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Editorial

The “New Deal for Engagement in fragile States” sets out objectives regarding legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations as well as revenues and services as international goals for fragile states and donors. These five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals are intended to enable the countries concerned to transition out of their state of fragility and embark on development. The New Deal also allows for the involvement of civil society in this process. Yet, what can international and local non-governmental organisations do to help create sustainable peace and better governance? How can and should civil society participate in peacebuilding? How can organisations deal with a shrinking scope for action? The articles by both governmental and non-governmental organisations in this issue address these questions from different perspectives.

Lukas Krienbuehl
Editor

KOFF – swisspeace

KOFF Roundtable Discussions on the New Deal and the Role of Civil Society

Since it was adopted in Busan in 2011, the “New Deal for Engagement in fragile States” has become a new working paradigm for both international and local actors in fragile and conflict-affected countries. What has been unique about this process is that the affected countries and donor states have jointly developed the agenda and are working on implementing it together. The New Deal proposes five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals aimed at overcoming fragility and conflict:

1. Legitimate politics: inclusive political solutions and conflict resolution
2. Security: guaranteeing and strengthening people’s security
3. Justice: addressing injustices and improving access to justice
4. Economic foundations: generating employment and improving livelihoods
5. Revenues and services: managing state revenues efficiently and building capacity for fair and accountable service provision.

To achieve these goals, indicators are currently being developed and fragility assessments carried out in pilot countries such as Liberia, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Although the New Deal stresses the importance of relations between the state and civil society, the question remains as to precisely what role civil society should play in implementing the goals in the various countries concerned. With this in mind, the Centre for Peacebuilding (KOFF) organised a roundtable discussion involving representatives from the OECD and the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, as well as from Swiss institutions such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Human Security Division of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and Caritas. As the discussions revealed, the scope for the participation of civil society in the political dialogue is lacking in many countries. However, the New Deal does enable local
actors from civil society to demand greater involvement in the process from their government. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, the New Deal has been accepted by the government as a second legal basis – alongside the constitution – for actively involving civil society in the fragility assessments and the development of indicators. From the perspective of civil society, calling on the governments concerned to meet their obligations according to the New Deal appears to be an important strategy. The results of the roundtable discussions are due to be published in a Critical Reflection in early September.

25.06.2013

Further information:
KOFF Ursula Keller

KOFF Study on Conflict Dimensions of International Assistance to Refugees from Syria in Lebanon

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than half a million people have fled to Lebanon since war broke out in Syria. The overwhelming influx of refugees has plunged this small country into a state of humanitarian emergency in the space of a few months. International aid organisations, including several from Switzerland, have therefore stepped up their emergency relief efforts in this region. At the same time, Lebanon is becoming increasingly embroiled in the political disputes and armed conflicts of the Syrian civil war.

To support Swiss and other international actors in implementing aid programmes in a conflict-sensitive way, the Centre for Peacebuilding (KOFF) of swisspeace has drawn up a study based on consultations in Lebanon. This study demonstrates how the current political conflicts are entangled with international aid operations. It also outlines how the international community can help resolve the humanitarian and political crisis by implementing effective programme strategies.

The political tensions in the country have heightened as expected, resulting in a governmental crisis and a civil war-like situation, particularly in northern Lebanon. In such volatile and complex political environments, international aid programmes run the risk of triggering conflicts themselves or aggravating existing tensions. This happens, for example, when the Lebanese people which feel neglected by their own government since decades are put under heavy strain by the influx of refugees and yet are excluded from international aid programmes. Another challenge is to coordinate these programmes with the politically divided Lebanese government, which is severely hampered in its ability to take action. The study was presented to Swiss organisations at a KOFF roundtable event in May, during which possible courses of action were also discussed.

14.06.2013

Further information:
KOFF Sibylle Stamm

Links

- KOFF
- KOFF study on the conflict dimensions of international assistance to refugees from Syria in Lebanon
Supporting Peace Processes in Southeast Asia

The Mediation Support Project (MSP), a joint venture run by swisspeace and the Center for Security Studies at ETH Zurich, invited Emma Leslie, Director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in Cambodia, to take part in a roundtable discussion in June on the support of peace processes in Southeast Asia. Moreover, she gave an input at this year’s Peace Mediation Course.

During the roundtable discussion, Emma Leslie talked about her previous involvement in peace processes in Southeast Asia, particularly in Myanmar and the Philippines. In her presentation she made, among others, three clear statements about peace negotiations based on her own experiences. First of all, she underlined the importance of carrying out in-depth and regular analyses when getting involved in conflict areas. Additionally, she emphasised the need to remember that local dynamics can change very quickly. Indeed, organisations often commission complex context and conflict analyses that reflect a situation which is already out of date by the time the analyses are finished. Emma Leslie’s second point was that, in addition to negotiating skills, emotional intelligence plays an instrumental role in practice. The ability to empathise, to recognise and interpret one’s own and other people’s feelings, can contribute significantly to the success of peace negotiations. However, adopting an empathetic attitude towards all parties on an equal basis often proves a major challenge for mediators. Thirdly, Emma Leslie demonstrated that the level of trust between the negotiating parties, and often towards third parties too, is very low after years or even decades of conflict. Building up trust therefore not only requires transparency with regard to the activities of the mediator’s own organisation. It also calls for a great deal of flexibility and reliability, as well as the ability to keep one’s ego out of the situation. swisspeace looks forward to continuing the excellent cooperation with Emma Leslie and the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in the future.

10.06.2013

swisspeace Annual Report 2012

The annual report offers readers colourful insights into the various activities of the Swiss Peace Foundation over the course of 2012. As well as describing the peacebuilding projects in Myanmar, the report outlines for example research being carried out in relation to difficult democratisation processes. The new format of the annual report is designed to reflect these activities in both visual and textual form. Interested readers can thus follow swisspeace on the “journey towards peace” and gain an overview of the activities which took place last year.

05.06.2013
Focus

The New Deal and the Role of Civil Society

More than 20 networks representing over 200 civil society organisations worldwide are currently involved in the implementation of international commitments with regard to weak and fragile states, as set out in the “New Deal for Engagement in fragile States”. The establishment of an appropriate platform has allowed civil society to participate in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and in implementing the New Deal in fragile states.

The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding is a coalition created to enable civil society organisations (CSOs) to participate in the New Deal. The platform includes both CSOs from the fragile countries, the so-called g7+ states, and international civil society organisations. Drawing on the experiences gained from the platform, this focus article explores the role of civil society in the New Deal process.

A Basis for Involvement

In democratic societies, CSOs have their say in public affairs. In most fragile states, however, the practice of good governance and the active involvement of civil society are not so well-established. Policy debates on the effectiveness of international aid (the Declaration of Paris in 2005, Accra Agenda for Action in 2008, the New Deal in Busan in 2011) have recognised CSOs as important actors in the dialogue regarding all kind of policy areas. The role of civil society as a pillar of good governance, as a citizen watchdog for policy-making, as an effective implementer of development programmes, as an agent of social transformation and rehabilitation for marginalised social groups, and as a defender of human rights is undisputed. CSOs even compete with the media when it comes to keeping a watchful eye on the accountability of policymakers. The New Deal further legitimises and expands these roles played by civil society in fragile states.

What Civil Society Contributes

After a year of activity, CSOs can take credit for various successes in the New Deal process. They have been instrumental in performing risk, conflict and fragility analyses in fragile states and the results they have produced have prompted governmental and international actors to take action. In the Central African Republic, civil society carried out a context analysis of the armed conflict between rebels and the government in February 2013. Based on this information, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) was able to grasp the urgency of the situation and send in troops to help protect the people.

To a large extent, CSOs have also helped spread the word about the New Deal. They ran awareness-raising campaigns designed to highlight the relevance of the five goals of the New Deal to everyday life. These efforts piled more pressure on policy-makers to take concrete action in order to achieve sustainable results. Focal points of the Civil Society Platform in Burundi, Togo and the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, organised national conferences to inform the general public about the New Deal commitments.
At national and international level, civil society organisations were also at the forefront of the development of indicators for measuring progress. Based on experiences in the field, they recommended taking a bottom-up approach, developing common global indicators based on best practice and lessons learned from fragile contexts. They also stressed that a more accurate picture of progress could be obtained if peace-related targets were underpinned by a package of indicators relating to capacity, the “objective” situation and public perception.

Finally, civil society was successful in its efforts to ensure that the issue of gender was incorporated into the New Deal process. In doing so, they underlined the importance of including women in peace processes. These recommendations were taken up by both the United Nations and the OECD.

**Challenges and opportunities for CSOs**

The implementation of the New Deal in national policies is ongoing. However, the involvement of civil society in these processes has proved challenging. In many cases, governments have either ignored CSOs or limited their participation to validation workshops. Yet, not all donors seem bothered by this situation. Further efforts to rally the support of all relevant actors at national level and in the international community are therefore needed. If CSOs are to play their part in implementing the New Deal, they need to be allowed sufficient scope for political dialogue. The DR Congo offers a positive example in this regard, as civil society has played a prominent role in the implementation of the New Deal in national policies. At the same time, this strong position also raises the question of the government’s ownership, since some ministers in the DR Congo seem less committed to implementing the New Deal than others.

Furthermore, civil society must be properly equipped to participate in the implementation of the New Deal. Experience has shown that more capacity-building is required within the coalition. International NGOs can certainly provide support for local civil society networks in this regard. At the same time, it has been suggested that governments’ budgets for measures aimed at implementing the New Deal should also specifically allocate funds for supporting CSOs and expanding their capacities. However, this idea could give rise to the risk that governments would try to buy civil society.

In order to clarify the position of civil society within the New Deal process and achieve better results in building peace and strengthening post-conflict states, specific strategies are needed. The New Deal can be used to create the scope required for an inclusive dialogue on political planning and governmental policies. In particular, CSOs should use fragility assessments as an opportunity to unite governments, civil society and development partners around a common strategy for peace.

The constructive involvement of civil society has a successful international track record. This provides a strong basis to campaign for the inclusion of the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals in the post-2015 development agenda, which is currently being discussed at international level. As a network representing CSOs from both g7+ countries and the OECD area, the Civil Society Platform is in a good position to advocate peace as a priority for development after 2015 and to raise even more awareness of the links between lasting peace and sustainable development.

Further information:
Georges Tshionza Mata,
Focal Point of the New Deal Platform in the DR Congo and Regional Coordinator of PREGESCO

19.06.2013
News from Swiss NGOs

Fondation Hirondelle: Giving Civil Society a Voice to Help Promote Peace

In every society, the media play a dual role. On the one hand they form part of civil society and therefore have an influence on decision-making processes, while on the other hand they serve as a tool for civil society, enabling it to make its voice heard and defend its interests.

In peacebuilding, dialogue and reconciliation processes, the media have an even more instrumental role to play, as they have the ability to change a situation either for better or for worse. Access to clear, precise and non-partisan information offers every citizen the chance to learn the facts and the reasons, enabling them to form their own opinion. However, civil society and conflicting parties must also be able to speak out and air their problems, needs and ideas. This is essential for re-establishing dialogues interrupted by armed conflicts and laying the foundations for a democratic society.

By making good use of the media, civil society can bolster its position as an actor working for a fairer and more respectful society. It therefore needs to recognise the media as a useful tool for exercising its rights and take advantage of these mechanisms of information and means of expression accordingly.

Fondation Hirondelle supports independent and credible media that address the needs of society and promote peace and reconciliation. One prime example is Radio Ndeke Luka in the Central African Republic, which has developed over time into an indispensable tool for civil society. The broadcasting station has won a great deal of trust from the people of the Central African Republic and listeners regard it as a reliable source of information. They even make impromptu visits to the radio station to send messages to the country’s highest authorities and to denounce violations of their rights. The people know that, through this medium, they have a real influence in bringing about tangible changes in everyday life. Radio Ndeke Luka has thus established itself as a mouthpiece for the people. 10.06.2013

APRED: Spreading the Word about Peace

Civil society plays a very active role in peacebuilding, partly because for a long time governments had relied on a centralising, military-oriented approach, and partly because peace organisations, in comparison to environmental ones, are less represented in the political realm.

In Switzerland and elsewhere, civil society organisations like APRED have made peace a study subject linked to concrete projects. They have been instrumental in the acknowledgement of peace as a common goal for governments, the international community and academia. This has led to the emergence of interfaces and collaborative platforms, which could sometimes overcome contradictory political approaches through practice.
Nevertheless, these successes should not obscure the fact that non-governmental organisations like APRED as well as governments are merely representatives of the people. Awareness-raising around the issue of peace is therefore needed. APRED is contributing to ensure that non-violent revolutions and the adoption of disarmament treaties help build more peaceful societies. It is necessary to consolidate peace at all levels so that such events lead to sustainable long-term peace policies. APRED is committed to make peace more visible, for example in constitutions or through the acknowledgement of a human right to peace. Furthermore, the tools of peace should be accessible to the entire population. Through its interactive and inclusive activities APRED is aiming to strengthen the relationships between all actors in order to promote peaceful societies.

20.06.2013

Abolishing Gender Norms: Political Requirements and Practical Approaches

The VOIX DES FEMMES 2013 series of events took place in June, exploring the topic of gender roles in the public sphere. This year’s invitee was the Afghan graffiti artist Shamsia Hassani, a remarkable young woman, which captivated both public audiences and media alike.

Female graffiti artists are something of a rarity, in particular in Kabul. With her street art, Shamsia is breaking every gender norm. Women wearing burkas feature prominently in her work – she paints them in luminous blue and larger than life, with the aim of making them visible and thus allowing them to reclaim public space.

During Shamsia’s two-week stay in Switzerland, the courageous Afghan woman took part in various events organised by TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland, including graffiti workshops for young people on the theme of gender roles, live graffiti art action and photo exhibitions of her work. She also took part in several panel debates along with guests from politics, arts and youth work, discussing the question of how to overcome gender roles – in Kabul and in Switzerland.

TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland’s activities are focused on pursuing the vision of a post-sexist society. One of its main objectives is to push Article 5 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) onto the agenda. The aim of this is to eliminate and avoid stereotypical gender roles, as these lead to a gender hierarchy, which is an important cause of gender-related violence.

The findings from the VOIX DES FEMMES 2013 events will be published in autumn in a report, which will be available online. As well as presenting examples of practical approaches, the report will outline political demands that provide the strategic focus for a Swiss policy aimed at reducing sexism in society.

15.06.2013
Scope for Development thanks to Constructive Relations between the State and Civil Society

Vulnerable population groups in fragile and conflict-affected situations are penalised twice: not only do they suffer from the violence itself and limited state services, but they also belong to the poorest people in the world. The Strategy on International Cooperation 2013-2016 of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) focuses on Swiss involvement in situations of this kind. Switzerland endorsed the "New Deal for Engagement in fragile States" in 2011. The SDC adopted a package of measures for working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts in 2012, with the aim of improving strategy development, cooperation, security, human resources policy and communication.

Successful cooperation relies on good coordination within the Swiss federal administration and with Swiss NGOs, as well as with governments, other donors and civil society in partner countries. When it comes to strategy development, efforts need to be stepped up to ensure that conflicts can be dealt with and partner countries are able to transition out of fragility. Conflict-sensitive programme management and a focus on the five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals as set out in the New Deal are absolutely essential in this regard. Joint context and conflict analyses as well as national strategies are crucial too. In terms of security, standardised procedures are required at department and federal government level, as is an updated risk management strategy. With regard to human resources, training and career development measures are being taken to ensure that well-prepared staff are ready and available for deployment. Other donors currently pursue similar changes. This could well be relevant to relief organisations too.

According to the DAC working committee of the OECD, fragility has two meanings: the inability of the state to provide basic services of organisational, institutional and financial nature, and the inability of the state to establish mutually constructive relationships with civil society. The latter is important, as the process of statebuilding and nationbuilding requires the involvement of various actors on an equal footing, particularly those from civil society. During the negotiations, Switzerland had advocated a more prominent role for civil society – in the sense of an independent development actor – than the one ultimately enshrined in the New Deal. In local statebuilding in particular, development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects combine direct aid for the population with the long-term impact on statebuilding and democratisation. In this regard, partnerships between foreign NGOs, local civil society organisations and the relevant authorities are essential for achieving results.

18.06.2013
Peace Mediation Course 2013

The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Mediation Support Project (a joint venture by swisspeace and the Center for Security Studies at ETH Zurich) held their sixth Peace Mediation Course in Oberhofen from 2 to 14 June. The training course once again attracted an extraordinary group of participants: 28 people from 17 countries attended the course, most of whom have been directly involved in peace processes, either as a member of a mediation team or as a representative of a government or an ethnopolitical party involved in armed conflict. Over 12 days, the enthusiastic and keenly interested participants were given the opportunity to explore and discuss key topics, concepts and techniques relating to mediation and negotiation in peace processes. As well as providing training in negotiation and mediation skills, conflict analysis methods and how to design mediation processes, the course offered modules on specific topics such as dealing with the past, power-sharing and gender. The theoretical training modules were supplemented with role-playing and practical exercises. The participants were also able to benefit from the wealth of international experience offered by the six trainers. One of the highlights of the course was an open exchange with Ambassador Claude Wild, in which the specific mediation dilemmas faced by Switzerland were discussed and the participants were encouraged to put forward their suggestions to the FDFA.

20.06.2013

Further information:
FDFA Murezi Michael

Gender: Glossary and Specific Examples

Ensuring equal opportunities for women and men is essential for achieving lasting improvements in both peacebuilding and development cooperation. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has therefore been working in partnership with the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies (ICFG) to publish a glossary on the gender approach in English, French and Spanish. As well as defining key gender concepts, this new publication contains a table with entries arranged by topic, corresponding explanations and information on international obligations. Another SDC publication in German, “SDC’s Gender Policy Turns Ten”, provides an insight into specific projects in Benin, Bangladesh and Moldova. These initiatives have the common goal to promote gender equality in order to combat poverty and pave the way for sustainable development.

11.06.2013

Archives for a Peaceful Future

As part of its new Essential publication series, swisspeace has released a publication entitled “Archives for a Peaceful Future. A Guidance Note for Working with the Archives of Truth Commissions in Dealing with the Past Contexts”. Truth commissions are important mechanisms for society when it comes to dealing with a past marked by violence. They investigate and document serious human rights violations committed during an armed conflict or under an authoritarian regime,
collecting a vast amount of material and documentation in the process. Once a truth commission has finished its work, it is important to preserve the archives it has produced and provide access to them. Yet, this often involves considerable difficulties. The guidance note is therefore intended to demonstrate how to manage and work with such archives.

28.06.2013

**Web Tip**

**Info**

- New Deal website
- International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding website

**New Deal Online**

The website newdeal4peace.org offers an overview of the “New Deal for Engagement in fragile States”, of recent policy developments at international level and the relevant documents. The website also illustrates how the New Deal is designed to help improve the situation of 1.5 billion people living in countries affected by conflict.

The “International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding” aims to strengthen the joint peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts of fragile and conflict-affected states, donor countries and civil society organisations. This platform focuses particularly on issues such as the implementation of the New Deal and indicators for assessing the impact of peacebuilding and statebuilding activities.

07.06.2013

**International Partner Organisations**

**Info**

- Berghof Foundation
- CDA Collaborative Learning Projects
- Conciliation Resources
- EPLO
- forumZFD
- FriEnt
- GIZ
- GPPAC Foundation
- International Alert
- Plattform Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung

**International Alert**

- On his blog, Dan Smith, Secretary General of International Alert, has written an article on the UN development agenda after the Millennium Development Goals expire in 2015. He examines the five targeted “shifts” currently being discussed at international level. The contribution makes it clear that now the issues of peace and good governance feature prominently on the development agenda. Dan Smith therefore calls for an in-depth international debate in order to firmly establish this ambitious objective at the highest level.

**FriEnt**

- In the spring, over 200 representatives from civil society networks and organisations gathered in Bonn for the “Advancing the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda” conference. The Working Group on Peace and Development (FriEnt) held a workshop with the aim of learning from the strategies and experiences of other organisations in linking peacebuilding and development cooperation and identifying common challenges. The organisation reports on this event in a blog post.

**GPPAC**

- In June, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), in collaboration with the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), published the 7th edition of the Global Peace Index. This index compares the peacefulness in 160 countries on the basis of 22 different indicators.
Events

- The Caux 2013 Initiatives for Human Security conference is due to take place in Caux, above Montreux, from 29 June to 12 August. This year’s programme includes inputs and discussions on a variety of topics, such as just governance or land and security. Further information and registration.

- swisspeace is holding its annual conference 2013 in the auditorium of the University of Basel on the afternoon of 10 September. To mark the Foundation’s 25th anniversary, the event will feature a discussion with Jakob Kellenberger. Further information will follow soon.

- The 6th summit of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) will take place from 16 to 20 September in Geneva. The thematic focus lies on „Nesting Peace: Creating Infrastructures to Sustain Diversity“. Further information and registration.

Publisher: Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF) / swisspeace
Address: Sonnenbergstrasse 17, P.O. Box, CH - 3000 Bern 7
Tel: +41 (0)31 330 12 12; Fax: +41 (0)31 330 12 13
Editing: Lukas Krienbuehl, Nathanaël Tichelli
Translation: Furrer Übersetzungen
Layout: Liliana Rossier
Publication dates: The KOFF newsletter appears in German, English and French on the first day of every month (except August 1 and January 1). The newsletter is distributed electronically. All previously published editions are available on the KOFF website as PDFs. The keyword search engine provides direct access to all articles of the online archive.