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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 Program
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

Over the last decade, the role of civil society in peacebuilding has increasingly gained recognition. Today the main question in the international debate is no longer “whether” civil society has a role to play in peacebuilding, but “how” civil society can best realize its valuable contributions. What are the roles of various actors? What are critical factors and pre-conditions that have to be in place? How can external actors best provide support? Despite the great interest in the peacebuilding activities of civil society, there exists little (i) systematic analysis on their specific potential, their limitations and critical factors, and (ii) guidance on how to support civil society peacebuilding initiatives, despite indications of significant challenges and doubts about sustainability and impact. 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 and discusses a new analytical framework to understand the functions of civil society in peacebuilding. In theory and practice, there is a wide variety of ways to categorize civil society contributions to development and peacebuilding. Donors tend to employ actor-oriented perspectives, focusing on supporting activities of different types of civil society organizations in a given situation. 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 new forms of civil society engagement in peacebuilding. In particular, it will help clarify policy and programming objectives, select civil society partners and facilitate setting outcome indicators for enhanced monitoring and evaluation.

The analysis shows that civil society can make numerous positive contributions and have unique potential to support peacebuilding and conflict mitigation. It can do so independently as actor in its own right, or in relation to peacebuilding processes and programs led by Governments or the international community. Despite many successful initiatives on the ground, however, civil society should not be considered a panacea. The existence of civil society per se cannot be equated with the existence of peacebuilding actors. Similarly, civil society strengthening and support does not automatically contribute to peacebuilding. While CSOs are frequently actors for peace, they equally have the potential to become 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 particular approaches they propose to engage in different phases of conflict/peacebuilding. Without greater clarity regarding objectives and intended impacts, and, without addressing existing 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 elements of supporting meaningful civil society peace contributions. A solid understanding of the “intermediary chains” and “insider-outsider” partnerships is important.
- Support to civil society peacebuilding needs to be based on a broad conception of civil society that goes beyond NGOs and formally constituted organizations.
- Greater clarity of objectives and intended outcomes of civil society support for peacebuilding can be achieved by referring to the set of seven civil society core functions.

- The programming of civil society support must be built on rigorous analysis (conflict/political analysis; civil society and enabling environment analysis; civil society 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 practiced. Concept and methodology development in this area should receive additional support.
- Further research is required concerning the comparative advantages of various types of civil society organizations, and their contributions in the different conflict phases. Critical success factors need to be better understood. Research should be done in a coordinated manner, 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.

Civil Society and Peacebuilding: Potential, Limitations and Critical Factors

1. Introduction

In numerous armed conflicts, rebellions and civil wars, citizens and civil society groups have shown that they can be more than victims, refugees and mute by-standers. Women in Kashmir organize dialogue across ethnic divides. NGOs document human rights violations in Nepal. International peace brigades protect trade union leaders under threat in Colombia. In Mozambique, a religious community facilitates official peace negotiations. The Inter-Religion Council in Sierra Leone manages to bring warring factions to the negotiation table. A Rwandan peace NGO organizes peace camps and soccer games for mixed Hutu and Tutsi teams. This report looks at these forms of civil society contributions to peacebuilding, and at ways how external support can help strengthen such initiatives.

Civil society's role in conflict-affected countries is now increasingly acknowledged, including at the level of global politics. The latest and most prominent indication is the statement released by the UN Security Council in September 2005 highlighting the comparative advantage of civil society with respect to facilitating dialogue and providing community leadership.¹ A recent UN-Civil Society conference on the role of civil actors in peacebuilding served to further entrench the issue on the international policy agenda.²

Today the main question in the international debate is no longer "whether" civil society has a role to play in peacebuilding, but "how" civil society can best realize its potential. What are the roles of various actors? What are critical factors and pre-conditions? How can external actors best provide support? Despite the great interest in the peacebuilding activities of civil society, there exists little (i) systematic analysis on their specific potential, limitations and critical factors, and (ii) guidance on how to support civil society in peacebuilding processes. 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. Despite countless examples and increasing practice over more than a decade, the discourse of civil society contributions to peacebuilding is still nascent, with codification of knowledge, critical analysis and good practice considerations 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 findings presented in this report are based on four methodological steps. The first was a review of literature pertaining to civil society, peacebuilding and the interactions between the two. The second was the development of an analytical framework to help understand civil society roles in peacebuilding through functional, institutional and enabling environment perspectives. The third was the examination of a set of case examples, which illustrate the seven core functions of civil society peacebuilding and, in addition, identify further lines of intervention. The fourth was the development of key conclusions and recommendations for donor support.

¹ UN Security Council Presidential Statement, S/PRST/2005/42:

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/515/21/PDF/N0551521.pdf?OpenElement>.

² Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, New York, 19-21 July 2005.

Audience

The target audience of this report is the international donor community and international agencies, including international NGOs. The report may equally be of interest to governments and CSOs in conflict-affected countries. The recommendations have been elaborated for donors and external support agencies.

Scope and Limitations

The focus of this report is on independent civil society initiatives that are directly aimed at mitigating conflict and building peace. The analysis aims at a better overall understanding of the issue, clarifies underlying concepts, and develops a new framework of seven civil society functions in peacebuilding. It reviews experience and analyzes the overall strengths, limitations and risks of such approaches. In doing so, the report cannot do justice to the many peacebuilding domains in which civil society is engaged. Furthermore, it does not deal directly with the issue of conflict-sensitive development and the very relevant question of how the peacebuilding capacity of civil society can be brought to bear in the broader development or humanitarian cooperation agenda.

Acknowledgement

This World Bank report follows on the heels of many experienced and highly committed organizations and individuals, who have been leading the work in this area, both in practice and with regard to methodological and theoretical reflections. Most often national and international NGOs have been the innovators, practitioners and leading thinkers in this field. A number of bilateral donors and UN agencies have been instrumental in developing and promoting civil society and its specific contributions. Not least due to its mandate and statutes, the World Bank has so far been engaged only to a limited extent in direct support to civil society for peacebuilding. The World Bank analysis, therefore, relies heavily on the experiences, discussions and analyses of these organizations.

Overview

In addition to this introduction, the report consists of four further chapters:

- *Chapter 2* provides the conceptual underpinnings of the civil society and peacebuilding discourses. It introduces key definitions and reviews key issues and current practice. Its main objective is to provide a sketch of the evolution of civil society roles in peacebuilding, and underline the need for clarifying basic concepts, objectives and approaches.
- *Chapter 3* first introduces a new framework of seven core functions of civil society in peacebuilding, and then briefly illustrates existing civil society initiatives and lines of interventions in each of these. It continues by analyzing how conflict impacts on civil society and its enabling environment, and discusses some of the institutional constraints and distortions that can be observed related to the practice of civil society support.
- *Chapter 4* concludes with key issues and lessons for external support drawn from the analytical and conceptual work and the available literature.
- *Chapter 5* presents a set recommendations targeted primarily at donors and organizations that support civil society peacebuilding.

2. Providing Conceptual Clarity

Both peacebuilding and civil society have assumed a prominent space in public policy debates of the last two decades. In both areas, a substantial discourse and practice have emerged. Today, no-one questions that a vibrant civil society is a critical factor in the pursuit of good governance, democratization and poverty reduction goals. Similarly, the horrendous costs of violent conflict have been tragically demonstrated in numerous countries plagued with civil war, and have been conceptually established.³ The question of civil society's contribution to peacebuilding, however, is a comparatively new and under-researched topic. This chapter provides the conceptual and practice background for exploring civil society and peacebuilding themes. It sketches the increasing involvement of civil society organizations in peacebuilding over the last two decade.

2.1 Civil Society

2.1.1 What is Civil Society?

The concept of civil society remains elusive, complex and contested. There are different meanings and interpretations of the concept 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”.⁴ As a public sphere where citizens and voluntary organizations freely engage, it is distinct from the state, the family and the market. It is, however, closely linked through various forms of cooperation with those spheres, and boundaries may sometimes be difficult to distinguish.

Civil society organizations (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.”⁵ The term goes beyond the narrower (and to many donors, more familiar) category of development-oriented non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and depicts a broad range of organizations, such as community groups, women's association, labor unions, indigenous groups, youth groups, registered charitable organizations, foundations, faith-based organizations, independent media, professional associations, think tanks, independent educational organizations and social movements.

The term **civic engagement** signifies the participation of private actors in the public sphere, conducted through direct and indirect interactions of civil society organizations and citizens with government, business establishments and multilateral institutions 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: 31-180). 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 broader society and the formal political processes. This arena is inhabited by a broad array of very diverse actors, including a range of formal and informal associations,

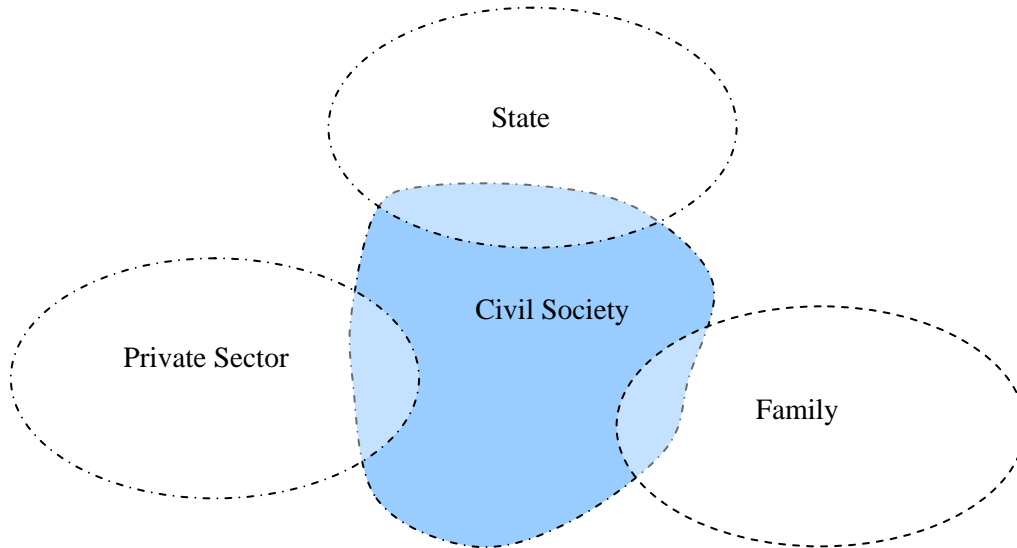
³ See e.g. the DAC Guidelines on “Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation” (OECD 1997) or those on Poverty Reduction (OECD 2001); similarly the policy frameworks of many bilateral donors, e.g. Norway, DFID, Germany.

⁴ The analysis follows the broad definition of the London School of Economics (LSE); see also Merkel/Lauth 1998: 7; and Douma/Klem 2004a: 2.

⁵ See website of World Bank Social Development Department, Participation and Civic Engagement team: <http://worldbank.org/participation>.

organizations and movements. As such, civil society is located between other key societal spheres: the ‘political sphere’ (state apparatus, political parties and parliamentarians), the ‘economic sphere’ (companies and markets) and the ‘private sphere’ (family) (Croissant 2003: 240; Merkel/Lauth 1998: 7). In reality, the boundaries between these theoretical spheres are often blurred and sometimes overlap.⁶

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 instances of collective citizen action. In reality, actors can move from one sphere to another (even inhabit more than one simultaneously), depending on the nature or function of their action. For example, private firms can engage in profit-seeking activities in the market sphere and act within civil society when lobbying for changes in the tax code.

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 of non-profit organizations in society. Third sector or non-profit sector debates tend to center on service delivery, typically asking what kind of services can best be provided by what kind of organization (state, business or non-profit sector). While these terms are often (and sometimes inaccurately) used to connote the similar group of societal actors, their largely “apolitical” focus distinguishes them in a fundamental way from the concept of civil society. Civil society and third sector debates hold different underlying tenets, e.g. regarding the role of the state, and can lead to very different policy prescriptions.

Civil society cannot be analyzed in isolation from the state. CSOs and government are mutually dependent. Although independence from the state is one of civil society’s defining

⁶For example, co-operatives (that have both profit-based and value-based goals) and media outlets are often considered to be on the border between civil society and the market. Para-statals are considered a borderline case between the state and the market. Political parties and members of parliament are sometimes seen as straddling the border between 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: 1).

features, civil society interacts closely with the state and is shaped by parameters and frameworks defined by the state. The state provides legal frameworks, operational regulations, procedures for consultations, and, in some cases, financial resources. Civil society regularly acts as a link between the state and citizens, in promoting specific values, building institutions, producing information and ideas, and building social capital (Huetter 2002). While civil society initiatives and organizations often emerge in situations where state and market fail, they cannot replace state functions and formal political processes (Croissant et al. 2000:17; Merkel/Lauth 1998: 7).

Conflict and state fragility pose specific challenges for civil society. Lack of state capacity to control parts of its territory or to deliver public services frequently prompts civil society to step in to deliver services, distribute emergency relief or support displaced people, often with external assistance. When CSOs are fulfilling functions usually performed by the state, care must be taken to avoid further undermining state capacity. In emergency relief and conflict situations, a critical judgment therefore has to be made as to the allocation and sequencing of external support, i.e., how much and how long to rely on CSO service provision, and how much and when to shift focus towards strengthening the policy and implementation capacity of the state.⁷

Civil society practices and discourses have developed in all regions, but concepts and reality of civil society vary greatly. In *Western Europe* and later *North America*, the concept of civil society initially referred to demands for civil rights by the socio-economic elite in the 19th and 20th century, and, subsequently expanded to encompass collective actions on the part of a broader range of societal actors (women, working classes, farmers, students) and movements (civil rights, peace, environment) seeking to address societal injustices and public concerns (Lauth 2003: 229). An important contemporary perspective is added by theorists of social capital, who see social networks, a rich associational life and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness associated with it, as the core element 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; Putnam 2002: 14). In *Latin America*, the concept of civil society has been framed primarily by the fight against military dictatorship in the 1960s and by social exclusion of parts of the population from economic and social progress. (Birle 2000: 232-234). In *Eastern Europe*, the concept of civil society has also been shaped in the context of collective public actions aimed at overcoming authoritarian regimes and establishing democratic structures (Merkel 1999: 397-441). Some have questioned the relevance and applicability of the concept of civil society in non-western countries (Lewis 2002; Harneit-Sievers 2005: 1). There is a substantial debate on the relevance of the concept of civil society in *Africa* and the need to adapt it to the regional context, in particular by taking into account the role of traditional institutions and community-level membership organizations (Lewis 2002: 574-584). Today, 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 between different (rural and urban, traditional and modern) CSOs (Pinkney 2003: 104-105; Schmidt 2000: 321-323).

The 1990s saw a significant rise in transnational CSOs activities and the emergence of a nascent global civil society. Trans-national CSOs and networks have placed global issues on the international agenda, successfully launched major international campaigns (such as those on 'banning landmines', 'blood diamonds', and 'publish what you pay') and participated as partners in all key international conferences and consultative processes (UN 2003). In the same vein, international CSOs have made efforts to network with national-level 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: 19-21). From an analytical perspective, however, the nature and impact of this 'global civil society' (Kaldor 2003) is subject to debate. Some see it as a simple reflection of

⁷ See the analytical report on Civil Society Organizations in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States (World Bank 2005d).

globalization processes (Cardoso 2003) and likely to improve global governance by promoting debate and bridging societal divides (Clark 2003). Critical perspectives point to the lack of legitimacy of international NGOs and question claims that such organizations are representative of international civil society (Anderson and Rieff 2004: 35).

2.1.2 Identifying Actors

Given the diversity within civil society, it is difficult to categorize or classify CSOs in a meaningful or comprehensive way. Despite this limitation, a wide range of CSO typologies based on characteristics such as organizational form, purpose, scale, scope and nature of activities have been developed. From a donor perspective, it can be useful to make a basic distinction between membership-based organizations (for example, CBOs, trade unions, women's groups, self-help groups, social movements, networks) and non-membership or "intermediary" organizations (including NGOs and support organizations).⁸ Another basic distinction can be made on the basis of the "level" at which a CSO is established and functions (i.e., community, local, regional, national or international level). Locally-based membership organizations are usually of greatest importance to poor people (World Bank 2000:143ff). International NGOs can provide valuable support to in-country 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-oriented 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: 9).⁹

The theoretical and cultural variations of civil society and the diverse organizational forms and functions observed in different contexts require a broad and inclusive conceptual framework. When analyzing civil society it is particularly important to avoid inadvertently introducing a "Western" bias. This would be the case, for example, when focusing exclusively on formally constituted or "registered" organizations, and excluding informal associations or traditional manifestations of collective action.¹⁰ Civil society and CSOs can and do exist in every context. They are variegated and can be found in manifold organizational forms, focus on different objectives and have usually adapted to their particular political, social and cultural contexts.

This high differentiation makes an empirical exploration of the range of civil society organizations mandatory, looking into their objectives, potential functions, capacities, constraints and relationships to other actors, including the state. Donors, such as the World Bank, interact predominantly with "intermediate" organizations located at the national or international level, and rely on these organizations to channel support onto a broader range of CSOs or to coordinate interventions involving multiple CSO actors working in different capacities and at different levels on their behalf. Donor funding is often limited to a small sub-set of CSOs (in particular development-oriented NGOs). Existing 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 for developing

⁸ 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, are becoming involved in advocacy activities.

⁹ 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 (regarding UK constituency).

¹⁰ For example, definitions of civil society that focus on "organizations" (e.g., Chazan 1992: 281; Foley/ Edwards 1996: 38; Salamon 1999:3) 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 the reality of those countries where (for a variety of cultural, political or practical reasons) most civil society associations are informal (or not registered).

capacity, specialization, strategic planning, and long-term investments in beneficiary communities.

Such networks and support chains, however, are vulnerable to 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” as a political phenomenon at the local and national level. Donor interventions frequently label any form of funding to national (or even international) NGOs as “support to civil society” without adequate analysis of the (political, social and practical) impact of such chains of support on the ground.

2.2 Civil Society Roles in Peacebuilding

2.2.1 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 five to ten year time frame. Peacebuilding should create conducive conditions for economic reconstruction and development efforts, but should not be equated and thus confused with these concepts. In this, 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 after large-scale organized violence has ended. There are three phases of peacebuilding: prevention prior to the outbreak of violence, conflict management during armed conflict, and post-conflict peacebuilding for up to 10 years after the end of armed conflict. 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-oriented approaches. Traditional **conflict management** approaches, practiced for example in the negotiations for Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995, aim at short-term management of armed conflict by identifying key representatives of armed conflict parties and negotiating or mediating peace accords with them (Paffenholz 1998 and 2001). Key actors are governments and multilateral organizations, mostly the UN, sometimes supporting their mediation efforts by threat of force (power mediation). By contrast, the objective of **conflict resolution approaches** is to address the underlying causes of conflict and mend the social fabric of conflict-affected societies. Activities typically included in this approach are designed to improve communications and inter-group relationships. Peace facilitators under this approach typically hail from academia, and international or national NGOs (Bailey 1985; Stedman 1993). To capitalize on the potential synergies between these different approaches, **multi-track diplomacy** approaches (Diamond and McDonald 1996) distinguish between different approaches and actors involved in peacebuilding 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.

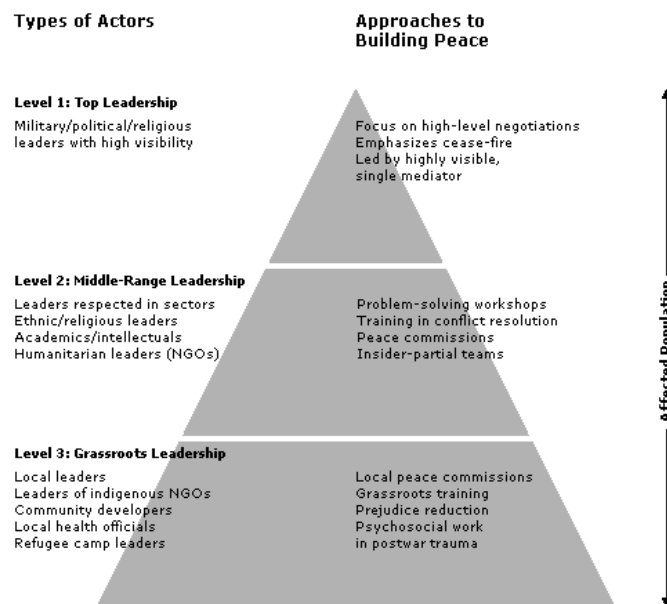
Conflict management and conflict resolution approaches are characterized by a number of important weaknesses. Outcome-oriented approaches are likely to overlook deep causes of conflicts and thus cannot guarantee long-term stability of the peace agreement (Hoffman 1992). In this vein, focusing on top leadership levels of conflict parties is likely to be too narrow (Lederach 1997). Additionally, 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 drawback of conflict resolution approaches is the long time frame, which can appear out of touch in situations of acute violence, and the fact that improving communications

and building relationships does not necessarily result in an end to armed 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 various 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).

The **conflict transformation** approach is now the leading approach to peacebuilding, and aims to address the shortcomings of other approaches. Recognizing that conflicts are a key feature of everyday life, this approach aims at combining short-term conflict management with long-term relationship building and transforming the roots of conflict (Rupesinghe 1995). A core element of this approach is the concept of ‘peace constituencies’ that aims at identifying representative individuals or groups on the middle level and empowering them to build peace and support reconciliation in their own country (Lederach 1997). Within this approach it is assumed that such “middle out” empowerment will impact on both the macro and grassroots level. The key role of third party intervention is to support local actors and co-ordinate external peace efforts. This requires an in-depth understanding of local socio-cultural dynamics, and a long-term time operational frame.

From a conflict transformation perspective, conflict-affected societies can be divided in three levels, for which different peacebuilding strategies are appropriate (Lederach 1997: 39). The top leadership level can be engaged by Track 1 intervention and outcome-oriented approaches. The middle-range leadership level can be approached with more resolution-oriented Track 2 approaches such as problem-solving workshops or peace-commissions with the help of prominent individuals from inside local society. The third level represents the majority of the population and can be approached by a wide range of peacebuilding approaches such as local peace commissions, community dialogue projects or trauma healing. It is here that civil society tends to be most active.

Figure 2: Lederach’s Levels of Peacebuilding

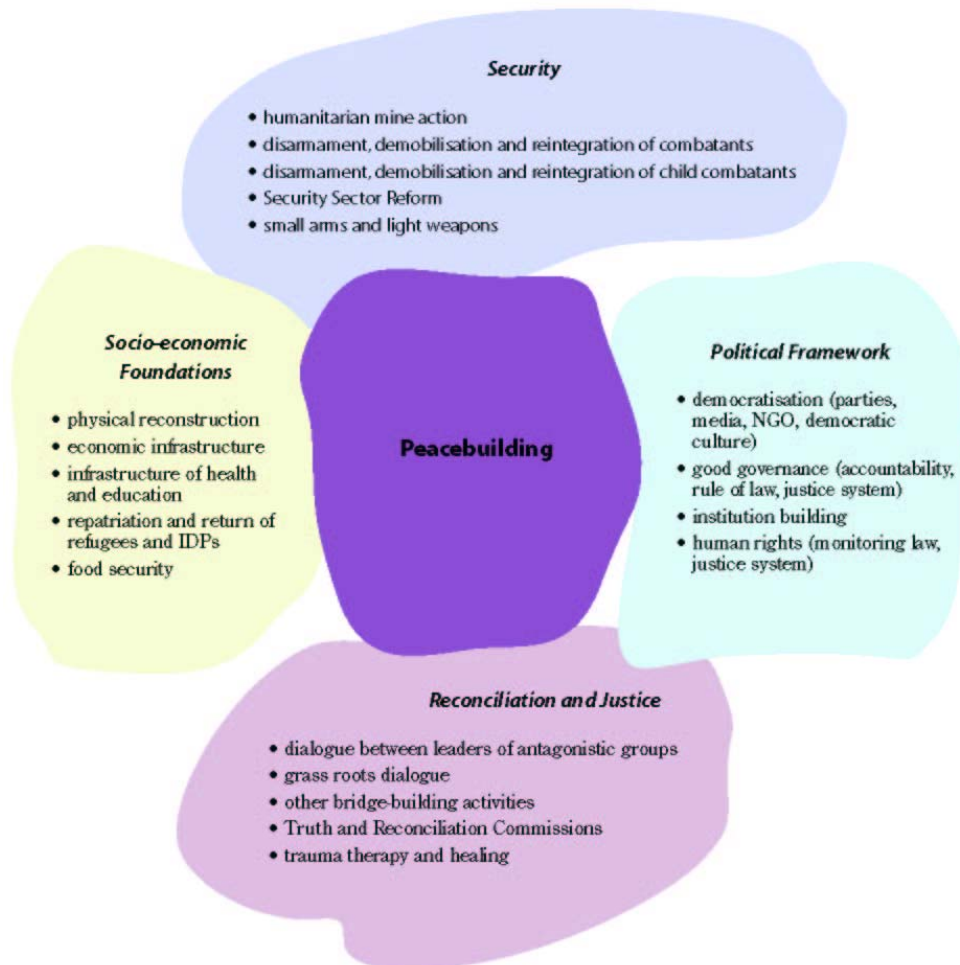


Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

The successive expansion of actors in theoretical approaches to peacebuilding is mirrored in peacebuilding practice. The first stage of this evolution is the sudden discovery of

peacebuilding as a policy area in the early 1990s at the level of bilateral donors and multilateral organizations. In 1992, the UN Secretary General's report 'An Agenda for Peace' (Boutros-Ghali 1992) still defined 'peacebuilding' in a narrow sense, as activities aimed specifically at preventing large scale violence and its reoccurrence within five years. The Rwanda crisis and genocide in 1994 then brought to the fore the issue of conflict prevention and early warning (Carnegie Commission 1997), culminating in the UN Secretary General's report on 'Preventing Armed Conflict' (UN 2001).

Figure 3: The Peacebuilding Palette (according to the Utstein Report)



Approaches to peacebuilding have shifted from a pure focus on security considerations and peacekeeping to establishing the socio-economic conditions of peace. This has been spurred by empirical evidence on the linkages between poverty and conflict (Collier et al. 2003). As part of this trend, development actors such as the World Bank have acquired an increased interest in conflict-related issues. The broadening of intervention areas conducive to and required for peacebuilding is reflected in the 2004 Report of the Utstein Group of European donors. This influential report outlines a framework of peacebuilding activities, where providing physical security is of equal importance as establishing good governance and the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace. The report acknowledges that the conjunction of economic recovery through 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” (the peacebuilding palette) of different elements to be configured according to the need of specific situations and operational requirements.¹¹ 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 the professionalization and evaluation in peacebuilding (Paris High-Level Forum 2005).¹²

Peacebuilding has thus come to be understood very broadly. It often covers all activities related to preventing violent outbreaks of conflicts, transforming armed conflicts, building peaceful ways of dealing with conflict, and creating the overall socio-economic and political pre-conditions of 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 assumptions. Service delivery activities, for example, have come to be seen as conducive to peacebuilding by helping to establish framework conditions conducive to peace. As will be discussed below, however, the contribution of public service delivery to essentially political peacebuilding objectives seems to be tenuous and requires further exploration.

2.2.2 The Increasing Role for Civil Society in Peacebuilding

The changing approaches to peacebuilding have resulted in increased space for civil society participation. Until the 1990s, conflict management approaches had focused on the top leadership level 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 Community de Sant Egidio in Mozambique represented an exception and their behavior often differed very little from official governmental mediators (Paffenholz 1998; van Tongeren/Brenk/Hellema/Verhoeven 2005:576). The subsequent shift to conflict transformation approaches then focused attention on the key role played by civil society. A key driver of this shift was John Paul Lederach, whose peacebuilding pyramid (see above) 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 frameworks¹³ 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.¹⁴ 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 technical reconstruction programs can hardly achieve. Cooperation between donor governments and Northern and international NGOs (I-NGOs) for peacebuilding has become routine in many countries. 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>).

¹¹ Dan Smith, PRIO – International Peace Research Institute, Oslo / Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, 2004: *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding: Getting Their Act Together*. Overview report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding.

¹² A/59/2005, 21 March 2005: *In larger freedom: toward development, security and human rights for all*. Report of the Secretary-General. UN.

¹³ See e.g. Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Strategic Framework: Peacebuilding a Development Perspective*, 2004; German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation, *A Strategy for Peacebuilding*, 2005.

¹⁴ See UN Security Council, Presidential Statement S/PRST/2005/42;

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/515/21/PDF/N0551521.pdf?OpenElement>.

There is wide agreement on the complementarity of non-governmental peace initiatives and diplomatic peace efforts. Lobbying efforts by church-based development and peace organizations, for example, were instrumental in creating international awareness of armed conflict in Sudan. Cooperation between I-NGOs and national/local NGOs in conflict countries 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 public opinion polls, as well as by creating feedback mechanisms in which popular sentiments are transmitted back to negotiating parties (Accord 2002). The official peace processes in Guatemala (1994-1996) (Armon et al. 1997; Molkentin 2002; Greiter 2003, Stanley and Holiday 2002, see also case example in Annex 1) and in Afghanistan (2001), for example, were accompanied by parallel civil society processes and fora to address key issues related to the peace process and make recommendations to official Track 1 negotiations. Civil society positions significantly influenced the nature and implementation of both peace agreements. While the Guatemala case demonstrates that a genuine civil society process can have a strong influence on the negotiated settlement, the Afghanistan case shows that externally driven civil society involvement can also have considerable impact. The involvement of civil society in the Afghanistan case created suitable conditions for civil society to play an important role in the post-settlement phase (Paffenholz 2006).

In a parallel development, the increasing recognition of the potential adverse effects of humanitarian and development aid on conflict has reinforced interest in peacebuilding on the part of international NGOs (Uvin 1998, Anderson 1999, Paffenholz 2005b). Mary B. Anderson has analyzed how aid can incite conflict by a variety of unintended consequences. The key mechanisms identified are (1999: 37-53):

- Preferring recipients from one side of the conflict (distribution effect)
- Fostering inter-group conflict through different benefits (distributional impact)
- Funding war parties by not preventing theft of aid goods (theft effect)
- Releasing funds for war through aid delivery (substitution effect)
- Destroying local markets through aid delivery (market effect)
- Legitimizing war factions through aid delivery (legitimization effect).

The growing awareness about the possibility to inadvertently ‘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 in which their programs could be made both conflict-sensitive and specifically conducive to peacebuilding objectives. To this end, ‘Do no harm’ reviews and other conflict and peacebuilding tools and approaches, 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 or implement interventions directly aimed at peacebuilding. This contributed to increased peacebuilding activities and the involvement of a set of new actors, primarily NGOs.

2.2.3 A Multitude of Actors and Approaches

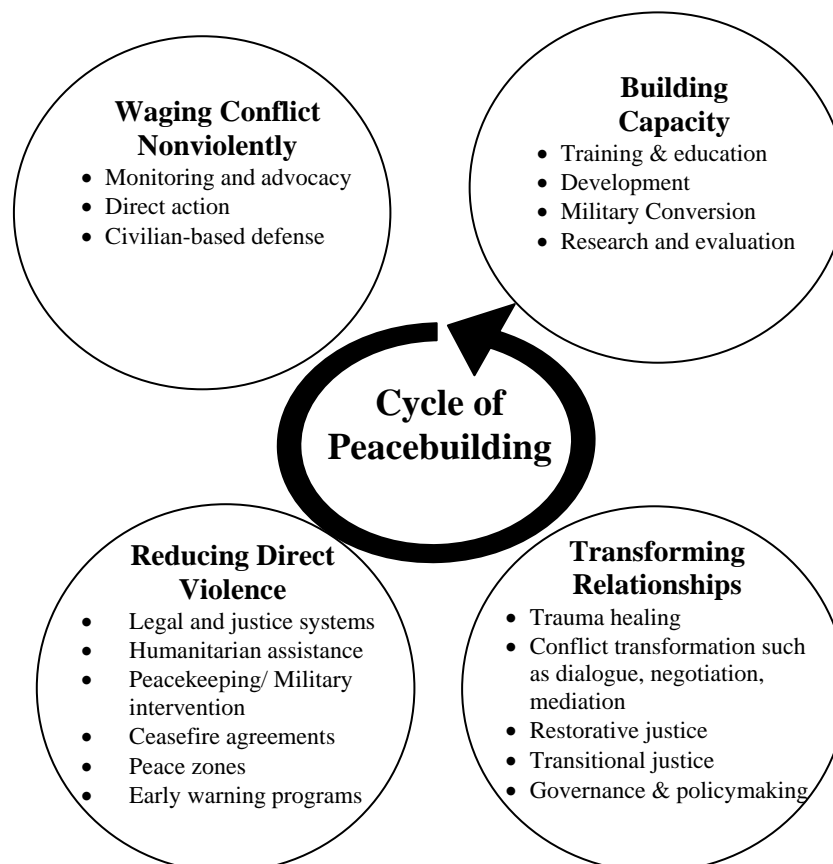
There is now a general consensus that national actors should take the lead in peacebuilding, and that outside intervention should be limited to their support (Lederach 1997). As part of multi-track peacebuilding approaches a wide array of non-state actors became increasingly involved in international, national and local peacebuilding initiatives (European Center for Conflict Prevention 1999; van Tongeren et al. 2005; Richmond and Carey forthcoming). Many 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 (such as faith-based organizations, women's, youth's and professional associations, trade unions);
- Community based organizations, institutions and initiatives (including women and youth groups, farmer associations, traditional self-help groups, traditional leaders, informal networks and associations);
- Informational and educational CSOs (for example, independent media, journalists associations, research and academic institutions and think tanks).

There are numerous typologies and ways to categorize CSO actors in peacebuilding.¹⁵ More important than finding the “right” classification, however, is to recognize the roles and peacebuilding approaches performed by the various segments of civil society. The literature variously lists as main roles for civil society in peacebuilding to: (i) promote reconciliation, (ii) engage in non-violent forms of conflict management and transformation, (iii) directly prevent violence (iv) build bridges, trust and interdependence between different groups, and (v) monitor and advocate vis-à-vis government and warring factions for peace, against human rights violations and social injustices, frequently seen as root causes of violent conflicts.¹⁶

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



Source: Schirch/ Sewak (2005)

¹⁵ See e.g. Douma/ Klem 2004; van Tongeren et. al. 2005; Harpviken/Kjellman 2004.

¹⁶ See Douma/ Klem 2004; Barnes 2005, van Tongeren et. al. 2005; Harpviken/Kjellman 2004.

In practice, peacebuilding activities and approaches of different types of CSOs frequently overlap. Figure 4, for example, provides a synthesis of the main areas and peacebuilding activities of women's organizations (Schirch/Sewak, 2005). Most of these activities are also performed by other types of civil society organizations. For example, dialogue initiatives and trauma healing are probably carried out or supported by the majority of the other organizations listed above (maybe with the exception of the more human rights monitoring/ advocacy organizations and the informational/ educational organizations). Similarly, the category of "Waging War Non-Violently" lists activity areas in which advocacy/human rights organizations and specialized peace-NGOs usually are heavily involved in. Capacity building activities, as listed in Figure 4, are regularly conducted by most intermediary CSOs, international NGOs and many donor programs.

This snapshot illustrates that approaching civil society contributions to peacebuilding through an actor-oriented lens may not provide much clarity about the particular strengths and comparative advantages of civil society organizations in a given conflict situation. Also, comparative analyses, focusing on the particular strengths and potential of different types of CSOs, are still lacking.¹⁷

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 (e.g., Aall 2001; Barnes 2005; Pouligny 2005; Debiel/ Sticht 2005; Douma/ Klem 2004) or with reference to specific case studies (e.g. 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 of literature researches the effectiveness of NGO peace work in general (Anderson/Olson 2003). Evaluations of the impact of civil society initiatives on a particular peace process are still scarce, despite emerging conceptual frameworks (D'Estrée et al. 2003; Anderson/Olson 2003), a vivid discussion of the methodological difficulties and approaches (see Douma/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, general conclusions are hard to derive.¹⁸ This applies to guidance on the comparative advantage of civil society in peacebuilding generally and with respect to particular activities.

2.2.4 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 community based or membership organizations and initiatives, which people directly relate to and engage in, is instructive. Intermediary organizations, such as specialized NGOs, seem to perform much more support, funding and

¹⁷ The comparative advantages of some CSOs seem more obvious. Faith-based or inter-religious organizations for example seem to be particularly 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 or have to be mobilized to facilitate peace, and (iii) in third-party mediation, when religious leaders or organizations are perceived as particularly trustworthy and legitimate by both parties (Johnston 2005).

¹⁸ 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.

capacity building functions, as opposed to local level and human rights and advocacy organizations.

Donor support for civil society peacebuilding tends to be channeled through intermediary chains. In general terms, intermediary chains function as follows: Donors provide funding for multilateral agencies or to I-NGOs¹⁹. The latter usually provide funding to national NGOs who, in turn, cooperate with local NGOs. In case of multilateral agency funding, those agencies often either fund also I-NGOs or directly local CSOs. Direct funding between the donors and local CSOs is very rare, but sometimes provided when donors set up special funding mechanisms such as ‘peacebuilding’ or ‘community development’ funds linking donors and local organizations.

More specifically, the following funding mechanisms can be found:

- Direct funding to I-NGOs or NGOs on request: In this case, I-NGOs submit specific 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 who frequently, but not always, hail from the same country. These agreements often entail a mix of basic and project funding.²⁰ Sometimes these partnerships are also 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 towards the same political and strategic objectives as the donor, or they recognize that capacity limitations require close collaboration.
- Dedicated funding mechanisms: In this category are multi-donor trust funds for specific countries (such as Afghanistan) or single donor funds. Similarly, dedicated funds can be established at headquarters level (such as the World Bank’s Post-Conflict Fund or GTZ’s Peace Fund) or at the field level (such as the UNDP Peace and Development Trust Fund in Nepal).
- Tenders: Tenders for specific purposes can be international or national in nature. They are 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 organizations that may have a good understanding of the the local context and partners and therefore easily connect donors with in-country civil society organizations. They can also provide capacity building for national and local organizations. At the same time, intermediaries are easily driven by donor agendas, losing elements of empowerment and local ownership in the process, while I-NGOs can take away space from national or local actors. As the main thrust of support tends to be directed toward NGOs rather than social movements or other actors in conflict countries, this might cement a lack of genuine civic engagement. In this vein, local NGOs become primarily accountable to donors rather than local society. These issues are discussed in detail in the sections below.

Diaspora groups can have significant impact on inciting violent conflict and supporting peacebuilding. The size of Diaspora remittances to conflict-affected countries can be significantly larger than donor allocations for those countries and can have significant impact on

¹⁹ We use the term I-NGO to include 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.

²⁰ Such arrangements are most common for Nordic countries, DFID and Switzerland.

war or peace. For example, the Eritrean or the Sri Lankan Diaspora in Europe and Australia has financed warring factions in those countries through an established Diaspora tax system. The knowledge of foreign-educated Diaspora groups, furthermore, also has significant potential to be used more effectively 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. After signing of the ceasefire agreement in Sri Lanka in 2001, the Australian Tamil Diaspora started a process to support the rehabilitation process of the North and East in cooperation with the LTTE. In the Afghanistan peace negotiations and the following Loya Jirga processes, the Diaspora played an important role to link Western interests and knowledge with traditional understanding and local context. As indicated above, a particular problem with Diaspora groups, however, is that they frequently may have partisan ties to one of the warring parties and may not primarily be interested in peacebuilding through non-violent means, but rather support or pursue political goals regardless of the means. Often they have been absent from their home countries for a long time and have left during war or repression. Their views can thus be more radical than those held by other groups within conflict-affected countries.

In situations of armed conflict, donors should clearly map the different policy objectives and motivations of their support. There is an emerging debate (e.g. SID Development 2005) stressing that civil society peacebuilding support can become subject to different, and often conflicting, foreign policy objectives. Civil society peacebuilding support can clash with the objective to strengthen opposition groups for purposes of regime change. These groups, while officially renouncing violence, may in the end put the pursuit of their political goals 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 driven support to 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.

3. Understanding Civil Society in Peacebuilding

This chapter proposes a functional perspective of civil society peacebuilding, and outlines a framework of seven civil society peacebuilding functions. The emerging framework can enable donors and practitioners to better understand civil society initiatives in peacebuilding, and plan their support more systematically and effectively. It may be of use as a basic grid for outcome and impact assessment and evaluation. The chapter also analyzes the institutional and political factors shaping the peacebuilding capacity of civil society. A last section looks at the internal institutional factors of CSOs active in peacebuilding and highlights a number of challenges and distortions fueled to a considerable extent by the support practice of donors and external agencies.

3.1 A Functional Perspective: Seven Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding

Focusing on civil society functions, instead of actors, can help define outcome and impact areas, support policy planning processes as well as setting clear and explicit expectations to facilitate monitoring and evaluation. Donors tend to employ an actor-oriented strategy to deploy their support, thereby focusing often 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. As a functional perspective it has the potential to allow cross-cutting country or regional analysis. Furthermore, the functions can be used as main outcome dimensions of civil society activities. In this way, they may help plan interventions and support programs of donors more systematically.

The framework represents a combination of frameworks developed by political scientists, and CSO functions most commonly identified by development organizations. German political scientists have presented a model of five functions of civil society extracted mainly from research of democratization and transformation processes in Eastern Europe and supported by a wide array of case studies (Merkel/ Lauth 1998; Merkel 2000; Croissant et al. 2000; Lauth 2003). The functions include (i) protection, (ii) intermediation between citizen and state, (iii) participatory socialization, (iv) community building/ integration, and (v) communication/ public opinion formation.²¹ Two dimensions (monitoring and service delivery) that are generally emphasized in development cooperation practice have been added. Other functions frequently attributed to civil society by development organizations are already reflected in the Merkel/ Lauth model. ‘Stimulating dialogue between civil society and government’ (DFID 2001a: 4-5) is captured by Merkel/ Lauth’s ‘intermediation’, whereas ‘advocating on behalf of the poor’ (Ibid.) and ‘channeling the views of the people to the political system’ (DFID 2001b: 11) clearly belong to the ‘public communication’ category.

Table 1: Seven Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding

Function	Activities	Typical Actors
Protection	Protecting citizen’s life, freedom and property against attacks from state and non-state actors.	Membership organizations, human rights and advocacy NGOs.
Monitoring/ Early Warning	Observing and monitoring the activities of government, state authorities and conflict actors.	Think tanks, human rights NGOs,

²¹ See Annex 3 for more details on the Merkel/Lauth model. Annex 2 provides a brief overview of some of the Western philosophical roots of the civil society concept.

	Monitoring can refer to various issues (human rights, corruption), particularly those relevant for drivers of conflict and early warning.	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, contributing to social cohesion.	CBOs and other membership organizations.
Intermediation/ Facilitation	Establishing relationships (communication, negotiation, control) to support collaboration between interest groups, institutions and the state. Facilitating dialogue and interaction. Promoting attitudinal change for 'culture of peace' and reconciliation.	Intermediary NGOs, CSO networks, Advocacy organizations, Faith based organizations.
Service provision	Providing services to citizens-at-large or group members can serve as important entry point forms to other peacebuilding if explicitly intended.	NGOs, self-help groups.

With regard to this ideal-typical framework, intended to help understand, conceptualize and plan civil society functions in peacebuilding, the following points need to be kept in mind:

1. **CSOs may be active in one, a few or all of these functions.** The identified functions are sometimes very closely related (e.g., intermediation/ facilitation and advocacy/ public communication) and, in practice, actors may become active in both functional areas at the same time.
2. **The functions covered are not exclusively provided by civil society.** Other actors can and do contribute, or, at times, even have the main responsibility for this function. 'Protection' for example should be mainly provided by the state, the judiciary and law enforcing authorities. Equally, socialization occurs not only in voluntary associations, but also in the classroom, the family and political parties.
3. **Some functions build more on unique capacities of CSOs, in others civil society makes important complementary contributions to functions performed by other actors.** Civil society has a particular comparative advantage and can autonomously perform functions related to socialization/ culture of peace and social cohesion. It appears that civil society activities in the areas of protection, monitoring/ accountability, and advocacy/ public communication are more complementary and their effectiveness depends on collaboration with a set of different actors. The comparative advantage of civil society with respect to intermediation/facilitation depends on whether intervention is geared toward conflicting groups at the local level or toward governments and formal peace processes. With respect to service delivery, the comparative advantage of civil society depends on whether services are provided to specific groups of community members otherwise excluded or whether services are provided as emergency relief, or on behalf of the state or other external actors.

4. **Civil society takes on different functions and plays different roles in the transition from conflict to peace, and in different conflict phases.** During armed conflict or in the immediate aftermath, priority tends to be given to protection, monitoring and advocacy/public communication. Culture of peace, peace education and reconciliation functions appear to be more oriented toward the long-term, and are therefore likely to be implemented in the post-conflict phase. Such distinctions, however, hinge on the specific characteristics of particular conflicts. As conflicts end and public institutions gradually recover, the dynamics between citizens, CSOs, and government institutions can be expected to change. A post-conflict transition will often be characterized by new financing from donors to governments, shifting the resources from civil society and the private sector to the public sector. CSO functions will normally evolve away from implementation and service delivery roles to those of facilitation, intermediation, advocacy, monitoring and accountability initiatives. The most suitable mix of civil society engagement in the functional areas seems to depend on the respective conflict phase and dynamics. A key challenge for CSOs, and for donors providing support, is to fulfill the right functions at the right time and to carefully observe, guide and adapt to transition phases. A critical challenge for countries recovering from conflict is 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.
5. **The ability of civil society to play these roles hinges on internal institutional factors, and the nature of the external enabling environment in which they operate.** These dimensions of civil society support for peacebuilding are discussed below.

3.1.1 The Seven Functions in Practice

The following sections briefly discuss the different civil society functions in peacebuilding with reference to selected examples and civil society intervention approaches.

Protection

States weakened by armed conflict typically cannot fulfill the protection for their citizens. During violent conflict, and in its aftermath, civil society initiatives frequently emerge with the aim of protecting citizen's life, freedom and property against attacks and encroachment by conflict actors or the state. According to the Reflecting on Peace (RPP) project, for example, CSOs' direct contributions to providing security and reducing violence is an indicator for effective peace work (Anderson/Olson 2003).

Protection functions are often taken on by external NGOs that support national or local civil society either indirectly, through their presence on the ground, as monitoring watchdogs (Orjuela 2003: 47) or directly through international accompaniment. The international NGO 'Peace Brigades International', for example, sends outsiders into conflict zones to protect national peace or human rights activists (Eguren 2001, see Box 1 and Annex 1 case 1). At the local level, other examples include communities in the Philippines or in Colombia that have negotiated 'zones of peace' where no arms are allowed (Barnes 2005; Orjuela 2004; Eviota 2005).

Another angle of protection is the support to security-related interventions such as de-mining, demobilization, disarmament or reintegration of ex-combatants. In case this particular type of protection is not sufficiently ensured by the state, multilateral agencies or the private sector, civil society may engage independently in specific activities that concern their own communities. In Mozambique, churches launched a follow-up demobilization campaign after the official UN demobilization process had ended. However, more frequently civil society organizations collaborate with government or international community led activities in areas as diverse as de-mining, small weapons and light arms control or demobilization (e.g. TRESA 2005).

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. This impedes ‘civic’ activity as citizens are afraid to participate in civil society activities. Peace Brigades International (PBI) focuses on enabling and catalyzing local activity and opens political space for civic engagement within communities by providing “protective accompaniment.” PBI volunteers act as unarmed bodyguards for individuals and communities, enabling civil society leaders and activists to organize community activities. They never participate in meetings themselves, but document violent incidents. PBI also works with Colombian and international NGOs to engage with authorities, security forces, civil society and the international community. This ensures that violence against local activists will attract an international response. PBI Colombia receives funding from international sources through PBI International. It recruits international volunteers from over 25 countries, mostly from Europe and North America. Documenting human rights violations is highly sensitive, and requires diplomatic skill, neutrality and good relations with all actors. To be effective, this kind of initiative is contingent on a set of factors, including good relations and a certain degree of collaboration from armed conflict parties. Conflict parties must be concerned with their international reputation.

Monitoring and Early Warning

Observing and monitoring the activities of conflict actors is a means to enhance accountability and a precondition of the ‘protection’ and ‘advocacy/ public communication’ functions of civil society in peacebuilding. International and local groups can monitor the conflict situation and make recommendations to decision makers or provide information to advocacy groups. Monitoring is also a precondition of early warning. This civil society function is relevant in all conflict phases. The impact of civil society monitoring activity is maximized when local, national and international actors are closely coordinated.

In the field of Early Warning, there is increasing cooperation between local, national and international NGOs but also with regional organizations. In Nepal, national human rights organizations closely cooperate with local groups and maintain close links to Amnesty International. These ties to the international level provide a safer space for the local groups to perform their monitoring tasks. Examples for Early Warning cooperation between the local, national and regional levels come from Africa, where early warning systems of regional organizations (CEWARN in the Horn of Africa) cooperate with local civil society groups in monitoring. In West Africa UNOCHA, the regional organization ECOWAS and a regional NGO peace network have signed a memorandum of understanding for joint early warning (see example in 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. Massive human rights violations perpetuate a climate of fear and impede civic engagement. 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. 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. 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). 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, and coordinate closely with international NGOs such as Amnesty International. Human rights monitoring addresses the problem of impunity for human rights violations, and improves the chances for peace deals and eventual reconciliation. According to Amnesty International, the number of disappearances fell significantly in 2005 after international

awareness was raised on disappearances in Nepal in 2003 and 2004. This example illustrates that 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 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 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). Civil society can articulate the interests of specific social groups, including marginalized groups. They create communication channels to facilitate the inclusion of these issues in the public agenda and raise public awareness. Traditionally it has been assumed especially in the conflict management school but also in the complementary school of thought that the influence of civil society on conflict management is fairly limited. Only in exceptional cases do members of civil society become mediators themselves, like the Catholic lay organization Sant Egidio in the Mozambique peace negotiations. Civil society plays a role in Track 1 conflict management through the advocacy/public communication function. Civil society can effectively put pressure on the negotiation parties to reach an agreement and can also advocate including specific issues on the negotiation agenda.

Advocacy is primarily a function for national and local civil society. An interesting example is the recent mass mobilization against the Nepali King that started as a political movement of the parties and the armed faction (Maoists) and developed into a country-wide peace and democracy mass movement.

International civil society can also take up important advocacy functions. I-NGOs and civil society networks have been particularly successful 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 practiced advocacy for Somalia with the objective of making international actors aware of the need for a people-based peace process, the special role of women in peacebuilding and the provision of funding for people's involvement. LPI's main advocacy instrument was to continuously provide information and advocate for a bottom-up solution of the Somali crisis in various international forums, such as UN bodies (UNOSOM in the beginning), the Somali Aid Coordination Body and international conferences (Paffenholz 2003a: 56-57).

Advocacy is relevant in all phases of armed conflict, although different issues might be more or less relevant in different phases. During armed conflict civil society can advocate for peace agreements, against violence and human rights violations, for broad based participation in the peace process as well as for relevant topics and issues. The population can be linked to the official negotiation process through broad based information campaigns, public opinion polls (Accord 2002) or more direct involvement. For example, official parallel civil society forums were established during the official peace negotiations in Guatemala from 1994 to 1996 (see box 3), and for Afghanistan in 2001 (Armon et al. 1997; Molkenntin 2002; Stanley and Holiday 2002; Greiter 2003). They gave recommendations to the official Track 1 negotiations. In the post-conflict phase, civil society can advocate against the recurrence of violence, for the proper implementation of peace agreements, or for important themes on the post-conflict agenda and a culture of peace within society (Orjuela 2004: 51-53; Jeong 2005: 120-121).

The role of independent media has shown to be extremely important in peacebuilding activities, as it helps reach a broad range of the population, facilitate public communication and amplify

advocacy campaigns (Rolt 2005). Printing and broadcasting of objective, non-partisan information (on mass killings, human rights violations, and truth and reconciliation efforts) is one important media support for peacebuilding. Producing and distributing more focused peace education features raising awareness on the need and feasibility of non-violent solutions is another. However, what should not be forgotten is that media can easily perpetuate group based 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 aim to promote high professional standards via self regulation measures. In Burundi, for example, UNESCO, UNDP, and UNHCR collaborated with media to promote reconciliation and peace education. Search for Common Ground, and NGO, supported the establishment of the country's first radio station in 1995 (Cheema 2005: 198).

Box 3: Civil Society Participation in Official Peace Processes, Guatemala. The official UN-led mediation process for Guatemala began in 1993, and a peace agreement was reached 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 was putting important but previously neglected issues on the negotiation agenda. 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. Most recommendations were taken into account directly or indirectly. 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 official peace negotiations, (ii) civil society managed to organize 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

Socialization is a crucial civil society function in peacebuilding which aims at inculcating a 'culture of peace' especially into divided societies at conflict. The objective is to promote attitude change within society toward peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation. Most activities, employing a conflict resolution approach fall under this function, including dialogue projects, reconciliation initiatives, peace education, exchange programs and peace camps, conflict resolution or negotiation training and capacity building.

Many civil society initiatives which support attitude change of adversary groups have been implemented as part of fostering a culture of peace in conflict countries. Empirical evidence shows that this function is effective only when it reaches a large number of people (Anderson/Olson 2003; Paffenholz 2003a). Research evaluations of a series of dialogue projects in the context of the Palestine/Israel conflict confirm these findings: it was difficult to establish the link between local micro initiatives and the macro peace processes with dialogue processes mainly working on the level of individuals, as compared to the level of the society at large.²² In response to this finding, the Geneva based international 'War-torn societies' project supports groups on the different sides of the Israel/Palestine conflict separately and believes that each group first needs to be strengthened in their peace efforts and understanding, prior to joint activities (www.wsp-international.org).

²² See Box 4 and summary of the evaluation of the 'People to People' civil society dialogue program in Israel/Palestine as case 4 in Annex 1 (Taha 2003; Atieh 2004).

A practical problem is that ‘culture of peace’ activities are often too sporadic (Aall 2001: 373), lack coordination and fail to create a critical mass movement that would be needed for change. The evaluation of a UNDP Peace Fund in Nepal elaborates these findings (Paffenholz/Damgaard/ Prasain 2004): First, many good small local initiatives with positive effects on the local level failed to develop influence on the macro peace process. Initiatives were scattered, not coordinated and failed to create a peace movement that could pressure for peace. Second, the local impact of these initiatives was limited, as it proved extremely hard to mobilize people for a long term culture of peace when they were in need of basic needs (Paffenholz et al. 2004).

The work of the Swedish Life and Peace Institute (LPI) in Somalia demonstrates that a long-term engagement in promoting a ‘culture of peace’ and reconciliation can have a medium to long-term impact on peacebuilding. In the absence of genuine civil society groups in Somalia, 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. While starting as an outsider to the conflict context, the LPI program quickly gained Somali ownership. LPI ran peacebuilding, leadership, and transformation training courses in Somalia over a period of more than 10 years. When interviewing the participants of the Somali peace negotiations in Djibouti in 2001, researchers found that more than 60% of all participants had been LPI trainees. Thus the micro-macro link of the training could be successfully evaluated (Paffenholz 2003a: 75-76).

Box 4: People to People Dialogue, 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 (P2P) programs supported around 165 joint Israeli-Palestinian activities aimed at enhancing dialogue, personal relationships and individual involvement in the peace process. They included professional workshops, practicing hobbies, film festivals, environmental activities, book dissemination, journalists meetings, and school twinning. While all projects involved a variety of Israeli and Palestine organizations, participants tended to be drawn from social elites. According to an evaluation the objectives of this program, however, have not been achieved (Taha 2003). There has been a return to violence and most activities have collapsed. It appears that activities only affected individual perceptions and individual relationships. They did not engage personal attitudes toward the other group (“the enemy”), although this is a crucial element of reconciliation. This illustrates that socialization toward a ‘culture of peace’ has high long term potential, but impact depends on a set of 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, as confidence building is threatened by violence. Activities should be designed to leverage individual friendship for peace on the aggregate social level. Available sources suggest that 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 (Taha 2003).

Social Cohesion

Supporting social cohesion is an important civil society function in peacebuilding, as ‘bridging’ social capital is usually destroyed during war and needs to be restored. This will in turn contribute to curb inter-group violence and ‘uncivil virtues,’ as well as revitalize cross-group interactions, interdependency and solidarity (Paffenholz 2003; Orjuela: 2004: 46-47; Jeong 2005: 120). Engagement and participation in voluntary associations has the potential of building and strengthening social capital. In this, it is crucial that not only ‘bonding ties’ within specific groups of society are built, but mainly ‘bridging ties’ across different and adversary groups (Putnam 2002). The objective is that these groups learn to live together in peaceful coexistence, e.g., this function can be called ‘conflict sensitive social cohesion’ for the objective of peacebuilding. The findings of a World Vision research project (O’Reilly 1998) confirm the importance of bridging social capital. Exploring the peacebuilding effects of community/ area

development projects in different countries, the research identified how these project helped increase levels of contact, interaction and communication across geographic, religious, ethnic, cultural and class divides, and how this in turn led to improved co-operation, unity and interdependence between different groups.

The main activities within the social cohesion function are initiatives fostering joint activities between former or present adversary groups, such as joint cross-adversary associations (parents, journalists, teachers, multi-ethnic chambers of commerce), joint cultural events (music, poetry, film festivals), 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.

A qualitative and quantitative research evaluation of the impact of peace education on attitude change through peace camps with different groups from both sides of the Georgian/Abkhazian conflict shows evidence that little attitude change could be achieved through various peace education initiatives over a period of four years. However, initiatives promoting and implementing joint work initiatives were possible and perceived as fruitful by the adversary groups even without any explicit work on changing of attitudes (Ohanyan with Lewis 2005). This case gives evidence to the assumption that initiatives of ‘conflict sensitive social cohesion’ can have a much higher influence on peacebuilding than ‘culture of peace’ initiatives (see also Box 5 and the summary of the case study example of the work of the Association of Independent filmmakers in the South Caucasus in Annex 1). Research from India shows that ethnically mixed organizations, including business, trade or other associations have been an effective means to build bridging ties across ethnic divided groups that even led to an ‘institutionalized peace system’ that facilitated the control of violence (Varshney 2002: 46).

Box 5: Independent Filmmakers Association, South Caucasus. Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the three South Caucasian Republics have experienced economic decline, impoverishment and armed conflict. Socio-cultural identity and social cohesion are not only to be built up in the countries but among all South Caucasian people in order to reoccurrence of armed conflict in the long run. Links between the three countries need to be reinforced on all levels in order to identify common interests and address common problems. In the frame of a filmmaking support program, the independent CSO “Association of independent filmmakers - South Caucasus” was founded as regional civil society organization. The trans-national association is comprised of individual independent filmmakers from all three countries. The regional association has its national offices, but acts and makes decisions always as the trans-national body. In addition to the standard functions of a business association, it aims to build trust among individuals from ‘enemy countries’ and with authorities and the general public. It demonstrates on a very practical level that there are common interests that can be tackled by cooperation. 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 as program objective and has encouraged the people to start the association as a transnational one. The initiative has started its various activities in 2005. While it is still too early to assess results, the setup of a regional association has so far proven difficult, as conflict-affected mentalities and attitudes of participants interfere during its implementation. A further difficulty is how to spread the project results to society outside the project.

Intermediation and Facilitation

Civil society usually has the role of intermediating between societal interest groups and the state by establishing various relations (communication, public opinion formation, negotiation). In a peacebuilding context, intermediation/facilitation can take place not only between the state and citizens, but also between different conflicting groups, within groups and on different levels of

society. The main activities within this function are facilitation initiatives (formal or informal) between armed groups, between armed groups and communities or development agencies. Both international and national/local civil society can perform an intermediation function.

International civil society often facilitates directly between the leadership levels of armed conflict parties. The contribution of civil society to conflict management is however limited (Aall 2001) and is primarily a function for states and multilateral agencies. When this function is taken up by national civil society, international CSOs such as international NGOs, international networks or research institutions tend to be involved. For example the catholic lay organization San Egidio mediated during the Mozambique peace negotiations in Rome from 1990 to 1992 (Paffenholz 1998) or the Geneva based international NGO Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (<http://www.hdcentre.org>) facilitated during the first negotiations between the conflict parties in Indonesian Aceh.

National and local civil society can facilitate on the following levels:

- Between civil society and the warring parties on the village or district level. In conflict zones in Nepal civil society representatives have successfully negotiated the release of citizens from custody by the armed groups (Paffenholz et al. 2004);
- Between the warring parties in order to bring both sides to the negotiation table (e.g., when the Inter-Religious Council in Sierra Leone managed to bring government and rebels to agree to peace talks in the late 1990s; or to negotiate peace zones (see function 1 above) or violence free days as the churches negotiated during the war in El Salvador in order to ensure a child vaccination campaign (Kurtenbach and Paffenholz 1994).
- Between international or national aid agencies and the warring parties as a means to ensure aid service delivery to their communities (Orjuela 2004: 48).
- Between international or national aid agencies and local civil society because service delivery in war zones and unstable post-conflict setting can often not be implemented through government structures that have either disappeared or are weak. Thus NGOs become the main providers of services. As these NGOs are usually not acquainted with the local context they are in need of facilitators (Jeong 2005: 218).

Box 6: ‘Violence Free Days,’ El Salvador. During the war, the Catholic Church of El Salvador facilitated between conflict parties to establish ‘violence free days’ in specific regions. Those days allowed for conducting a vaccination campaign, and thereby illustrated 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. Initiatives such as ‘violence free days’ 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.

Box 7: Humanitarian Corridors, Mozambique. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided humanitarian aid during the war in Mozambique. It could access government controlled areas throughout the war, but was only allowed access to areas held by Renamo (the rebel group) after a draught in 1992. ICRC successfully negotiated with Renamo and the government to establish humanitarian corridors. These allowed for the provision of humanitarian assistance, and curbed support to both conflict parties: Renamo lost control over the population and parts of their 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, and was an important step toward ending armed conflict. The case demonstrated to the population that a ceasefire was possible, and, put pressure on the warring parties.

Service Provision

The direct provision of services to citizens or their members forms an important part of the activities of CSOs. Particularly, in weak states and during armed violence NGOs become involved and substitute for state public 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 function of civil society because it spares lives and diminishes suffering, which are by themselves pre-conditions for achieving peace (SIDA 2005). The provision of services by CSOs in substitution of the state may also address some of the root causes of violent conflict, as in the case of social, ethnic or regional groups that were hitherto excluded or severely underserved. Furthermore, CSOs are seen as better qualified to provide certain services (Barnes 2005).

In contrast, another line of argument is that service delivery has primarily economic, social or humanitarian objectives and has only indirect and limited relevance in 'civil society peacebuilding' efforts. From a political perspective, service delivery is not a civil society function per se, but rather a task of the state, the market or the third sector. During armed conflict the provision of humanitarian and social services through civil society increases tremendously as state structures are either destroyed, weak or do not have access to certain parts of the population. There is no doubt that this kind of aid services is extremely important to help the war affected population, but it is only relevant for civil society peacebuilding, if peacebuilding is an explicit objective. In this respect, service delivery is often a potential entry point for peacebuilding. In Sri Lanka, for example, an emergency education project that was started in the aftermath of the ceasefire agreement in the most conflict-affected areas in the North formed a project management committee comprising the two conflict parties on district level that had not been in dialogue with each other (Paffenholz 2003b). Here service delivery is an entry point for the 'conflict sensitive social cohesion' function of civil society peacebuilding (see Box 8 and Annex 1 for the case example of the 'Trail Bridge Program' in Nepal that has enforced social ties in war affected communities in the).

Box 8: Building Community Trail Bridges, Nepal. Key conflict factors in Nepal Social are pressures for political change, as well as political and economic exclusion. 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 of this activity 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 through conflict sensitive development efforts. Constructing bridges is an entry point for reinforcing 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. The project demonstrates that service delivery can be an entry point for addressing conflict factors, provided it is an explicit objective.

An interesting related discussion dwells on the issue whether a monitoring function should be added to the activities of development NGOs that are already delivering services. It is argued that these groups are on the ground anyhow and could add this function easily to their work. In practice, it seems not that easy: In Nepal a UNDP multi-donor Trust Fund for Peacebuilding and Development funded a variety of peace, human rights and development service delivery local groups to contribute to peacebuilding. It had been assumed that development work should be combined with peace or human rights work as the services delivered might create entry points for working with the communities also on other peace and human rights issues. An evaluation of the Fund's activities (Paffenholz et. al. 2004) has, however, shown that the mixing of roles was problematic. Human rights groups that specialized in human rights monitoring proved to be very

effective under the condition that they were linked to national and international networks. However, service delivery NGOs that have taken up new functions proved to be far less accepted by communities and had a lack of expertise to fulfill these new functions. The human rights monitors also felt no need to have other entry points as the issue of monitoring gross human rights violations was and remains high on the agenda of violence affected communities.

In conclusion, more empirical research seems needed on how quasi-commercial service delivery by CSOs, e.g. in emergency relief or social and economic development work, affects their capacity and credibility to effectively engage in support of peacebuilding initiatives.

3.2 Institutional and Political Factors Shaping Civil Society Peacebuilding Capacity

3.2.1 External and Internal Factors Critical for Civil Society

A functional perspective allows for an improved understanding of different types of civil society activities in peacebuilding. It falls short, however, in analyzing the way in which conflict transforms civil society capacity to fulfill those functions, as well as the dynamics and potential distortions created by civil society interactions with external supporters. This capacity is contingent on both external framework conditions and internal characteristics of civil society.

The extent to which civil society is able to fulfill the various functions identified above is dependent upon a range of internal and external factors. Key enabling elements of civil society include the ability of citizens and CSOs to: associate, mobilize resources, voice interests and needs, access information, and negotiate change.²³ These elements are influenced both by the nature of the environment, in which civil society exists and functions, and the internal characteristics and capacities of civil society.

Key aspects of the external environment which serve to enable or disable civil society include:

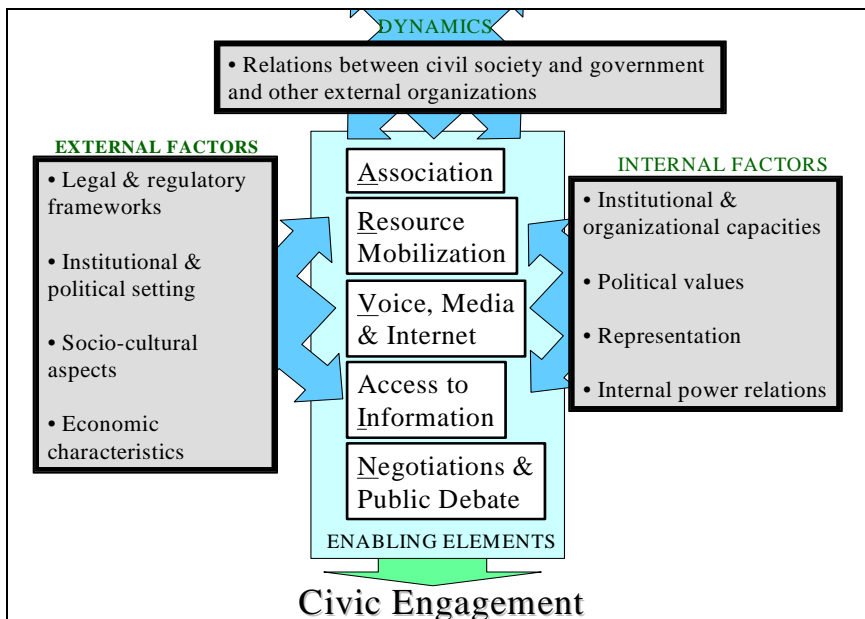
- The legal and regulatory frameworks (for example, laws guaranteeing basic rights of association, expression, information and participation as well as regulations regarding issues such as financing, tax exemption and CSO registration);
- The political and institutional context (for example, peace and stability, respect for political rights, the existence of appropriate and functional governance institutions);
- The socio-cultural aspects (for example, societal values and attitudes, trust and tolerance, levels of literacy, etc.) and economic factors (for example, levels of poverty and inequity, existence of CSO funding sources from members, government or donors); and
- Finally, the nature and dynamics of civil society's relations with other societal actors and, in particular with the state, is a key enabling or disabling factor.

Key internal factors include:

- Institutional and organizational capacities (for example, knowledge, skills, appropriate structures and systems, adequate human, financial and physical resources);
- Values (for example, a commitment to values of democracy, transparency, accountability and non-violence);
- Representativeness (the extent to which CSOs represent and answer to their constituencies); and
- Internal power relations (the extent to which there is equitable power-sharing, coordination and collaboration within and between CSOs).

²³ For an in-depth discussion on the enabling environment analytical framework, see WB 2003 and the Civil Society Assessment Tool, WB Participation & Civic Engagement team in the Social Development Department (unpublished)

Figure 5: A Framework for Analyzing Enabling Elements and Influencing Factors for Civil Society²⁴



3.2.2 Conflict Transforms the External Environment for Civil Society

Armed conflict dramatically changes the framework conditions for civil society. Already in normal times, the challenge for many states is to engage with non-state actors in developing appropriate frameworks for civic engagement, and to reform laws and appropriate institutions (Cheema 2005: 195). Fragile, conflict-affected or divided states are unlikely to uphold the physical protection of their citizens and the rule of law. They are often unable to enforce the policies and rules governing the functioning of CSOs. In some situations, the legal and institutional rules and mechanisms for supporting civil society are in abeyance by virtue of state emergency powers or military or insurgency activity. In other situations, they are dysfunctional or discredited, needing to be completely overhauled and replaced. In extreme cases there is no government, and therefore no laws and rules in place. Instead rebel occupation, international community protocols and donor support may put in place other rules and constraints for civil society engagement. Further, relationships between citizens and institutions are invariably seen through the lens of power and loyalties, and citizens’ trust and confidence in institutions evaporates. Insecurity and fear, induced by years of civil war, can hinder people from participating (Pearce 2005a). CSOs and leaders are often suspected of subversion or collaboration with “the enemy”, and individuals targeted for arrest without warrant or evidence, and detention without trial.

Conflict situations also pose a challenge for the autonomy of CSOs, which often have to operate under conditions set by warring factions or a repressive state. An example from southern Sudan illustrates this dilemma, but also points to the challenges for NGOs where there is a total breakdown of governance. NGOs had to coordinate their work with the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA), the relief arm of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). In 1999 the SRRA required NGOs to sign a Memorandum of Understanding which, among other controversial provisions, required NGOs to operate in accordance with “SRRA

²⁴ World Bank (unpublished): The Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT). A Methodology Note. Participation and Civic Engagement Team, Social Development Department.

objectives". The NGO World Vision refused to sign and withdrew all its operations (\$16 million), arguing that the MoU would violate the Do No Harm framework and the fundamental principle of neutrality (Riak 2002: 128). The example shows how in conflict situations suitable framework conditions are either suspended or replaced through rules established by one conflict party, which often hamper or prevent effective CSO interventions. The crisis provoked questions about the impact of CSO support to a party to the conflict, what level of cooperation infringes the doctrines of autonomy and neutrality, and the impact of CSO alliances with warring factions on post-conflict relations.

Ironically, the absence or shake-up of established frameworks may offer unique opportunities for the re-emergence civil society initiatives, moving from other domains into peacebuilding activities, and for new attempts of structuring a state-civil society dialogue. Rebuilding an enabling environment can offer a platform for inclusive stakeholder interactions, within government, between government and civil society, and within civil society. This can help build a constituency for key reforms and civil society strengthening in a post-conflict environment. Exclusion from involvement in public sector institutions of certain minority groups (or of the majority) often constitutes one of the structural causes of conflict, and can be addressed by including CSOs in public administration reform (UNDP, Governance Foundations, cited in Cheema 2005: 197). Collaborating with the government on designing the mechanisms necessary for an enabling environment which would allow NGOs to contribute to reconstruction and development, for example, was a key challenge for NGOs in South Africa (Pieterse 1997: 162). NGOs determined that developing a new legislation to promote civil society required pro-active engagement on their part. This was led by the Development Resource Center (LRC) based in Johannesburg, which conducted an enabling environment study in 1992 and engaged many NGOs to deliberate and adopt the proposal. This was followed by intense lobbying of government, marking perhaps an important phase in which the importance of NGO autonomy from government was underscored.

There are concerns and misgivings that the dominant position of NGOs in providing aid in humanitarian crisis and post-conflict will further destabilize and weaken fragile state structures (Abiew/ Keating 2004: 101). It might also inadvertently enhance authoritarian regimes as 'soft' NGOs normally lack the power to execute pressure or conditionality upon these regimes. Under such circumstances supporting civil society and rebuilding social capital is difficult (Coletta/ Cullen. 2000).

3.2.3 Conflict Affects the Internal Composition of Civil Society

Conflict may change the internal composition of civil society. Civic life at all levels is affected by armed conflict, including changes in attitudes and behavior of individuals (trust, confidence, militancy), shifts in social perceptions between groups, a reduction in economic and social exchanges, and shifting power relations within and between communities, regions and the society as a whole. Conflict can polarize organizations along conflict fault lines and drive some of them into open partisanship with conflict actors. The massive influx of external aid can contribute to changes in social fabric and power relations in and after armed conflict, and aid itself can have adverse effects on peacebuilding.

Conflict situations tend to strengthen "bonding" social capital within identify groups, to the detriment of "bridging" social capital between such groups. Recourse to kinship, tribal, religious and traditional political structures, as well as communities can serve as coping mechanisms for people in response to state fragility and the challenges posed by conflict (Bogner 2004, Pouligny 2005: 498). Even in the post-conflict phase, such patterns can easily be perpetuated, resulting in a highly polarized civil society. Under these conditions, it cannot be assumed that all civic actors will work toward peacebuilding objectives.

Societal actors tend to change as they adapt to conflict-affected environments. Community structures, the nature of groups and the positioning of CSOs change during war (Pouligny 2005: 498). Especially where the state is weak or captured by particular interests, the influence of uncivil or violent non-state groups is likely to rise (Belloni 2006: 8-9, Schmidt 2003: 323-324), substantially limiting the potential impact of those civil society groups working toward peacebuilding objectives. In post-conflict settings, non-state actors with a vested interest in continued conflict are unlikely to accept ceasefire agreements and give up their sources of income or privileges, and might contest the regaining power of government authorities (Strand et al. 2003: 20). In situations of armed conflict civil society tends to fall into the same camps as the conflicting parties (Belloni 2006). Even if avoiding support to outright “uncivil” groups (armed factions, warlords, gangs etc.) donors may inadvertently still be strengthening 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 at least a basic understanding of the internal dynamics of and the external framework influencing CSOs. This is necessary not only to accurately assess the commitment to peace and non-violence of CSOs and their capacity, but also to identify potential obstacles, policy reform needs or necessary support for legal or institutional reforms. Especially where the state is fragile or repressive, any external support should look very carefully at required changes in the enabling environment for civil society. As discussed above, the fragility or absence of established frameworks may in post-conflict situations also open unique opportunities for civil society activities. Doing a realistic assessment of the limitations and the opportunities for CSOs should be a crucial requirement for every support program.

3.2.4 Institutional Constraints and Distortions Related to External Support

Despite the comparative advantages and the sometimes unique functions of CSOs discussed above, civil society in most conflict-affected countries faces many practical limitations and constraints. The following summary portrays weaknesses and constraints encountered with CSOs active in development cooperation or humanitarian assistance. As will be discussed in more detail below, many of these limitations, however, do apply to CSOs active in peacebuilding and conflict prevention as well:²⁵

- **Institutional capacity of CSOs is uneven and frequently limited.** National CSOs often lack adequate human, financial, organizational and physical resources and can have problems retaining qualified staff and developing and maintaining a specialization. (World Bank 2005d)
- **Weak coordination and networking frequently limit civil society effectiveness.** While some countries possess highly effective CSO networks, umbrella organizations and issue-specific alliances, in many countries such coordinating mechanisms are absent or very limited. 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 resources from donors. (Fowler, 1997:116-119)
- **Lack of legitimacy and accountability** on the part of CSOs 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 vis-à-vis local communities is not always adequate. Often, CSOs have developed

²⁵ This section draws on the findings of a set of civil society assessment in conflict-affected countries (WB 2005) and the broader literature on civil society's role in peacebuilding (Douma/Klem 2004; Harpviken/Kjellman 2004; Pendergast/Plumb 2002; Fitzduff 2004, Barnes 2005, OECD 2006b).

higher accountability and responsiveness upward to donors rather than downward to community based organizations (World Bank 2005d: 10-16).

- **CSOs are sometimes exclusionary and at worst reinforce divisions** between groups. Sometimes vulnerable groups are not represented. Beneficiaries' participation is less widespread than commonly assumed. In circumstances where mechanisms of oversight and self-regulation are weak, fraudulent CSOs can take advantage of this vacuum to the detriment of the population. (Fowler, 1997:31-32)
- **Donor engagement with CSOs is often fragmented and short-sighted.** External funding and support is often limited to a small sub-set of CSOs (in particular development-oriented NGOs), while many important local-level and membership-based organizations are by-passed. Donor preferences for financing CSOs on a project-by-project basis give CSOs limited opportunities for developing capacity, specialization, strategic planning, and long-term investments in beneficiary communities. Donors aiming to promote governance and democratization goals should help to create space through dialogue with reluctant governments and, as appropriate, seek to address enabling environment factors. Donor-funded civil society support programs need to be based both on stronger conceptual analysis and empirical research. (World Bank 2005d, Van Rooy, 1998)

Under conditions of armed conflict, I-NGOs and other external actors may face particular challenges 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), for example, finds that in these situations CSOs are often driven into social service delivery and away from advocacy and governance work. In part, this was attributed to government's attitude that regards advocacy less positively than social service. In part, it may also reflect donor approaches conceiving civil society support as a merely technical task, avoiding the more critical political or the softer social civil society functions.

Using CSO mainly as public 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 engaging in large scale service delivery experience difficulties with engendering the kind of civic engagement processes they are assumed to trigger or support by virtue of being non-state actors. In addition, the increasing engagement in commercial public service delivery may detain talented and motivated citizens from joining political parties, government institutions and contributing to political peace processes (Belloni 2006: 23). As discussed above, delivering basic services can become an important entry points for other civil society peacebuilding functions. Thus, devising operational approaches to this end requires specific analysis and careful monitoring of potential negative impacts.

The expanding space for civil society in peacebuilding resulted in the rise of NGOs in conflict countries, going hand in hand with the professionalization and the commercialization of peace work. One important line of argument in the literature regarding the effects of increased donor and external assistance for civil society peacebuilding is that international and urban based middle class NGO peacebuilding initiatives monopolize peace work and take attention, knowledge and motivation away from the local level. This 'NGO-ization' of social protest (Orjuela 2004: 255) has been said to have led to a 'taming of social movements' (Kaldor 2003) and to have impeded peace movements and grassroots civic engagement for peace. In their engagement, donors tend to channel funding directly to I-NGOs or through them to national, mainly urban, elite-based NGOs. Empirical 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: 8-9) vis-à-vis other segments of civil society (Belloni 2006:21). This has resulted in a 'colonization of space' by international and national NGOs (Jeong 2005:

215-219; Pouligny 2005: 499; Paffenholz 2001b: 8/9). International NGOs have been criticized for ‘parachuting’ into conflicts and employing culturally and contextually inappropriate conflict resolution techniques (Sorbo et al. 1997), which mainly spoke to the language and expectation of international donors (Belloni 2006: 23). This argument is countered by others, however, who point to the fact that many I-NGOs work with national NGOs that are linked to the local context (Aall 2001: 373).

Many new national urban NGOs have been criticized on the basis of their weak membership base, lack of country wide and balanced political or ethnic representation, and linkages to the political establishment. The reasons are to be found mainly in the ‘monetization of peace work’ (Orjuela 2004: 256) which some authors refer to as a ‘peace industry’ (Moltmann 2004). NGOs have often been criticized regarding their lack of transparency vis-à-vis their donors (Debiel/ Sticht 2005: 16-17). However, the fact that they are only accountable toward their international counterparts and not vis-à-vis ‘their’ constituencies (Orjuela 2004: 256; Neubert 2001: 63) has resulted in the disempowerment of local communities and civic engagement for peace (Orjuela 2004: 256; Bush 2005; Pouligny 2005: 499; Belloni 2006: 22). The logic of receiving funds makes it necessary to downplay local knowledge and resources, and instead demonstrate local weaknesses and needs. Donor driven NGO initiatives have limited the capacity to create domestic social capital and ownership for the peace process. Thus empowerment is undermined leaving domestic groups in a weak and subordinate position (Belloni 2006: 21-22). According to Edwards (2004: 95), ‘the number of NGOs is the easiest thing to influence, but also the least important’.²⁶

Insider and outsider groups are dependent on each other, but insiders should take the lead in identifying problems, starting peace initiatives and defining support needs (Anderson/Olson 2003: 36ff). In most conflict situations, a wide range of domestic and international CSOs are active, often work in partnerships or “intermediary chains”, to take advantage of distinctive capacities and comparative advantages. As intermediary organizations (I-NGOs, NGOs, CSOs) usually have direct access to external funding and other form of support, they are often the ones setting agendas, bringing new topics and perspectives, planning support and making funding decisions, with insufficient consideration for the real needs of local and community based peace initiatives. In situations of armed conflict, the distinction between insider and outsider groups²⁷ provides crucial guidance, as it emphasizes the need to ensure that insiders take the lead in identifying problems, initiating interventions and mobilizing support, thus preventing outsider dominance and inappropriate impositions. In order to arrive at jointly agreed support programs, insiders and outsiders have to establish continuous interactions, on-going dialogue and reflection on experiences made.

Recent studies show that impacting on the macro peace process level is contingent on certain pre-conditions. NGO peace initiatives often fail to exert any tangible impact on macro peace processes. For example, the Reflecting on Peace Project (RPP) found that, in order for peacebuilding to be effective, either a set of key actors or a critical mass of people needs to be

²⁶ Analyzing the example of the Sri Lankan civil society’s role in peacebuilding, a recent study could provide further empirical evidence of these negative trends (Orjuela 2004). When peace work became increasingly professionalized and commercialized, it also became monopolized by a few, mainly urban based elite NGOs from Colombo. This led to a decrease in the genuine social and peace engagement and disempowerment of local peace work, as national NGOs tended to be disconnected from local communities on both sides of the conflict. While addressing polarized ethnic conflict requires creating local capacities for peace, this could not be achieved by national NGOs. The study concluded that the impact of civil society work on peacebuilding in Sri Lanka was very limited.

²⁷ Insiders are “widely seen as vulnerable to the conflict”, living in the conflict area, experiencing consequences of violence and conflict directly”. Outsiders are “widely seen as individuals or agencies that choose to become involved in a conflict”; they may work and sometimes live in the area, but personally have little to lose (Anderson/Olson 2003).

supported (Anderson/Olson 2003). Nevertheless, urban based or international NGOs receive the majority of funds, because it is easy for I-NGOs to work with urban based elite NGOs as they do speak Western languages 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 institutional distortions, it is important for donors and external support agencies to: (i) carefully assess the legitimacy and credibility of CSOs they seek to fund; (ii) further expand their selection of potential intermediaries and their access to local peace organizations; (iii) differentiate further their support strategies for intermediary and insider CSOs; (iv) promote and systematically invest in capacity development related to adequate internal governance, management and accountability systems of CSOs; (v) support the networking, coordination and on-going reflection and exchange of experience between insider and outsider/intermediary CSOs as a means to enhance effective partnerships and accountability relations; and (vi) make use of all the different instrument that they possess to support civil society peace initiatives; other means beyond provision of funding are capacity building, country and regional exchange of experiences, lobbying for space with governments and other conflict parties, support to improve the enabling environment, harmonizing their frameworks and country programming etc. All of these suggestions point in the direction that support to civil society for peacebuilding requires a high level of engagement from external actors and can not be relegated to a hands-off funding relationship.

4. Conclusions: Key Issues and Lessons for External Support

This chapter compiles and discusses key issues related to civil society peacebuilding, and summarizes main lessons for external support. Civil society has unique potential to contribute to peacebuilding and conflict mitigation. Despite many successful and valuable examples, however, civil society should not be considered a panacea. Civil society is not per se a peacebuilding actor. Similarly, civil society strengthening and support does not automatically contribute to peacebuilding. While CSOs are frequently actors for peace, they equally have the potential to become 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 identify more strategically the objectives and demonstrate the relevance of particular approaches and functions they propose to engage in different phases of conflict and peacebuilding. Without such clarity, activities run the risk of being well-intentioned, but unlikely to achieve substantial results.

4.1 Civil Society Peacebuilding has High Potential but Risks Remaining Marginal

Civil society can make unique and distinctive 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 durability of subsequent peace agreements (Wanis-St.John/ Kew 2006). This is supported by country examples, such as Guatemala and Sierra Leone. Research appears to suggest that civil society has the strongest comparative advantage with respect to advocacy and intermediation/facilitation functions. Similarly, human rights monitoring has proven to be central. Without being able to stringently attribute certain functions to particular types of CSOs, and accepting the many overlaps that exist, a certain pattern can nevertheless be recognized. For example, CBOs tend to be more active at local level in the area of social cohesion, socialization, intermediation/facilitation, dialogue and service delivery to their members and the community; faith-based and human rights organizations usually go beyond these functions, have a good reach to higher levels and frequently include some social justice advocacy work.

External support can help strengthen the contribution of civil society to peacebuilding at various levels. The provision of independent civil society support, complementary to the provision of peacebuilding support through government and official aid channels, seems particularly justified. It allows to tap into the special potential of civil society (geographical access, reach across conflict fault lines, building community, voice of marginalized groups), to ensure independence and to harness the potential of civil society in situations of a dysfunctional, repressive 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 several official peace negotiations (Track 1) and national truth and reconciliation processes provide a lucid account of the strength of collaborative arrangements.

Local peace initiatives and networks frequently offer a credible starting point. Support for peacebuilding should build on locally owned initiatives. If committed individuals organize dialogues across conflict lines, like the women's initiative "Athwaas" bringing together Muslim, Sikh and Hindu women in Kashmir, this clearly indicates a strong need, a high level of social energy and credibility. Such a multi-group initiative can grow over time, extending its scope of activities from trust-building and awareness raising campaigns, to trauma healing, networking, and advocacy work on women's empowerment and human rights. This describes a credible and successful trajectory, connecting the individual/ personal level with the broader social/ political level.²⁸ It demonstrates how local peace capacity can grow and expand on its own.

²⁸ An important criteria to reach higher impact, as discussed below and in Anderson/ Olson (2003:55).

However, civil society initiatives are not a panacea for peacebuilding. Channeling support through civil society is not fundamentally easier than pursuing other peacebuilding options. This report highlights numerous risks, potential distortions and particular challenges of civil society support. They include inadvertently “doing harm” or supporting conflict actors; distracting local CSOs from their own initiatives; contributing to the monopolization of support by NGOs, and to the conversion of CSOs into mere implementers and service providers. Challenges also arise from conflict-induced changes to enabling environments as well as the nature of civil society itself. These challenges have often been first raised and addressed by members of civil society themselves.

Violence and conflict are often driven by macro-level factors. There is a broad consensus that peacebuilding also has to address and influence the root causes of violence and conflict, such as exclusion and inequality. The underlying structural factors may reside in geo-political power imbalances, historical/ colonial exploitation or destructive forces of globalization. However, in practice, problems in the direct environment of CSOs, at the local and national level, may well be seen as of higher urgency and immediacy. Scaling-up and effecting change at the structural and macro-level remain regular challenges for civil society peace initiative.

The following table provides a snapshot of the potential strengths, limitations and challenges of CSOs in peacebuilding. The table has been distilled from a broad range of literature.²⁹ The strengths identified, however, represent “potential contributions.” Not all types of actors possess these strengths and weaknesses in the same way. Significant differences exist between different kinds of actors and between different stages of conflict.

Table 2: Summary of CSO Strengths, Weaknesses and Challenges

<i>Strengths</i>	Better information on “reality on the ground” CSOs can work where government can not (areas) CSOs can speak to parties government can not reach CSOs can work on social change issues government often can not CSOs are better grounded; particularly CBOs enjoy trust and legitimacy CSOs can inform and monitor policies (the view from below) CSOs operate more flexibly and adapted to the context
<i>Limitations/ Weaknesses</i>	Limited organizational capacity, internal governance, funding. Often a local focus (particularly CBOs). Weak networking and coordination mechanisms among CSOs Questionable constituency base and legitimacy of NGOs Often tense relations with, disregard & 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
<i>Challenges</i>	Sheer diversity of CSOs: different motivations, capacities, contributions Effectiveness of CSOs peacebuilding initiatives difficult to measure Tension between having constituency ties (leading partisanship) and impartiality/ neutrality considered crucial for effective civil society peacebuilding Key conditions for peace are often out of reach for CSOs

²⁹ Cf. for example Barnes 2005, Douma/Klem 2004, Harpviken/Kjellman 2004, World Bank 2005b/c/d, Bouta/Kadayifci-Orellana/Abu-Nimer 2005.

4.2 A Functional Perspective Clarifies Objectives and Impacts

Effective peacebuilding activities require a precise definition of the term. Only this allows for a clear identification of directly relevant activities, programming objectives and intended impacts. The broad understanding frequently employed by donors, as well as religious organizations 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 produce conditions conducive 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 wide range of actors from civil society are engaged in peacebuilding processes, including human rights groups, women's associations, business associations, journalists unions, university councils, and traditional self-help groups. They are often better suited to perform the peacebuilding functions analyzed above. Evidence from various countries, however, shows that donors tend to support mainly NGOs and moderate, middle class groups that often act as 'gatekeepers' vis-à-vis other groups in society. Existing mass organizations and trade unions are often neglected as potential partners. In contrast, many of the new national urban NGOs have a weak membership base, lack country wide and balanced political or ethnic representation and are often linked to the political establishment through kin relationships. Furthermore, donor driven NGO civil society 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 civil society support in peacebuilding often shows insufficient recognition of the broad diversity of members of civil society, including their characteristics, respective goals, strengths and weaknesses. The roles and potential peacebuilding functions that particular CSOs are able to fulfill are often unclear. The current support practice tends to employ actor-oriented approaches, identifying existing civil society groups that could eventually support peacebuilding, and providing them with various forms of assistance. It needs to be recognized, however, that in situations of armed conflict parts of civil society are likely to develop "uncivil" characteristics.

A functional perspective can help clarify objectives and intended impacts. This report develops and discusses a new analytical framework to understand the functions of civil society in peacebuilding. In academic theory and operational practice, there is a wide variety of ways to categorize civil society contributions to development and peacebuilding. Donors tend to employ actor-oriented perspectives, focusing on the impacts that activities of different categories of actors can have in a given situation. This report proposes to move toward a functional perspective, centered on the concrete contributions that different actors can make in situations of armed conflict. It will enable donors to better analyze existing and potential new forms of civil society engagement for peacebuilding. In particular, focusing on civil society functions will 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.

4.3 Working through Partnerships, while Avoiding Aid Distortions

The Insider-Outsider distinction is critical. In most conflict situations, numerous CSOs are active at various levels, including human rights groups, unions, NGOs, women groups and traditional leaders. In addition, external CSOs (Northern and I-NGOs) will most likely be present. 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 very useful (Anderson/ Olson 2003: 36ff). Insiders are groups “widely seen as vulnerable to the conflict”, living in the conflict area, experiencing consequences of violence and conflict directly. Outsiders are “widely seen as individuals or agencies that choose to become involved in a conflict”; they may work and sometimes live in the area, but personally have little to lose.³⁰ Insiders and outsiders bring very different strengths and limitations to the table.³¹ The frequently distorted dynamics of insider-outsider partnerships have been analyzed numerous times (donor dominance, gatekeeper problematic if national NGOs etc), and much good advice has been given on how to improve the collaboration and funding relationship.³² What is important to emphasize, is that in civil society peacebuilding activities - even more so than in “regular” development cooperation - insiders have to take the lead when identifying problems, starting initiatives and mobilizing support.

Civil society is not always good: beware of ‘uncivil’ society. The report has shown that civil society has its dark sides, too. Many civil actors show ‘uncivil behavior’, preach hatred against other groups and thus incite armed conflict. This seems to be especially virulent during and in the immediate aftermath of armed conflict, when a weak state is unable to execute control and thus provides opportunities for uncivil groups to thrive. This underlines again that sound analysis is needed to determine which actors work for integration, inclusion and democratization and which ones stand for disintegration and exclusion. Besides the case of outright “uncivil society”, CSOs may side or get involved too closely with one conflict party (partisanship). This may not lead them to becoming actors of violence themselves. However, they may no longer be seen as impartial, open-minded or distanced enough to be accepted by both sides as mediators, conciliators or initiators of peace dialogues etc. This exemplifies the need to invest in exchange of experience and mutual learning processes where partners can recognize, reflect upon – and possibly correct – their behavior.

Ownership is key, but poses a particular challenge in conflict settings. There is a general consensus in the literature that national actors should be the main actors in peacebuilding, and that outside intervention should be limited to their support (Lederach 1997; Anderson/ Olson 2003). While “country ownership” has become a fundamental policy prescription for development cooperation, the rationale for this principle in peacebuilding, which by default includes social and political change, is even more evident, e.g. in the form of national reconciliation, dialogue, peace education, security sector reforms. In deeply divided societies, members of civil society may be conflict parties themselves, and their legitimacy and the representativeness of civil initiatives are hard to establish. In addition, traditional or local membership organizations are often formed on the basis of group identity, and do not build bridging social capital, by connecting people through personal ties, interactions and solidarity relations across conflict fault lines. External actors and their local partners have an obligation to do proper checks and monitoring on the identity, background and practice of particular groups in order not to support inadvertently spoilers and dividers instead of integrators and peace activists.

The “NGO-ization” of peace work. There is some empirical evidence of negative effects of NGO peacebuilding initiatives. Following the logic of development aid delivery, external support for civil society goes most often directly from donors to international or northern NGOs and, to a large extent, through them to national, mainly urban, elite based NGOs. In many cases this has lead to a ‘monetization of peace work’. NGOs may become dependent on external funding and

³⁰ In this understanding, outsiders are not necessarily from outside the country, although all expatriate staff most likely belongs to that category. Also representatives of capital based NGOs may be perceived as outsiders in the case of a local or regional conflict.

³¹ Insiders are seen to bring (i) in-depths knowledge of the context, (ii) motivation, commitment, (iii) credibility and trust from people in the particular setting, (iv) leverage and (v) long-term continuity, follow-up and presence. Outsiders may dispose of (i) lobby, advocacy and awareness-raising ability at the international level, (ii) leverage with outside constituencies to increase security of insiders, (iii) provide comparative experience and new ideas and techniques, (iv) external funding and contacts (Anderson/ Olson 2003).

³² As an excellent example again see Anderson/ Olson 2003.

increasingly accountable toward international sponsors, instead of local constituencies. This can result in the disempowerment of local communities and civic engagement for peace, as the logic of receiving funds makes it necessary to downplay local knowledge and resources, demonstrating local weaknesses and needs instead. In this way, attention is deflected from local level, political advocacy initiatives and mass-based movements. NGO peace activities themselves seem often to have a rather limited effect on macro-peace processes. Donor's and I-NGO's preference to support NGOs may result in reduced voice and mass mobilization for peace issues. Resources and opportunities gained in the NGO sector are inclined to detain talented and motivated citizens from joining political parties, government institutions and contributing to political peace processes.

Does service delivery for donors undermine civil society peacebuilding impact? As discussed above, the contribution of service delivery by CSOs to conflict prevention and peacebuilding is contested. Besides distorting organizational priorities, incentives and accountability of CSOs, this practice runs the risk of undermining the state. Counter arguments are that (i) delivering food, water, shelter, etc. is by itself a contribution to peace, helping people to survive or suffer less; (ii) enhanced service delivery by CSOs to hitherto excluded or underserved social groups may by itself address some of the root causes of a particular conflict; (iii) service provision has an entry point functions to build trust and relationship, on which civil functions more directly supportive for peacebuilding can grow; and (iv) service delivery is often accompanied with the establishment and strengthening of participatory governance mechanism, which can certainly contribute to peacebuilding, if set up to enhance bridging social capital.³³ More empirical research is needed on how quasi-commercial service delivery, e.g. in emergency relief or social and economic development work, affects the capacity of delivery and CSOs in the field of peacebuilding.

Capacity building and the professionalization of CSO peace work. Over the last decade, CSOs in many countries, particularly I-NGOs and national NGOs, have acquired an enormous amount of skills and know-how, and developed an impressive stock of expertise on how to work and engage in conflict situations and in the different aspects of peacebuilding. Indeed, in many respects, they are at the forefront in the field of peacebuilding. The literature speaks of the growing professionalization of NGOs in conflict prevention and peacebuilding (Reimann/ Ropers 2005), having developed standards, operating policies, manuals. Many I-NGOs and national NGOs have provided valuable support for other CSOs already engaged in or planning to enter peacebuilding work. Besides expertise in the many peacebuilding areas (reconciliation, dialogue work, trauma healing etc.), support has been focused on strengthening the organizational capacity (internal governance, legitimacy, partnering), advocacy skills, networking and institutionalized forms of mutual learning and exchange. Some peacebuilding processes require a high level of professional training and experience, e.g. individual counseling and trauma healing, and the question remains to whether this is a task for NGOs or should rather be performed by private professionals or the state?

4.4 Improving Effectiveness

CSO activities risk remaining disconnected from macro-level processes. Interventions at the individual/ personal level have to move toward bringing about socio-political and institutional change. Many CSO peace initiatives have their focus at the local level. They often have limited contact with, and even less effect on the macro-level conflict dynamics, be it the structural underlying causes of conflict, or the official conflict management, peace or state-rebuilding processes. The assumption that many local peace initiatives will automatically influence peacebuilding at the macro level has proven wrong. (Anderson/ Olson 2003: 54ff.) External

³³ E.g., the research conducted by World Vision regarding the peacebuilding impact of Area Development projects. Also, Community Driven Development projects combine the support for self-organization and internal governance of communities with delivery of material support.

support has to show modesty and realism, and be ready to engage with citizens and their organizations working toward transforming violent conflict and achieving peace in the long term.

Initiatives already at the socio-political level can improve their impact by either connecting key individuals with large numbers of people (creating legitimacy, popular support and political pressure), or vice versa (gaining spokesperson, leadership, political power promoters). In many conflict situations, large parts of the population mistrusts government, and civil society peace activists avoid making direct connections to governmental actors. However, for boosting the reach and sustainability of civil society peace activities the establishment of communication channels and working relations with government officials at the local, district or national level have been found particularly important (Anderson/ Olson 2003: 54ff.).

Successful civil society peacebuilding activities require a medium to long term perspective (Paffenholz/ Damgaard/ Prasain 2004). Supporting civil society peacebuilding initiatives is not a quick fix to achieve solutions to urgent conflict-related challenges. Instead, as the analysis above has shown, most civil society peacebuilding functions aim to achieve long-term social transformation toward peace. In addition, they are contingent upon the development of a set of important framework conditions, which are unlikely to be created in the short term. The Life and Peace Institute's example in Somalia shows that it took ten years of dialogue programs and trainings to reach from the local level to the national/ international processes (Paffenholz 2003a).

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. In theory, the role of the state is to guarantee security, respect for human rights, and an independent judiciary; it has to deliver public services in a responsive and inclusive way, develop just public policies and lead their implementation. During and after armed conflict, however, state structures tend to be weak, fragile, characterized by in-transparent power relations and unable to guarantee an enabling environment for civil society activities. In other contexts, we may find a strong authoritarian state that oppresses civil society in times of conflict. Thus, it may be necessary to consider support for state structures, law enforcement, participatory decision making mechanism, etc. concomitantly to assistance to civil society. In many respects, peacebuilding requires the lead of the government, even if CSOs play vital roles in areas such as reconciliation and reintegration processes.

CSOs and external support agencies can have adverse effects (i.e. contribute to violence, hostilities, destructive attitudes). With their activities or support they can contribute to worsen divisions between conflicting groups, increase danger for participants in peace activities, trigger overt violence, diverting interest and energy of local partners to non-priority areas (see above). In order to avoid these damaging effects, external support agencies, as well as their local partners should jointly conduct “Do No Harm” reviews regarding their peacebuilding activities and particular mode of operation. Furthermore, whether outside support is an appropriate option, must be carefully assessed. The danger is to expose citizen and civil society initiatives and make them target of hostile activities. Also, external support may pull them into fields of activities where they do not have the right qualification or experience for. Conducting a thorough conflict/ political analysis, as well as an equally important civil society assessment can help inform the broad design of support strategies and programs. An open fund allowing civil society stakeholders to come up with their proposals combined with very open and transparent selection criteria is suggested.

There is need for more impact analysis and context-specific political analysis. Existing studies on the effectiveness of peace work confirm that the success of peace initiatives is contingent upon very specific conditions. A USAID evaluation (USAID 2001), for example, compares the effectiveness of three different civil society approaches to controlling violent conflicts and building peace at the Greater Horn of Africa. It shows how dependent effectiveness

and results are on the specific features of the approach chosen and the particular context variables.³⁴ More evaluations and studies are needed to gain more insights and discern typologies. In self-evaluations, civil society peace practitioners judge the outcomes and impact of their peacebuilding activities at best mediocre (Anderson/ Olson 2003). Many of them recognize the need for further improvements, for themselves, but also as a requirement from their donors. Currently, the majority of them is engaged in monitoring of inputs and outputs at the project level (i.e. how their activities achieve intended goals), but does not (yet) systematically observe the outcomes and impact of their activities (i.e. how their discrete programs contribute to progress with regard to the peacebuilding goals). Numerous methodological questions occur with regard to impact evaluations of civil society peace activities.³⁵ The further development and testing of adequate methodologies is recommended (Douma/ Klem 2004). Besides the four criteria to assess effectiveness of peace work provided by Anderson/ Olson (2003: 16)³⁶ the civil society functions perspective developed in this report may provide important dimensions for outcome indicators (monitoring) and intended results chains (planning).

4.5 Knowledge and Research Gaps

This report has highlighted numerous research and knowledge gaps.³⁷ In essence, these revolve around the key questions of (i) how to improve the effectiveness of civil society initiatives, (ii) how to measure their impact, and (iii) how to more strategically deploy external support. Further analysis and applied research through in-depth case studies, comparative research and more consultative forms of knowledge sharing would be particularly beneficial in the following areas:

- To what extent should we hold the criteria of addressing root causes against the often important, but small and localized civil society peacebuilding activities? Can and should all CS initiatives aspire to do this?
- How, in which functions and under which circumstances can different types of actors from within civil society positively impact on peacebuilding?
- What are the comparative advantages of civil society compared to other actors?
- What is the potential impact of different civil society peacebuilding functions in different conflict phases?
- What are optimal ways of sequencing and interlinking civil society support with official peace processes?
- How can external support programs be designed to minimize possible distortions negative impacts?
- What are key criteria on whether, when and how external actors should support civil society peacebuilding?
- How to recognize promising initiatives, whether to engage in supporting them, at what stage, through which partners and in what form?

³⁴ The three approaches evaluated were (i) a local peace capacity approach working with traditional leaders, which showed the deepest outcomes with regard to ending violence (in a localized setting with the traditional authorities involved); (ii) a peace dialogue approach between mid-level managers/ leaders, that was highly appreciated, but with results that remained somewhat unclear; and (iii) a peace media campaign, which had clearly a broad reach, but whose outcomes/ influence remained unclear (USAID 2001).

³⁵ E.g. How to choose the counterfactual? How to isolate a small positive factor in a whole web of bigger influences? When to expect outcomes/ impact? How to deal with external shocks? The question of attribution.

³⁶ The four criteria are: (i) the effort causes participants and communities to develop their own initiatives for peace; (ii) the effort results in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievance that fuel the conflict; (iii) the effort prompts people increasingly to resist violence and provocations to violence; (iv) the effort results in an increase in people's security.

³⁷ See also Annex 5

5. Recommendations

This chapter provides a set of recommendations. They are aimed primarily at external actors (donors, UN, World Bank, I-NGO etc.), who are supporting civil society in peacebuilding processes. They may equally 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 and improvements.

Continue direct support to civil society for peacebuilding. The report has outlined the many ways in which civil society makes invaluable, unique and independent contributions to peacebuilding. They can also make a very positive contribution to official peacebuilding interventions. In general terms, donors should therefore continue providing direct support for peacebuilding activities of civil society. 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. In providing support to civil society initiatives for peacebuilding, donors should be mindful of critical factors and key limitations. Donor policies and funding guidelines should reflect good practice standards for civil society support (including analytical requirements, joint Do No Harm reviews, public transparency standards, independent peer review mechanisms, donor evaluations by CSOs).

Start with a broad notion of civil society, and extend the current focus of support beyond NGOs. Given the regional and cultural variations, as well as the differentiation of civil society within each country it seems imperative to employ a broad notion of civil society. This will prevent missing out on specific groups, such as social movements, informal and traditional groups, and help to overcome the current preference to support mostly capital-based national NGOs. External support programs should collaborate with a broad range of civil society organizations, selected according to the civil society peacebuilding functions to be strengthened. A solid, empirically grounded understanding of the actor landscape, their existing roles and their potential to move into missing ones, their capacities and needs is crucial.

Enhance clarity of objectives in civil society peacebuilding support. The functional perspective developed in this report should help make more strategic choices regarding the objectives of civil society peacebuilding support. The framework should be tested and validated further, with regard to its usefulness as a heuristic instrument to guide: (i) outcome and impact evaluations, (ii) planning and programming decisions, and (iii) harmonizing donor policy and programming.

Base civil society support on rigorous analysis and develop appropriate instruments. Typically, three analytical steps are required: (i) a thorough conflict or political analysis to identify the most essential areas for civil society engagement (the functions developed above will be of help); (ii) a solid civil society assessment, which analyzes civil society composition; the existence of “uncivil society”; internal factors, such as its capacity, organization, governance, networking; as well as the various dimensions of enabling environment for civil society³⁸; (iii) a review of civil society capacity and experience with peacebuilding initiatives to capture successful and promising approaches, understand success factors and limitations, as well as capacity enhancement needs. Donors and external support agencies should invest further in the development and application of appropriate analytical instruments, as well as related in-country

³⁸ The WB’s Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT) may be an instructive example for such an instrument and easily adjusted for this purpose.

and independent capacity. Wherever possible, methodology development and in-country capacity development should be done through coordinated or joint efforts.

Consider following the “template process” for designing support interventions for civil society in peacebuilding in a specific conflict context (Annex 4). The suggested process entails six steps: (i) conflict/ peace and civil society analyses, (ii) needs assessment, (iii) relevance assessment, (iv) strategy and partner selection, (v) risks and effects assessment, (vi) final decision of focus and scope of support. This “template process” would need to be enriched through consultations with in-country stakeholders and other donors, as well as existing and potential partner organizations.

Improve understanding of outcomes, impacts and critical success factors of civil society peacebuilding initiatives. Outcome and impact evaluation methodologies should build on case study analysis and project/ program evaluations, as well as comparative analysis (thematic evaluations). Donor organizations and I-NGOs should support the elaboration and testing of qualitative impact assessment methodologies, building on existing peacebuilding 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 designs of rigorous impact evaluation. The functional framework for civil society in peacebuilding may be a good guiding framework for these tasks.

Reconcile the need for partner-led approaches with donor requirements. The report points at local ownership and partner led approaches as key success factors for civil society peacebuilding support. At the same time, the need for greater clarity in objectives, thorough analyses and better impact assessments has become evident. Donors have the obligation to account for their funding, report on outcomes, and prevent negative impacts. The two rationales of partner-led approaches and donor accountability requirements may well come into tension. Reconciling them requires that both partners become convinced of the relevance and usefulness of new standards. Besides a continued debate, as e.g. is happening around the instrument of Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments, donors should engage in a strategic dialogue with their partners regarding civil society functions in peacebuilding, the need for more upfront analysis and impact assessments.

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

Donor support has to go beyond simple funding and standardized trainings. In most instances, it should be offered with at least a medium term perspective. Donors should invest in systematic capacity building (e.g. on internal governance, networking, sharing of experience) and joint learning with their partners to find the most appropriate way for improving current practice. Donors should also make use of the broad set of roles as dialogue partner, lobbyist for space for civil society initiatives and facilitator for linking local experience into formal peace processes. Working in “partnerships” requires a high level of engagement also from external actors and can not be relegated to a hands-off funding relationship.

Take into account constraints in the external environment for CSOs and the role of the state. The entanglement of the state in the conflict dynamics, as well as the extent to which state authority and capacity exist to perform its core functions are key determinants for civil society peace initiatives. Equally, the “enabling environment” for civil society, in particular the degree of deterioration or even suspension of the rule of law, respect for human rights, and security for citizens should be assessed. This set of information should be used (i) to inform decisions regarding the broad areas for civil society support, but also (ii) to identify complementary measures for strengthening state capacity or influencing political willingness, in areas critical for peacebuilding in general and civil society contributions in particular.

Link independent civil society support and other development assistance instruments. Greater policy and strategic coherence on the part of donors is needed to ensure that the effective

transfer of analytical insights, lessons learned, as well as programmatic recommendations across the various policy domains and assistance instruments. Outside the realm of direct civil society support, it seems particularly important (i) to promote civil society collaboration in official peacebuilding and reconstruction processes led by Governments or the international community, and (ii) to strengthen functions and capacity of the state which are of particular importance for civil society and an enabling environment.

Strengthen donor coordination. In order to enhance donor coordination and harmonization of frameworks, it is suggested that interested donor organizations establish a joint platform for on-going discussion and sharing of experience on the issue of civil society and peacebuilding, e.g. as an informal working group of the OECD DAC Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation network. Such a working group could become the right forum for discussion of harmonization issues, learning about effectiveness, clarifying linkages with official peacebuilding processes and interacting with practitioners, regional networks, the UN³⁹ and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC).

Invest in research and evaluation to address knowledge gaps. In view of the basic information, research and evaluation gaps outlined throughout the report, it is suggested to further invest in coordinated research activities related to civil society in peacebuilding. Such a research program should pay particular attention to improving the interface between researchers, policy-makers and implementers. It should bring together researchers, practitioners (CSO, NGO and I-NGO and networks), donors and other interested parties to more fully understand the particular contributions and functions of civil society during conflict and the various conflict phases.

39 A good start has been the elaboration of the OECD/DAC Issues Brief on the issue (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>

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Annexes

Annex 1: Examples of Civil Society Peacebuilding Functions

Protection: Peace Brigades International, Columbia

Name of initiative	Peace Brigades International (PBI) – Columbia
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: 376-381.

Monitoring: Human Rights Monitoring, Nepal

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 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

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.

	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Sequencing civil society input is crucial. ACS formulated targeted recommendations prior to specific negotiation rounds.</p> <p>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.</p>
Further Information	Greiter 2003; Conciliation Resources 2002.

Socialization: People to People Dialogue, Israel/ Palestine

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.
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	<p>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.</p> <p>Activities should be designed to leverage individual friendship for peace on the aggregate social level. The specific conditions for this require further research.</p> <p>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.</p>
Further Information	About initiative: www.unidir.org ; Atieh et al. 2004; Taha 2003.

Social Cohesion: Independent Filmmakers Association, South Caucasus

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	Supporting conflict-sensitive social cohesion has high potential of

Good Practice Limitations	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

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	<u>El Salvador</u> : 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. <u>Mozambique</u> : 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	<u>El Salvador</u> : 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. <u>Mozambique</u> : 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	<u>El Salvador</u> : The churches hold contacts to both parties and did successfully facilitate short term ceasefires. <u>Mozambique</u> : ICRC did negotiate with Renamo and the government.
Role of external actors	<u>El Salvador</u> : No external actor were involved. <u>Mozambique</u> : 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	<u>El Salvador</u> : 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. <u>Mozambique</u> : The same results on the psychological side can be stated for Mozambique.
Further Information	Kurtenbach/ Paffenholz 1994: 116-119; Paffenholz 1998: 186-188.

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

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 stressing that civil society is a body in its own right, separated 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/ Lauth 1998: 4; Schade 2002: 10).

Charles Montesquieu (1689 – 1755) has 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/Lauth 1998: 5).

Alexander de Tocqueville (1805 – 1859) has 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 has later named it (Putnam 2000: 19-26)

Antonio Gramsci (1891 – 1937) has 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 to be (Merkel/Lauth 1998, Merkel 2000, Croissant et al. 2000, Lauth 2003):

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. Community building – integration: Civil society is seen as a ‘catalyst of civil virtues’ as an ‘antidote’ both to individualism/retreat to family and to etatism. 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.

5. 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/Reychler 2005c and Paffenholz 2005a and 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 contribution 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.