

**To the Co-Chairs and the Steering Committee
of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. 10 February 2012.**

We welcome the work of the Steering Committee, Co-Chairs and Secretariat that has given rise to already very solid drafts of a 'Strategic Vision and Work Programme 2012' and 'Terms of Reference for the Steering Group'. Following are our comments and recommendations on these drafts that we believe can strengthen them, before they go out for wider consultation. These comments and suggestions are derived from a consultative process among various civil society organisations.

I. THE VISION.

There are *two components to the vision* as articulated in the draft.

- a) Ongoing work around the achievements of the IDPS pre-Busan, such as the promotion of the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, further work on FOCUS and TRUST parts of the New Deal, developing guidance for their application and progress indicators.
- b) Providing a neutral forum for discussion, learning and innovation, bringing together past and new stakeholders to share experiences, and to find solutions for the specific challenges associated with conflict and fragility, including and beyond those addressed by the 'New Deal'.

Civil society supports the two components of the vision. It should be recognized however that the second component did/could not receive enough attention and time in 2011. Post-Busan the IDPS should grasp the opportunity to also turn itself into a central platform for collaborative learning on how to most effectively deal with 'fragility' and 'conflict' beyond improving aid (footnote 2 of the draft document).

Recommendation: Both dimensions of the vision have to be reflected in the work plan. At the moment the draft work plan remains primarily oriented towards the first part of the vision.

II. THE WORKPLAN.

We see and recommend the following major clusters of work for the IDPS post-Busan:

1. Dissemination and Promotion.

There are three major strands in these, which require somewhat different approaches and actions:

- a) Dissemination and explanation of *all* the formal Declarations of the IDPS notably in the countries that are part of the g7+. This includes the Dili Declaration and the Monrovia Roadmap. This is a strategic priority. The Int. Dialogue and its Declarations are largely unknown, not only among civil society and among people in g7+ countries, but also in sections of central and local government, among parliamentarians, the media etc. Local representatives of aid providing countries are generally equally unaware. This will require dedicated dissemination and explanation effort that civil society participants will actively contribute to.

Please note that *civil society participants hold in particular the 'g7+ Statement' (Annex to the Dili Declaration of April 2010) to be as important a reference as the 'New Deal'*.

b) Dissemination, explanation and promotion in international fora: of *all* the Declarations of the IDPS. We believe that this will be a difficult and challenging undertaking that will take much time. We believe that prioritizing our efforts in the pilot countries may provide us with a much stronger case to convince the skeptics that the agreements and modus operandi proposed through IDPS work, can and do make a difference.

c) The post-MDG framework: Inclusion of the PSGs. Civil society participants are fully supportive of efforts to ensure that issues of conflict, violence, fragility, justice etc. are integrated in a post-MDG framework.

2. From 'fragility' to 'resilience' / FOCUS.

Recommendation: The '**fragility assessment**' should be the starting point and therefore a primary area of work in 2012, for the piloting countries and for the global IDPS work. We recommend that this be handled as a 'fragility & resilience assessment', from the tested conviction that there are always factors of resilience that can be built upon.

Further work on a 'fragility spectrum' and on 'progress indicators' can fit under this cluster of work. So can other components of FOCUS, such as visioning, planning, compact and political dialogue and leadership can be fitted under this cluster – with perhaps a sub-group working on 'fragility and resilience' assessments.

Rationale: Pre-Busan the IDPS has agreed on peace and statebuilding goals, and has started working on identifying 'progress indicators'. But so far it has not examined what makes a country 'fragile' and what makes a country 'resilient'. The IDPS is currently working on the assumption that 'fragility' is primarily the condition of low progress against the five peace and statebuilding goals. That may not be entirely correct. The IDPS has therefore also proceeded on the assumption that the nature, scope and reasons for 'fragility' are generally the same in the different countries so labeled. This may not be the case. If this is not the case, even if major milestones would be similar, the country-specific trajectories (and time frames) to progress towards the peace- and statebuilding goals may also not be identical. In other words, a generic fragility spectrum does not provide strategic guidance on how to make progress in very specific (and different) contexts.

Work on these issues at the global level can support and be enriched by the practical experiences in the pilot countries.

3. TRUST.

Recommendation: This can be another overarching cluster of work. Within TRUST, there appear to be three major strands of work which could be taken up by sub-groups:

a) Timely, predictable and transparent aid & country systems.

b) Strengthen capacities: This should not just focus on capacities for revenue raising and financial management, but also on other critical capacities such as inclusive political dialogue and legitimate politics, capacities for constructive dispute and conflict management, and capacities for constructive state-society interaction. This concerns capacities in the state and non-state sectors and includes an enabling environment for non-state actors.

c) Risks assessment and joint risk management: This too will be a critical area that merits more dedicated attention.

Here again work at the global IDPS level can support and be enriched by the experiences in the pilot countries.

4. Peacebuilding and Statebuilding.

Pre-Busan the IDPS has tilted more towards 'statebuilding' (resources and capacities) than towards 'peacebuilding', and there is an untested assumption that 'statebuilding' equates with 'peacebuilding'. There is however a vast amount of high quality work and debate on peacebuilding and statebuilding, that the IDPS has not drawn upon. Hence the value of a ***dedicated learning space*** on this.

III. THE PROCESS.

We recommend that the Steering Committee and the Secretariat proactively respond to the broadly perceived concerns about the process pre-Busan, an important one of which is acknowledged in the minutes of the 19 January Steering Group meeting.

a) A platform for real dialogue: The Steering Committee meeting on 19 Jan in Paris acknowledged sensitivities around a modus operandi on the basis of 'caucuses'. There are understandable reasons for why this happens, but it cannot be the sole or predominant modus operandi of the IDPS post-Busan. If the IDPS post-Busan wants to be also a process and a platform to build collaborative relations and 'trust', all the more so if it wants to bring in other stakeholders that are neither part of 'INCAF' nor of the 'g7+', then ***its normal modus operandi has to be multi-stakeholder collaborative work*** (all on equal basis and not in tiers).

b) Enabling meaningful and effective multi-stakeholder participation: Pre-Busan the IDPS in its work and meetings was very much geared to the production of documents, within extremely tight time frames. The resulting success in productivity came however at the cost of broad participation, awareness and buy-in. Civil society, INCAF and g7+ participants were typically unable to consult effectively with colleagues and within their constituencies, against these tight timeframes. Neither did such process allow much time for genuine 'dialogue', dialogue that also contributes to learning and builds relationships and trust. We hold that ***process is as important as output***, and recommends a better balance between both post-Busan.

Post-Busan, there is much greater interest in the IDPS and more entities want to be informed and contribute. The IDPS now has to operate in ways that enable greater participation. We also recommend

that the IDPS create a *separate website/portal* where not only its official documents but also all working documents are grouped and can be easily accessed. If deemed necessary, access can be password controlled.

IV. THE GOVERNANCE.

The modalities of ‘governance’ and the required secretariat support need to flow from the vision, work plan and intended modus operandi. They also need to be consistent with the spectrum of participants in the IDPS post-Busan, and the core messages it seeks to promote.

1. Participant Status.

Pre-Busan, the IDPS has operated with a two-tier status of ‘participants’. States could be ‘members’, while multilateral organisations and civil society were second-tier ‘participants’. The ‘members’ were either part of the INCAF or the g7+ grouping. Post-Busan, the IDPS wants to bring in other stakeholders, some of which may be states that are not part of INCAF nor of the g7+, but also more multilaterals and possibly private sector actors. Clarity has to exist from the outside about the terms of participation. ***Will the IDPS remain an INCAF-g7+ dialogue, be a wider inter-state dialogue or a multi-stakeholder dialogue?***

The answer to that question is also closely linked to the question whether the IDPS is really a platform for work and dialogue about aid and aid flows to fragile and conflict-affected states, or a platform for ***work and dialogue about conflict, peacebuilding and statebuilding?***

The question is also relevant with regard to the coherence between what the IDPS promotes and how it operates. The IDPS promotes constructive collaborative relationships between governments and societies, and between international assistance providers and recipients of such assistance. It therefore needs a structure and a modus operandi that encourages the honest dialogue, better and collaborative relationships and greater trust we together seek to achieve and promote.

2. Composition & Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee.

Composition: The Steering Committee should be neither too small nor too big. We agree with the principle of overall balance between developing countries and development partners, and a regional balance. But we recommend that these general criteria be expanded to ***include ‘meaningful presence’ of ‘society/civil society’***, which itself needs to have good balances regionally and between developing and developed countries.

Responsibilities: We recommend that the following be ***added*** to the responsibilities of the SC

- Complementary efforts to raise resources for the work of the IDPS;
- Oversight over the quality of the ‘process’ to enable meaningful participation and ‘dialogue’ in the IDPS;
- Oversight over the transparency and accountability of the decision-making processes in the IDPS. Pre-Busan it has often been unclear who actually decided and on what grounds, or why

certain recommendations and suggestions were accepted and others not. Decisions can and must be taken – but the decision making process, by the Co-Chairs and/or the Steering Committee has to be much more transparent and accountable.

V. CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE IDPS.

We are willing and eager to continue being a constructive and responsible partner in the IDPS endeavours, at global and country levels. Post-Busan there is now much wider and much stronger CSO interest to engage with and **contribute in a structural manner:** to the working groups, in the piloting countries and in the governance. We are well aware that it is very important to have broader and deeper engagement of civil society organisations particularly from g7+ countries.

The more active involvement of larger numbers of civil society organisations around work in different locations, poses greater challenges for effective ‘CSO engagement’ with the IDPS than pre-Busan. To achieve this we will need three **enabling factors:**

- ➡ To be accepted in the IDPS as a genuine and equal ‘development’ or ‘resilience’ partner – in line with the Busan Partnership document and with the many references to state-society relations in the IDPS documents;
- ➡ More resources to enable effective consultation and collaboration among civil society organisations, and for civil society engagement in the IDPS.
- ➡ Structures and mechanisms of CSO collaboration and coordination which are both effective and legitimate.

Interim arrangements for interaction with civil society: There is at the moment an already larger core group of CSOs engaging around the IDPS. We want to broaden and deepen civil society involvement, and are looking at practical ways to achieve this. Between now and end March 2012, we request that our IDPS partners and the IDPS Secretariat maintains structured communication with civil society through a quintet of people, who will act for the next few weeks as *point people for the core group*. These are

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