January 2015

January 7 2015: A monthly selection of the best new research and resources on local peacebuilding worldwide, as chosen by Insight on Conflict. This month's edition features articles on local initiatives in Syria, civil society in Colombia and more. Sign up here to receive the newsletter by email each month.

Research this month

Local First in practice: unlocking the power to get things done

"This study addresses a fundamental problem of current aid practice. Because the sector focuses on the provision of external resources, it is dominated by donor agendas and often ignores existing capacity in recipient countries. This has some damaging and distorting consequences for local agency and ownership, and can lead to inappropriate and misconceived interventions that end up exacerbating the very problems it aims to solve."

Local First in practice is a detailed study of models for locally-led development projects, written by Rosie Pinnington as part of the Local First initiative. Under the Local First initiative, Peace Direct researched practical approaches and partnership models that can be used by international organisations to work in a way that allows local people to lead their own development.

Hungry for peace: positives and pitfalls of local truces and ceasefires in Syria

"While they can prove problematic in some areas, and have been co-opted as part of the government's starvation and surrender policy, or used as a military tactic by other forces, local agreements have often delivered tangible improvements on the ground that the top level talks singularly failed to do."

Hungry for peace, from the LSE and Syrian NGO Madani, presents an in-depth analysis of examples of grassroots peacebuilding in Syria that have led to local ceasefires and pockets of peace. The research looks at the motives behind such peace deals and the key factors that lead to their success or failure.

Civil society speaking out: agendas for a sustainable peace in Colombia

"In order to build a sustainable peace, it is essential to involve those that have suffered the impact of the conflict in the peace-building process. For this an enabling environment needs to be created – an environment where participative democracy and human rights are respected and promoted."
Civil society speaking out, from ABColombia, looks at how civil society in Colombia is contributing to the peace process. The paper stresses the importance of recognising the vital role that civil society plays in building sustainable peace.

Learning from governance initiatives for conflict resolution: local agency, inclusive dialogue and developmentality

Many elements of such initiatives are less than ideal and do not lead to the ultimate objective of helping to resolve the conflict. In some cases, they may actually have created more tension than existed before.

Learning from governance initiatives for conflict resolution, from the Berghof Foundation, draws on a series of case studies from diverse conflict environments to examine the use of governance initiatives for conflict resolution. The paper is critical of these initiatives for often failing to acknowledge local capacity, having poor-quality dialogue among stakeholders, and pursuing a goal of pacification instead of peacebuilding.

Conflict, climate and environment

With the post 2015 Development Agenda fast approaching, the rationale for exploring the relationship between conflict, climate and environment has never been more urgent.

Conflict, climate and environment, from International Alert and the Overseas Development Institute, serves as a guide to the relationships between conflict and the environment. The publication provides an in-depth introduction to the key issues, debates and latest thinking.

From the blog

Picturing peace: using photography in conflict transformation

By Tim Bidey: The relationship between storytelling, photography and peacebuilding, and the use of exhibitions as a peacebuilding mechanism for divided communities. Read more »

That sinking feeling in Somalia? The trouble with NGOs in the Horn of Africa

By Abdiwahab M. Ali: With international aid money flowing into the Horn of Africa, and the potential for corruption increasing, how are local NGOs affected? Read more »

Building peace or a fragile future? The legacy of conflict in the Cote d’Ivoire

By Daniel Ozoukou: Daniel Ozoukou reports on a worrying lack of progress in reconciling the supporters of the two men who have dominated Ivorian politics for the last 10 years. Read more »

Politics, protest, peace: preparing for elections in Burkina Faso
By Boris Somé: Boris Somé discusses an initiative being developed to ensure a peaceful general election in Burkina Faso next year. Read more »

Peace from within

By Dr Karambu Ringera: Dr Karambu Ringera discusses how an innovative organisation is helping to build peace, one person at a time. Read more »

Consolidating social cohesion through community development in Rwanda

By Jean de Dieu Basabose: Jean de Dieu Basabose, Peace Direct's Local Correspondent for Rwanda, looks at how small scale saving and loans associations are contributing to peace in Rwanda. Read more »

Challenging impunity: the struggle to tackle gender-based violence in Kenya

By Claire Mc Evoy: Claire Mc Evoy discusses the struggle to secure justice for survivors of sexual violence in Kenya. Read more »

Kenya calling: into the Horn and beyond

By Kevin McCann: Kevin McCann introduces Insight on Conflict's new section on Kenya. Read more »

Peacebuilding come undone? Al Shabaab and the perils of Kenya's early devolution

By Jeremy Lind: Jeremy Lind discusses the problems and opportunities that devolution presents for solving political conflict in Kenya. Read more »

Committed to peace or creating further conflict? The case of Kenya's local peacebuilding committees

By Louise Khabure: Louise Khabure discusses Local Peace Committees in Kenya. Read more »
A corridor of opportunity? The LAPSSET project in local context

By Kisuke Ndiku: The LAPSSET infrastructure project could bring huge opportunities for Kenya and the region, but only if proper efforts are made to engage local communities. Read more »

Taking the high road

By Khamis Cosmas: Khamis Cosmas reports on a march for peace in South Sudan. Read more »

Two conflicts, one problem: finding new solutions to old wars

By Kirthi Jayakumar: Kirthi Jayakumar on the action taken by two different women in a very similar position. Read more »

The Insight on Conflict newsletter

Keep up to date with the latest peacebuilding research, funding opportunities, and posts from the blog with our monthly newsletters.

Email address

Sign up

January 2015

This month’s newsletter features articles on local initiatives in Syria, civil society in Colombia, and more. Read more »

Conflict areas

Africa: Burkina Faso · Burundi · Central African Republic · DR Congo · Ivory Coast · Kenya · Liberia · Mali · Niger · Nigeria · Rwanda · Somalia · Somaliland · Sudan · South Sudan · Uganda

Themes

Conflict prevention · Culture / media / advocacy · DDR · Development · Gender / women · Health / counselling · Peace education · Reconciliation · Environment

Resources

About Insight on Conflict · Tomorrow's Peacebuilders · Submit your organisation · Peacebuilder bulletin · Local First · How to choose a local partner · From local to...