

CSO WORKSHOP ON PEACEBUILDING & STATEBUILDING & ENGAGEMENT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE - Nairobi 28-30 March 2012.

REPORT.

I. BACKGROUND.

Members of civil society from various countries met in Nairobi on 28-30 November to discuss peacebuilding and statebuilding in what are often referred to as ‘fragile and conflict affected states’. The initiative to organise this workshop came from civil society engagement with the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) in 2010-2011. Yet the workshop was not designed with exclusive reference to this international policy process.

II. OBJECTIVES.

The objectives of the workshop were threefold:

1. Raise or deepen the awareness about the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, particularly among CSOs in fragile and conflict-affected states;
2. Explore how peacebuilding and statebuilding play out in a variety of fragile and conflict affected countries, and what role civil society may be playing in that regard;
3. Identify how civil society, particularly that from fragile and conflict affected states, can strengthen its role and engagement with the challenges of peacebuilding and statebuilding in specific countries and perhaps regionally/internationally, and how it can strengthen and broaden its engagement with the global IDPS process post- Busan.

The agenda for the 2.5 day workshop was structured accordingly. The afternoon of Wednesday 28 March was devoted to providing participants with more information about the International Dialogue and the engagement of civil society with it in 2010-11; on Thursday 29 March participants spent the whole day in small groups, exchanging country experience, with only occasional reference to the IDPS; on Friday 30 March, we considered what next steps we might take to take this agenda to other civil society organisations that could not be present in the workshop, and then to take forward collaborative actions around the broad topic of peacebuilding and statebuilding in general, and collaborative engagement with the IDPS in particular. The workshop took place in French and in English.

III. SOME SUBSTANTIVE ATTENTION POINTS.

- **Fragility:** Civil society expressed similar reservations about the frequent use of the word ‘fragility’ as their governments, including governments that are part of the g7+. The concept is intellectually vague, and seen as politically sensitive because stigmatising. There was a strong feeling that it is better to focus on ‘resilience’ (although that concept also needs to be intellectually clarified).

- ***Legitimate politics:*** This concept was also seen as problematic, a reaction that has also come from state sources. It is not clear why the IDPS changed from ‘political dialogue’ – a term that participants felt to be more straightforward and acceptable- to ‘legitimate politics’. The latter raises the question of what the standards are to consider politics ‘legitimate’, and whose judgment counts.
- ***The correlation between peacebuilding and statebuilding:*** Participants acknowledged a correlation between peacebuilding and statebuilding, but also that this is a complex relationship with reciprocal influence. Sustained peace may not be achieved without a functioning state that is serving the public good, while building such state may not be possible without real peacebuilding efforts. The International Dialogue has tended to focus primarily on ‘statebuilding’ and assumed that ‘peace’ would be the automatic outflow of a better functioning state. Yet the critical questions are what state is being built and whose state it will be. The various country experiences also underlined the need to consider the peace- & statebuilding dynamic in very a very contextual manner. The absence of any state in large parts of Somalia can mean there is a very strong desire to see a re-establishment of a state, with less immediate concern about its nature. The situation may be different in e.g. the Democratic Republic of Congo, which experienced years of control of the state by an authoritarian ruler and kleptocratic elite. It will again be different in e.g. South Sudan or Timor Leste which can now build their own states (and societies) after years of armed resistance against a power perceived as ‘foreign’. Attention was also drawn to the issue of ‘nation’, a sense of collective national identity that is stronger than smaller group identities, and that is present in some countries (e.g. DRC) and less so perhaps in others (e.g. Liberia).
- ***Civil society environment and capacities:*** Many participants provided examples to underscore the value of civil society developing thematic/topical expertise. That puts them in a position to make constructive proposals, which can change the relationship with state authorities and eventually even lead to the latter consciously seeking out expertise from civil society. There were also examples of civil society taking an active self-regulatory role, be it in engaging with the authorities to develop a legal framework that is appropriate to the times and to the nature and roles of civil society, but also in setting certain standards for civil society organisations, to reduce the internal competition and increase public confidence.

Many more substantive issues were discussed on the 2nd day of the workshop. These exchanges will be captured later in a *separate report*.

V. OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS.

a. Scope for collaborative action.

There are three major ***areas for potential collaborative civil society action*** around peacebuilding and statebuilding:

- ➡ In country, with or without reference to the International Dialogue, even if the country is not part of the g7+ or one of the pilot countries;

- ➔ ‘Cross-border’ (regional/international), again with or without reference to the Int. Dialogue;
- ➔ CSO engagement with the global process of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. We understand that this process provides certain opportunities, but also has its demonstrated limitations. Our CSO work around peacebuilding and statebuilding should not be constrained by the limitations of the Int. Dialogue.

Engagement in these domains is not exclusive, but different civil society organisations may prefer to work in different domains of possible action.

b. The substantive area of interest for civil society.

We agreed that our *primary agenda (or overall ‘framework’) is ‘peacebuilding and statebuilding’*. These are challenges and conversations that are older than the International Dialogue, and may outlive that formal policy process. It also extends to countries that are not part of the ‘g7+’, is broader than the question of ‘aid effectiveness in fragile and conflict affected countries’, and may cover other concerns not paid attention to in the International Dialogue.

We also agreed that the value added by the International Dialogue cannot be reduced to the ‘New Deal’. The central focus of the New Deal document is that of the aid relationship. For those of us with a broader interest in peacebuilding and statebuilding, the *Dili Declaration and the Monrovia Roadmap* are equally central documents of reference. We remain aware that many commitments ultimately remain on paper.

In future we will need to sit together to see how this thematic focus and potential CSO collaboration connects to the work done by the Open Forum on Aid Effectiveness and Better Aid.

c. Provisional focal points.

Various participants at the workshop already agreed to be the *provisional focal points for their countries, for the time being*. Criteria will be developed to help identify a smaller number out the total number of focal points to actively complement the CSO engagement with the International Dialogue which so far has not had enough presence and participation of ‘southern civil society’.

It will be critical to *avoid the trap of civil society rivalry and competition* around an issue that is of vital strategic importance to the populations in so many countries: sustained peace and an inclusive and effective state that protects and promotes people’s rights. Therefore we should be clear *what ‘provisional focal point’ means and does not mean:*

- Participants at the Nairobi workshop who are *not* ‘provisional focal points’ are encouraged to *also* disseminate information and to identify and mobilise other interested civil society organisations and even sections of the population (citizens), and to explore possibilities for collaboration;
- As ‘provisional focal points’ all of us have the responsibility to act in an inclusive manner and to try and forge collaboration and consensus building;
- Focal points are the primary points of contact for communications and conversations particularly about civil society engagement with the International Dialogue. They themselves should be acting as catalysts and crossroads for information flows, to bring in other voices and actors.

- Nobody at the Nairobi workshop had the authority or mandate to designate a participants as the ‘leader’ or ‘representative’ of civil society in a given country or region. Our aim is to develop truly collaborative ways of working. That that effect we need to gain the respect and support of our many colleagues, by demonstrating our commitment, competency, integrity, inclusiveness and ability to listen to all.
- Being a focal point does not automatically imply that one is best positioned, individually or institutionally, to take part in each and every aspect of the International Dialogue. Often others will be the most appropriate choice to take CSO views into that policy debate.
- As more CSOs become informed about the International Dialogue, and mobilise around peacebuilding and statebuilding, the in-country forms of collaboration may evolve. We hope to see the emergency of very open and inclusive spaces, for debate, consensus building and collaboration. It is critical that we demonstrate the values that we expect from the state authorities: inclusiveness, concern for the common good, fairness, balance, a readiness to listen, responsiveness, accountability.

d. One civil society.

The suggestion to have a grouping of ‘g7+ civil society’ was considered but not deemed appropriate. It would mirror the sometimes unhelpful division and dynamics in the International Dialogue between ‘aid donor governments’ and ‘aid recipient governments’, and presumably force the ‘northern CSOs’ to align with the ‘aid donors’ – which is not their desire. Although there is recognition of the sometimes ambiguous and problematic relationship between ‘northern’ and ‘southern’ civil society, it was agreed that the *commonalities of our concerns, positions and efforts* far outweigh our differences. When broadening out this conversation, we may find other CSOs having a different view on this. This conversation may not yet be concluded.

e. In country-next steps.

All those present in the Nairobi workshop are expected to *provide information and identify other interested organisations or civil society networks* in their respective countries. To this end, they will be provided with the contact details of all those who expressed interest but could not be sponsored for the Nairobi event.

They will also have to be provided with the names of those government officials that have been active in the International Dialogue, as part of the g7+. It will be strategically important to explore the space and opportunities for constructive civil society-state collaboration around peacebuilding and statebuilding.

Fairly large numbers of expressions of interest to participate in the Nairobi workshop came from the DR Congo, Burundi and Kenya-based individuals/organisations. It might be fairly cost-effective in these countries to organise a follow-up event, that brings those (and others interested) together for the sharing of information, but possibly also an initial collective reflection. If needed, individuals very familiar with the International Dialogue and/or with the international policy research and debate on statebuilding and peacebuilding, could be invited to support such event as resource persons.

One possible follow-up action may be the translation of core IDPS documents into one or more national languages. It was also suggested to use the national/local media to disseminate information about the International Dialogue, and especially state commitments and plans for and progress in ‘implementation’. Future CSO engagement may be in the ‘resilience and fragility assessment’ (baseline) and the ‘monitoring of progress towards the five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals. Another future CSO action might be the production of ‘shadow reports’ to complement the official state reporting on the ‘New Deal implementation’.

But in-country CSO collaboration need not be limited to and shaped by the agenda, schedule and interests of the Int. Dialogue, although it can seek to draw value from it and use the opportunities it can offer.

f. Cross-border regional/international collaborative action.

There was recognition that although there are now well established regional/international civil society networks around many topics, there is a relative vacuum on the issues of ‘peacebuilding and statebuilding – resilience and fragility with regard to violence’. (Some networks such as PREGESCO in francophone Central Africa however do have ‘conflict’ as a central theme).

It was recognised that we should not start designing new collaborative CSO ‘structures’, while we still have no clear agenda. The premature creation of ‘formal structures’ also risks leading to a competition for positions. For a while to come then, it seems appropriate to pursue a more ‘organic’ development of CSO collaboration around these themes. Such regional / international cooperation need not be shaped by the agenda, schedule and interests of the Int. Dialogue, although it can seek to draw value from it and use the opportunities it can offer.

There are various existing regional / international civil society networks that could provide a channel for collaborative work on these challenges of conflict and peace, statebuilding and peacebuilding, in the form of e.g. exchanges for learning, but potentially also collaborative action (e.g. towards regional state structures).

Many existing networks however may have a different mission and an already full work plan and cannot take this agenda on or would provide thematic expertise on a component of it (e.g. an international network on natural resource management). Others are ‘structures’ for generic civil society engagement with state or inter-state bodies, without any thematic focus. These too may not be the most effective for our purposes.

Participants therefore will have to *assess and evaluate existing networks*, their focus, governance, capacity, efficiency, inclusiveness, transparency and effectiveness.

g. CSO Engagement with the International Dialogue.

There is a clear *opening and opportunity for stronger CSO engagement* with the International Dialogue, particularly civil society from fragile and conflict affected countries. So far, the possible organisation of such CSO engagement has been speculated upon by non-CSO partners, and taken different shapes:

- ➡ The IDPS selects: The IDPS secretariat sends out a call for applications from civil society organisations/networks on behalf of the Co-Chairs and the Steering Group. This call goes out to a

wide range of organisations that have been previously identified, but will also be made public on the IDPS website. The selection will be based on a set of criteria (legal status, governance and democratic decision-making, broad geographical representation, interest, specific expertise and experience. Members in the Int. Dialogue can make recommendations; the Steering Group makes the final decision (Steering Committee meeting in Paris on 19 January 2012);

- ➔ CSOs form according to a suggested pyramid structure: At the top, two to four very senior CSO individuals, balanced between North and South, will be the interlocutors for the IDPS at the level of the Co-Chairs (of Ministerial level) and the Steering Group. In the middle, a team of perhaps up to 10 CSO people who mix coordinating and facilitating roles with technical/thematic expertise. Then there can be a wider ‘CSO network/constituency’ that offers information, ideas and suggestions, but several of which can also be active at the country level. At country level, they can interact directly with their national governments, while they would go through the coordinating team for engagement with the global IDPS process (g7+ meeting in New York in February 2012);
- ➔ Southern CSOs form a ‘g7+ civil society’ group. It is not clear how they would engage then in the global IDPS process – with their respective governments or via a ‘CSO structure’, nor what format for engagement of ‘northern CSOs’ there then would be?

Admittedly, the IDPS Secretariat has been asking CSOs to come up with their own proposed structure(s) for engagement. That valid and positive request could not however be realised until we could have a serious consultation. Such could not happen by email alone, so it required funding. That (initial) consultation has now happened in Nairobi. It would have been unrealistic to believe that in a 2.5 day meeting we could hammer out a detailed proposal. We needed time to deepen our understanding of the International Dialogue, and to explore our respective experiences with peacebuilding and statebuilding issues in our countries. We also need now to consult further with CSO colleagues in our own countries.

The next moments to explore the shaping of broader CSO engagement with this high level policy process, are the *World Bank/IMF Spring meeting in Washington D.C. in April 20-22*. The World Bank Institute has agreed to sponsor Tolbert Thomas Jallah’s presence at that event, to complement some other CSO people.

There is potential interest from donors to financially support CSO engagement with the International Dialogue. The Danish, Dutch and British would welcome an *initial ‘concept paper’*, and the World Bank might also come up with some funding later in 2012. Such concept paper needs to be developed in the next few weeks now that donor interest is active. It may base itself on the model for CSO engagement with a global process as was the case in 2011, but might include funding for a periodic Nairobi-type gathering of regional/global civil society.

Inevitably there will be a transition period from the current ‘core group’ of largely northern CSOs, to a new and broadened CSO engagement that has much stronger southern CSO presence and backing. An immediate critical issue is maintaining the information and coordination role that Interpeace cannot sustain after Easter. It is now also imperative that all communications are *bilingual* (English & French).

There seems an obvious value in a *dedicated website or webpage*, which would provide regular information on the IDPS, but potentially can also develop a resource library (multi-lingual) with documents (and e.g. videoclips) relevant to peacebuilding and statebuilding policy and practice.

h. Level of Interest.

If the quantity of expressions of interest to participate in the Nairobi workshop is anything to go by, then the topic of ‘peacebuilding and statebuilding’ seems to have resonated very strongly in civil society circles in many countries. Those who could participate also did so with great interest and expressed strong commitment to take this further.

While some had already drafted a *‘declaration’* (in line with the Int. Dialogue habits, this might have been called the “Masai Lodge Manifest” -sic), expressing a clear commitment to specific further steps, others felt this was a bit too quick. Better to first share more widely the information and have some further consultations and reflection, so that we are clearer about what we can and may wish to do and how, before issuing a public statement. A possible target time for such might be the International Dialogue *Steering Committee meeting in Guinea Bissau in May.*



ANNEX: FUNDING AND ORGANISATION OF THE WORKSHOP.

The workshop was an initiative of *ad hoc group of civil society organisations* that had been either already very actively engaged in the International Dialogue prior to the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan (Dec. 2011), or that had joined in with the former after Busan.¹

This workshop was made *financially* possible by DFID and by voluntary contributions from civil society organisations. Approximately half of the actual expenditure is covered by the remainder of a DFID grant for CSO engagement with the International Dialogue in 2011. The other half comes from voluntary contributions (financially but sometimes also in-kind as staff time), notably from Cordaid (Netherlands), Saferworld (UK), Conciliation Resources (UK), International Alert (UK) and the Open Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Brussels), the African CSO Platform for Principled Partnerships (Nairobi-based) and Interpeace. World Vision and TIRI each covered the expenses of one colleague, originally from a conflict affected country.

The total organisation of the workshop had to take place *in a good 4 weeks*, between 23 February when

we got the approval from DFID the grant remainder could be used for this purpose, and the start of the event on 28 March (as the DFID grant has to be spent by the end of its financial year i.e. 31 March). Most of the organisational preparations were handled by the African CSO Platform for Principled Partnerships and Interpeace, but colleagues from Cordaid, Open Forum, TIRI (UK), International Alert, Saferworld, the Alliance for Peacebuilding (USA) and the Dalia Association (Palestine) also helped out with various tasks.

THE g7+ GROUP.

The 'g7+' group is a voluntary association of the governments of 19 currently fragile and conflict affected countries, notably Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Nepal, Somalia, Burundi, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Ethiopia, Togo, Haiti, and the seven 'piloting countries' Afghanistan, Timor Leste, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Liberia & Sierra Leone.

The g7+ group emerged in the context of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. Not all 19 governments have been equally actively engaged with this Int. Dialogue so far.

We received about 130 expressions of interest to participate, almost all of whom requested financial support.

The difficult *selection* took into account a variety of criteria: Priority would be given to people coming from or based in countries that are part of the 'g7+' group of fragile and conflict affected states, and within that especially those from the 7 countries that have volunteered to test the implementation of the

¹ This ad hoc group consisted of: African CSO Platform for Principled Partnerships (Paul Okumu); Alliance for Peacebuilding (Melanie Greenberg); CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (Dayna Brown); Conciliation Resources (Sophie Haspeslagh); Cordaid (Izabella Toth, François Lenfant); Dalia Association in Palestine (Nora Lester Murad); Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (Peter van Tuijl); International Alert (Sarah Batmanglich, Phil Vernon); Interpeace (Graeme Simpson, Koenraad Van Brabant), North-South Institute (Jennifer Salahub); Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness (Amy Bartlett); Saferworld (Larry Attree, Sébastien Babaud); TIRI (Claire Schouten), West Africa Network for Peace (Emmanuel Bombande); World Vision (Randy Tift).

New Deal (Afghanistan, Timor Leste, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo). By and large we sought to have 2 participants per country here. Initially we had one participant from Afghanistan confirmed, but sadly he had to withdraw because of other issues demanding his attention. Given the size of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the fairly different ‘realities’ in various parts of it, we increased the number of DRC participants to 4, 2 coming from Kinshasa and 2 from the eastern parts. Given the relatively different dynamics in the various Somali regions (unfortunately we did not get any expressions of interest from Somaliland) we also had 3 rather than 2 Somali participants. We added one person from Zimbabwe and one from Nigeria, because peace- and statebuilding questions were deemed relevant to these countries and because we could do so at little cost (the Nigerian participant already being in Kenya). Several though not all of the participants also belong to existing networks, another criterion. Finally we also had 4 people that are Kenya based, all of which however belong to regional or international networks. Various participants have been involved with the Better Aid and/or the Open Forum on Aid Effectiveness processes in the run-up to Busan. We are aware that some very qualified organisations/individuals could not participate in this workshop because of the inevitable limitations.

In the end our budget allowed us to partially or fully sponsor 32 participants from ‘southern’ civil society. Another 7 participants came from ‘northern’ civil society. While we had a great diversity of participants from relevant countries (see annex), the obvious and glaring weakness was *gender balance*.

Those who could not be sponsored (or accommodated) were informed that this did not mean they would be unable to participate and contribute in future processes. They were already sent links to relevant reading, will receive this report, and should be engaged in the next steps after the Nairobi event.

	Name / Nom	Organisations	Based in /base à
1	Shiva Hari Dalal	National Peace Campaign	Nepal
2	Bishnu Pukar Shrestha	Campaign for Human Rights and Social Transformation	Nepal
3	Domingos Ati	NGO Forum Timor Leste	Timor Leste
4	Harold Aidoo	Liberia Democratic Institute	Liberia
5	Lancedell Jehu Mathews	New African Research and Dev. Agency	Liberia
6	Rodolphe Devaux-Yanganda	ACDD GERDDES & PREGESCO networks	Central African Rep.
7	Julius Woli	Generation Agency for Development and Transformation	South Sudan
8	Mathew Pagan Daniel Padiet	Justice and Peace Commission - Malakal	South Sudan
9	Ibrahima Seck	CECIDE	Guinea Conakry
10	Rita Nyampinga(f)	Gender and Economic Alternatives Trust	Zimbabwe
11	Georges Tshiona Mata	Renforcements Capacités OSC & PREGESCO	DRC (Kinshasa)
12	Irène Esambo Diata (f)	Centre Etudes Justice et Résol. 1325	DRC (Kinshasa)
13	Monique Nagaralbaye Mayala (f)	PREGESCO	Tchad
14	Diakalia Ouattara	Forum National sur la Dette et la Pauvreté	Ivory Coast
15	Julien Tingain Kouadio	Social Justice	Ivory Coast
16	Noor Mohamed Noor	Puntland Non-State Actors Association	Puntland
17	Theophilus Ekpon	National Peace Summit Group	Nigeria (in Kenya at moment)
18	Blaise Gahungu	Biraturaba	Burundi
19	Evariste Ngendakumana	Réseau Femmes et Paix	Burundi
20	Aho Tete Benissan	Réseau des Plateformes Nationales d'ONGs d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre	Sénégal
21	Tolbert Thomas Jallah	Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in West Africa	Togo
22	Hassan Ahmed Sadik	Somalia South Central Non State Actors	Somalia (Mogadisho)
23.	Henri Bura Ladyi	Centre Résolution Conflit	DRC (east)
24	Randolph Katta	The 50/50 Group of Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
25	Hussein Jimaale	Center for Research and Development	Somalia (Mogadisho.)
26	Aloys Tegera	Pole Institute	DRC (Goma)
27	Leonie Abela Sendegeya (f)	ACORD Int.	Kenya
28	Solomon Gichira	All Africa Conference of Churches	Kenya

29	Roy Anunciacion	People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty	Kenya
30	Paul Okumu	ACPPP	Kenya
31	Fred Goba	World Vision Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
32	Larry Attree	Saferworld	UK
33	Phil Vernon	Int. Alert	UK
34	Graeme Simpson	Interpeace	USA
35	Koenraad Van Brabant	Interpeace	Switzerland
36	François Lenfant	Cordaid	Netherlands
37	Darynell Rodriguez Torres	GPACC	Netherlands
38	Patrick Rafolisy	TIRI	Kenya
39	Paul van Tongeren	Independent / Infrastructures for Peace	Netherlands