban NGOs are criticized for their weak membership base, lack of country-wide and balanced political or ethnic representation, and links to the political establishment. The reasons are to be found mainly in the monetization of peace work (Orjuela 2004) which some authors refer to as a peace industry (Moltmann 2004). NGOs are often criticized because they are only accountable to their external funders rather than their constituencies or beneficiaries (Orjuela 2004; Neubert 2001), which in turn disempowers local communities and civic engagement (Orjuela 2004; Bush 2005; Pouligny 2005; Belloni 2006). The logic of fund raising makes it necessary to downplay local knowledge and resources, and instead overemphasize local weaknesses and needs. Donor-driven NGO initiatives have limited the capacity to create domestic social capital and ownership for the peace process, leaving domestic groups in a weak and subordinate position (Belloni 2006). According to Edwards (2004: 95), “the number of NGOs is the easiest thing to influence, but also the least important.”²¹

Insider and outsider groups are dependent on each other, but insiders need to take the lead in identifying problems, starting peace initiatives and defining support needs (Anderson and Olson 2003). A wide range of domestic and international CSOs are active in most conflict settings, often working in partnerships or intermediary chains. As intermediary organizations usually have direct access to external funding and support, they often set agendas and make funding decisions, without fully considering local needs and community-based peace initiatives. In conflict settings, the distinction between insider and outsider groups is key,²² as it emphasizes the need to ensure that insiders take the lead in identifying problems, initiating interventions and mobilizing support,

²¹ A study in Sri Lanka found that when peace work became professionalized and commercialized, it was monopolized by a few, mainly urban-based elite NGOs (Orjuela 2004), reducing local engagement in peacebuilding, as national NGOs were disconnected from communities in conflict areas. The impact of civil society on peacebuilding was very limited.

²² Insiders are directly affected by the conflict. Outsiders are individuals or agencies that choose to become involved in a conflict, who may work and live in the area, but personally have little to lose (Anderson and Olson 2003).

thus preventing outsider dominance. In order to arrive at jointly agreed support programs, insiders and outsiders have to establish continuous interactions, on-going dialogue and reflection.

Although donors understand the need to work at the grassroots level, urban or I-NGOs nonetheless receive the majority of funds. This is largely because it is easy for I-NGOs to work with urban-based elite NGOs as they speak the language of I-NGOs and donors, and also understand the culture of project proposals. While CBOs and local peace initiatives have local knowledge, their ability to cope with Western agency demands is limited.

In view of these distortions, it is important for donors to: (i) carefully assess the legitimacy and credibility of CSOs they seek to fund; (ii) expand the number of eligible intermediaries and their access to local peace organizations; (iii) differentiate their support strategies for intermediary and insider CSOs; (iv) invest more systematically in building the capacity of a wider range of CSOs; (v) support the networking, coordination and sharing of experience between insider and outsider/intermediary CSOs; and (vi) move beyond mere funding of civil society peace initiatives, especially by improving donor coordination of civil society peacebuilding and provide direct support to improve the enabling environment.

CONCLUSIONS: KEY ISSUES AND LESSONS FOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Civil society has unique potential in peacebuilding but strengthening civil society does not automatically contribute to peacebuilding. CSOs are often actors for peace but they can also contribute to violence. Civil society peace interventions have not been rigorously evaluated. Civil society and donors need to identify strategic objectives and demonstrate the relevance of activities they propose to engage in. Without such clarity support can be well-intentioned but unlikely to achieve sustained results.

Civil Society Peacebuilding has High Potential but also Limitations

Civil society can make unique contributions to peacebuilding during all phases of conflict, with or without external support. Peacebuilding research has shown that civil society involvement in peace negotiations is directly proportional to the sustainability of peace agreements (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2006). This is supported by country examples, such as Guatemala and Sierra Leone. Research suggests that civil society has the strongest comparative advantage in advocacy and intermediation/facilitation functions, as well as human rights monitoring. CBOs tend to be more active locally in promoting social cohesion, socialization, intermediation/facilitation, dialogue and service delivery; faith-based and human rights organizations usually go beyond these functions, with better access to higher levels and often include some social justice advocacy work.

External support can help strengthen civil society contributions to peacebuilding. It builds on civil society potential and comparative advantages (geographical access, reach across conflict fault lines, community-based interventions, voice of marginalized groups), especially when an independent civil society can counterbalance a fragile or partisan state. Civil society also appears well placed to strengthen official peacebuilding processes. While the report does not cover this aspect systematically, civil society contributions to Track 1 negotiations and truth and reconciliation processes have considerable potential when well coordinated.

Local peace initiatives and networks are often good starting points but support for peacebuilding should build on locally-owned initiatives. Committed individuals who organize dialogues across conflict lines—such as the *Athwaas* initiative, bringing together Muslim, Sikh and Hindu women in Kashmir—can tap into society’s desire for peace and reconciliation. Such efforts can grow over time, extending the scope of activities from trust-building and awareness raising, to trauma healing, networking, and advocacy on women’s empowerment and human rights, connecting the individual or personal level with the broader social and political levels.

As civil society actors readily acknowledge, civil society initiatives are not a panacea for peacebuilding. Channeling support through civil society is not fundamentally easier than other peacebuilding options. This report highlights numerous risks and challenges, including inadvertently doing harm; disempowering local CSOs; concentrating support on a few NGOs and turning CSOs into mere implementers and service providers. Challenges also arise from conflict-induced changes to enabling environments and civil society’s own nature.

Conflict is generally driven by macro-level factors. There is a broad consensus that peacebuilding should also try to address the root or structural causes of conflict. Underlying structural factors may reside in geo-political power imbalances, historical or colonial factors, social and ethnic marginalization, and socio-economic tensions due to modernization and globalization. CSOs tend

to operate and act on the local space, while the scope to scale up and influence change at the structural and macro levels remains limited. Table 2 summarizes potential strengths, limitations and challenges of CSO peacebuilding, distilled from a broad range of literature.

Table 2: Summary of CSO Strengths, Weaknesses and Challenges

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better information on reality on the ground Can work where government can not (areas) Can speak to parties government can not reach Can work on social change issues government often can not CSOs are better grounded, particularly community-based organizations who enjoy trust and legitimacy Can inform and monitor policies (the view from below) CSOs operate more flexibly and adapt better to the context |
| Limitations/ Weaknesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited organizational capacity, internal governance, funding Often a local focus (particularly community-based organizations) Weak networking and coordination mechanisms among CSOs Questionable constituency base and legitimacy of NGOs Often tense relations with, disregard and mistrust from government Capacity to act in situations of violent conflict equally hampered NGOs may weaken the state, by substituting service delivery for too long periods |
| Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheer diversity of CSOs, hence different motivations, capacities, contributions Effectiveness of CSO peacebuilding initiatives difficult to measure Tension between having constituency ties (leading partisanship) and impartiality and neutrality Key conditions for peace are often out of reach for CSOs |

A Functional Perspective Clarifies Objectives and Impacts

Effective peacebuilding activities require a precise definition of the term. Only with a clear definition is it possible to assess the relevance of activities, objectives and intended impacts. The broad approach frequently adopted by donors risks labeling all socio-economic development efforts in a conflict setting as peacebuilding. Peacebuilding aims at preventing and managing armed conflict and sustaining peace for a decade after violence has ended. It should improve conditions for economic reconstruction, development and democratization, but should not be equated or confused with these efforts.

NGOs are not the only relevant CSOs in peacebuilding. A number of civil society actors are engaged in peacebuilding processes, and are often better suited to perform peacebuilding functions. However, donors tend to mainly support NGOs and moderate, urban-based organizations who become gatekeepers for other groups, neglecting other social movements and organizations. In contrast, many of the new NGOs have a weak membership base, lack national coverage, are not always politically or ethnically neutral, and are often linked to political elites. Donor-driven NGO initiatives have limited capacity to create domestic social capital, and broad ownership of peace processes. This can leave more representative, collective interest and advocacy oriented domestic civil society groups in a weak and subordinate position.

Support to civil society peacebuilding needs to be based on a broad conception of civil society. Current support does not fully recognize the diversity of civil society actors, including their characteristics, goals and interests, strengths and weaknesses. The potential peacebuilding functions that particular CSOs are able to fulfill are often unclear. Current practice tends to employ actor-oriented approaches, identifying existing civil society groups that could support

peacebuilding, and providing them with assistance, without recognizing that in conflict-settings not all civil society actors are working for peace and reconciliation.

A functional perspective can help clarify objectives and intended impacts. This report presents a new analytical framework to understand the functions of civil society in peacebuilding, moving away from an actor-oriented approach toward a functional perspective, centered on the concrete contributions that different actors can make in conflict settings. It would enable donors to better analyze existing and potential forms of civil society engagement, help define outcome and impact areas, support policy planning processes, help select partners and facilitate the setting of clear and explicit indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

Working through Partnerships, while Avoiding Aid Distortions

The insider-outsider distinction is critical. A range of CSOs are active at various levels in conflict settings, including external CSOs. Different organizations play different roles, and have different capacities and comparative advantages. They frequently work in networks and partnerships, based on shared values and principles, and provide services or funding for each other. In view of this complexity, the basic distinction between insider and outsider groups is important (Anderson and Olson 2003).²³ Insiders and outsiders have different strengths and limitations.²⁴ The frequently distorted dynamics of insider-outsider partnerships have often been analyzed, and much good advice offered on how to improve collaboration and funding relationships (Anderson and Olson 2003). What is important to emphasize, is that in civil society peacebuilding activities insiders have to take the lead in identifying problems, starting initiatives and mobilizing support.

Civil society can also be uncivil. Many civil actors support violence, preach hatred against other groups and can exacerbate conflict. This may be more prevalent during and in the immediate aftermath of conflict, when a weak state and the grievances generated by conflict allow uncivil groups to thrive, and underscores the need for sound and contextualized analysis to determine actor motivations. Beyond outright uncivil behavior, CSOs may favor one of the conflict parties, and while not becoming parties to violence, may not be sufficiently neutral or impartial to effectively engage in peacebuilding

Ownership is key but is challenging in conflict settings. There is general agreement that national actors should take the lead in peacebuilding, and that outside intervention should be limited to a supportive role (Lederach 1997; Anderson and Olson 2003). While country ownership is now an accepted principle in development cooperation, in conflict settings the need is stronger yet harder to achieve. In deeply divided societies, civil society members may be conflict parties themselves or directly affected by the violence, making it hard to establish their legitimacy and neutrality. In addition, local membership organizations are often formed on the basis of group identity and do not build bridging social capital. Without a thorough analysis of civil society, donors may inadvertently support spoilers and actors that are not working for peace and social cohesion.

²³ In this understanding, outsiders are not necessarily from outside the country, although all expatriate staff most likely are. Also representatives of capital-based NGOs may be perceived as outsiders in the case of a local or regional conflict.

²⁴ Insiders are seen as likely to bring: (i) in-depth contextual knowledge; (ii) motivation and commitment; (iii) credibility and trust; (iv) leverage; and (v) continuity, follow-up and presence. Outsiders bring: (i) international lobbying, advocacy and awareness-raising; (ii) leverage with outside constituencies to increase security of insiders; (iii) comparative experience and new ideas and techniques; and (iv) external funding and contacts (Anderson and Olson 2003).

There is a tendency to equate peacebuilding with support to NGOs—the ‘NGO-ization’ of peace work. Donors frequently rely on northern or I-NGOs to channel support to national, mainly urban-based NGOs. In many cases this has led to a monetization of peace work. NGOs may become dependent on external funding and increasingly accountable to international funders rather than local constituencies. The logic of fundraising tends to downplay local knowledge and capacity, emphasizing instead local weaknesses and needs, which can sideline and disempower local advocacy efforts and capacity. NGO peace activities themselves seem often to have a rather limited effect on macro-peace processes. Donor and I-NGO preference to fund NGOs may weaken mass mobilization efforts to support peace and attract talented and committed individuals that could be involved in broader civil society peacebuilding efforts.

Does service delivery undermine civil society peacebuilding impact? The contribution that CSO service delivery can make to peacebuilding is contested. In addition to distorting CSO priorities, incentives and accountability, it can also undermine the state. Counter arguments are that: (i) delivering services contributes to peace by improving livelihoods; (ii) delivering services to excluded or underserved communities may address some of the root causes of conflict; (iii) service provision can be an entry point to build relationships of trust required for effective peacebuilding; and (iv) service delivery can support peacebuilding if it is designed to enhance local participation, empowerment and bridging social capital.

The professionalization of CSO peace work has increased, but questions remain. Many CSOs, particularly I-NGOs and some larger domestic NGOs, have acquired considerable skills and experience in conflict settings and peacebuilding. The literature refers to growing professionalization of NGOs in peacebuilding (Reimann and Ropers 2005), including new standards, operating policies, and manuals. In many respects these professional CSOs are at the forefront of the peacebuilding field, but two questions remain. First, although there are many instances where they provide valuable support and capacity building to other CSOs, it is not clear how systematic this practice is. Many smaller and grassroots CSOs frequently complain that they are used and manipulated by the larger and more well-established NGOs, often using them and their grassroots activities as a front to secure donor funding, with little effort to build their capacity or scaling up. Second, some peacebuilding processes require a high level of professional training and experience (e.g., trauma healing), and it is not clear whether this is a task for NGOs or should rather be performed by private professionals or the state.

Improving Effectiveness

CSO activities should try to connect with macro-level processes, even if difficult. Many CSO peace initiatives often have limited contact with, and even less effect on, macro-level conflict dynamics, be it structural conflict factors, or official peace or state-rebuilding processes. The assumption that many local peace initiatives will automatically influence peacebuilding at the macro level has proven wrong (Anderson and Olson 2003). While modesty and realism are required, initiatives working at the local and individual level need to clearly articulate how they expect to influence macro or structural conflict factors.

Peacebuilding initiatives need to connect with political and governance structures. In many conflict settings, governments are mistrusted and peace activists tend to steer clear of direct contacts with government or political actors. However, establishing communication channels and working relations with government officials at the local, district or national level have been found particularly important (Anderson and Olson 2003).

Successful peacebuilding activities require a medium- to long-term perspective (Paffenholz, Damgaard and Prasain 2004). Supporting civil society peacebuilding is not a quick fix for complex conflict-related challenges. Instead, most civil society peacebuilding functions aim to achieve long-term social transformation to support peace, and contingent on enabling factors which are unlikely to be created in the short term.

The role of the state and the enabling environment need to be considered when planning civil society peacebuilding support. Civil society requires a functioning state to work effectively, but during and after conflict, state structures tend to be weak, fragile, and unable to guarantee an appropriate enabling environment. In some cases an authoritarian state may repress civil society activities, especially during conflict or when democratic pressures threaten its hold on power. Thus, a strategy to support civil society may also need to involve support for the enabling environment, including state structures, laws and institutions.

CSOs and external support can have adverse effects. They can exacerbate conflict divisions, endanger partners, trigger violence, and divert local efforts to non-priority areas. In order to avoid these effects, external agencies and their local partners should conduct joint Do No Harm reviews on peacebuilding activities and modes of operation. Whether outside support is appropriate must be carefully assessed. External support may expose citizens and civil society initiatives, making them targets of hostile activities, or pull them into fields where they do not have the right qualifications or experience. Conducting a thorough conflict and/or political analysis, coupled with a civil society assessment, can help inform the design of support strategies and programs. An open and transparent call for civil society proposals is suggested, with a built-in appeals mechanism to ensure that larger national and I-NGOs are not merely using local grassroots partners as covers or fronts to generate more credible proposals or substitute for a weak constituency base.

There is need for more impact analysis and context-specific political analysis. The effectiveness of peace work is contingent on very specific conditions. A USAID evaluation (2001), for example, compares the effectiveness of three different civil society approaches to controlling violence and peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa. It shows that effectiveness depends on features of the approach chosen and the context.²⁵ Additional evaluations are needed to gain insights and discern typologies. Civil society self-evaluations frequently judge peace outcomes and impacts as mediocre at best (Anderson and Olson 2003). Many recognize the need for further improvements for themselves and for donors. A large number of organizations attempt to monitor inputs and outputs at the project level but do not yet systematically analyze the outcomes and impact of their activities (i.e., how their programs contribute to progress in terms of peacebuilding goals). Impact evaluations of civil society peace activities raise a number of methodological questions,²⁶ suggesting the need for further development and testing of methodologies (Douma and Klem 2004). In addition to the four effectiveness criteria for peace work suggested by Anderson and Olson (2003)²⁷ the functional perspective developed in this report may offer guidance on outcome indicators (monitoring) and intended results chains (planning).

²⁵ The three approaches evaluated were (i) a local peace capacity working with traditional leaders, which showed the greater impact on reducing violence; (ii) peace dialogue between mid-level leaders, that was highly appreciated but with unclear results; and (iii) a broad peace media campaign, that also showed unclear results (USAID 2001).

²⁶ How to choose the counterfactual? How to isolate a small positive factor within a larger set of influences? When to expect outcomes or impact? How to deal with external shocks? How to attribute interventions to outcomes?

²⁷ The activity: (i) leads participants and communities to develop their own peace initiatives; (ii) results in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances that fuel the conflict; (iii) prompts people to resist violence and provocations; and (iv) increases people's security.

Knowledge and Research Gaps

The research and knowledge gaps identified in this report tend to revolve around improving effectiveness, measuring impact and the strategic use of external support. Further analysis and research through in-depth and comparative case studies, and greater knowledge sharing would be beneficial to answer a number of questions:

- The extent to which peacebuilding should address root causes versus localized initiatives?
- How, in which functions and under which circumstances can different types of civil society actors have an impact on peacebuilding?
- What are the comparative advantages of civil society compared to other actors?
- What is the potential impact of civil society peacebuilding functions in different conflict phases?
- How to sequence and interlink civil society support with official peace processes?
- How can support programs be designed to minimize possible distortions and negative impacts?
- What criteria determines whether, when and how external actors should support civil society peacebuilding?
- How to recognize promising initiatives, whether to support them, at what stage, through which partners and in what form?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are aimed primarily at external actors who support civil society in peacebuilding processes. They may also be of interest to civil society at country or regional level, governments in conflict-affected and fragile states, and private sector or military actors. Given that the debate on civil society in peacebuilding is still at an early stage, particularly regarding empirical evidence and in-depth analysis of outcomes and impact, the recommendations are intended to provide broad references for future actions.

Continue direct support to civil society peacebuilding.

The report outlines the many ways in which civil society should be supported by donors. Similarly, governments and donors should encourage the participation of civil society in official peacebuilding processes and programs.

Recognize that civil society initiatives are not a panacea for peacebuilding.

Donors should be mindful of critical factors and key limitations in supporting civil society peacebuilding initiatives. Donor policies and funding guidelines should reflect good practices (including contextual analysis, joint Do No Harm reviews, transparency, independent peer review mechanisms, and donor evaluations by CSOs).

Start with a broad notion of civil society and extend support beyond NGOs.

Given regional and cultural variations, as well as civil society differences in each country, a broad notion of civil society is essential. This will avoid ignoring other groups and help to overcome the current preference to support mostly capital-based national NGOs. External support should partner with a broad range of CSOs, selected according to the civil society peacebuilding functions to be strengthened, and based on a solid, empirically-grounded understanding of the CSO landscape, roles, capacities and potentials.

Be clear on objectives.

The functional perspective developed in this report can help make more strategic choices regarding the objectives of civil society peacebuilding support. The framework should be tested and validated further, especially its value to guide: (i) outcome and impact evaluations; (ii) planning and programming; and (iii) harmonization of donor policy and programming.

Base civil society support on rigorous analysis and develop appropriate instruments.

Three analytical steps are suggested: (i) thorough conflict or political analysis to identify the most essential areas for civil society engagement; (ii) solid civil society assessment, which analyzes civil society composition, the existence of uncivil society, internal factors (capacity, organization, governance, and networking); and the enabling environment;²⁸ (iii) review civil society capacity and experience with peacebuilding initiatives to capture successful and promising approaches, understand success factors and limitations, and capacity needs. Donors should invest further in the development and application of analytical instruments, as well as in-country independent capacity, wherever possible through coordinated or joint efforts.

Consider following the template process (Annex 4).

The suggested process entails six steps: (i) conflict and civil society analyses; (ii) needs assessment; (iii) relevance assessment; (iv) strategy and partner selection; (v) risks and effects assessment; and (vi) final decision on focus and scope of support. This template process would need to be enriched through consultations with donors, domestic stakeholders, and partner organizations.

²⁸ The World Bank's Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT) may be easily adjusted for this purpose.

Improve understanding of outcomes, impacts and critical success factors.

Outcome and impact evaluation methodologies should build on case study analysis and project/program evaluations, as well as thematic evaluations. Donor organizations and I-NGOs should support the elaboration and testing of qualitative impact assessment methodologies, building on existing peace impact frameworks and going beyond linear cause-effect chain models (e.g., by using the qualitative multi-stakeholder perception based evaluation methodology of GTZ). Efforts should also be made to clarify the feasibility and design of rigorous impact evaluation.

Reconcile the need for partner-led approaches with donor requirements.

The report points at local ownership as a key success factors, coupled with the need for better impact assessments. Reconciling the need for locally-led efforts and donor accountability for results requires that both partners become convinced of the relevance and usefulness of the proposed activities. Donors should engage in a strategic dialogue with their partners on civil society functions in peacebuilding, the need for more upfront analysis and impact assessments.

Develop flexible, responsive and long-term approaches to support local initiatives.

Donor support has to go beyond simple funding and short-term training. Donors should invest more systematically in longer-term capacity building and joint learning, while making full use of their capacity to encourage greater space for civil society initiatives, improve the enabling environment, and facilitate links with formal peace processes.

Take into account constraints in the enabling environment for CSOs and the role of the state.

The state and the enabling environment have a major influence on the effectiveness of civil society peace initiatives. The enabling environment, particularly the rule of law, respect for human rights, and security for citizens should be assessed and used to: (i) inform decisions regarding areas for civil society support; and (ii) identify complementary measures to strengthen state capacity in areas critical for peacebuilding in general and civil society contributions in particular.

Link independent civil society support and other development assistance instruments.

Greater donor policy and strategic coherence is needed to ensure the effective transfer of insights, lessons, and programmatic recommendations across policy domains and assistance instruments. Beyond direct civil society support, it is important to: (i) promote civil society collaboration in official peacebuilding and reconstruction processes led by governments or the international community; and (ii) strengthen functions and capacity of the state that affect the enabling environment for civil society.

Strengthen donor coordination.

To enhance donor coordination and harmonization of frameworks, interested donors should consider establishing a joint platform, possibly through or linked to OECD/DAC, for on-going discussion and sharing of experience on the issue of civil society and peacebuilding. Such a working group could become a valuable forum to discuss harmonization, knowledge sharing, link with official peacebuilding processes and interaction with practitioners, regional networks, the UN²⁹ and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC).

Invest in research and evaluation to fill knowledge gaps.

Such a research program should pay particular attention to improving the interface between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, bringing these constituencies together to better understand the contributions and functions of civil society in conflict settings.

²⁹ A good start has been the elaboration of the OECD/DAC Issues Brief on civil society (OECD 2006b), as well as the UN conference and process of the Global Partnership for Peace and Conflict Prevention (GPPAC), which ensured international visibility and UN support. See <http://www.gppac.net>

ANNEX 1: EXAMPLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY PEACEBUILDING FUNCTIONS

Protection: Peace Brigades International, Colombia

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| Name of initiative | Peace Brigades International (PBI) – Colombia |
| Conflict phase | During armed conflict |
| Time frame | Short-term |
| Context | There has been armed conflict between left-wing guerrillas, paramilitary forces and the national army for over four decades. Three million people have been displaced since 1995. Human rights and peace advocates, union leaders and the rural population are exposed to politically-motivated violence. |
| Main activities | The core of PBI activities is “protective accompaniment”, whereby volunteers act as unarmed bodyguards and accompany individuals and communities threatened by violence. PBI also documents violent incidents and engages with authorities, security forces, civil society and the international community. In Colombia, there are 40 volunteers in four regions. |
| Relevance | Fear of violence impedes ‘civic’ activity as citizens are afraid to participate in civil society activities and is an effective method to spread fear among communities. PBI volunteers (who never participate in meetings themselves) enable civil society leaders and activists to organize community activities. This is an important pre-condition for community action and bottom-up peacebuilding. |
| Internal actors involved | PBI focuses on enabling and catalyzing local activity. In Colombia, PBI protects people from 11 local NGOs and two local communities. These communities have created ‘neutral zones’ in an attempt to avoid participation in armed conflict. PBI works with Colombian and international NGOs to pressure the government to uphold international and national laws related to the protection of displaced persons. |
| Role of external actors | PBI in Colombia is supported by an international PBI working group. It receives regular funding from PBI International, which is funded by private individuals and more than a dozen different international sources. PBI recruits international volunteers from over 25 countries, mostly from Europe and North America. |
| Results | PBI ensures that violence against local activists will attract an international response. This approach opens political space for civic engagement within communities. |
| Shortcomings | Documenting human rights violations is highly sensitive, and can endanger communities and PBI volunteers. The task requires diplomatic skill and maintaining some neutrality and good relations with all actors. |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | This kind of initiative has great potential but is not a blueprint for each situation. To be effective, it is contingent on a set of factors good relations and a certain degree of collaboration from armed conflict parties. Conflict parties must be concerned with their international reputation for this approach to be effective. |
| Further Information | Peace Brigades International: http://www.peacebrigades.org/ ; Eguren 2001: 28-34; Yuill 2005: 376-81. |

Monitoring: Human Rights Monitoring, Nepal

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| Name of initiative | Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) and other organizations |
| Conflict phase | During armed conflict and in the immediate aftermath |
| Time frame | Short-term |
| Context | Armed conflict between Maoist rebels and the national army began in 1996. Key conflict factors are pressures for political change, and social, political and economic exclusion of major parts of the population (women, lower casts, ethnic groups and remote rural areas). Since King Gyanendra dissolved parliament in February 2005, the impact of armed conflict has been compounded by restrictions of civil liberties and harassment of human rights activists. The human rights situation is among the worst in the world. Limiting human rights violations by both conflict parties is a precondition for civic engagement toward peace. |
| Main activities | With 75 human rights reporters (one in each district) and 50 local partner organizations, the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) monitors the human rights situation. It disseminates findings through various media channels and publishes its own annual Human Rights Yearbook. |
| Relevance | Massive human rights violations perpetuate a climate of fear and impede civic engagement. Human rights monitoring addresses the problem of impunity for human rights violations, and improves the chances for peace deals and eventual reconciliation. |
| Internal actors involved | INSEC is a national organization, founded prior to the onset of armed conflict. It has an established local network of contributors. INSEC conducts human rights education in remote areas, and awareness campaigns on social issues (minimum wage for agricultural workers). Nepal has over 40 human rights organizations, which pursue different activities, including monitoring, awareness-raising, and interacting with public prosecutors and courts. Initiatives are coordinated by the Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Coordination Committee (HRTMCC). |
| Role of external actors | Most human rights organizations in Nepal are supported by international donors, either directly or through international NGOs. They have established working relations with international organizations, especially with the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission established in 2005. Local human rights groups are closely cooperating with international NGOs, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. |
| Results | INSEC disseminates human rights information, even on remote areas, at the national and international levels. This data is used by other organizations to lobby conflict parties. According to Amnesty International, the number of disappearances fell significantly in 2005 after international awareness had been raised about the world highest rate of disappearances in Nepal in 2003 and 2004. |
| Shortcomings | |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | Human rights monitoring, combined with effective communication and dissemination, can provide protection and promote accountability. Cooperation between national and local, and national and international organizations can be a powerful tool. Effective local |

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| | and national groups were instrumental in establishing the UN monitoring mission. Cooperation with international NGOs can help build international awareness and provide protection for the human rights defenders. A network of local human rights monitors, based in their communities, can enhance the effectiveness of monitoring and ensure local coverage. |
| Further Information | Informal Sector Service Center: www.insec.org.np ; Nepal Human Rights Yearbook, Amnesty International |

Advocacy: Civil Society Participation in Official Peace Processes, Guatemala

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| Name of initiative | Asamblea de la Sociedad Civil (ASC) Guatemala |
| Conflict phase | After armed conflict |
| Time frame | Short-term |
| Context | Injustice and discrimination of the indigenous, rural majority had resulted in low intensity armed conflict. The peace process began with political liberalization by the military government in the mid 1980s. It was further developed into a regional peace and democracy initiative (Esquipulas II) in 1987, involving Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. In 1990, negotiations between different social groups prepared the ground for official negotiations. An official UN-led mediation process began in 1993, and a peace agreement was reached in December 1996. |
| Main activities | Civil society engagement was linked to dynamics surrounding the “Esquipulas” process. A national reconciliation commission initiated dialogue within the civil society and between civil society, the military and the government. As a result of different consultation processes, civil society became more organized. In 1994, the ‘Civil Society Assembly’ (ASC) was established and given a mandate to make <i>non-binding</i> recommendations on all issues negotiated by track 1 parties. ASC produced briefing papers with recommendations on key issues, and synchronized release with the track 1 process. |
| Relevance | The ASC brought important and urgent issues to the agenda of the peace negotiations. Most addressed key conflict factors, including rights and identity of the indigenous population, repatriation of displaced people, the political economy of rural areas, the role of military in a democratic state, and constitutional reform. Civil society challenged official negotiators to engage issues integral for sustainable peace. |
| Internal actors involved | In the years prior to the beginning of official peace negotiations, various CSOs had put their claims on the public agenda and, in conditions of conflict, eventually formed the “Civil Society Assembly”. It comprised a variety of different organizations, including political parties, religious groups, trade unions, indigenous groups and academia. |
| Role of external actors | Participation of ASC in the UN-led peace negotiations was funded by international donors. Besides that the setting up of the civil society organization to take part in the official peace process was mainly a genuine local process. Potential influences from external actors have so far not been investigated. |
| Results | Civil society involvement brought forward and lent legitimacy to the negotiation process. Despite its consultative status, the ASC was putting important but previously neglected issues on the negotiation agenda. Most recommendations were taken into account directly or indirectly. Some key enabling factors facilitated the establishment of the ASC: (i) civil society had demanded participation for many years, (ii) civil society managed to organize effectively, (iii) the guerrilla party was relatively weak and hoped to gain civil society support, (iv) all parties, including mediators, hoped to gain legitimacy from ASC participation. |
| Shortcomings | |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | The establishment of an official civil society forum parallel to the official track 1 negotiation is an effective instrument for civil society advocacy and can improve coherence between the different peacebuilding tracks. Working through official collaboration process, rather than informal channels, can enhance the influence of civil society on peace negotiations. A civil society forum established purely from outside like it was the case in Afghanistan is much weaker than a forum that is a result of a genuine civil society movement within the country like it was the case in Guatemala. Civil society participation in peace negotiations is not a quick-fix solution, but requires preparation, significant lead-up time and pre-existing civil society. It takes time to develop joint civil society positions. Sequencing civil society input is crucial. ACS formulated targeted recommendations prior to specific negotiation rounds. The specific enabling conditions for effective civil society participation in need further research. For example, similar efforts to establish a civil society wing in El Salvador’s peace negotiation failed apparently as the main parties on the negotiation table were not lacking legitimacy. |
| Further Information | Greiter 2003; Conciliation Resources 2002. |

Socialization: People to People Dialogue, Israel/Palestine

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| Name of initiative | People to People Dialogue, Israel - Palestine |
| Conflict phase | During ongoing and after armed conflict |
| Time frame | Long-term |
| Context | Given the long-standing and deeply devise nature of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, any sustainable solution will hinge on reconciliation and, at minimum, the acceptance of the principle of peaceful coexistence. This would require a profound shift in mentalities on both sides. In this context, the Oslo Peace Accords of 1993 and 1995 between Israel and the PLO provided scope to a multitude of People-to-People (P2P) programs, encouraging Israelis and Palestinians to increase mutual understanding and commence reconciliation. |
| Main activities | The P2P Program funded around 165 joint Israeli-Palestinian activities aimed at enhancing dialogue and personal relationships. They included professional workshops, practicing hobbies, film festivals, environmental activities, book dissemination, journalists meetings, and school twinning. |
| Relevance | Joint activities are intended to facilitate dialogue and interpersonal relationships, fostering involvement in the peace process and reconciliation. |

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| Internal actors involved | All projects involved a variety of Israeli and Palestine organizations. However, participants tended to be drawn from social elites. |
| Role of external actors | In the Oslo peace accord this program has been included and funded by the Government of Norway. It supported Israeli and Palestinian NGOs in establishing dialogue projects. |
| Results | The objectives have not been achieved. There has been a return to violence (2 nd Intifada), and most P2P activities have collapsed. |
| Shortcomings | Activities only influenced individual perceptions of one another and affected individual relationships. It did not engage personal attitudes, toward the other group ("the enemy"), although this is a crucial element of reconciliation. |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | Socialization toward a 'culture of peace' has high long term potential, but impact depends on environmental conditions, including the level of violence and the design of specific activities. In the short run, during or immediately after armed conflict such initiatives appear to have little impact. Under those conditions, confidence building is threatened by levels of violence. Activities should be designed to leverage individual friendship for peace on the aggregate social level. The specific conditions for this require further research. Research suggests that such activities should initially be implemented separately among former conflict communities. Trauma healing and confidence building within groups is likely to be a pre-condition for future reconciliation and necessary in the short term. |
| Further Information | About initiative: www.unidir.org ; Atieh et al. 2004; Taha 2003. |

Social Cohesion: Independent Filmmakers Association, South Caucasus

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| Name of initiative | Independent Filmmakers Association – South Caucasus (IFA-SC) Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia |
| Conflict phase | After violent conflict has ended |
| Time frame | Long-term |
| Context | Since the break-up of the Soviet Union the three South Caucasian Republics have experienced a sharp drop in economic activities, leading to growing impoverishment among the population, as well as armed conflict over territories (Nagorny Karabagh, Abkhazia and others) with more than 1.5 million displaced persons. The region is characterized by different ethnic groups and religions, lack of generally shared values, power struggles over natural resources, weak and underdeveloped democratic institutions and collapsed economies. At present, but still lacking peace agreements on the other side. Consequently, the region is still at risk of instability and inter-state and intra-state armed conflict. In this environment there is a need for regional integration and inter-state cooperation in the South Caucasus. Links between the three countries need to be reinforced on all levels in order to identify common interests and address common problems. Socio-cultural identity and social cohesion are not only to be built up in the countries but among all South Caucasian people to prevent outbreaks of armed conflict. |
| Main activities | In the frame of a filmmaking support program, a trans-national regional civil society organization has been founded. The independent CSO "Association of Independent Filmmakers-South Caucasus" does the 'usual' business of associations in increasing awareness of film issues in the public (like piracy), challenging the government on legal or economic issues (subsidies for cinemas) on national or regional level, and providing services (lending modern equipment) to their members and the film community. At the same time, this cooperation of individuals from 'enemy countries' builds up trust not only among the people involved but also to the authorities and the general public. It demonstrates on a very practical level that there are common interests that can be tackled by cooperation. |
| Relevance | The initiative addresses the lack of cooperation and social cohesion in conflict situations. There is the expectation that this specific positive experience can be transferred to other people and sectors. |
| Internal actors involved | The trans-national association is comprised of individual independent filmmakers from all three countries. The regional association has national offices, but acts and makes decisions always as the trans-national body. Building the association on the base of national associations would have born the danger to focus only on national aspects, neglecting the regional ones. |
| Role of external actors | The association is mainly financed by an external donor (Swiss Development Cooperation) in the frame of its filmmaking (AVANTI) program and supported by services of 'FOCAL - Swiss Foundation for professional training in cinema and audiovisual media'. The donor actively pursues conflict prevention objectives, and has encouraged establishing the association as a transnational one. |
| Results | The initiative started in 2005. It is still too early to assess results. |
| Shortcomings | Setting up a genuinely regional association is difficult. Attitudes affected by conflict may interfere during implementation. |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | Supporting conflict-sensitive social cohesion has high potential of building trust and mutual confidence. It might be best done by practical cooperation. However, there are various limitations: (i) It is difficult to effect change beyond the project. (ii) Practical cooperation involves usually some kind of service delivery which needs resources and funds. This entails the danger of creating incentives that may not support strengthening social cohesion. (iii) There might be cases where participants are seen as traitors by their national constituencies. |
| Further Information | Swiss Program for the South Caucasus 2002-2006: www.sdc.admin.ch ; www.focal.ch/AVANTI/ . |

Intermediation/Facilitation: Violence Free Days El Salvador, Humanitarian Corridors, Mozambique

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| Name of initiative | Facilitation between conflict parties for development/humanitarian issues |
| Conflict phase | During armed conflict |
| Time frame | Short term |
| Context | Armed conflict in El Salvador and Mozambique |
| Main activities | El Salvador: During the war, the catholic church of El Salvador facilitated a number of times between conflict parties (guerrilla and government), with the objective to achieve 'violence free days' in specific regions. Those days allowed for conducting a vaccination campaign. Mozambique: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided humanitarian aid during the war. It could access government controlled areas throughout the war. Renamo, the rebel group, only allowed access to areas it controlled after a draught in 1992. |
| Relevance | El Salvador: War made it impossible to provide health services in some regions. The allowed for a basic vaccination initiative to be conducted. It also illustrated the common interests of both conflict parties. Mozambique: Besides allowing for the provision of humanitarian assistance, the humanitarian corridors weakened both conflict parties. Renamo lost control of 'their' people and thus also parts of their resource base. The government could no longer rely on its military allies, as Zimbabwean troops were restricted to protecting the corridor. The initiative also illustrated the potential impact of negotiations, and was an important step toward ending armed conflict. |
| Internal actors involved | El Salvador: The churches hold contacts to both parties and did successfully facilitate short term ceasefires. Mozambique: ICRC did negotiate with Renamo and the government. |
| Role of external actors | El Salvador: No external actor were involved. Mozambique: ICRC met Renamo and the government on various occasions to negotiate the humanitarian corridors. |
| Results | In both cases, the most result of the short term ceasefires / humanitarian corridors was their psychological effect on the peace process: The population saw that a ceasefire was possible and put pressure on the |
| Shortcomings | |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | El Salvador: Civil society can represent common interests of the entire population. They have the potential to facilitate between conflict parties, and mitigate the impact of violent conflict. Initiatives such as 'violence free days' also have a symbolic value and can remind conflict parties of what they have in common, and of the suffering of the population. This may open space for negotiations and rapprochement. In this example, linking a service delivery issue (vaccination) with a common interest (health of children) has speeded up the peace process. Mozambique: The same results on the psychological side can be stated for Mozambique. |
| Further Information | Kurtenbach and Paffenholz 1994: 116-119; Paffenholz 1998: 186-188. |

Service Provision: Building Community Trail Bridges as Entry Point for Social Cohesion, Nepal

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| Name of initiative | Trail Bridge Sub Sector Program (TBSSP) |
| Conflict phase | During armed conflict |
| Time frame | Short to long term |
| Context | Armed conflict between Maoist rebels and the national army in Nepal began in 1996. Key conflict factors are pressures for political change, and social, political and economic exclusion of major parts of the population (women, lower casts, ethnic groups and remote rural areas). Poverty rates are particularly high among those groups. |
| Main activities | Swiss Development Cooperation and its implementing partner NGO Helvetas have supported the construction of trail bridges for over 40 years. In 2001, construction support began to be readjusted with the explicit objective of contributing to improved living conditions of rural people by better access to markets and basic services. This was a deliberate strategy to address one of the causes of conflict through conflict sensitive development efforts. Constructing bridges is an entry point for reinforcing social ties within communities. |
| Relevance | Reinforcing social ties within communities that are divided by cast, gender and ethnicity mitigates social exclusion, a key conflict factor. |
| Internal actors involved | Local government authorities, local NGOs and the local community cooperate in the construction process. |
| Role of external actors | Helvetas, a Swiss NGO, is implementing the project together with government authorities. |
| Results | In addition to providing bridges to the wider community, the project has ensured that marginalized groups benefit from this new infrastructure. They participate in the project staff, user committees and have gained access to health and services. Communities continue to take on new activities in a joint and inclusive manner. |
| Shortcomings | |
| Lessons Learnt Good Practice Limitations | The project demonstrates that service delivery can be an entry point for working addressing conflict factors. However, this is not achieved automatically through service provision activities, but requires explicit programming objectives and likely additional effort. By collaborating on joint projects, communities can experience potential ways to overcome divisions, and build social ties through sharing project benefits. |
| Further Information | Project website: http://www.nepaltrailbridges.org . |

ANNEX 2: PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS AND THEORETICAL CONCEPTS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

John Locke (1632–1704) was the first in modern times to stress that civil society is a body in its own right, separate from the state. People form a community, in which their social life is developing and in which the state has no say. This sphere is pre- or un-political. The first task of this civil society is to protect the individual—its rights and property—against the state and its arbitrary interventions (Merkel and Lauth 1998; Schade 2002).

Charles Montesquieu (1689–1755) elaborated his model of separation of powers (*De l'esprit des lois* 1748). Montesquieu distinguishes as Locke between political society (regulating the relations between citizens and its government) and civil society (regulating the relations between citizens), but dissolves the sharp contrast: He stresses a balance between central authority and societal networks (*corps intermediaries*). The central authority (monarchy) must be controlled by the rule of law and limited by the controlling counter powers of independent organizations (networks) that live inside and outside the political structure (Merkel and Lauth 1998).

Alexander de Tocqueville (1805–1859) stressed even more the role of these independent associations as civil society (*De la Democratie en Amérique*). He sees these associations as 'schools of democracy' in which democratic thinking, attitudes and behavior are learned, also with the aim to protect and defend individual rights against potentially authoritarian regimes and tyrannical majorities in society. According to Tocqueville these associations should be built voluntarily and on all levels (local, regional, national). Thus, civic virtues like tolerance, acceptance, honesty and trust are really integrated into the character of civic individuals. They contribute to trust, confidence and 'social capital', as Putnam later termed it (Putnam 2000)

Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) focused on civil society from a Marxist theoretical angle. He stresses the potentially oppositional role of civil society as a 'public room', separate from state and market, in which ideological hegemony is contested. According to him civil society contains a wide range of organizations and ideologies which both challenge and uphold the existing order. Within civil society the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes and societal consensus is formed. Gramsci's ideas influenced the resistance to totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe and Latin America (Lewis 2002).

Jürgen Habermas (*1929) focuses in his concept of civil society on its role within the public sphere. The political system needs the articulation of interests in the public space to put different concerns on the political agenda. This function cannot be left to established institutions, e.g., the political parties. Especially for marginalized groups it is necessary to build organizations and to articulate their interests. There is no other way as parties and parliaments are "in need [...] to get informal public opinion beyond the established power structures" (Habermas 1992: 374).

ANNEX 3: CIVIL SOCIETY FUNCTIONS ACCORDING TO LAUTH, MERKEL AND CROISSANT

The five core function of civil society according to Lauth, Merkel and Croissant are perceived as (Merkel and Lauth 1998; Merkel 2000; Croissant et al. 2000; Lauth 2003):

Protection

Civil society is the social sphere beyond the state in which citizens, endowed with their rights, are free to organize their life without interference from the state. The state has to ensure this protection of the private sphere. The task of civil society is to remind the state of this warrant and in case force it to do so.

Intermediation Between State and Citizens

Civil society has to ensure the balance between central authority (state, political sphere) and the preferences and needs of citizens. This function focuses on the permanent exchange of self-organized associations with the state in order to influence, control or restrain the activities of the state, enhancing in return legitimacy of the state and public respect of the “social contract.

Participatory Socialization

This function stresses that civil society and the associations are ‘schools of democracy’. People learn how to execute their democratic rights, even on a basic level. People will acquire the capacities of being citizens, participating in public life, developing trust, confidence, tolerance and acceptance. This also supports the decentralization of power, and the creation of solidarity among citizens. These will be defense mechanisms against possible attacks on their freedom.

Community Building–Integration

Civil society is seen as a ‘catalyst of civil virtues’ as an ‘antidote’ both to individualism/retreat to family and to statism. Thus participation in social organizations helps to bridge societal ‘cleavages’, create civil virtues, foster social cohesion and will also satisfy the needs of modern individuals to develop bindings and attachments. Only this will enable truly democratic and inclusive decision-making. A pre-condition is that the self-organization of civil society is not taking place purely under ethnic, religious or racist premises. Associations must be built beyond these criteria.

Communication–Public Opinion Formation

Public communication is the core function of civil society in the frame of deliberative democracy models. It stresses the importance of a free public sphere, separated from state and economy, where people have room for debate, participation and public opinion formation. Civil society and its associations have a major role—besides parties and parliaments—to establish this ‘democratic public’ and to act as a watchdog. Actors of spontaneous groups, organizations, social movements will thus be able to articulate concerns and problems and transfer them from the more private sphere to the political agenda.

ANNEX 4: TEMPLATE PROCESS FOR DESIGNING CIVIL SOCIETY PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT

The following section proposes a process for designing support for civil society peacebuilding activities in a specific conflict context. It is based on the Aid for Peace approach (Paffenholz and Reyhler 2005c; Paffenholz 2005a,b), and adapted to civil society peacebuilding roles and according to the results of this report.

1. Analysis

- a) ***Conflict and peace process analysis (political environment)***: Information on conflict phase, dynamics, status of peace process, etc. This allows for an initial understanding of which civil society functions are most effective.
- b) ***Civil society assessment (status quo analysis)*** in the specific country:
 - Who belongs to civil society unions, associations, organizations?
 - Political affiliation of CSOs?
 - Membership base? (representativeness in the light of the conflict context)
 - Internal set-up of CSOs ('democratic' decision-making? membership across societal cleavages? civil or uncivil virtues to others?)
 - Overall understanding of civil society role?
 - Rural-urban divides?
 - Existence of civil society networks?
 - Relations of CSOs to other CSOs (conflicting relations, dominance, cooperation and common interests, alliances, bridging ties; relevance of particular interests?)
 - Attitudes and relations of CSOs toward the state (control, fighting against, cooperating with the state?)
 - Changes in civil society due to conflict?
 - Status of the enabling environment for civil society at various levels? Effects of the conflict situation?
- c) ***Review of experience and constraints*** with civil society activities in peacebuilding:
 - Which initiatives exist/existed? What lessons can be drawn? Success? Effectiveness? Constraints?
 - Which civil society functions are currently performed?
 - Which actors fulfill these functions or have the potential to do so?
 - Existing external support to civil society?

2. Needs Assessment

- a) Stating the 'ideal' role of civil society, derived from the functional framework and based on the conflict or peace process phase,
- b) Comparing the current performance of civil society in peacebuilding (status quo information from 1) with the ideal or potential role along functions (=analytical framework)
- c) Identification of areas and needs for civil society peacebuilding.

3. Relevance Assessment

Assesses which particular needs of the broadly identified functions (point 2) match with donor or agencies objectives and opportunities, and which ones should therefore receive priority support.

4. **Strategy and Selection of Partners**

Based on the needs and relevance assessment, a strategy for an intervention in support of civil society for peacebuilding can now be elaborated and partners need to be selected.

- a) ***Selection of partners/actors:*** Partial information comes from the analysis (part 1b), but two important considerations:
 - The scope of potential actors/partners needs to be amplified (not only NGOs, but also mass organizations, social movements, individuals etc.)
 - Both actors with current and potential capacities should be considered and assessed.
- b) ***Criteria for support:***
 - Avoid duplication of funding/activities.
 - Networking capacity of partners needed.
 - Representativeness of partners should be high (evenly distribution of political affiliations in organization preferred, inclusiveness of marginalized groups)
 - Organizations with internal democracy and transparency preferred
 - 'Bad' civil society needs to be avoided (= uncivil virtue; exclusion vis-à-vis other groups)

5. **Risk and Effects Assessment**

The risks (economic, political, and institutional) associated with supporting a specific actor need to be assessed as well as potential negative effects on peacebuilding.

6. **Decision**

The results of analysis, identification of strategy and partner selection should be shared with interested donors and other groups in order to reach a coherent civil society support strategy in the specific context. Feedback from the consultative process with potential partners and other donors should feed into the final decision.

ANNEX 5: QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the context of this report, the following gaps in knowledge with regard to civil society contributions to peacebuilding can be highlighted:

Appropriateness and Impact of Civil Society Functions for Peacebuilding

- What are the main contributions of short-term and long-term civil society functions toward various defined peacebuilding objectives? What is their impact?
- How do various functions interact in different phases? Which functions are mutually reinforcing and complementary? Which ones are mutually exclusive or competing? Which ones can be mixed?
- Can it be confirmed that advocacy is one of the most important civil society functions in peacebuilding during all phases of conflict? Can it be verified that mass mobilization for peace negotiations and against the recurrence of war in combination with targeted agenda setting (especially through the involvement of civil society in peace negotiations) are the most effective roles civil society can play during and immediately after armed conflict?
- Is creating a mass movement for peace (by linking grassroots initiatives with national groups) an effective way of supporting civil society for achieving peace?
- Is the 'culture of peace' function only effective for long-term post-conflict peacebuilding, or can it have an impact on short term peace making?
- Can we verify that building bridges between adversarial groups (e.g. through joint initiatives on thematic issues such as water, forest, films) are more effective as a means of conflict sensitive social cohesion and easier to implement than initiatives aiming directly at peacebuilding through promoting a 'culture of peace'?

Role and Selection of Different Actors

- More needs to be known about the comparative advantages of different actors. Development cooperation has neglected traditional mass organizations and given priority to NGOs. It should be assessed what kinds of organizations have formed that enabled civil society what type of organizations have not achieved that. What is the impact of different membership bases? On the other hand, it is equally important to know what kind of mass organizations are able to fulfill specific civil society functions and how they might change due to external support. It needs to be clarified for example how 'genuine' groups, movements and networks can be supported without undue commercialization. It is also important to assess the role of international NGOs. Are they functioning as gatekeepers that draw away resources and knowledge from national groups? Under which conditions can they be most effective? What is the role of international donors in this regard? Do they have to substantially change the way and mode in which they support civil society?

Enabling Environment

- What are the features of an optimal enabling environment for civil society in peacebuilding? What are the key obstacles? How does conflict and large scale violence affect the enabling environment for civil society? How does the environment, in turn, affect the perceived constraints, opportunities and peacebuilding activities of civil society?

Service Delivery

- Under which conditions can service delivery be more than an entry point for other civil society functions? There is some evidence that service delivery can add to the legitimacy of

civil society. However, there is also evidence that service delivery does not enhance civic engagement. There are also concerns that advocacy work is adversely affected when CSOs are driven into service delivery and thus drawn away from other important functions.

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