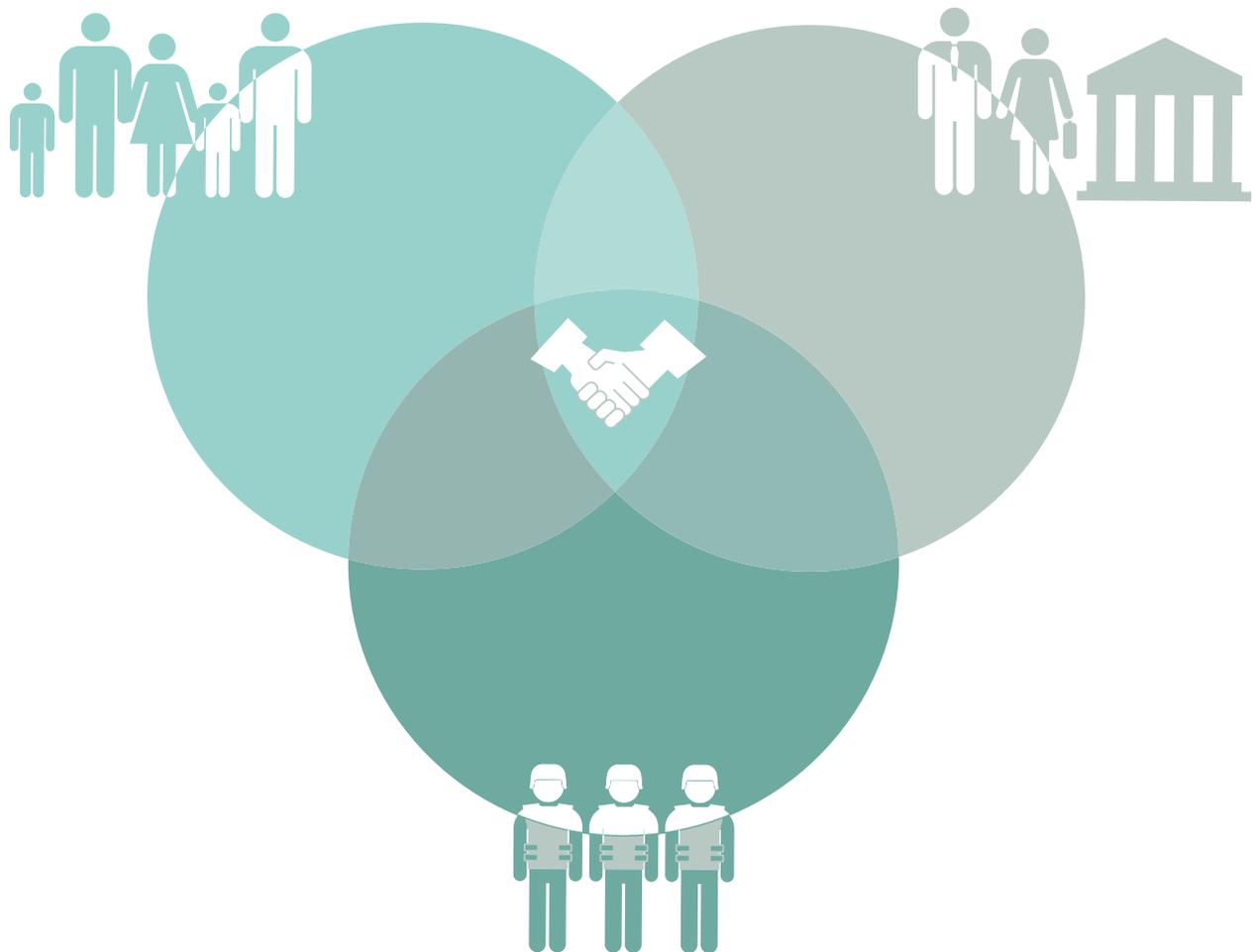


Multi-Stakeholder Processes for Conflict Prevention & Peacebuilding: A Manual



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Global Partnership
for the Prevention of
Armed Conflict

Executive Summary

It is widely acknowledged that conflict prevention is a challenge that can only be addressed through the combined effort of many different groups, agencies and sectors. Such different groups working together on a common objective, is what makes a multi-stakeholder approach. It assumes that bringing together the resources, knowledge, perspectives, skills and constituencies of the various stakeholders can lead to the political will, collective capacities and sense of ownership needed to prevent conflict and build sustainable peace.

The main benefit of the multi-stakeholder approach is that it allows for a systems approach to conflict, where the different actors and their initiatives are complementary to each other and part of a bigger, complex whole. This can enhance inclusivity and contribute to broader ownership of conflict prevention strategies. There is also much criticism of these assumptions, as well as known risks involved in setting up or participating in a multi-stakeholder process in a conflict context. To address the risks and enhance the possible benefits of such an approach, fundamental questions around legitimacy, power, and ownership must be acknowledged and addressed.

In this manual, we define multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) as initiatives that convene three or more stakeholder groups, which together seek solutions and develop strategies around specific conflict prevention objectives. While we refer to techniques and lessons learned from dialogue and mediation, the manual mainly considers initiatives that are ultimately aimed at joint planning and action. These require more intense engagement, agreement on longer-term objectives, and means to ensure follow up and implementation.

The manual specifically explores the multi-stakeholder approach from the perspective of civil society organisations (CSOs). CSOs can take part in multi-stakeholder processes in many different capacities, as original convenor or as an invited participant. To set up an MSP, a civil society organisation will often have to form a partnership with other key actors so that they will have the leverage to invite the right people and agencies to the table.

Building on the vast experiences of practitioners and case studies from a diverse set of contexts, the manual has been developed for GPPAC members and other CSOs that are or seek to get involved in MSPs. It also provides guidance on good practice for other actors, such as International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), governments, donors, regional or global intergovernmental organisations that seek to engage civil society in processes that they convene.

By including quotes and case studies, we aim to remind the reader that that each context and situation is specific and different from another. The manual is best understood as a flexible tool of options, to help practitioners ask the right questions, and to find inspiration and guidance in examples and methodologies used by others. It can help practitioners to look out for common pitfalls and benchmarks as they create or contribute to their own variation of a multi-stakeholder process for conflict prevention.

Visit www.preventiveaction.org to download the full manual or the chapter(s) of interest.

Colophon

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Acknowledgements

This manual is a product of the Preventive Action Working Group of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). The Working Group brought together civil society representatives and practitioners from the world over to reflect on how to bridge the gap between conflict early warning and early response, to better understand the roles and contributions of civil society in this respect, and to equip practitioners with know-how and lessons learned to play their role effectively.

Thank you! The manual has been several years in the making and is the result of a slow, participatory process and an accumulation of existing resources in the fields of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and organisational development. Consequently, there is a long list of people and organisations to be acknowledged and to credit for this final product.

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Content input and deliberations: As reflected in the many quotes and examples throughout the manual, the content is an accumulated effort of practitioner deliberations, most notably:

- The Preventive Action Working Group (see Annex) dedicated a full day to deliberating on a draft outline of the manual at their meeting in Istanbul in May 2013, in addition to commenting and adding content to several subsequent feedback rounds.
- Four GPPAC members put in time for in-depth interviews and reviewing drafts: Raya Kadyrova of Foundation for Tolerance International (Kyrgyzstan), Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls of FemLINK PACIFIC (Fiji), Andrés Serbin of CRIES and Florence Mpaayei, formerly of NPI-Africa.
- Lisa Schirch of the Alliance for Peacebuilding contributed to and incorporated parts of the manual into the Handbook on Human Security, and twenty-nine practitioners took part in a global Training of Trainers pilot in June 2015.

List of Abbreviations

ASF	African Standby Force
ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBO	Community-based organisation
CCP	Concerned Citizens for Peace
CEWS	the Continental Early Warning System
CIMIC	Civil-Military Interaction and Cooperation
CPAD	Strengthening Capacities for Peace and Development in the Pacific
CRIES	Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales
CSDN	Civil Society Dialogue Network
CSOs	Civil society organisations
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GPPAC	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
ICCN	International Centre on Conflict and Negotiation
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LPC	Local Peace Committees
MSP	Multi-stakeholder process
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NPI-Africa	Nairobi Peace Initiative
OAS	The Organization of American States
OSCE	The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
TACE	Taller Académico Cuba-EEUU, or in English the Cuban United States Academic Workshop
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPA	United Nations Political Affairs

1 About this Manual

“the guidance is practice-oriented, looking beyond the textbook approach and considering the imperfect realities within which conflict prevention efforts take place.”



1.1 Introduction

Conflict prevention is one of the most important and most difficult challenges of our time. It is a challenge that can only be addressed through the combined effort of many different groups, agencies and sectors, with a multitude of strategies at different levels. Taking this idea a step further, the multi-stakeholder approach proposes that these divergent groups can work together, or at least in synergy, towards a common objective.

This manual explores the viability, options and experiences of multi-stakeholder processes from the perspective of civil society organisations (CSOs) working to prevent conflict and build peace. There are many roles that CSOs can play in this regard, from instigating and (co-)hosting a multi-stakeholder process, to supporting the process design, organisation and implementation. In most cases, this requires a partnership with other key actors, which individually or together have enough convening power to involve the right people in the process.



Latin America case study
Section 8.4

What we are trying to show is that civil society organisations are able and well prepared to deal with some issues, and governments should have some kind of partnership with those CSOs. My impression is that in the books this works marvellously. In reality, it's sometimes very difficult to develop this approach.

Andrés Serbin

Practitioners in the peacebuilding field often express the need for coordination and collaboration, but this need is not easily addressed. While it is difficult to disagree with the multi-stakeholder approach in principle, it is not always clear what it means in practice, and what the implications are for project planning and implementation. Many initiatives may be multi-stakeholder in composition, but often without adapting their design and procedures to this form of engagement.¹ In other words, “putting the right people in one room does not automatically [...] produce more effective or sustainable solutions.”²

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) was founded on the principle that preventing violent conflict requires joint action by different kinds of actors—hence the use of ‘partnership’ in its name. The GPPAC network is a strong promoter of multi-stakeholder collaboration. However, what we have lacked until now has been an experience-based critical assessment of the multi-stakeholder approach that takes us beyond the broad principles and popular buzzwords and seeks to answer a number of key questions. What practical considerations do CSOs need to bear in mind when they initiate or participate in such processes? How can we make these processes more efficient and productive? When is it better not to engage in such a process? This manual is a result of these types of questions.

1.2 Objectives

Over recent years, GPPAC’s Preventive Action programme has worked to share knowledge, and to identify and develop tools that can support CSOs to move from conflict analysis to preventive action, by engaging with key stakeholders in a conflict situation.³ As part of this, GPPAC developed a Conflict Analysis Field Guide, which provides practical guidance on the different uses of and tools for conflict analysis. It was the need for additional examples and guidance on how to practically use the analysis—to feed into proactive conflict prevention strategies and mobilise key stakeholders—which led to the work on this manual.

To complement the Conflict Analysis Field Guide, this manual aims to:

- Harness the knowledge on multi-stakeholder processes of CSOs and peacebuilding practitioners in different regions in the context of conflict prevention.

¹ ‘Multipart - Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships in Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The Role of the European Union’ www.multi-part.eu.

² Wim Hiemstra, Herman Brouwer and Simone van Vugt, *Power Dynamics in Multi-Stakeholder Processes: A Balancing Act* (PSO, 2012).

³ See Annex.

- Provide practical guidance for CSOs and their partners to initiate or engage in multi-stakeholder processes as a part of conflict prevention strategies.
- Enable CSOs to use their conflict analysis strategically and as part of a preventive action process.

The manual is intended as a practical tool, developed for GPPAC members and other CSOs that seek to initiate, instigate or participate in multi-stakeholder processes for conflict prevention within their own contexts, or those that are already involved in such processes. Secondly, it also provides guidance on good practice, which can inform other actors, such as International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), governments, donors and regional or global intergovernmental organisations, which seek to engage civil society in processes that they convene.

1.3 Methodology

The steps that led to the manual included:

- **Desk review** of existing literature on multi-stakeholder processes, tapping into dialogue and mediation materials as well as looking beyond the conflict prevention and peacebuilding fields. Materials studied have related to diverse sectors, such as information and communication technology, medicine, community involvement, natural resource management and business.
- **Case studies** based on in-depth interviews with GPPAC members from four different regions, as well as examples from other documented processes, which have been referenced throughout. The presentation of the Reflections in Section 8 was left in the interview format, to reflect the personal opinions and insights, which are specific to the case and to the individual interviewed at a given time. The cases were selected based on the following criteria:
 - » Processes that convened multiple stakeholders around conflict prevention objectives.
 - » Processes that aimed at increased coordination or collaboration of those actors in the pursuit of conflict prevention objectives—whether successful or not.
 - » A geographical spread of cases from the perspective of local civil society groups.
- **Peer review** and working group deliberations: The contents of the manual have been informed by deliberations of practitioners in the GPPAC Preventive Action Working Group,⁴ as well as additional subject matter experts. The draft manual went through several consultation rounds.
- **Training of Trainers:** The core concepts and steps elaborated in this manual were presented and discussed, as well as tested in a scenario exercise, at a Training of Trainers event with GPPAC members and partners from across the globe.⁵

Most of the quotes used throughout this manual have been collected through the case study interviews, working group meetings, the Training of Trainers or via the consultation rounds on the draft versions. A smaller number of quotes are cited from existing materials covered in the desk review.

We have aimed to ensure that the guidance is practice-oriented, by looking beyond the textbook approach of what a multi-stakeholder process *should* look like, and by considering the imperfect realities within which conflict prevention efforts take place. We welcome all feedback and suggestions to enable us to continuously improve our guidance and knowledge on real-world processes for conflict prevention.

⁴ On 7–9 May 2013, sixteen members of the Preventive Action Working Group met in Istanbul, Turkey to discuss a draft manual and relevant case studies. See also Annex.

⁵ On 8–12 June 2015, twenty-nine practitioners took part in the Human Security Training of Trainers as part of the Civil Society and Security Sector Engagement for Human Security project by the Alliance for Peacebuilding, GPPAC and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.

1.4 How to Use this Manual

The guidance in this manual is structured around the following main parts:

Section 2 is an **introduction** to the idea, background and rationale of the multi-stakeholder approach. It describes the theory of change of this approach as related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding objectives, outlining in brief the benefits and risks, as well as possible alternatives.

Section 3 unpacks and responds to these benefits and risks by discussing the underlying issues that can make or break a multi-stakeholder process. Fundamental questions around **legitimacy, power, and ownership** are continuous considerations that need to be addressed from the outset.

Section 4 guides the practitioner in deciding **when and whether to initiate or participate** in a multi-stakeholder process. It discusses **conditions** and timing in the context, as well as the **competencies** and **skills** required of the organisers and the participants.

Section 5 outlines key **steps in the process** of initiating, preparing and designing, implementing, and concluding the process. This section also refers to a number of tools that can aid some of the steps and stages of the process.

Section 6 gives a basic overview of some of the **stakeholder groups** that can be considered for the process, exploring their potential roles in conflict prevention, the risks involved and what type of preparation or entry point might be useful for getting them on board.

Section 7 provides **practical tools** to help plan and implement an MSP, to give the reader some optional support to take the practical steps of moving from theory to practice.

Section 8 presents reflections on four diverse **case studies**—the Pacific, Kyrgyzstan, Kenya and Latin America—based on interviews with practitioners having been involved in multi-stakeholder initiatives in those regions on either national or regional levels.

Finally, Sections 9 and 10 provide a **glossary and sources** to help the reader delve deeper into the rich materials reviewed for this project.

A **note of caution** is necessary to emphasise that each context and situation is specific and different from another. The manual is therefore best understood as a **flexible tool of options**, to help practitioners ask the right questions, and to find inspiration and guidance in examples and methodologies used by others. It will also help practitioners to look out for common pitfalls and benchmarks as they create or contribute to their own variation of a multi-stakeholder process for conflict prevention.

Find your way through the manual

Look out for these icons throughout the manual to find out more on a particular topic or tool.



Find this quote in the Reflections section of the manual.



More on this topic can be found in the Conflict Analysis Field Guide or another key resource.



There are relevant tools and guidance boxes available for this topic.



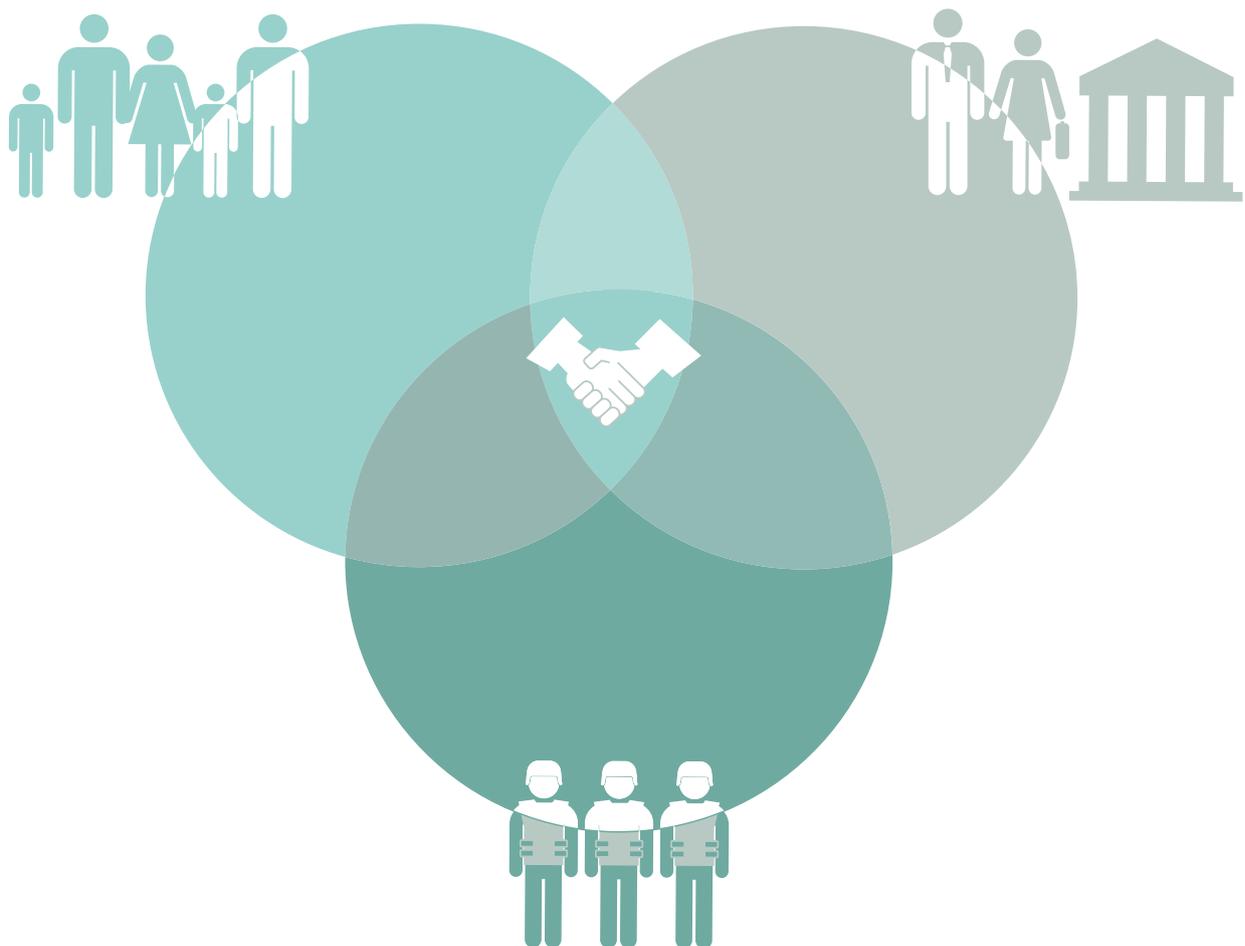
Additional resources on this topic, listed in full in the Bibliography.



More on this topic can be found in a different section of this manual.

2 About Multi-Stakeholder Processes

“The idea behind multi-stakeholder processes is that actors with different positions, mandates and backgrounds can go further working together than in isolation.”



2.1 Background and Definitions

Since the late 1990s and the many global summits of that decade, multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) have increasingly become an important strategy for addressing complex problems. MSPs have been proposed to bridge the governance gap of international organisations, to manage humanitarian or disaster relief, or to make information and communication technologies more accessible around the world, to name but a few examples. In the context of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the multi-stakeholder approach is often deemed necessary to ensure broad ownership and coherence of peacebuilding processes.

The approach has sometimes been criticised as not being applicable in countries that do not have the conditions for democratic dialogue.⁶ Another critique is that MSPs are often donor-driven rather than locally owned.⁷ However, this need not be the case, especially as MSPs carried out in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding have mainly emerged from dialogue and mediation practice.⁸ This line of work acknowledges that all cultural traditions have provisions for dialogue that are giving rise to locally-owned and effective MSPs—though often they are not labelled or known as such.



Pacific case study
Section 8.3

[In Fiji], the fear is not just among civilians or civil society, but there is also a lot of fear amidst state officials, because they are also working within a certain framework that is a result of the [military] coup. (...) The dialogue process is about being able to communicate that we are collectively trying to prevent the resurgence of violence.

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

2.1.1 What is a multi-stakeholder process?

The case studies and practitioners' deliberations (Section 8) did not point to one particular definition, but brought out similarities in how they described multi-stakeholder processes. They emphasised that MSPs bring together diverse representatives of key sectors within a society, that they can be public or private, and that they depend on participants sharing a common objective. The processes were seen to be relevant to public issues, crises or anticipated crises, and could have multiple objectives. Hence, in defining these MSPs, we acknowledge that there are many variations of these components:

- **Multi:** Involving more than two types of groups or entities—for example civil society, state actors (such as government, local authority, ministries), international organisations (UN, regional organisations), the media, the business sector, the security sector (military, police), or academia. Since each of these categories can be diverse in themselves, MSPs could also apply to different sub-groups within these categories.
- **Stakeholder:** Anyone who has a stake or interest in a specific issue is a stakeholder—those who are affected by a particular problem (e.g. conflict), and those who can affect it.⁹ It can be a challenge to narrow down the groups to involve. This manual looks at the options for selecting the right stakeholders for the process, and provides guidance on key considerations for some of those stakeholder groups
- **Processes:** MSPs can range from open-ended, fluid forums or platforms to structured partnerships with written charters, agreed decision-making and sometimes even an agreed action plan and secretariat. They can be spaces for dialogue, debate or negotiation, or most



See Section 6
on different
stakeholder groups

6 Nicolas Faysse, 'Troubles on the Way: An Analysis of the Challenges Faced by Multi-Stakeholder Platforms', *Natural Resources Forum*, 30 (2006), 219–29; Julia Roloff, 'A Life Cycle Model of Multi-Stakeholder Networks', *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 17 (2008), 311–25.

7 'Multipart'.

8 Lawrence E. Susskind, Sarah McKearnen and Jennifer Thomas-Lamar, *The Consensus Building Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Reaching Agreement* (Sage, 1999).

9 Francesca Bonino and Claudia Croci, *Evaluating Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships in Post-Conflict Settings – Practitioner Guidance on the Use of OECD/DAC Criteria through a Human Security/Peacebuilding Lens* (MultiPart, 2010), p. 7; Roloff.

likely a combination or evolution of these. In their most productive form, they can reach a point of joint analysis, planning and action. In this manual, we refer to the full spectrum of MSPs as engagement processes, where a particular set of groups interact around joint objectives and rules of engagement, whether formalised or not.

For the purposes of this manual, we define MSPs as processes that convene three or more stakeholder groups, which together seek solutions and develop strategies around specific conflict prevention objectives. Recognising that the involvement of more than two groups is complex and has implications for how the process should be designed,¹⁰ this manual builds on techniques and lessons learned from dialogue and mediation as a means to enhance MSPs. In this sense, MSPs are themselves a type of negotiation process between the different stakeholders.

2.1.2 Purpose

Ultimately, the most defining aspect of any MSP is its purpose, whereby the stakeholders seek to address an issue or issues that they hold in common.

MSPs can range from an open-ended, continual process to something more time-bound and specific. They can have a specific **function** or a combination of functions, for example: advocacy and mobilising political will, joint analysis and dissemination of information, dialogue among various participants, mobilising and pooling resources, and joint action.

An MSP is fundamentally different from a conflict resolution, dispute settlement or reconciliation process in which the participants are trying to sort out significant differences, grievances, broken trust, or even violent abuses. While participants in MSPs may experience some of those dynamics, they must at a minimum be able to unite behind a common purpose regarding the prevention of violent conflict.

Thus, a sharp distinction is often drawn between **dialogue** processes that are aimed at enhancing communication, opening discussion, building bridges and increasing awareness and understanding, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, processes aimed ultimately at **joint planning and action**, which require more intense engagement, agreement on longer term objectives, and means to ensure follow up and implementation. Both are multi-stakeholder processes, and the latter may begin with dialogue efforts and purposes that are more limited and only move towards action planning at a later stage.

Example 1

Types of purpose from GPPAC case studies

- To develop an early warning and early response system in Kyrgyzstan.
- To halt the crisis and prevent further violence caused by the contestation of the 2008 election results in Kenya.
- To develop a Pacific regional action plan on Women, Peace and Security for implementation in 2014.
- To develop a conflict prevention agenda for Central America.
- To bring about a peaceful transition to democracy in Fiji.

The purpose also defines the **geographic scope**, which can be international, regional, national and/or local. In some cases, these distinctions are blurred when participants play a role at different levels and in different arenas. The conflict dynamics in a specific location can be affected by events that play out at regional or global levels and require a wider scope of analysis and action.

¹⁰ *Convening: Organizing Multiparty Stakeholder Negotiations* (CDR Associates, 1998).

2.2 Why (Not) a Multi-Stakeholder Process?

Views on MSPs range from the idealistic to the sceptical. Whether the potential of MSPs for conflict prevention proves true in practice often depends on a number of assumptions and pre-conditions. These assumptions should be checked in relation to the context dynamics and the specific groups and individuals involved.



See further discussion on considerations for/against initiation of an MSP in Section 4.

BOX 1 VIEWS AND ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT MSPS	
Supporting	Questioning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicts (between participants) are mainly the result of miscommunication; an open, well-facilitated dialogue can address this. People with different outlooks and goals can work together effectively if they are motivated to find common ground and they are given the credible opportunity and the tools to do so. Power relations can be addressed by building capacity, synergy and trust. MSPs can lead to more widely accepted decisions and strategies. In conflict situations, engagement is a necessity. MSPs can enhance local ownership and the perceived legitimacy of a given process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSPs are fundamentally a space to express power relations. Power dynamics cannot be sidelined; an equal playing field is not possible. Vulnerable groups stand too much to lose and can be used for tokenism/rubber stamping; they could lose legitimacy within their own constituency. Powerful actors use the approach to divide and rule. MSPs can be very time consuming for little evidence of results. MSPs raise expectations that cannot be met. Alternative ways, such as solidarity networks, movements or focused bilateral dialogues, can be more effective.

Adapted from source Wim Hiemstra, Herman Brouwer and Simone van Vugt, *Power Dynamics in Multi-Stakeholder Processes: A Balancing Act* (PSO, 2012), p. 10



Latin America case study Section 8.4

Stakeholders need to recognise the added value of each other's involvement, and be able to take advantage of each other's capacities. This could lead to avoiding competition and focusing efforts towards achieving a common goal; and to reducing asymmetries in power within the partnership, as each stakeholder is recognised for the resources and know-how for which they are most valued.

Andrés Serbin

It is useful to test this range of assumptions at different stages of an MSP, while not losing sight of the actual **deliverables and results** of the process. Against all the investment required for a functioning MSP, it is ultimately important to ask how or whether it will contribute to the prevention or reduction of violence and towards greater human security. For example, MSPs can lead to:

- Shared and mutually agreed conflict analyses.
- The implementation of collaborative action plans.
- Concrete policy goals and commitments.
- Institutionalised structures for communication, engagement and dialogue for peace.
- Partnerships between state and non-state actors in conflict early warning and early response.
- Increased capacities to work together or at least in a coordinated manner within a conflict context.

Example 2

Results from the Mesa de Seguridad in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

The Mesa de Seguridad (Security Roundtable) initiative emerged because of three different factors. The first one was the security crisis itself, which prompted the participation of different stakeholders: universities, NGOs, and business groups in Ciudad Juárez, which had experienced extreme levels of violence for several years. Second, several civil society efforts were already in place when the violence escalated, like the Citizen Observatory for Security and the Juarenses for Peace Group, which were both groups of citizens that met regularly to discuss the security situation in the town. Finally, the third factor has to do with [then-President] Calderón's idea to invite civil society to participate in an initiative called Todos somos Juárez (We are all Juárez) to address the seven most urgent issues of the city, including insecurity and violence.

The Mesa de Seguridad is the committee that was created within the Todos somos Juárez initiative to discuss issues regarding insecurity and violence and to identify solutions in a collaborative way. Citizens and representatives from the three levels of government participated in Mesa de Seguridad. It was a true multi-stakeholder dialogue. The basic assumption was that civil society and government acting together could better identify the priority areas, generate and implement concrete proposals, and follow-up and evaluate the results of those proposals.

This committee was so effective in generating trust and carrying out different strategies that it is still in place, even though the Todos somos Juárez initiative officially ended in 2012. Today, the Mesa de Seguridad has several subcommittees that address access to justice, immediate response to threats, violent theft, human rights, and performance indicators. All three levels of government continue to participate in the Mesa de Seguridad.

Source S. Aguilera, N. Babinet and Gómez Chow, 'Decreasing Violence in Mexico through Citizen Participation', in Empowerment and Protection – Stories of Human Security, ed. by Kristin Wall, Jenny Aulin, and Gabriella Vogelaar (The Hague: The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 2014), pp. 64–66.

2.3 Opportunities and Benefits

The idea, or **theory of change**, behind multi-stakeholder processes is that actors with different positions, mandates and backgrounds can go further working together than in isolation. MSPs allow for a **systems approach** to conflict, where the different actors and their initiatives are looked at as part of a bigger whole.¹¹ It can enable preventive action at different levels, with various sectors and sections of society playing a role, as illustrated in John Paul Lederach's famous peace pyramid.

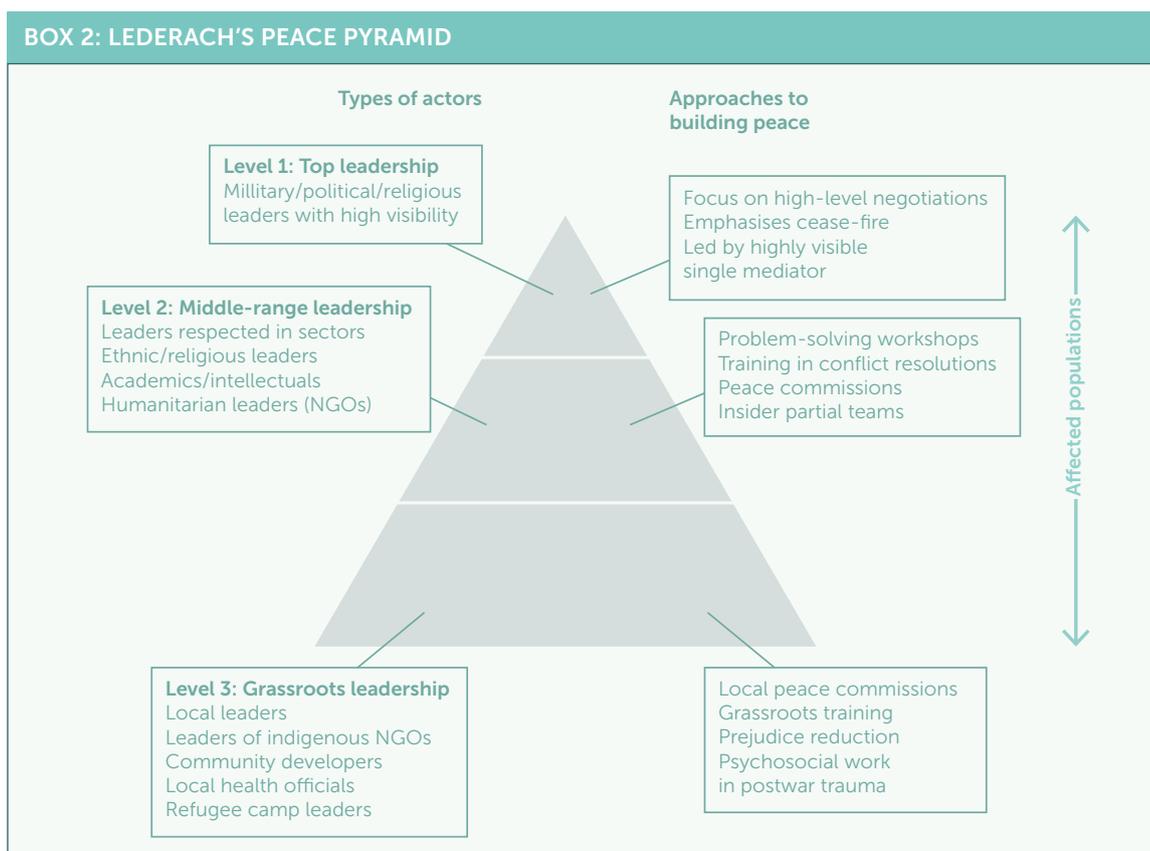


For more on a systems approach see *Reflecting on Peace Practice*, (CDA, 2013); **Robert Ricigliano**, *Making Peace Last: A Toolbox for Sustainable Peacebuilding* (Paradigm Publishers, 2012); **David Peter Stroh**, *Systems Thinking For Social Change*, (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2015); **Diana Chigas and Peter Woodrow**, *Designing Strategic Initiatives to Impact Conflict Systems* (CDA, 2016).

¹¹ **Lisa Schirch**, *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security*, First Edition (Boulder, CO: Kumarian Press, 2013).



See the Kenya case study in Section 8.5 for a real-life example illustrating this triangle.



Source John Paul Lederach, 'Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies', United States Institute of Peace Press, 4 (1997), p. 39.



Kyrgyzstan case study
Section 8.2.

We [...] have the understanding that conflict prevention and peacebuilding cannot happen in an ad-hoc way. This is such a complicated field that without joint efforts we will never be successful.

Raya Kadyrova

In a systems approach, several **types of change** are part of the same picture, from individual transformation, to group dynamics and societal/structural change. Depending on the scope of the process, MSPs can potentially affect the perspectives of the individual participants, the dynamics among the different participants, as well as achieving a multiplier effect among their respective constituencies in wider society.

Successful multi-stakeholder processes can bring a number of benefits:

- The involvement of more actors provides a broader range of expertise and perspectives. This means problems can be **analysed better**, based on several different viewpoints.
- Such analyses can lead to a more **comprehensive strategy** to address complex conflict situations.
- MSPs provide the opportunity for greater understanding of different stakeholders' capacities, roles and limitations thus contributing to **better coordination** of interventions.
- MSPs can help organisations **pool and share resources**, including skills, funding, staff time, and logistical or administrative resources.
- The involvement of multiple stakeholders can be conducive to public outreach and awareness raising at different levels simultaneously, increasing the reach from grassroots to policy mobilisation. In this way, they have potential for a **multiplier effect** when the key messages of the process are communicated to the participants' respective constituencies.

- MSPs can contribute to building **trust** among diverse stakeholders, and enable relationships that can outlast the process itself.
- They can provide a platform for much needed **capacity building** among practitioners at different levels.
- Sharing skills and knowledge can enable participants to see problems in a new way, which is also conducive to **innovation**.

[MSPs to prevent election violence in Kenya included] technical teams, comprised of people from the media, the private sector, peace and human rights organisations, manufacturers association, who added value to the analysis and helped find solutions. If there was a need to broker peace, you had people who had the right information regarding the issues and actors, and therefore knew the right channels to use and who should be approached.

Florence Mpaayei



Kenya case study
Section 8.5

When the process is participatory and inclusive it can contribute to **political will** and **ownership** of conflict prevention strategies that involve different actors. MSPs provide the space to inform and define issues and non-violent responses to conflict. Broad ownership of the process is key to the **sustainability** of conflict prevention strategies.

2.4 Risks

As noted in the Latin American case study, “To build a multi-stakeholder approach takes lots of energy, lots of time and resources invested, and sometimes the results are not what you are expecting and not of the level of what should be done in terms of conflict prevention” (Section 8.4). This section gives a brief overview of the possible risks involved in an MSP, which will be further addressed throughout this manual.

MSPs rely heavily on a champion or initiator. When much depends on this initiator, especially when they are an outsider, the process might have **limited sustainability and ownership**. The challenge of ensuring that the process is not donor-led, dominated, or perceived to be dominated by one actor or group, goes beyond the meeting room and directly affects the results. A related risk is an important group or individual deliberately refusing to participate, which can undermine the credibility of the process as a whole.

Closely related to the capacity for engagement and inclusivity is the challenge of resources. The amount of **resources** required—including time, communication channels and funding for implementing action plans—is often hugely underestimated. Limited funding can mean that the process does not live up to expectations, making future engagement more difficult. The financial muscle also contributes to the view that MSPs are not a level playing field. Unequal access to funding, or where the funding comes from, can influence the process. This sense of inequality can be a determining factor when it comes to stakeholders staying involved in the process.

Depending on the financial strength of the organisations and the scope of operation, some actors may proceed with implementation while others struggle to obtain resources to enable them to carry out the actions they committed to.

Working Group member

Hidden agendas of participants can disrupt the process and affect its outcomes. Different expectations, when not clarified at the start, can lead to **disappointments** or **inefficiency**. In a worst-case scenario, it could **worsen the situation** rather than improve it, and increase

competition among different groups. Power dynamics can also result in worsening the position of vulnerable groups, for example when their inclusion is more a result of **tokenism** that is used to justify a policy or to further the interests of a ruling group, rather than transforming relationships with policymakers.

One risk scenario is when stakeholders physically take part, but for reasons of either personal or organisational interest they don't actually participate, or they actively undermine the process to further their own interests.

Training participant

Getting the different parties to truly listen to each other is a much bigger challenge than bringing them together to talk. This increases the risk of an MSP becoming a **talking shop** with few tangible results. By negotiating so many viewpoints and interests, a consensus-oriented discussion could reduce the problem and strategy to the **lowest common denominator**, and therefore not go as far as it could if tackled by more like-minded and focused groups. There is also a **reputational risk** if the process does not yield results, the right results, or results that are not immediate enough, which could lead to participants losing face or legitimacy among their own constituencies.

After the bloodshed in June 2010, a bilateral donor financed a national multi-stakeholder process focused on the need for Kyrgyz and Uzbeks to live together. Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful. There were about 30 people—the leaders of leading political parties, representatives from among the Uzbeks, from the Kyrgyz and other ethnicities. We met several times and nothing happened. Despite the [donor] and all the experts, we could not agree on goals and objectives, on why we needed to meet together, what we should discuss, and what to expect from all our meetings.

Raya Kadyrova



Kyrgyzstan case study
Section 8.2.

BOX 3: COMMON PITFALLS AND RISKS

- Stakeholders feel ignored or abused.
- The discussion becomes repetitive.
- Internal support for discussion dwindles.
- Confidential information is abused.
- Consensus fails to be reached.
- Dialogue is not strategic or proactive, which leads to new conflicts.
- Issues are not addressed appropriately, leading to repeated confrontation.

Source Rob van Tulder, From Platform to Partnership (The Partnerships Resource Centre, 27 January 2011), p. 21.

Finally, the **legal or political context** could also limit the space to set up an MSP or for implementing its action plans. In politically sensitive contexts, the process could endanger the participants if confidentiality agreements are not adhered to. If civil society is repressed or subject to legal restrictions, or if the state is hostile to non-aligned actors, there is a risk that the only possible composition of the group is a biased one.

The subsequent parts of this manual will further relate to these risks, and propose ways to mitigate or address them through analysis, process design and process implementation.



See how local civil society worked through advocacy alliances in the Pacific case study, Section 8.3

2.5 Alternatives

In some situations, an alternative approach might be more productive than a multi-stakeholder process. In other cases, a more careful phasing of the process might be necessary. For instance, where direct engagement with official authorities is unproductive or contentious, civil society might choose to build **advocacy alliances** with like-minded groups to lobby on the sidelines rather than seeking direct collaboration with state actors. .

In situations where there are opposing sides and sensitive political dynamics, it can be more appropriate to facilitate a low-key, **bilateral dialogue first**, and then open up the process to a multi-stakeholder arena once a degree of trust has been built and there is a common agenda.



Latin America case study Section 8.4

A more successful initiative [than previous multi-stakeholder attempts] was TACE, the academic dialogue workshops between Cuba and the United States, where the process was restricted to two specific sectors: former diplomats and academics. No governments were involved until we started promoting the recommendations. So you have two groups of goodwill that you coordinate and work with to influence the governments.

Andrés Serbin

A trusted institution considered relatively impartial in the given context could take up the function of facilitating **basic information exchange** and to **liaise** between different stakeholder groups, without necessarily developing a direct process of cooperation. This can allow for spontaneous collaboration between different groups to emerge as and when there is a need.

Example 3

The Civil Society Dialogue Network at the European Union

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is an example of a successful liaison initiative for multiple stakeholders. Through the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), the CSDN runs a continuous forum for dialogue between CSOs and EU policymakers. CSO representatives from conflict regions, their Brussels-based partners and EU representatives gather in Brussels to discuss policy issues of concern to the EU. There they can speak as equals in small dialogue sessions. This approach allows the CSO representatives to speak freely, as they are away from their home country and because it is not a formal engagement with the EU. Rather than having to pitch for funding for their cause, they are invited to speak as experts on a particular topic. This format also helps EU representatives identify whom to speak to regarding their policy issues. In this way, the CSDN facilitates an exchange of information between stakeholders, which can at times result in collaboration between different groups when the need arises.

Source *Regional Organizations and Peacebuilding - The Role of Civil Society*, Policy Brief (Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2014), pp. 16–17.

3 Key Considerations and Challenges

“To address the risks and enhance the possible benefits, fundamental questions around legitimacy, power and ownership must be acknowledged and addressed.”



Introduction

When preparing an MSP for conflict prevention, it is crucial to consider the **sustainability** factors that may help or hinder the process at the given place and time. These factors matter not only in the early stages, but should be considered throughout the process. It is also important to think ahead and put in place strategies that can counter any problems that might come up.

3.1 Legitimacy

Legitimacy is usually linked to the credibility of the convener, the participants and the process itself. One of the most important ingredients in an MSP, from the moment that it is first convened and throughout, is the sense of **trust** that people have in the fairness of the process, and in the intentions of the conveners and participants. This is where the risk of reputational damage is most at play, not only that of the process but also that of the individual participants within their constituencies and the wider society. Lack of trust in the process can lead to disillusionment and a failed process.

Note that the degree of trust between participants and of the participants in the process is not necessarily to be expected from the outset of the MSP, but is rather a result of the process itself. The focus should therefore be on **trust building** and **trustworthiness** emerging from the process and the behaviour of the participants.¹²

*It is not “we work together because we trust each other”
but “we trust each other because we work together”*

Rob van Tulder, Partnerships Resource Centre¹³

3.1.1 Credible convener and the facilitator role

A convener is the individual or agency that brings a group of stakeholders together. To get potential participants to the table, it can be decisive that someone who is widely respected and accepted can become the champion of the process. Conveners must have the trust of the participating parties, or at least the ability to earn that trust through the process. This could be an individual or an institution regarded as **impartial and objective**, and with the **political power** or **moral authority** to convene a diverse set of stakeholders. Depending on the situation, foreign conveners or other outsiders can be seen either with suspicion, or can form a key component of the process precisely because they are not a party to the context dynamic (see more on this in Section 3.3.1).



Pacific case study
Section 8.3

[In the Pacific], “governments feel comfortable... when it is the UN, because government and military can get very nervous when civil society invites them”

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

To convey and bring about the sense of purpose that can convince and bring the stakeholders together, it is crucial to have a **skilled facilitator**. This role is not automatically taken on by the convener. It may be necessary to appoint an experienced professional, or to arrange for a mutually acceptable co-facilitation team among the different parties. The facilitator has to be alert to the different perceptions and expectations right from the start, bearing in mind that these may change over time. He or she must be able to grasp what the different needs are, and how to deal with critical incidents or crises.

¹² **Mariette van Huijstee**, *Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives: A Strategic Guide for Civil Society Organizations* (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, 12 March 2012).

¹³ **van Huijstee**, p. 9.

3. Key Considerations and Challenges

- 3.1 Legitimacy
- 3.2 Power
- 3.3 Ownership



Kenya case study
Section 8.5

You might have people of integrity who are influential, but without the necessary skills to be mediators or facilitators of dialogue processes. Having expertise to accompany these processes is important.

Florence Mpaayei

BOX 4: WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?

Facilitators are **process experts** rather than experts on a subject area. They keep a dialogue focused, help participants consider a variety of views, and summarise group discussions. They do not promote or share their own opinions, but help the group to explore similarities and differences of opinion. Facilitators make sure that all participants get a chance to contribute to the conversation. Key facilitation skills and tasks include:

- Establishing the purpose of the process.
- Fostering dialogue and posing provocative questions.
- Managing the agenda and guiding the process.
- Developing ground rules (see Box 21).
- Active listening—including both verbal and nonverbal listening skills (silence does not equal consent!)
- Monitoring group dynamics.
- Communicating interest in everyone's perspective.
- Helping to deal with difficult participants—for example avoiding one-on-one arguments or managing participants who talk too much, refuse to participate or interrupt.
- Summarising and paraphrasing different views as well as agreements of the group.
- Staying impartial by refraining from sharing their own experiences or beliefs.
- Modelling the behaviour expected from participants.
- Closing with a summary and helping the group to focus on the next steps.

Adapted from Source Lisa Schirch. "Handbook on Human Security: A Civil–Military–Police Curriculum" Alliance for Peacebuilding, GPPAC and Kroc Institute for Peace Studies, 2015.



See more on how to select participants in Section 5.2

3.1.2 Credible participants

Participants are accepted as representatives and credible **spokespersons** either by function of their organisation, or by personal reputation and experience—or, ideally, a combination of these. Organisers need to look out for **gatekeeping** behaviour, where participating organisations and individuals claim spaces of engagement without proper involvement of their peers. Representative participants also need to have sufficient—or at least the potential for—**authority** and capacity to make decisions and to see through the implementation of what is proposed during the process.



Kenya case study
Section 8.5

Some initiatives had a core group of five to ten professionals, who were credible and represented the face of Kenya—meaning they were from different ethnic groups—and who had the ears of Kenyans [...] Spokespersons for multi-stakeholder processes need to be selected wisely to avoid the messenger blocking the message.

Florence Mpaayei

Most people have several **identities**, affiliations and allegiances: they can be government officials but also church members, mothers or fathers, residents, and so on. In politically sensitive contexts where the interaction between different official agencies might be considered risky, one option can be to involve the participants in a less threatening capacity.

Example 4:

The church as a common identity in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, community members participating in Local Peace Committees (LPCs) range from political party members to security sector representatives and members of the community. However, many of them participate in their capacity as church leaders. The LPCs build peace in their communities through dialogue spaces where people engage each other in search of solutions to their challenges. In some situations, they mediate conflict and act as early warning systems and work towards addressing human security concerns in their areas.

Source Ambrose Moyo, 'Community-Based Healing and Reconciliation in Zimbabwe', in Empowerment and Protection – Stories of Human Security, ed. by Jenny Aulin, Kristin Wall, and Gabriella Vogelaar (The Hague: GPPAC, 2014)

Some constituencies may be represented by **NGOs or CSOs**—for example specific communities, faith groups, youth or women. CSOs that through their work engage with contentious or hard to reach groups such as gangs or militias, while not necessarily representing those groups in MSPs, can contribute their knowledge about such groups' grievances, culture and functioning. However, in some contexts, being an NGO in itself can raise questions of legitimacy, since they have usually not been selected as part of a formal process. In some situations, disadvantaged groups may need to be directly involved, beyond their umbrella organisations. In other cases, the political context makes it difficult for internationally backed CSOs to engage their government due to suspicions of external interference. In most cases, it is important for CSOs to address questions of accountability.



Latin America case study
Section 8.4

As the state assumes that it is legitimate (...) there is no space for civil society. The attitude is "Why should we give space to civil society when we are the representatives of the people?"

Andrés Serbin

A key issue [in my country] today is a growing hostility to any independent civil society group that has or had in the past received support from sources outside the country. This fact may in itself be enough for certain parties (like local government) to disengage themselves from the process.

Working Group member

3.1.3 Accountability

Whether the participants have been selected to represent a broader **constituency** formally or informally, the expectation is that they are able to speak on behalf of that group and report back to that group in one way or another. This link, and the **feedback loop** of information sharing between the representatives and their constituency, are to encourage accountability. It is important to be clear on expectations and limitations in this regard, especially where there are no formal feedback mechanisms, as is often the case for many CSOs. This can be a major challenge, even in the best conditions, and is therefore best considered from the beginning of the process.



See also the communication strategy guidance in the Tool section 7.8.

BOX 5A: STRENGTHENING AND SUPPORTING ACCOUNTABILITY

- Draft an accountability map: asking “accountable to whom?”, and consider how the process and its participants reports back and consults with each other or with their respective institutions and constituencies.
- Emphasise and invest in transparency and communication (see Section 5.5 and Box 27)
- Emphasise and support links between participants and their constituencies, for example by stimulating demand for information and participation, or building the capacities of process participants to communicate externally.
- Develop standards for feedback loops and communication, and regularly reflect on how well they are followed in reflections and evaluations.
- Ensure these efforts are reflected in the budget allocations and fundraising bids.

Adapted from Source Carmen Malena, ‘Strategic Partnership: Challenges and Best Practices in the Management and Governance of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships Involving UN and Civil Society Actors’, 2004, pp. 32–63.

Ideally, the participants in an MSP can individually or together work towards a **communication strategy** aimed at a broader audience. This can be in the form of statements, updates, newsletters or media engagements. Other forms of involvement can be built into the process, such as periodic public meetings, participatory forms of research or surveys, or online/social media strategies.

New technologies and ICTs provide critical opportunities and tools [for broader engagement]—even through basic SMS text messages.

Working Group member

BOX 5B: MODELS FOR BROADENING PARTICIPATION

In addition to communicating outwards, there are a number of ways to include a broader range of groups in the MSP. The following models for broadening participation were identified in an extensive research on official peace processes, and can also be relevant options for an MSP.

1. Direct representation [MSP participant].
2. Observer status.
3. Official consultative forums.
4. Consultations: less formal consultations without official endorsement.
5. Inclusion in follow-up activities or mechanisms.
6. Civil society parallel dialogues.
7. Public participation, e.g. via public hearings, opinion polls, town hall meetings, campaigns.
8. Mass action, street demonstrations, rallies.

Source Thania Paffenholz, *Broadening Participation in Peace Processes: Dilemmas and Options for Mediators*, Mediation Practice Series (HD Centre, June 2014).

The level of **transparency** about the process can be deliberately limited where the process takes place in a politically sensitive environment. However, for the sake of sustainability and broader impact, it is important to plan towards a point when the process may gradually need to open up towards broader ownership and external communications.¹⁴ In many cases, it is precisely the ability to build constituencies and communicate to a wider public that make follow up actions and social change possible.

¹⁴ Thania Paffenholz, *Broadening Participation in Peace Processes: Dilemmas and Options for Mediators*, Mediation Practice Series (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, June 2014), p. 7.

3. Key Considerations and Challenges

- 3.1 Legitimacy
- 3.2 Power
- 3.3 Ownership



See Section 5.3 on Rules of Engagement and Chatham House Rule.

Example 5:

From confidential to multi-stakeholder communications in US-Cuba dialogues

In the TACE Process for a Cuba–US dialogue, Chatham House rules were applied during the first phases of the initiative so as not to jeopardise the process. At the outset of the process, core group members, together with the facilitation team, decided to adopt a low profile communication strategy, due to the politically sensitive issues that would be discussed in each workshop. Gradually, there was consensus to change that strategy and raise the profile of the process, as the group consolidated and produced joint publications and recommendations for cooperation on areas of mutual interest that could reach policymakers and decision-making levels.

Source Andrés Serbin and Ana Bourse, 'A Challenging Dialogue Process: The Cuban–United States Academic Workshops (TACE)', in *Creating Spaces for Dialogue: A Role for Civil Society*, ed. by Zahid Movlazzadeh, GPPAC Dialogue and Mediation Series, 1 (The Hague: GPPAC, 2014).



Pacific case study
Section 8.3

We need to continue these different tracks of dialogue, but we also need to see them played out in the public space, so that the citizens can see that there is diversity of opinion ... How do we demonstrate that public dialogue and discussion are taking place, when under the media regulation state officials can say things but there is no right of reply?

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls



Section 5 gives guidance on how to navigate these types of questions

3.1.4 Credible engagement process and proceedings

The question of **selecting participants** is a delicate one, so it is important that there is a clear rationale and process behind it. The **purpose** of the initiative should also be well defined, and the convener(s) explicit about their intentions. The **role** of the participants should be clear: are they there to give advice, to make recommendations, to take decisions, to reach consensus? Do they have a specific function in the MSP because of their expertise or background? Who is responsible for follow up? The **decisionmaking** process should be explicitly agreed: are decisions made by the group, and how?



Kyrgyzstan case study
Section 8.2

...to have all NGOs from a region participate in selecting representatives is not realistic. To bring all the business organisations to select one representative is also just not possible. But it is problematic because there are different voices saying, “Why is this NGO part of this? Why not the other one?” or “Why not me?”

Raya Kadyrova

The point at which participants join the process matters. People inserted in the process after the initiation run a risk of being left out and not having any weight on the discussions or decisions. This can be mitigated if the roles and functions of participants are clear at the point of joining a process.

Example 6:

Function and gradual addition of participants in The Istanbul Process

In the Istanbul Process, a dialogue process involving stakeholders from Russia and Georgia following conflict in 2008, participants included political experts, NGO activists and civil society. The gradual addition of participants by the convener—the International Centre on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN)—was considered a great success of the project. Key participants from both sides remained involved to grant continuity to the dialogue, but new people from different backgrounds were added over time. This had several advantages. For one, it affected the dialogue, allowing it to move from discussions of the past, to more practical matters of how to proceed. Secondly, the personal connections participants made across the two sides allowed them to engage outside the dialogue process. Thirdly, eventually coming to include key media figures, and not just political experts, led to more frequent media engagement. The Istanbul Process led to joint recommendations being made to the political leadership, and in 2010 a joint collection of articles by Russian and Georgian authors was published as a book: *Russia and Georgia: the ways out of the Crisis*.

Source George Khutsishvili and Andrey Ryabov, 'The Istanbul Process and the Problem of Rebuilding Georgia-Russia Relations', in *Creating Spaces for Dialogue: A Role for Civil Society*, ed. by Zahid Movlazedeh, GPPAC Dialogue and Mediation Series (The Hague: GPPAC, 2015), i, 44–57.

3.2 Power

No matter the context, power dynamics will always be at play between different stakeholders with diverse interests. There will also be both positive and negative interpersonal dynamics in these processes, with personal or personalised challenges affecting participants and group dynamics. In this context, instead of thinking of power as a quality of an individual or group, it is more useful to consider it as a dynamic that defines all relationships.¹⁵ Different groups derive their power and 'place at the table' from different places. Sources of power can range from moral authority, legal authority, mass public support, financial resources and technical expertise. Hence, how power is expressed and exercised takes many different shapes:

- **Visible:** official procedures, positions, setting, actors' control over resources, resource interdependencies and interests.
- **Hidden:** when agendas are manipulated or voices of less powerful groups are marginalised; how communication is done (or not).
- **Invisible:** when those in power are able to influence the belief system of others. Issues are kept away, not only from the decision table, but also from the knowledge of others.¹⁶

In a process you discover that what seems to be unified may actually be divided. Hardliners can grow stronger or be weakened throughout the process. It can be a transformative process for some of these groups.

Training participant

Power relations can **change over time**, and it is important to recognise the ability of participants to change these dynamics during the course of a process. For example, frequently excluded interest groups may come to realise how much other actors depend on their position at the grassroots level for conflict early warning or early response. Less powerful stakeholders can in some cases gain from participation in MSPs, so long as the facilitators are able to identify and address the power dynamics at work, and create favourable conditions.¹⁷

¹⁵ Lisa Schirch, 'Comparing Mainstream DoD Terminology and Concepts with Conflict Analysis & Transformation Approaches' (presented at the Civil and Military Perspectives on Dutch Missions, The Hague, 2015), p. 5.

¹⁶ Hiemstra, Brouwer and van Vugt, p. 33.

¹⁷ Hiemstra, Brouwer and van Vugt, p. 33.

BOX 6: TYPES OF POWER:

- Power **over** – the ability of the powerful to affect the actions and thought of the powerless.
- Power **to** – the capacity to act; agency.
- Power **with** – the synergy of collective action, social mobilisation and alliance building.
- Power **within** – a sense of self-dignity and self-awareness that enables agency.

Source Hiemstra, Brouwer and van Vugt.

3.2.1 Gendered and cultural power dynamics

One important aspect of understanding power dynamics at large is to pay attention to the perceptions of gender roles and responsibilities within a given context. A **gender analysis** or at least a **gender-sensitive** analysis is crucial to grasping the dynamics and impact of conflict in the bigger picture. Gender refers to socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society associates with male or female identities.

Gender relations and roles often determine **access to positions of power**, and power is usually distributed unequally depending on people's gender. People's needs, vulnerabilities and priorities, as well as their **experience** of conflict, differ for men and women, boys and girls. How these play out are also linked to other social and cultural factors such as class, rural-urban divides or age. The combination of these factors with a gender analysis can have different and sometimes surprising results for power dynamics and strategies for multi-stakeholder engagement.



Pacific case study
Section 8.3

Having a military coup (...) exacerbate[d] the already patriarchal or traditional power structures in our country and in the Pacific context, where male leadership is seen to be where the power decisions are made. The move for gender equality, for engaging with young people and ensuring equity in that process, is still part of the struggle... I've been quite lucky because of the peacebuilding approach to how to engage, how to communicate... But for a lot of people, sometimes they would just sit there and wouldn't say anything.

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

Because of their gender, women often have less access to power.¹⁸ However, it is important to note that a gender-sensitive approach does not merely see women as victims, but recognises the **multiple identities** of both women and men. Most cultures have certain expectations of both male and female behaviour and roles, which affect how they may interact and respond to a peacebuilding process. Both women and men can benefit from a gender-sensitive approach.

¹⁸ 'United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325'; *Global Burden of Armed Violence*. (Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008), p. 109; *Women and War* (ICRC, 2015); *From Resolution to Reality* (CARE, 2010).

3. Key Considerations and Challenges

- 3.1 Legitimacy
- 3.2 Power
- 3.3 Ownership

Example 7:

The effects of gender analysis on conflict mitigation projects in Yemen

See Box 27 in Section 5 for tips on addressing information gaps.

Partners for Democratic Change have highlighted the importance of understanding gender within the context of a given situation. By conducting gender analyses to explore the unique and context-specific impact of the organisation's activities on men and women, Partners is able to "create opportunities for women in their communities without exposing them to unintended backlash". In their community-based Conflict Mitigation project in Yemen, the gender analysis uncovered the role women have played in both perpetuating and ending tribal conflicts, showing women's direct influence on revenge or reconciliation with their male relatives. This insight "enabled Partners to coach female participants on how they could utilize mediation skills to reduce violent conflict in their communities".

Source Oriana Lavilla, 'Don't Just Count Women In, Make Their Voices Count!', *Partners for Democratic Change Blog*, 2015.



The Conflict Analysis Field Guide has a dedicated bibliography section on gender sensitive approaches.

Since gender identities are constructed by society, they are **not static** but change along with perceptions in society. Violent conflict can transform gender roles and relations as both women and men often take up new roles in a conflict situation. These new roles are often in contrast with traditional perceptions of gender roles and this can create additional tension. In a process of dialogue and interaction, gendered roles can be exposed, unpacked and challenged in a way that can address power imbalances and make the overall process more effective.

Hegemony and power are always multidimensional. Strategies of change must address these multi-layered hierarchies. It is not a matter of choosing between gender and class, for instance, but to combine them in order to challenge how our own participation in the social processes sometimes reinforces the status quo. Otherwise we will keep missing the point.

Atila Roque in BRIDGE e-discussion⁹⁹

3.2.2 Dealing with power dynamics

The cultural and socio-political **context** must determine the manner of addressing and acknowledging power issues in a way that is **conducive** to the process. The facilitator's role and impartiality is therefore all the more important, and dialogue and mediation skills—applied both in and outside the meeting room—will be required.

An **upfront discussion** on power dynamics can begin to tackle these issues from the start, though the ability to do so depends on the facilitator, the context and types of participants. In some cultures, it would not be suitable to discuss such issues openly. The level of openness could also present a dilemma; "if you are not explicit you might be blamed for having a secret agenda, and if explicit you may be endangered for having identified yourself in a specific way not favoured by those holding divergent views and interests" (Working Group participant).

A critical factor to power dynamics is how **knowledge and expertise** are defined and perceived, and how **information** is communicated within the process. For instance, addressing technical issues such as governance or security sector reform could reinforce existing power relations if not facilitated in such a way that all participants can relate to the topic. On the other hand, some types of knowledge such as cultural insights or minority group issues may not carry the same status as technical expertise, unless explicitly acknowledged on an equal level.



See Box 27 in Section 5 for tips on addressing information gaps.

3. Key Considerations and Challenges

- 3.1 Legitimacy
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You have to create a level playing field between what participants know about, so that they can have a meaningful discussion. Otherwise, some stakeholders will be sidelined. You can bring in academic institutions and use a research approach to build this symmetry of knowledge, it can decrease the chance of there being a monopoly of knowledge on one side.

Training participant

BOX 7: DEALING WITH POWER DYNAMICS

Here is an overview of different ways of addressing the power dynamics you might encounter when starting an MSP.

- Power analysis (as part of stakeholder analysis).
- Mapping/awareness of existing relationships between participants.
- Appropriate information and communication (see Box 27 in Section 5).
- Capacity building and horizontal/mutual learning.
- Collective action/organisation by disadvantaged groups/ minorities.
- Inter-personal mediation (personalised power dynamics) such as bilateral, informal or indirect discussions via a trusted third party.
- Funding/resources to enable full and equal participation.
- Sharing mandates (joint facilitation, coordination).
- Addressing conflict of interest fairly.
- Gender/masculinities or consciousness workshops.
- Facilitation based on impartiality or multi-partiality (see Box 4 section 3.1).
- Built-in procedures such as ground rules, decision-making, grievance procedures.



Many of these strategies are explained further in Section 5.

In some cases, it may be necessary for civil society or disadvantaged groups to demonstrate their **collective** power through activism and advocacy—for example through shadow events, petitions, marches, or other symbolic actions—to strengthen their position outside the process.²⁰

Example 8:

Functions of the ASEAN People's Forum

The ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC)/ASEAN People's Forum (APF) is an annual forum of CSOs in member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The forum is held as a parallel meeting to the ASEAN Summit, and is hosted by civil society.

Participants of this forum come from civil society organisations, NGOs, people's organisations, and people's movements. In this meeting, CSOs bring up broad issues on different subjects, such as human rights, development, trade, environment, youth, and culture, affecting many countries in the region, which inform a joint statement and recommendations for the ASEAN leaders. A feature of the ACSC/APF is to open spaces for dialogue with ASEAN leaders. Whether CSO representatives are able to meet face-to-face with ASEAN heads of state during the ACSC/APF, depends on the attitude of the government hosting the Summit and ACSC/APF. Nevertheless, the joint statements and recommendations are submitted to the ASEAN Secretariat and the government representatives.

Source "ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum." <http://aseanpeople.org/about/background/>.

As for addressing gender issues, this often requires a **personal commitment**. Gender power dynamics are echoed in people's personal relationships, making the personal political. Reflecting on this personal level in a non-threatening group of peers can affect changes in

²⁰ Lisa Schirch, Alliance for Peacebuilding, GPPAC and Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2015

power dynamics of a group as a whole.²¹ One starting point can be for people to analyse violence or oppression in their own lives, and use this reflection to develop methods to challenge violence in broader contexts.

We go along in the fights against violence but do not check how much violence there is in our personal relationships. We ourselves do not recognise the power we have.

Interview with Nicaraguan activists; Ardón 2012²²

BOX 8: CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING

Consciousness raising involves exploring personal experiences of violation or empowerment through group processes. It also enables participants to develop a critical understanding of the root causes of oppression, deepening knowledge of history (including activist and alternative perspectives on mainstream history) and building solidarity and a shared political commitment to changing the status quo. Consciousness raising is commonly facilitated in non-hierarchical ways, with the experiences and knowledge of all participants considered valuable and relevant for learning and reflection. The move to encourage individual self-reflection within social movements stems from a political embrace of personal experience as a legitimate, relevant domain of movement politics and action. Support for this idea cannot be assumed, particularly in movements with a more collective vision of activism, and as such needs to be cultivated.

Source Jessica Horn, Gender and Social Movements – Overview Report (Institute of Development Studies and BRIDGE Development, 2013), p. 67

3.3 Ownership

While the principle of ownership is broadly supported in conflict prevention theory, it is notoriously difficult to define and deliberately establish in practice. Collective ownership results from visible and invisible negotiations of power, and is demonstrated when those taking part in a process are empowered to act, to **hold each other to account** and to take mutual **responsibility** for the process moving forward. The ownership question must be unpacked in each specific context and situation, and it usually involves several layers as illustrated in Box 9 below.



See also the indicators for process ownership in Box 11.

BOX 9: KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT OWNERSHIP

Ownership of what ? What will the process be about? Is there a sense of ownership over the entire process, or only over certain parts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose, Content: All participants have been involved in formulating the purpose and goals of the MSP. • Outputs, outcomes: a sense of responsibility for the results of the process.
Who is involved and who drives the process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles: Insider/outsider leadership • Inclusivity: breadth of involvement
How is the ownership being exercised, or claimed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process: Participants make use of procedures for holding each other to account and addressing conflict of interest and power imbalances • Funding: the effect of the funding and influence of donors • Results: decisions about how results (outputs) of the process are to be used, and who takes credit for outcomes.

²¹ Nadine Jubb, BRIDGE e-discussion March 13, in Horn, p. 68.

²² Horn, p.67.

3.3.1 Local ownership

Probably the most decisive factor for long-term results is whether the process is locally driven or not. When this is not the case, for example when international actors play a disproportionately active role in funding and driving the process forward, the **unintended negative impacts** may be greater than the intended benefits. For instance, it can affect how the process and the groups involved are perceived locally, undermining their legitimacy and shifting accountability from local communities to donors.²³

Ultimately, processes that do not have local leadership behind them have also been shown to not be sustainable, and may lead to superficial results.²⁴



Kyrgyzstan case study
Section 8.2

[An international organisation was] putting big money into Oblast [regional] Advisory Committees, and appointing particular NGOs to run the committees' secretariats and establishing the protocols for those NGOs' work. This created jealousy and a lack of support from the NGOs that weren't chosen. It also actually created a barrier between communities where signals of tension were apparent, which government officials should have been responding to. Officials could say, "Let the NGOs do it, they have the money," instead of assuming their responsibilities.

Raya Kadyrova

Nevertheless, many case studies and practitioners emphasise that **outsiders** can play an important role, especially where they are more likely to be considered impartial. For instance, the case studies in this manual showed the value of international organisations in helping to convene local processes. Relative outsiders can also be well placed to lend their technical expertise and respond to support needs. However, their manner of involvement needs to be considered carefully, and local stakeholders need to be on board from the beginning. If outsiders are heavily involved in convening a process, their **exit strategy** should be considered from the beginning, for example by building in a gradual hand-over process.²⁵



See Box 17 on
Self-Assessment
in Section 5.2

The role of outsiders should be stated explicitly, and those actors need to have a self-awareness of where they fit in the dynamics. Context knowledge is key, including the understanding of who commands respect and how authority (which is not always formalised) works within different groups, as well as awareness of those that fall outside mainstream arrangements. Conveners should explicitly pay attention to how a process builds on **existing structures, forums and initiatives** before starting something new.

BOX 10: THE TREND OF DONOR-LED MSPS

A study on MSPs in post-conflict contexts indicated that many MSPs tend to be initiated and dominated by international actors such as international agencies (UN, multilateral/bilateral donors, INGOs), where the format tends to follow paths like this:

- The MSP model is imported from a location where it has already worked.
- International donors (unintentionally) re-organise existing local organisations.
- The MSP is a follow-up to other projects that have been implemented by international donors.
- Pressure (from donors) for short-term results can inhibit long-term planning and undermine the process.

Source Executive summary, "Multipart - Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships in Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The Role of the European Union," www.multi-part.eu.

23 Rowan Popplewell, *Civil Society Under Fire: Three Big Questions for Peacebuilders Working with Local Civil Society*, INTRAC Briefing Paper (INTRAC, March 2015).

24 Executive summary 'Multipart'.

25 Chigas.

The meaning of 'local' will often need to be carefully defined, as there can be a tension between **national and local ownership** of an MSP. Processes referred to as 'nationally owned' are often those led by the government. Certain groups may not see the government as legitimate, or a community may not feel represented in broader, national processes.²⁶ Hence, the idea of 'insiders and outsiders' can also apply within a country or region, for instance where there is a rural-urban divide. In these situations, 'local ownership' can become a problematic term. It is therefore important that it is defined within its own context and local dynamics.



Pacific case study
Section 8.3

While it's not trickling down to inviting grassroots people, [the multi-stakeholder process in the Pacific] does focus on those organisations that are working at national level, but that clearly have rural connections.

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

3.3.2 Process ownership

Beyond the insider-outsider dynamic, a sustainable MSP is one where the participants feel they own the process in the sense of **influencing decision-making and strategic direction**, and where participants share a sense of **responsibility** in the process and outcome. For a process to be sustainable, it may be necessary to ensure that there is a sense of ownership not only among the individual participants, but also within their respective organisations.

Ownership falls on both the individual and the institutions, where there can be a gap; the latter is not always how they are portrayed, it depends on who is in office.

Working Group member

Process ownership has to be developed from the beginning and continuously monitored, through meaningful participation at each stage.

In this sense, it is important to note the difference between *access* to process and *participation* within the process.²⁷ Participation can be promoted by encouraging a '**voices not votes**' approach, where every position is considered legitimate in its own right.²⁸ All parties are heard and recognised for what they bring to the table, and respective roles are complementary to each other. Process ownership can be strengthened through procedures, feedback loops and continuous internal consultation and learning processes.

BOX 11: INDICATORS FOR PROCESS OWNERSHIP

Are participants...

- Taking the initiative to bring in ideas and proposals?
- Coming prepared and coming to the meetings?
- Offering resources?
- Following through on commitments outside the meeting room?
- Suggesting process improvement?
- Holding each other or the conveners to account?

Source Preventive Action Working Group discussion.

26 **Sigrid Gruener and Matilda Hald**, *Local Perspectives On Inclusive Peacebuilding: A Four-Country Study*, Development Dialogue Paper (Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, May 2015).

27 **Bart Cammaerts**, 'Civil Society Participation in Multistakeholder Processes: In between Realism and Utopia', in *Making Our Media: Global Initiatives Toward a Democratic Public Sphere*, ed. by Clemencia Rodríguez, Laura Stein, and Dorothy Kidd (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2009), pp. 83-102.

28 **Rob van Tulder**, *From Platform to Partnership* (The Partnerships Resource Centre, 27 January 2011), p. 28.

3. Key Considerations and Challenges

- 3.1 Legitimacy
- 3.2 Power
- 3.3 Ownership



See **Example 10** on the Concerned Citizens for Peace in Kenya, where those who proposed an action were also responsible for making it happen.

Often, those who have more **resources and funding** have the most influence in the process. This can disadvantage CSOs where there is a trend of donors investing mainly in governments, and it can affect the power balance where both civil society and government are part of an MSP. The role and participation of donors can also affect the ownership, unless there is a clearly designated role or rule of non-interference.

One indicator of **ownership** is when all participants **take responsibility for follow up** actions and **contribute** resources (whether funding, time or political influence) to the process. External funding—in particular if only from one source—can run the risk of undermining an MSP, causing dependency and a disproportionate role for donors.²⁹ On the other hand, funding can also be used to address unequal starting points of the different participants, supporting capacity building or forms of participation.

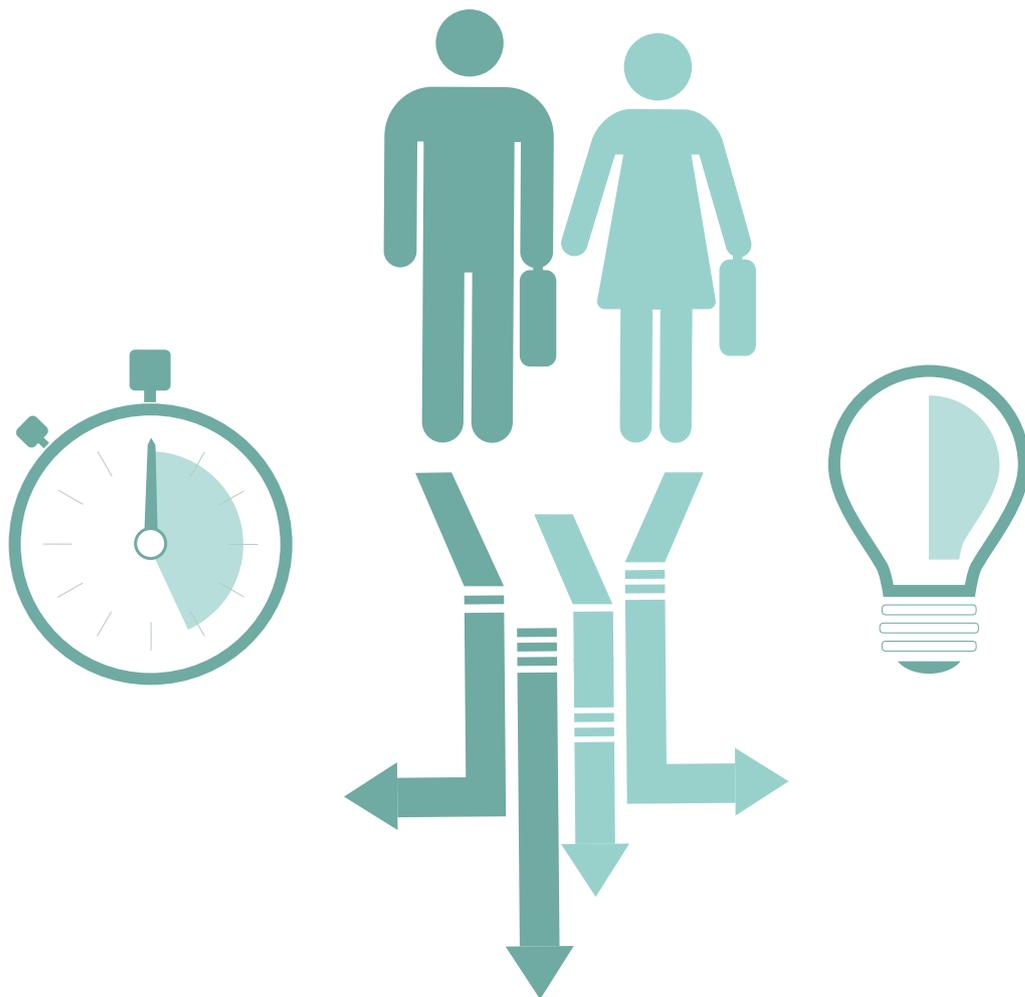
Finally, an often forgotten ownership question is **who claims the results** of the process. Participants should have the right to own the outputs and decide how they are used.³⁰ Another issue is when organisers, donors or other prominent and more powerful participants promote the achievements of a process as theirs. It is crucial to acknowledge all contributions and participants of a process, and to jointly reflect on and disseminate results.

²⁹ Poplewell.

³⁰ Tom Midgley and Michelle Garred, *Bridging the Participation Gap: Developing Macro Level Conflict Analysis Through Local Perspectives*, Policy and Practice (London: World Vision, September 2013), p. 25.

4 Deciding for a Multi-Stakeholder Approach

“Be aware that situations where all the right conditions line up are a rare luxury in conflict contexts”



Introduction

Consider and be aware of the full range of potential benefits, risks and possible alternatives of MSPs—as outlined in Section 3—when deciding to invest in such a process. Not only do the pros and cons have to be weighed up, but also the available and required organisational **costs and competencies**. A number of **conditions** can play a part in deciding whether or not to opt for an MSP. The initiators should explore these conditions in the first phases of the process in consultation with partners and potential participants as described in Sections 5.3 and 5.4.

BOX 12: WHAT ARE SUITABLE CONDITIONS FOR A VIABLE MSP?

 Enabling	 Non-conductive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is momentum and incentive for all (potential) parties. • The necessary resources and competencies are available to support the process. • The potential participants, at least to some extent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » accept or acknowledge their interdependencies; » are willing and able to communicate and learn from each other; » are willing to actively tackle the problems at hand, and there is a sense of urgency; » are individually committed to investing time and effort into the process over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential participants are opposed to the extent that all the energy of the process will go into bridging the differences, necessitating bilateral dialogue & mediation processes. • The process is proposed, designed and led by an external donor who has a particular agenda (lack of ownership). • The lack of time to design and prepare the process before setting it in motion increases the risks of unsustainable or harmful results. • There is a lack of internal or external support for the process in the organising or participating organisations/parties.

Adapted from sources Faysse, p. 222; Bernard S. Mayer and others, Constructive Engagement Resource Guide: Practical Advice for Dialogue among Workers, Communities and Regulators (US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, NSCEP, 1999), p. 8; Tulder, p. 17

Bear in mind that in conflict contexts, situations in which all the right conditions line up are a rare luxury. It can therefore be more useful to be clear on your own position, and what the **parameters** and non-negotiables are for your organisation. Another important consideration from a conflict prevention perspective is how to gradually work towards improving and enabling the conditions and stakeholders to a point where an MSP does become viable for both initiators and participants.

4.1 Leadership

The initiation and continuation of an MSP is often directly related to the leadership question, deriving from political will and embodied in a **process champion**. Leadership can evolve during the course of a process; for example, it can be initiated by an outsider, but—if handled correctly—can be claimed and continued by the process participants. On another level, the participants also need to champion the process within their respective organisations and constituencies.

There are different **types of leadership** to look out for, and it can come from different sources at different times. There is the official convener, under whose auspices the MSP occurs (see Section 3.1.1), but there is also the leader of the core group of organisers that may be more active behind the scenes in keeping the process on track and maintaining focus on the purpose. At the stage of joint action, different participants may take the lead on specific parts of the action plan. These leadership roles fulfil different functions, which may have an external (visibility, constituency building) or internal (organisational, institutional) focus.

4.2 Timing

When an MSP is initiated plays a huge role in its preparation and overall course. Some argue that times of crisis can be conducive to initiating an MSP, as these create cohesion and a **sense of urgency** among diverse stakeholders, which helps to hold the process together. However, the challenge of seeking to end a crisis or preventing it from worsening is that such urgent situations do not tend to allow for thorough process design and analysis. More importantly, conflict prevention efforts seek to get collaborations off the ground precisely to prevent such crises.

It is therefore useful to initiate an MSP at the analysis stage in order to build the foundation for standing capacities before the situation reaches crisis point. Stakeholders that work together on thorough conflict analyses can focus on **anticipating** events where crisis, tensions or escalation of violence might be expected.



Kenya case study
Section 8.5

Overlooking scenario building of possible outcomes, and not putting the necessary measures in place is another critical mistake that can happen. It is important to reflect on options of intervention and not leaving things to chance. It is contemplating questions such as: what if there is a re-run [of elections]? How do you keep the country united? Because that would be a very, very emotive period, there would be a lot of tension in the country

Florence Mpaayei

Momentum can also be created, as long as there is an issue of significant interest to the actors concerned. This could include a policy momentum or new appointments in key agencies that are to be involved. Finding common interest and like-mindedness are key defining aspects and good starting points, though this requires a lot of work to keep up as the process progresses.

4.3 Resources and Competencies

The resources devoted to the process should **match the expectations**.³¹ This is a crucial consideration, since an under-resourced process could have the opposite effect: a lack of proper analysis and process design, poorly facilitated meetings, insufficient communications or sloppy logistics can lead to fall-outs, unmet expectations and a lack of transparency and legitimacy. Resourcing goes beyond the funding question, and relates to capacities and skills required by both organisers and participants in different phases of the process.

Necessary **resources** include the funding for meeting costs and logistics, administration and communication before and in between meetings, and for feedback to constituencies. Experienced facilitation and mediation professionals may be needed to steer the meetings, as well as the overall multi-stakeholder process (see Section 3.1.1). Also, think about costs in terms of time required, both for organisers and for participants. For instance, in addition to attending meetings, participants also need to be able to invest time in preparing, following up and reporting back on these meetings. Look ahead and ensure that there are resources not only to develop action plans, but also to implement them.

³¹ Bernard S. Mayer and others, *Constructive Engagement Resource Guide: Practical Advice for Dialogue among Workers, Communities and Regulators* (US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, NSCEP, 1999), p. 80.

4. Deciding for a Multi-Stakeholder Approach

- 4.1 Leadership
- 4.2 Timing
- 4.3 Resources and Competencies
- 4.4 Go or No-Go?



Latin America case study
Section 8.4

The problem is that you can have a beautiful plan, but if you don't have the financial resources, there is no way of doing anything. People are frustrated and feel they were involved in something that was not sustainable, that they invested a lot of time and energy in something that was not going to happen.

Andrés Serbin



See more on facilitation skills in Box 4, Section 3.1.1.

The relevant **competencies** for organisers include facilitation and communication skills, dialogue and mediation knowledge, and political know-how. Process design, planning, management and capacity building competencies are also essential for a meaningful process. For participants, relevant competencies include representation, speaking and negotiation skills. Perhaps even more important are the abilities to listen, to work with diversity and a problem-solving approach. In addition, technical knowledge about specific issues might be necessary. Where these competencies are not covered, resources can be allocated and plans included to develop them.

The variety of competencies involved in convening and sustaining an MSP is another reason why an individual organisation should not seek to be the only organiser and driving force of such a process.³² Working together as a team through a core **group of champions** from different organisations (see Section 5.1) gives a solid base for an effective and sustainable process.

4.4 Go or No-Go?

In deciding to initiate or join an MSP, bear in mind the opportunities, timing, resources, competencies and support structures available for the task ahead. When doing so, consider whether alternative strategies might be equally or more effective in achieving the conflict prevention objectives. The decision often relates to several different levels of considerations:

- The **individual** level: skills, interpersonal dynamics, trustworthiness.
- The **organisational** level: cost-benefit, risks, organisational identity and vision, constituency, mandate, internal support.
- The **civil society** level: what are other CSOs doing, does the MSP complement outsider strategies.
- The **MSP** level: power dynamics, preparation and design, opportunities and risks.³³

For the initiators, the decision to fully launch an MSP should be taken only after preliminary consultation, self-assessment and conflict analysis as described in Section 5.

It should be taken with the following steps in mind:

- Assessing whether the MSP is appropriate at this time and with the tentative set of participants identified.
- Determining the right purpose, conveners, participants and process steps.
- Weighing up the opportunities, competencies, and resources available.

You must accept that there will never be the perfect situation or context for an MSP. That is the reason you are considering an intervention in the first place. But your analysis and understanding of the situation is very important to ensure you are taking the right approach and not making the situation worse. You might have to work through a very gradual process towards an MSP.

Training participant



See a full check list for effective MSPs in the Tools and Templates section 7.2.

³² Towards New Social Contracts: Using Dialogue Processes to Promote Social Change (CIVICUS, May 2015), p. 17.

³³ van Huijstee.

4. Deciding for a Multi-Stakeholder Approach

- 4.1 Leadership
- 4.2 Timing
- 4.3 Resources and Competencies
- 4.4 **Go or No-Go?**



See the self-assessment template in section 7.1.

BOX 13A: KEY QUESTIONS FOR AN INFORMED GO/NO-GO DECISION FOR INITIATORS.

- Is a multi-stakeholder approach necessary, or would other approaches such as advocacy and lobbying strategies, be less risky and equally (or possibly more) effective?
- Are there good reasons to believe actors of substantial influence will join in a collective approach?
- What factors could make the process unmanageable and ultimately unproductive, and could they be mitigated?
- Is sufficient funding available to sustain the process? How is the funding source viewed (biased, neutral, with/without an agenda)? Will the resources still be available once the process has taken off (for example to implement planned joint activities)? If not, are there fundraising capacities or connections within the group?
- Will the participants still be available to commit if they move jobs, or does the organisation/ agency they represent sufficiently support the process to commit a replacement?
- How might the MSP cause unintended negative consequences, especially with respect to conflict dynamics? How might these effects be prevented or minimised?

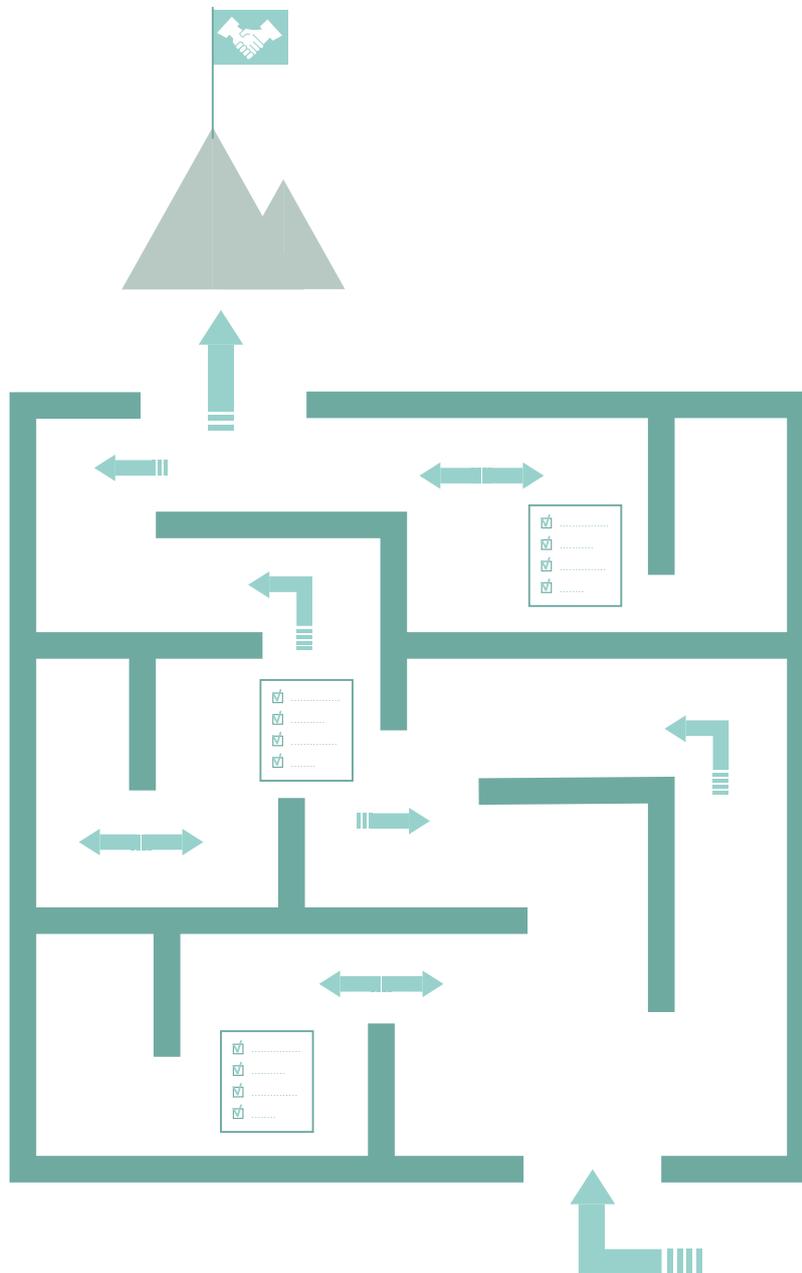
BOX 13B: KEY QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

- How might the multi-stakeholder process meet your organisational interests and goals?
- Does the process have institutional support from your organisation?
- What will be your exit strategy—when will your organisation consider the MSP to have fulfilled its objectives and when will it be seen to be underperforming or failing and what does it mean for your participation?
- Does the process encompass the personal needs of the individuals directly involved, taking into account personal capacities, skill development, support and encouragement?
- What are the benefits of joining, as compared to an alternative outsider strategy?

Sources Preventive Action Working Group discussions, adapting from (amongst others): **Convening: Organizing Multiparty Stakeholder Negotiations** (CDR Associates, 1998); van Huijstee; Bernard S. Mayar and others, p.23.

5 Steps in the Process

“The manual is best understood as a flexible tool of options, to help users ask the right questions, and to find inspiration and guidance in examples and methodologies used by others.”



Introduction

This section outlines some key steps and phases for deliberately designing and implementing a multi-stakeholder process.³⁴ In reality, these steps are **never linear**. Even in a planned and deliberate process, participants may need to take a step back to re-strategise or redefine roles—for example, when some participants leave and new ones join. The context itself might change drastically during the course of the process, requiring participants to go back to the drawing board.

Even planned initiatives require **flexibility**, and they can learn a great deal from MSPs that result from spontaneous processes, which “may start with just a few individuals coming together to discuss the problem in the midst of crisis, where there may not be enough time to methodically design and plan the process” (Working Group member). These organic initiatives often have a strong sense of ownership and energy—characteristics that are usually the main challenge for planned MSPs.

Example 9:

The Concerned Citizens for Peace in Kenya

When the results of the 2007 elections were disputed, the violence that erupted among the electorate plunged Kenya into an unprecedented crisis. The Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP) initiative was launched on December 31, 2007 by a core group of five prominent Kenyan civil society peace workers and mediators. The initial focus was to plead with the political leadership for dialogue, while calling upon Kenyans to stop the violence and wanton destruction of property. The CCP initiators publicly called on Kenyans to join in and to contribute their thoughts, abilities, and connections toward a resolution of the crisis.

As a result of this appeal, the The Open Forum was born, meeting every morning at the Serena Hotel in central Nairobi, where the CCP established its base over the following weeks. The Open Forum became the meeting place for members of the peacebuilding community, leaders of civil society groups, representatives of the private sector, reporters from the media, social analysts, politicians and professionals from a variety of disciplines, all expressing their concerns and seeking to be helpful. When normalcy gradually returned to the country, the morning meetings were reduced to three times weekly and then once weekly.

A sense of organisation quickly emerged, with Working Committees and a Technical Team, and Concern became a brand name used by other affiliates of CCP (Concerned Writers of Kenya, Concerned Women, Concerned Youth for Peace, etc.). The Open Forum reflections formed the basis of the Citizens Agenda for Peace launched on January 9, 2008. This document became a major ingredient to the formal mediation process eventually led by Kofi Annan.

From the beginning it was understood that CCP was not an organisation, but a forum or a movement. Participants who proposed specific initiatives were expected to own their proposals and to serve as implementers as well, with the respective Forum committees assisting with coordination and focus. Results from action suggested and implemented through the Forum were reported in subsequent meetings with alacrity. Following this simple format, CCP stimulated action at grass-root and at diplomatic levels.

Adapted from source George Mukundi Wachira, Thomas Arendshorst and Simon M. Charles, Citizens in Action: Making Peace in the Post-Election Crisis in Kenya-2008 (Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa (NPI-Africa), 2010).

³⁴ Adapted from Roloff.

In the interest of “moving from ideal to real” (Working Group member), the guidance that follows should not be understood as prescriptive but rather as a resource that can be used, in full or in part, as basic guidance and inspiration along the way. **The different steps presented on designing and implementing an MSP can respectively take weeks, months or years, and do not refer to a set number of meetings or events.** Rather, they describe the general progression of a process that can take many shapes.

It should also be noted that the order presented here is only a broad indication. The point is that the process design should consider the sequence of the different steps; but the precise order of the different steps might vary. What is logical to one practitioner group may not be so for another in a different context, and the starting point for a multi-stakeholder initiative must always be guided by the specific conditions and people involved.

5.1 Initiating the Process

There are various options for getting an MSP started, depending on the context and opportunities at hand. The first step in initiating a process is getting a core group of committed individuals and organisations involved in considering the process design and feasibility.

- **Process champions:** CSOs can approach their respective networks to get an MSP started, and take advantage of established relationships with other key stakeholders. It helps to identify counterparts in other agencies that can champion the idea of an MSP, for example within a local UN agency or other international/multilateral organisations, a regional organisation, a government department or mechanism, and other key CSOs.
- **Initiator, convener, host:** The convener is the official face of the process, and should be seen as impartial and have enough authority in the context to convince the right parties to get involved (see Section 3.1). Where CSOs do not enjoy such a position, they can instigate the process by convincing a key agency to play this role, and can partner with them as co-initiators, supporting the process through their organisation’s skills and networks. Another way of involving additional partners can be to get them to co-host meetings and to rotate the host function among different agencies, to appeal to different groups.



See Section 8 for examples on CSO positions as initiators in partnership with other agencies as conveners.



Kyrgyzstan case study
Section 8.2

You need a small group of like-minded people who believe that conflict prevention and peacebuilding need a systemic approach and systematic, sustained work.

Raya Kadyrova

- **Core group:** Ideally, the core group of initiators is already multi-stakeholder in composition. CSOs and their identified counterparts should start by comparing objectives and expectations, and clarify the level of investment (time, capacities, and other resources) they are prepared to contribute, as well as discussing potential roles. A Memorandum of Understanding between the key partners can help formalise this commitment.
- **Facilitation resources:** The core group should agree on how to identify and choose a facilitator to support the process from the outset, based on some selection criteria and cultural/contextual considerations.

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Latin America case study
Section 8.4

For the TACE process, we put together a facilitation team, in which each member had different roles and functions. It was crucial to rely on the experience brought by the external professional facilitator for the planning and implementation stages, and on the flexibility of the facilitation team to adapt to the changing needs of the group and context developments, over time.

Ana Bourse, Working Group member, on the Latin America case study

- **Reality check:** start calculating the cost of the process and to explore whether sufficient funding, institutional resources and competencies can realistically be secured to see the process through (see Section 4). Make contingency plans for how to proceed should expected resources fall short. The resource considerations can also be explored through consultations with potential participants as described in the steps below.

5.2 Designing and Preparing the Process

The process design must rely on sound knowledge about the context and the various stakeholders. Self-awareness and sensitivity to conflict dynamics are also important before taking the steps of approaching process participants. Perhaps the most challenging and most important part of this phase is identifying and approaching the potential participants. This phase focuses on mapping, analysis and consultation that can gradually help build trust in the lead up to the official start of the process.



The GPPAC Conflict Analysis Field Guide includes a number of tools for conflict and stakeholder analysis.

- **Preliminary context analysis:** The initiators should have sufficient knowledge about the context to recognise possible signs or triggers of conflict. Based on this, initiators can formulate their own preliminary objectives of what they are seeking to achieve.

BOX 14: EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: CONFLICT ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. What are the deeper, long-term structural and cultural causes of conflict? For example, these may be issues of political, social or economic exclusion based on ethnicity or religion. These issues may already be present in society, but may not have emerged in visible conflicts or violence yet.
2. What issues, if left unaddressed, could eventually lead to violent conflict? Over what time period? Examples: sharp economic disparities; neglect of whole regions or groups/unequal distribution of government support for development; rampant corruption; lack of government services in education, health, transport; problematic governance structures/processes in terms of participation, decision-making, representation.
3. What policies or groups are attempting to address these issues? How? To what effect?

Source GPPAC Conflict Analysis Field Guide

- **Stakeholder mapping:** To start identifying potential participants, initiators should consider power dynamics, interests and relationships of the groups and individuals that play a role in either exacerbating or deterring the conflict. This exercise may require input from a wider group for validation.
 - » **Map** the positions, interests, needs, issues/problems, means of influence/power, and the willingness to negotiate of the main stakeholders groups (see Section 6 on stakeholders).
 - » To **prioritise** and define how best to involve them, it can help to rank the most relevant stakeholders according to their influence and interest in contributing to the MSP, as illustrated in Box 15.
To be inclusive, consider involving not only those stakeholders that rank high on influence and interest (→Partner). Some stakeholders may be highly relevant but have limited influence, requiring extra support to play a role in the process (→Empower). It is equally

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important to take note of those who are influential but opposed to the objectives of the process (→Engage), and those whose support and influence is currently low but whose position could shift due to changing dynamics (→Monitor).



A more detailed guide to this exercise can be found in *Towards New Social Contracts: Using Dialogue Processes to Promote Social Change* by CIVICUS.

BOX 15: PRIORITISING RELEVANT AND INFLUENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS				
Influence on the issue; ability to bring about the desired change ↑	High			
	Medium		Engage	Partner
	Low		Monitor	Empower
		Strongly opposing	Opposing	Supportive
	Position on the issue →			

Adapted from sources Advocacy Capacity Building: A Training Toolkit, The People's Peacemaking Perspective Project (Conciliation Resources and Saferworld, 2011); *Towards New Social Contracts: Using Dialogue Processes to Promote Social Change* p. 36–38.

- **Criteria for selecting participant stakeholders:** The context and stakeholder analysis can help define a set of criteria for selecting the participant institutions and individuals. Whether this is done in a formal process or not, documenting such criteria can strengthen the legitimacy of the process, as it may be questioned or examined by other stakeholders at any stage during the process. In politically sensitive situations, it can be prudent to involve the potential stakeholders in formulating the criteria in a phased process.

BOX 16: SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPANT SELECTION CRITERIA

Inclusion

- Which constituency groups are indispensable to the process? Why?
- What would motivate those groups to participate or to stay away?
- What are the implications for not engaging certain groups?
- How does the purpose relate to hardliners and potential spoilers? Will their inclusion make it difficult to reach agreements? Are there other ways to engage them outside of the MSP?
- What balance and diversity do you need to consider in the composition of the group, including gender, age, social or geographic considerations?
- How can you build on what is there: which frameworks/strategies/commitments, which forums/umbrella bodies/spontaneous meeting places can you tap into?

Capacities

- Whose work, experience and expertise are linked to the purpose of the MSP and who are likely to give maximum input to the process?
- Who is in a position to constructively engage in the process, and who will ultimately be in a position to act on commitments?
- Can the capacity to participate be built into the process (e.g. for disadvantaged or marginalised groups)?

Representation

- Even if a group agrees to participate, how will individual participants be selected, to ensure a constructive group? Are there personality traits or individual qualities that can either help or block the process?
- What are the pros and cons of involving participants in their personal or in their institutional capacity?
- If participants are involved as representatives of a broader constituency, how representative are they, and how do you know they are accountable to their constituency?

- **Do No Harm and self-assessment:** Initiators should consider their own capacity to facilitate the intended process, and assess the possibility of the process affecting the participants or the conflict dynamics negatively.

BOX 17: CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

Self-assessment

- How well do you understand the context?
- Where are you in the stakeholder map? To which actors do you relate?
- How do stakeholders perceive your motivations?
- What are you capable of doing to address the key drivers and mitigators of conflict?
- What are your resources, means or sources of power?
- Does your organisation or do your partners have the adequate facilitation capacities?
- Can you respond quickly to windows of vulnerability or opportunity?

Do No Harm

- How will your engagement in this context affect relationships and dynamics?
- Would any of the potential participants/ stakeholders be at risk (physically, reputationally) as a result of being involved?
- Could any unintended effects result from this initiative, based on prior experiences and lessons learned?
- Are there any strings attached to the funding you have available?

Source Lisa Schirch, Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security, First Edition (2013)

- **Formulating the idea:** As a basis for future internal and external communications, it can be useful to document the key points of the analyses and the preliminary purpose and objectives of the process in an accessible format, such as a summary sheet or concept note. This document should also make the initiators' intentions and role explicit. This can form part of a process proposal that participants can validate or revise in initial meetings.
- **Approaching potential participants:** preliminary consultations form part of the initial convening process to get a sense of whether there is sufficient interest in the MSP, any concerns potential participants have and initial process proposals. These consultations can help identify opportunities, and risks, as well as gaps in the analysis and other key stakeholders to approach. Proposals of how and when to start the process can be made. Some key roles such as facilitator, recorder, observer, etc, can be assigned during the consultations. It is also a good time to discuss the scope and size of the group. All of this can provide input for a draft charter, or terms of reference (See Box 23). There are several ways to start approaching the potential participants, depending on the type, level and scope of the process:
 - » **Bilateral meetings** with pre-selected stakeholders to discuss preliminary ideas and validate the analysis. These can initially be quiet and off-the-record.
 - » Announcing a call for **expressions of interest** to a broader constituency (note: this public approach can be risky if the decision to move forward with the process has not been taken yet; it is not suitable in politically sensitive contexts).
 - » Identifying useful **entry points** for initiating the discussion, for example research findings, policy momentums.
 - » Using a **concept note** that sums up the ideas and benefits of the approach to convince the identified target groups. Tailor the arguments to the different groups if needed. Consider: what is a unifying framing for the problem/issue to be addressed by the MSP? How can the issue be described in a way that attracts the maximum number of participating groups?



See the suggested interview questions for potential stakeholders in Section 7.3.



See Section 2.3, Section 6 and the Building Blocks in Section 7.4 to ideas for presenting your case for an MSP.

Negotiating over a convener, venue, facilitators or other process issues presents opportunities for trust- and confidence-building. The negotiation can demonstrate an openness to hear the other side and to put forward options aimed at accommodating both sides.

Working Group member

Example 10:

Selecting and approving participants and agenda in the US-Cuba dialogue

The TACE process for a US–Cuba dialogue targeted people who had had government experience or who had worked closely with government officials in the past. Their involvement had the tacit approval of key government officials, who were kept informed of the process. National Co-coordinators helped select and invite the participants, following a set of criteria:

1. Capacities
2. Area of expertise and knowledge
3. Political reach and representation among the academic and political community

The list of potential participants from one side had to be approved by the other side, which formed part of the trust-building in the lead up to the first joint meetings. The CRIES facilitation team asked each national coordinator to set up a consensus process with its country members, to draft a list of grievances and issues that they would like to address during the meetings. This served as a preliminary agenda-setting exercise. During the first meeting, the issues on both lists were addressed, and the whole group accepted to work on a list of 24 topics from the bilateral agenda. Finally, 5 were prioritised and developed during the process.

Source Serbin and Bourse.

- **Addressing challenges to engagement:** An important step at this stage is convincing the right people to participate in the initiative—it is a make or break moment in the process. With the core group of organisers, identify the potential barriers to engagement (before and during the engagement process) and develop strategies to address them.

BOX 18: ADDRESSING OBSTACLES TO ENGAGEMENT

APPROACHING PEOPLE WITH THE WRONG PORTFOLIO

- Carefully determine which tier, body and department (from local to national, from bureaucrats to politicians, from government offices to public bodies) would be the best placed to engage in the process.

CONFLICTING AGENDAS, ESPECIALLY OF HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES

- If it is not possible to have decision-makers at the meeting, work your way downwards to what may be possible. For example, can their representatives be delegated to make decisions? Try to brief these delegates before the dialogue clarifying what would be expected from their institution.

CHANGE OF FOCAL POINTS, RESTRUCTURING OF ORGANISATIONS

- Engage institutions as ‘an organisation’ rather than ‘with individuals’.
- Make sure you have multiple contacts and points of entry even if only one person is participating in the meetings.

LACK OF MOTIVATION OF FEAR OF EXPECTATIONS

- Explain clearly the expectations of other actors regarding their participation, and make transparent how the process, and its results, will be used.
- Understand what they may want out of a dialogue process, and what they find justifiable in terms of time and resources.
- Try to identify who would understand and share your interest in a dialogue process, and seek to engage these individuals. Find out what they need to enable them to participate, and respect their contributions.

WEAK LEVERAGE ON THEM

- Draw on your network. Consider who in the core group would be best placed to approach each stakeholder. If you and the core group lack the relevant connections, consider mobilising the communities represented by target politicians or other people that may approach key representatives on your behalf.

Source Towards New Social Contracts: Using Dialogue Processes to Promote Social Change, p. 27.



Latin America case study
Section 8.4

You have to recognise that not all [stakeholders] are going to respond favourably, and eventually there will be a need to smooth out the differences between some of the different agendas.

Andrés Serbin

- **Observing protocol:** In cases where the process aims to involve high-level state or intergovernmental participation, it may be necessary to seek official endorsement in this phase of the process. The role of officials or government in the process will vary, depending on the political dynamics and the degree to which government is enmeshed in conflict dynamics. However, even if the government is involved in conflict dynamics, it may be possible (and advisable) to work with them, especially if they can be persuaded to support efforts at preventing violent conflict, as they will often see this as in their interest.

Example 11:

Involving state authorities in the preparation of the Jos Experience, Nigeria

When the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) initiated a multi-stakeholder dialogue process in Jos in the Plateau State of Nigeria, the organisers ensured that there was high-level support for the initiative at several levels before proceeding with the actual dialogue.

Step 1: a request to the President to use his good offices to entreat 3 elderly statesmen to call for cease-fire; **Step 2:** the State government to provide support to multi-level dialogue processes in Jos communities to mediate the underlying issues; **Step 3:** the federal government provides platform for state and non-state actors to promote peace and reconciliation and **Step 4:** that the organisers convene the wider stakeholders to raise awareness on the issues identified in the consultation meeting.

The participatory nature of the dialogue planning process paved the way for a successful dialogue.

Source Dialogue and Mediation – A Practitioner’s Guide. Processes and Lessons for Participatory Dialogue and Mediation. (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, 2012), p. 24.

- **Go or No-Go?** Based on the preceding steps, identify a clear decision-making moment with the core group of organisers, where you weigh up whether to proceed with the process or not.
- **Administrative and practical preparations:** organisers must have dedicated people in charge of preparing the practicalities for launching the process. This can include outlining the programme, sending out invitations, securing an appropriate venue and time for the first meetings and handling all other logistics relevant to start the MSP. Note that the administrative functions and timely communications will be important and recurring tasks throughout the process, which has implications for funding/budget considerations.

5.3 Getting Acquainted

The first group meetings and the acquaintance phase must be considered carefully, as they can set the tone for the rest of the process. The acquaintance phase can involve a degree of **disagreement and contestation** about the issues at stake. This is a natural part of the process, and should be allowed to play out, where the facilitator helps to unpack the key issues and barriers present in the group to start building confidence. For this reason, it is useful for the group to agree on **how to work together** from the outset.



See Section 4 and 7.1 for
decision-making factors
and tools.

- **Facilitating interaction:** Pay attention to practical arrangements, facilitation and space that can encourage interaction among the participants. For example, seating arrangements, ice-breakers and allowing time for social spaces, learning and networking can make for more productive and open group discussions. Note that MSPs involving high-level officials from formal institutions will need to take into account official protocol, which may be a pre-condition for meeting. In this case, breaks, outings and other activities for social interaction in between official proceedings can be important to make space for relationship building.

BOX 19: LOGISTICS MATTER

The space and location may have symbolic meaning or association for some or all participants. Hospitality such as meals, refreshments and the degree of comfort or even inspiration offered by the choice of venue can help participants to relax and encourage informal interaction. Timing and accessibility must be considered in relation to participants' schedules, transportation options or other issues such as child care.

Sitting arrangements can facilitate participation, as it can encourage participants to relate to each other. When not seated with the group to which they belong, they will begin to build relationships and bonds with a neighbour they do not know. Sitting in a circle re-affirms the principle of respect. It suggests no one is higher in rank, or more important than the other.

Adapted from sources Lisa Schirch, Handbook on Human Security: A Civil-Military-Police Curriculum (Alliance for Peacebuilding, GPPAC and Kroc Institute for Peace Studies, forthcoming 2015).
WANEP Dialogue and Mediation – A Practitioner's Guide. p. 9.

- **Stating expectations:** It is the role of the convener to present the anticipated intentions and purpose of the initiative in the first meeting. Introductions are made to acknowledge those present while taking note of who is not present and whose absence may affect the process. Once the agenda of the meeting has been presented and accepted, it is important that participants get the opportunity to express their expectations to start identifying commonalities or areas of contention.

BOX 20: KEY QUESTIONS ON EXPECTATIONS:

- Why are we here? (Ask participants to relate this question to the convener's presentation of preliminary purpose and intentions of the process)
- What are our concerns?
- What can we contribute?
- What constraints or barriers do we expect to face as a participating group or institution?
- What do we expect to achieve by being here?
- What do we expect from others in the room?

One way that worked was to first research on the (true) interests of the parties, and then to start the discussion by presenting and reflecting on the findings to each other and consult on getting to hear each other's issues and positions.

Working Group member

- **Ground Rules:** Having collective agreement on how to interact and participate in the process gives a clear mandate to the facilitator to intervene when the group dynamics are not respectful or productive. This can be done in several ways, for example:
 - » Presenting a draft text for discussion, amendment and approval.
 - » As part of, or in follow up to, preparatory bilateral meetings.
 - » Engaging the participants in formulating ground rules from scratch in the first meetings.
 - » Organising a joint training session on dialogue and listening skills, where the participants can at the same time learn about each other's ways of working, values, and constraints.

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BOX 21: SOME INGREDIENTS FOR GROUND RULES:

- Listen to each other.
- Stay open to learning and new perspectives.
- Respectful behaviour.
- Avoid cynicism.
- Avoid disruptions or distractions (e.g. mobile phones, laptops, side-talk, interrupting each other).
- Ask questions whenever something is not clear or unresolved.
- Commit to staying involved in the process.
- Find common ground, while respecting and understanding differences.

Adapted from source Schirch, Handbook on Human Security: A Civil-Military-Police Curriculum

Using the words 'ground rules' when conducting dialogue in Northern Uganda is very problematic. Instead, we use words like 'guidelines' or something similar and more appealing. You have to give consideration to the context when proposing these 'rules'.

Training participant

- **Rules of engagement and procedures:** Protocol helps the participants to assess and state their level of commitment, roles and responsibilities. Involving the participants in setting out and agreeing to the proceedings is necessary to avoid or minimise misunderstandings once the process is underway. They help the facilitator to ensure a fair and appropriate process. In particular:
 - » **Accountability and grievance resolution** mechanisms need to be in place and clear to all participants, where expectations within and outside the group are clearly agreed, and where there is a procedure that spells out how disagreements or complaints are handled in the group. It can also be useful to have an agreed procedure for dealing with inactive participants or those whose behaviour (whether in the meeting or externally) can undermine the process.

BOX 22: EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA FOR GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

- **Legitimate:** enabling trust in the process and fair conduct of grievance processes.
- **Accessible:** being known to all stakeholders and providing adequate assistance for those who may face barriers to access.
- **Predictable:** clear and known procedure with an indicative timeframe for each stage, and clarity on the types of process and outcome available and means of monitoring implementation.
- **Equitable:** aggrieved parties have reasonable access to sources of information, advice and expertise necessary to engage in a fair grievance process.
- **Transparent:** keeping parties to grievance informed about its progress and all parties informed of its implementation/performance.
- **A source of continuous learning:** identify lessons for improving the mechanism and preventing future grievances and harm.
- **Based on engagement and dialogue:** consulting the stakeholder groups involved on the design and performance, using dialogue as a means to address and resolve grievances.

Source UN Business and Human Rights Guiding Principle 31, Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, 'United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights - Implementing the United Nations' (Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework, 2011) p. 33-34.

- » **Agreement on internal and external communication and confidentiality** in relation to what can or cannot be disclosed outside the meeting is key to maintaining a level of trust between the participants and in the process (see Section 3.1). Depending on the nature of the MSP, it may be useful to agree to apply the Chatham House Rule, which allows participants to disclose the content of discussions but not to attribute that content to anyone. In cases where the Chatham House Rule is not considered sufficiently strict, an event can also be held entirely off the record.



Chatham House Rule,
Glossary, Section 9



There was a lot of concern that information got out of the room after a dialogue session, and that almost meant that we didn't have a subsequent one.

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

- » The degree of **formality** required ultimately depends on the culture and the stakeholders involved, and on the conditions of where and how the dialogue is conducted. Some cultures (including sub-cultures within a specific context) function more through spoken word rather than through documents. Where formal institutions are part of the process, formal charters and reports may be necessary for institutional endorsement.

BOX 23: DEVELOPING TERMS OF REFERENCE

The written terms of reference for the convening process are sometimes called a charter. The charter names the stakeholder groups and their representatives and outlines how they will work together and what they will discuss. The facilitator can create the draft in collaboration with the stakeholders during the preparatory/bilateral meetings and submit it to the group for discussion and approval.

The charter can include some or all of the following components:

- Statement of purpose and the group's mandate (relationship to other groups, initiatives or decision-makers, as relevant).
- Stakeholder groups and their representatives (can include organisational or individual representation; alternates; gender balance; geographic or thematic spread).
- Roles and responsibilities for MSP participants.
- Role of the third party facilitator.
- Role and mandate of coordinator/organiser/secretariat.
- Procedure for changing or selecting new participants.
- Schedule of meetings and proposed tasks.
- Guidelines for communicating with the press/media.
- Observer guidelines.
- Expectations for stakeholders to communicate with and report feedback from their constituencies.
- Decision-making procedures for the dialogue and within stakeholder groups (consensus, straw polls, voting, etc.)
- Dispute/grievance resolution mechanism.
- Conflict of interest.
- Procedures for documenting meetings and process for tracking agreements.
- Moments or timeline for reviewing and (where necessary) adapting the charter/Terms of Reference.

Note: while these roles may be discussed at the initiation and acquaintance stage, the formalised charter, or Terms of Reference, can also be adopted at a later phase in the process when a group commitment has emerged.

Adapted from sources [Convening: Organizing Multiparty Stakeholder Negotiations](#); Protocol for Developing Multi-Stakeholder Group Terms of Reference and Internal Governance Rules and Procedures (Institute for Multi-Stakeholder Initiative Integrity, February 2015).

5.4 Agreeing To Go Forward

To be able to function together, the group eventually needs to find a degree of consensus on several levels: the purpose of the process; the problem definition; a shared vision; and a shared plan of what the group will do together. This is not likely to be achieved in one sitting, but is usually the result of a longer process and regular interactions. The sequence of the steps described may take different forms depending on what suits the group dynamics.



One pre-condition is the investment in the preparation of all the key parties, so that we all understand what has happened or where we're coming from; that we can agree to disagree, but we also agree that we must be in this space for dialogue. Quite often you don't find that, and some of that baggage then comes into the room as well.

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

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- **Framing the issue(s):** By jointly defining and exploring the scope of the problem to be addressed, the group can reach a shared problem formulation. As different components of a conflict analysis might be contentious, this process may also bring out the parameters of what is or is not negotiable for the different participants.³⁵ This exercise should be well prepared and can be informed by the preliminary engagement with participants.



The *Conflict Analysis Field Guide* has several relevant tools for this step; see for example the Problem Tree and scenario mapping.

- » The emphasis here should be on conflict analysis as a process, where the documentation of the outcomes/findings is most useful if short and concise—this makes it more accessible and easy to update over time.
- » The analysis can be informed in various ways, for instance through storytelling by those affected, experts' opinions and political statements.³⁶
- » Consider leading the analysis and discussion towards the peacebuilding potential and peace drivers to avoid blockages and disagreements on the conflict per se.

- **Finding common ground for a vision:** While a vision for what the group would ideally like to achieve should be inspiring and ambitious, it is useful to prepare a visioning exercise that can get as detailed as possible. Participants will have different starting points, assumptions, and institutional interests, so a vision may need to be unpacked and described in concrete terms from different perspectives to avoid different interpretations of the ideal scenario.



See the *Conflict Analysis Field Guide* for more guidance and an example on scenario building.

- » Outcome mapping is a technique that focuses on monitoring the change of behaviour in targeted actors, by asking: which actors need to change and what would they ideally do? What type of change are you seeking by targeting these actors—individual, group or societal (see Section 2.2)? It can support the process from the stage of visioning through to monitoring implementation and evaluation.³⁷ See the example in Box 26.
- » Scenario building is another alternative to reach a common vision, which can be useful when there are significant differences in how the participants envision a feasible way forward.

Agreeing a shared vision and purpose sounds too idealistic; you may have to speak of a better understanding of the various visions and agree to take action towards those objectives where common ground may be found.

Working Group member

³⁵ *Convening: Organizing Multiparty Stakeholder Negotiations*, p. 7.

³⁶ *Roloff*, p. 317.

³⁷ See more on Outcome Mapping on www.outcomemapping.ca

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See also **Dialogue & Mediation – A Practitioner's Guide** by WANEP for tips on dealing with consensus challenges

BOX 24: ADDRESSING BLOCKAGES IN CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING

What happens when everyone does not agree?

Consensus does not mean unanimity. It does not mean that everyone agrees with every single point of a proposal or feels equally good about the decision. It does mean that the agreement is the best one for the group as a whole, if not for each individual group member. Consensus should be blocked only for reasons of principle, never for trivial reasons. The objection or concern should be stated briefly and clearly so that the group knows what the point of disagreement is and why meeting participants must find another solution. Both the person with the concern and the group should attempt to avoid being defensive regarding the disagreement. The group should hear different opinions, but it also has a right to disagree. All participants have the right to state dissenting opinions, but have an obligation to present them in a constructive manner.

Guidelines for facilitators when a strong disagreement has been voiced:

- Identify whether the disagreement is between individuals or a small group.
- Identify whether it is an objection that the whole group should consider, or whether it is one that could be worked out by a subcommittee group and then presented to the whole group for approval.
- Ask the objecting participant or small group if they have any alternative proposals that the whole group might consider, to overcome the objections.
- Ask the group to break into smaller groups to discuss the question and to work to develop new proposals.
- Suggest a process in which each person speaks his or her views on the question without response by other group members. Then test for consensus on the old proposal or a newly modified one.
- Suggest a break or postpone the discussion to a later date, allowing people time to consider the objection and alternatives.

Guidelines for facilitators when the different viewpoints cannot be reconciled:

- Consider making the result non-precedent setting, temporary or trial.
- Ask the individual or sub-group to allow the group to record the disagreement, but proceed with the majority view.
- Ask the individual or sub-group to stand aside and not block consensus, thus allowing the group to proceed. Standing aside can release those who object from involvement in implementation of the group's agreement. (The individual or sub-group also may initiate standing aside.)
- Ask the people who disagree to prepare a minority report that describes their concerns. This report may be submitted to a decision-maker outside the group, or to a person with formal authority within the group, for a final decision.
- Return to earlier steps of problem solving to determine if any new, mutually-acceptable options can be developed.
- In extreme cases, the individual who disagrees may decide to leave the group, releasing the group to move ahead.

Source Convening: Organizing Multiparty Stakeholder Negotiations, pp. 11–12.



See Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment overview in Section 7.5

- **Action Plans:** Planning should address key who, what, how and when questions about follow up actions the participants will take, whether individually or together. When articulating what the group can act on, the why should also be explicit and based on the conflict analysis.
 - » The plans should have a clear **theory of change**, explaining in what way the planned actions are expected to address the problem.
 - » Action plans can be enhanced by individual self-assessments and mapping of the participants' different roles and potential in the bigger picture, as this can make for **complementary** actions.
 - » Bear in mind how the plans relate to **existing policy frameworks or mechanisms** related to local peace and security issues, for example the Sustainable Development Goals, statebuilding and peacebuilding goals or national development strategies.
 - » **Avoid 'shopping lists'** of desirable actions and prioritise actions that are within reach of the participants (see self-assessment); identify which actions can be done by the group,

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Some tools that can support this process include the Choice Matrix in Section 7.6, the Action Planning templates in 7.7 and the Level of Potential Change Exercise in the GPPAC Conflict Analysis Field Guide. The Building Blocks in Section 7.4 may also be of use here.

as well as those the group can encourage/lobby other actors to do; ensure the right actors are targeted (see stakeholder analysis).

BOX 25: LOOKING AHEAD, STRATEGICALLY

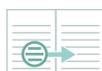
- Where are we now? (baseline)
- Where do we want to be? (vision)
- How do we get there? (action plan)
- How do we know what has been achieved? (monitoring and evaluation)
- How do we learn and adapt? (learning)

- **Goals and milestones:** An important part of the action plan is the formulation of what changes and achievements are expected as a result of the actions. It supports motivation and credibility of the process to have some milestones or progress indicators already spelled out from the beginning, and to include some intermediary achievements and quick wins along the way.

BOX 26: USING OUTCOME MAPPING TO DEVELOP PROGRESS INDICATORS

	WHO	WHAT	WHEN
Short term (quick win)	E.g. The National Defence Council	Participates in regional discussion on minority rights	Within the coming 6 months
Medium term (progress)		Agrees to protect minority rights as part of the Country Development Strategy	Adoption of Strategy scheduled for October 2016
Long term (goal)		Implements the Country Development Strategy in collaboration with local peace committees	2017 onwards; Evaluation of Strategy due in 2020

- **Costing the plan:** Once there are clear ideas about follow up actions, it will be necessary to revisit what resources are needed to implement the plans, and to agree on how they will be secured. Fundraising or pooling of resources may be necessary as part of the follow up steps; this may also be the moment to mobilise any donors or donor connections involved in the process (see Section 6.8).



See Section 6.8 on how to engage donors

5.5 Implementing Action Plans

To achieve results beyond the individual level, a crucial part of the process is in the follow up outside the meeting room. Flexibility is needed to be able to go back to re-assert and adjust the process as it moves along and where the need to change plans arises. Internal and external communication throughout this phase is crucial, both for the sake of keeping up momentum and for the purpose of accountability and trust in the process.

- **Getting organised:** With plans of action and definition of roles, the group considers how to work together in the follow up phase, for example by forming working groups, delegations, advisory groups, contact persons/liaisons or action-oriented task forces. The tasks can include activities to support and strengthen the platform itself, such as mobilisation of

extra resources as well as public and political support. Constant or emerging issues in this phase may lead to new ways of getting things done. This stage is an opportunity to broaden the engagement in the process, by involving additional groups in the proposed actions.

Example 12:

Working Committees and roles in the Concerned Citizens for Peace, Kenya

The participants in the Forum that gathered to address the electoral violence crisis in Kenya grouped around five working committees: Humanitarian Response; Media; Community Mobilisation; Resource Mobilisation; Technical; and High– Level Dialogue. Committee members assumed responsibility to harvest ideas and suggestions from the people gathered daily at the Forum, helping to translate discussions into action. As the committees developed, the CCP Core Team, functioning as the High–level Dialogue Committee and in concert with the Technical Team, could concentrate on analysis, strategy building, personal contacts with pivotal actors, and coordination.

Source: Wachira, Arendshorst and Charles, p. 12.



See the guidance for communication strategies Section 7.7

- **Feedback loops:** Make a point of scheduling regular report back sessions of participants to the group and of the group to broader constituencies. There are many ways of doing this, either using existing channels, or using media, online tools, or arranging for workshops or conferences for a broader range of participants to validate or respond to the activities of the group. Feedback loops are relevant both for the sake of accountability and in order to manage expectations..

BOX 27: ACCESSIBLE AND FAIR COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

- It is essential that participants have a common base of information.
- Sources must be credible.
- Allow time to exchange information.
- Share information openly.
- Make technical information easy to understand; add training if needed.
- Beware of information overload.
- Ensure that the information is well-organised.
- Avoid jargon and keep documentation short and concise.
- Use alternative means of communication—for example social media, radio, videos, illustrations.
- Where needed ensure that the documentation of meetings and decisions has been agreed/ confirmed by participants before sharing externally.

Many dialogue processes gloss over the role of a recorder and yet an inefficient recorder or an inappropriate record of proceedings could undermine the ability to keep track of proceedings based on which consensus or agreement is reached.

Sources Mayer and others, p. 67, Dialogue and Mediation – A Practitioner’s Guide. Processes and Lessons for Participatory Dialogue and Mediation, p. 16.

It’s not like setting railway tracks, but more as if you’re sailing a boat.

Working Group member

- **Keeping up the momentum:** It is important that the process inspires and motivates participants to follow their ideas and plans through. Extra support, capacity building, buddying schemes or coaching may be needed for a stakeholder to achieve some results. The level of trust within the group becomes important where different resources within the group can be shared to prevent the process from stalling.

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BOX 28: MAINTAINING STAKEHOLDER COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION

- Find out how people like to be rewarded/acknowledged and thus become more effective.
- Give feedback and ask for feedback then make the necessary modifications—do not ignore it.
- Keep people informed as to how the decisions are being made and what progress is being made (e.g. open days, radio, media releases)—also continue to provide opportunities for their involvement.
- Celebrate the achievements, small and big.
- Remember that no one has a monopoly on bright ideas; develop a team feeling, encourage camaraderie among members.
- Combine training and personal/professional development with acknowledgment and fun.
- For example: organise inter-regional and interstate tours, hold a training session with partners in one of the region's holiday spots, or have a barbecue at the end of the meeting.
- Ensure there is adequate support and acknowledgment for honorary contributors. Ensure that being part of the initiative has personal and professional development spin-offs. For example, share tools, tips and resources with participants that might assist them in their life outside the initiative.

Adapted from source 'Wageningen UR Knowledge Co-Creation Portal Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: Process Model - Collaborative Action', Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships Wageningen UR.

These processes can be very tiring, so they need to encompass the personal needs of the individuals involved. For example personal capacities, skill development, support and encouragement, and so on, of those directly involved. Frustration and fatigue are in part a result of the design of the process, so the design is really important.

Working Group member

- **Reflecting and sense-making:** Take time throughout the process to review what works, what does not, and why. Conducting regular feedback sessions can help the group to make necessary adjustments.³⁸
 - » A light-touch approach to monitoring and evaluation through short collective learning sessions can be more productive and meaningful than conventional evaluation methods, which often use external evaluators.³⁹
 - » Remember to look out for unintended consequences of the actions taken, and monitor changing perceptions and expectations of participants over time.
 - » Each stakeholder can also do a self-assessment on their progress and delivery of results, to confirm their continued interest and participation in the MSP.
 - » It is important to communicate the results of the evaluation wherever possible (see 'Feedback loops' above).

BOX 29: REFLECTION AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The following questions can be discussed in the multi-stakeholder group itself, as well as being used in the evaluation of different actors targeted by the action plan (see Box 26)

- What do you consider the most significant changes over the last [period], and why?
- What has caused these changes?
- Were there any changes that were unexpected, or negative?
- Are the changes sustainable?
- Are we working with the right people, at the right level, in the most resourceful way?
- How can we improve the way we work together?

Source Will Bennett, Community Security Handbook (Saferworld, 2014). See also Rick Davies and Jess Dart, The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique, 2005.

38 For useful M&E tools see John Paul Lederach, Reina Neufeldt and Hal Culbertson, *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Tool Kit* (Mindanao: Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2007); and *Reflecting on Peace Practice*.

39 'Monitoring and Evaluation: New Developments and Challenges' (Soesterberg, the Netherlands: International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC), 2011).

- **Adapting:** New issues that emerge may require the inclusion of new stakeholders. The procedures and rules of engagement for the MSP will have been tried and tested, and may need to be reviewed to be more suitable for the group. Feedback from constituencies, as well as changes in the context or the outcome of some of the activities may show that some of the group's Theories of Change were incorrect or outdated. Some participants may have dropped out causing a gap in the composition of the group. These are all potential developments that the process will need to adapt to in order to stay relevant and effective.

Example 13:

From Track 2 dialogue process to Track 1.5 in The Istanbul Process

The Istanbul Process (see Example 6) started out as typical track 2 diplomacy between Russians and Georgians. Participants originally included political experts, NGO activists, civil society and academics, and they contributed by publishing analyses and sharing their perspectives through the media with their respective countries. Following the 2012 elections in Georgia the political environment changed, and some of the core participants obtained position in the government, allowing the Istanbul Process to move from track 2, to track 1.5. The informal participation of government and political figures became possible. Because the project had made an effort to continuously add new participants, the political figures could organically be included in the process.

Source Khutsishvili and Ryabov, I.

5.6 Exit Strategies

Conflict prevention is a continuous effort and there is not necessarily an end to such processes. Nevertheless, the time may come when the MSP will either wind down or move to the next level of institutionalisation. In this phase, the process should not simply fade out without notice, explicit agreement or exit strategy, as this can cause disillusionment that can discourage future initiatives.

- **Closure:** The participants may reach consensus about closure for various reasons. Key outputs/objectives may have been reached, or the agreed time period for the initiative is coming to a close. If the process is not sustainable due to lack of resources or motivation, or when reflection showed that the investments did not justify the results for the participants and target groups, that can bring an end to the MSP. External factors or risks in the context can also directly affect this decision.
- **Exit strategy:** An exit strategy can range from gradually winding down a process, to handing it over to continuous, institutionalised mechanisms. Either way, it is important to communicate the next steps not only to participants but also to key partners, target groups and broader constituencies. It may also involve ensuring that some of the collaboration achieved and relationships built are safeguarded through some other form of engagement or contact.
- **Lessons learned:** For future reference and broader learning, it is useful to document and share not only the outcomes of the process, but also the learning points about the process itself. Some conventional ways of doing this might include reports or presentations (workshops, conferences), but other means can include videos, interviews or blogs. The different stakeholders can tap into their respective networks to disseminate such information.
- **Institutionalisation:** in the best-case scenario, the process evolves into permanent structures, so-called standing mechanisms that can support conflict prevention and peacebuilding through the collaboration of different local stakeholders. This is exemplified

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See more on regional infrastructures for peace in Example 15, Section 6.3 and in the case studies on Kyrgyzstan and Kenya in Section 8.

by dedicated resources allocated by local authorities/government, or institutional or policy frameworks underpinning the multi-stakeholder collaboration as well as capacity building.

Example 14:

Institutionalising conflict prevention: Infrastructures for Peace

In Ghana, the **National Peace Architecture** was consolidated through the National Peace Council Act 2011, which encompasses all national government levels. It includes a National Peace Council, peace advisory councils at district, regional and national levels, government-affiliated peace promotion officers at regional and district levels, and a coordinating Peacebuilding Support Unit within the Ministry of Interior. The various units are mandated to collaborate with various stakeholders in Ghanaian society, including diverse civil society groups, the security sector and the media.

In Costa Rica, a law for the Alternative Resolution of Conflicts and Promotion of Peace was passed in 1997, requiring **peace education** in every school. The Ministry of Justice and Peace, established since 2009, is mandated to implement a **National Peace Plan** and support peacebuilding efforts undertaken by CSOs. There is a National Council for Security and Social Peace, in which all the highest authorities of the government work towards promoting security and peace as a national policy.

Local peace activists have set up **local peace committees** independently from the state in many different countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Colombia and Sudan. They deal with tensions and specific, localised challenges at the community level. For instance, the local peace committees in North Kivu, DRC, contributed to community-led disarmament and reintegration efforts to enable rebel fighters to return to their communities. In other places, local peace committees are connected to or part of the national, state-led infrastructures—for instance in South Africa, Kenya, Sierra Leone, and Ghana.

Sources 'Infrastructures for Peace' www.i4pinternational.org; Hans J. Giessmann, Embedded Peace – Infrastructures for Peace: Approaches and Lessons Learned (Berghof Foundation, UNDP, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 2016).



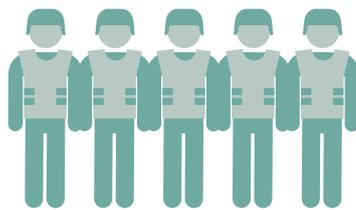
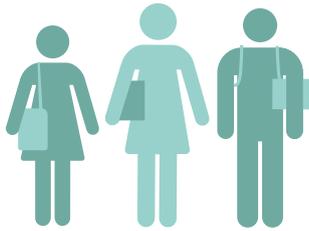
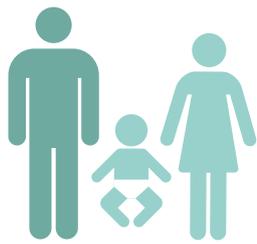
Kyrgyzstan case study
Section 8.2

We want our government to invest funds from the national budget in Oblast [regional] Advisory Committees, and for this national unit to be responsible for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Raya Kadyrova

6 Considering Stakeholder Groups

“...explore their potential roles in conflict prevention, the risks involved, and what type of preparation or entry point might be helpful to get them on board.”



Introduction

This section gives a basic overview of some of the stakeholder groups that can be considered for participation in an MSP, exploring their potential roles in conflict prevention, the risks involved, and what type of preparation or entry points might be helpful to get them on board. This overview is not an exhaustive one; groups not included here, for example, are armed or other hard-to-reach groups or regulators such as electoral commissions.



See 'Stakeholder Mapping' in the *Conflict Analysis Field Guide*.

When preparing to engage different stakeholder groups in an MSP, keep in mind the **interest of the actor** being targeted, and make explicit how their participation in the process matches and advances their own priorities. Engagement is also more effective when informed by the **institutional realities and constraints** of the targeted actor. Exploring and learning about these together can be built into the process as a way of trust building.

The characteristics of different stakeholder groups are highly influenced by the context. Variables that come into play include the **political context**, in particular the behaviour and openness of the state toward civil society, freedom of expression and the role of the media and private businesses. Secondly, the **level of violence** and the position of the stakeholders in a particular phase of the conflict cycle (pre-, post-conflict, outright crisis), as well as the history of violence, determine what type of engagement is appropriate. The **level of influence and perceptions of external political actors** and donors will indicate to what extent and how to involve international actors and outsiders.⁴⁰

One caveat to bear in mind in any context is the **diversity within** all assumed stakeholder groups, since power dynamics and lack of coordination can be as problematic within these groups as among them.



Useful references

Aditi N. Hate, Lisa Moore, Dirk Druet: "Understanding and Improving Engagement with Civil Society in UN Peacekeeping," United Nations 2017

De Weijer, F., and U. Kilnes. "Strengthening Civil Society? Reflections on International Engagement in Fragile States." ECDPM, October 2012.

Paffenholz, Thania. "Civil Society and Peacebuilding – Summary of Results for a Comparative Research Project." CCDP, 2009.

Poppellwell, Rowan. "Civil Society Under Fire: Three Big Questions for Peacebuilders Working with Local Civil Society." INTRAC Briefing Paper. INTRAC, 2015.

6.1 Civil Society

In broad terms, civil society groups are defined by their purpose, their level of organisation, their geographical reach and the context in which they work. Some of the **variations** that distinguish or characterise civil society groups include:

- Interest-driven or advocacy groups—for example trade unions, environmental groups
- Identity-based—for example faith groups, minority groups, women or youth groups
- Technical or service providers—such as health or education NGOs
- Organised (from volunteer-driven to institutionalised with paid staff) or informal (activists such as community leaders, social media users)
- Explicitly neutral (for example humanitarian agencies) or explicitly political (interest and advocacy groups)
- local ('grassroots' or community-based), national, regional, or international scope
- Networks and umbrella groups (also with varying geographical spread).

To be taken seriously as partners in multi-stakeholder initiatives, CSOs must be able to demonstrate their role and added value. Organisations can have unique qualities that make them valuable in an MSP. While a local organisation might have cultural expertise, a larger INGO might bring knowledge from MSPs they have participated in elsewhere.

⁴⁰ Paffenholz (2014): Broadening Participation in Peace Processes: Dilemmas and options for mediators. Mediation Practice Series 4. Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, June 2014

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- 6.2 State Actors
- 6.3 Intergovernmental and International Organisations
- 6.4 The Media

- 6.5 The Security Sector
- 6.6 The Private Sector
- 6.7 Academia
- 6.8 Donors

BOX 30: DIFFERENT WAYS CSOs CAN BRING VALUE TO AN MSP

These are just some of the ways an organisation might uniquely contribute and add value to an MSP.

- **Constituencies:** the people or groups the organisation represents, and who they can mobilise or reach out to.
- **Leadership:** at the community level, or in relation to interest groups.
- **Expertise:** technical knowledge, or knowledge of a particular subject.
- **Skills:** for example analytical, or dialogue and mediation skills.
- **Cultural knowledge:** for example knowing specific communities or identity groups, or gender awareness.
- **Network and resources:** an organisation's links to a broader network, or access to relevant political arenas and institutions.
- **Experience:** International NGOs can bring stories and experience from MSPs elsewhere. They also often have links to important donors.

Civil society is a reflection of broader dynamics in society.⁴¹ Navigating the **diversity** of civil society groups can be a challenge, and where local CSOs are **polarised** along conflict lines the act of including or excluding groups in an initiative can directly affect the conflict and power dynamics. Do No Harm considerations are therefore key when considering civil society participation. The involvement of CSOs can also be affected by **competition**—for visibility, funding and influence—among different groups.



Kenya case study
Section 8.5

...you will find that different actors have vested interest in the process. Visibility for some stakeholders for instance becomes critical. Many actors need to prove to their immediate constituency that they are engaged and doing something about peaceful elections. So when selecting individuals to represent all stakeholders, there can be a bit of jostling for positions.

Florence Mpaayei

A common criticism is the issue of **representation**: who do CSOs represent and how? Often, this is not addressed and it remains unclear in which capacity they participate (see Section 3.1). A frequent problem is civil society only being represented by an **NGO elite**, professionalised organisations that are familiar with international project language and processes, but which may not be representative of marginalised groups. International NGOs (**INGOs**) involved also run the risk of dominating the process through their access to resources and operational support.

On the other hand, smaller CSOs may lack **capacity to participate** consistently, due to practical and resource issues such as time constraints or staff turnover, or—often in the case of community based groups—insufficient negotiation skills and underlying power issues in relation to other participants. These challenges and how to mitigate them are discussed in Section 3.2.

BOX 31: NGOs COME IN ALL STRIPES:

Here are some examples of how the range of NGOs can be described in the media, reflecting the proliferation of NGOs and the often blurred lines of how they are defined and perceived.

INGO	International NGO
BINGO	Big international NGO (also known as Business-friendly NGO)
TANGO	Technical assistance NGO
RINGO	Religious NGO
CONGO	Corporate-organized NGO
DONGO	Donor-organized NGO
GONGO	Government-organized NGO (not really an NGO)
PANGO	Party NGO (set up by a political party, not really an NGO)
Briefcase NGO	NGO set up only to draw donor funds
CBO	Community-based organization

Source Dinyar Godrej, 'NGOs - Do They Help?', New Internationalist, 2014.

⁴¹ F. De Weijer and U. Kilnes, *Strengthening Civil Society? Reflections on International Engagement in Fragile States* (ECDPM, October 2012).

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While the preparation and entry points for engaging diverse civil society actors can emerge naturally through existing contacts and **networks** of the MSP initiators, it is important to also carry out stakeholder analysis (Section 5.2) to address the risks described above. **Specialised** resources and umbrella groups can support the engagement of specific groups such as faith groups, women or youth groups, community-based groups, and so on. Networks can also be helpful as platforms for broader civil society to align insider (MSP participants) and outsider (pressure groups) strategies towards conflict prevention purposes.

6.2 State Actors



Useful references

“International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS)” www.pbsdialogue.org/en/.

“Open Government Partnership.” Open Government Partnership. www.opengovpartnership.org/.

“Parliamentarians for Global Action” www.pgaction.org/.

Van Tongeren, P., and C. van Empel. “Joint Action for Prevention: Civil Society and Government Cooperation on Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding.” GPPAC Issue Paper. European Centre for Conflict Prevention, 2007.

Just as civil society is a diverse category, it is nearly impossible to generalise about states. They range from effectively functioning bodies that operate in a legally defined and enforceable framework within a well-established democratic tradition, to non-functioning entities where democracy and the rule of law are virtually absent.⁴² The **nature of the state** also influences what type of civil society exists in the context, as well as civil society’s relationship to the state—which ranges from cooperation or co-optation to outright hostility.

Traditionally, there has been an assumption that states ‘own’ conflicts, in that they are ultimately responsible for initiating or ending conflicts. In principle, they provide the **legal and justice framework** needed to institutionalise conflict prevention, **regulate economic activity** and the **security sector** to ensure the human security of citizens.⁴³ CSOs initiating an MSP should therefore consider carefully the consequences of leaving them out of the discussion. At the same time, the rise of non-state actors in conflict has legitimised an increased role for civil society in addressing conflict alongside governments.

In dealing with governments, it is useful to understand the internal dynamics and different roles that various institutions, departments or ministries play in a given context. While their roles and positions may appear to contradict each other, that contradiction is where political entry points can sometimes be found. When considering state actors, there is also an important distinction to make between engaging **politicians** or **civil servants**. Both categories have their advantages and disadvantages.

When working to support the Nagorny-Karabakh peace process in the South Caucasus, we realised that the position of different institutions within the government was not really unified. Some departments or ministries were more receptive towards the idea of engagement with civil society than the others. Understanding the reasons for these differences allowed us to better see the complexities of the government’s positions in the official negotiations process. This in turn helped us to formulate more nuanced political frameworks for track 2 dialogues between the conflicting sides.

Reviewer

Politicians, such as ministers or parliamentarians can provide **leadership and authority**, and have the potential of direct **legal or policy influence**. In some countries, it is possible to work with a spectrum of political actors through cross-party working groups, or with a politicised target group such as youth wings or women leaders. The **reputational risk** is more pronounced when working with politicians, as is the possibility that they might use the process for short-term **political gain**. Risk assessments and careful management of group consensus become important to counter these risks.

42 P. van Tongeren and C. van Empel, *Joint Action for Prevention: Civil Society and Government Cooperation on Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding* (European Centre for Conflict Prevention, 2007), p. 7.

43 Schirch, *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning*, p. 108.

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BOX 32: BRINGING DECISION-MAKERS TO THE TABLE

Direct participation of all parties or stakeholder groups having the authority to make and to implement decisions increases the likelihood of their implementation. On the other hand, in some processes (particularly for citizen input) the direct involvement of the decision-makers might overly influence the process, impede open and honest discussions, and taint the recommendations. In some cases, the regulatory or decision-making agencies are at the table to provide input and reality testing, but do not participate in the consensus decision-making process, especially if the product of negotiations is a recommendation to their agency.

Source Convening: Organizing Multiparty Stakeholder Negotiations, p. 6.

Civil servants can provide a bridge between politicians and the **operational** arm of policies. In this sense, they are the do-ers in governmental departments or local authorities, once a policy has been adopted. They may also be influential as **policy informers** as technical advisors to politicians. When engaging civil servants, it is important to be clear on their individual and institutional mandate. Directly linked to the **mandate** are the possible **bureaucratic** requirements that civil servants may have to comply with to participate in a process, and/or to follow up on commitments. Finally, given the need for comprehensive analysis and strategies in conflict prevention, it may be useful to consider **interagency** working groups across different government departments.

As a starting point for engaging state actors, it is relevant to know which institutional mandates, policy **commitments** and **policy frameworks** could be referred to and built on. It can be helpful to analyse where the government and international actors are already investing resources. Examples of this include the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, the Sustainable Development Goals, or the implementation of key UN Security Council resolutions such as UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Other entry points are international agencies or donors that are working with the government towards such frameworks.



Useful references

“Pathways for Peace Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict”
United Nations and World Bank, 2017 and forthcoming

“Regional Organizations and Peacebuilding – The Role of Civil Society.” Policy Brief. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2014.

6.3 Intergovernmental and International Organisations

While MSPs should strive to be locally led, there are several potential reasons for involving international intergovernmental actors in the process. They can provide an **impartial platform** and hold sufficient **authority** to convene national state- and non-state actors. As bodies that are mandated by their member states, they have a direct link and existing **partnership with governments**, while providing a crucial **link to regional and global** perspectives, policy frameworks and action. In the long-term, intergovernmental agencies can play a role in creating legal norms, deploy preventive diplomacy and mediation support.⁴⁴

In some cases, UN and regional organisations can contribute by **providing a space and legitimacy to CSOs** versus their national governments. This is especially true where political space for CSOs is restricted. Multilateral forums provide the opportunity for CSOs to address issues that they would not be able to table in their own national contexts.⁴⁵

Regional organisations are increasingly playing a proactive role in conflict early warning and early response, where the guiding motivation is **regional stability and prosperity**.⁴⁶ They are therefore most likely to be involved when initiators can demonstrate that a conflict has (existing or potential) spillover effects at regional level. UN agencies, like-minded state actors from the national context or from other member states can provide openings for their participation. They can also help by demonstrating best practice examples from other regions, showcasing what regional mechanisms are contributing to conflict prevention in practice.

44 Schirch, *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning*, p. 109.

45 *Regional Organizations and Peacebuilding – The Role of Civil Society*, Policy Brief (Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2014), pp. 16–17.

46 *Regional Organizations and Peacebuilding – The Role of Civil Society*.

Example 15:

Regional organisations and conflict prevention mandates

1. The **African Union**'s Peace and Security Architecture includes structures and decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts, post-conflict reconstruction and development on the continent—including a Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Peace Fund.
2. The Economic Community of West African States, **ECOWAS**, has an institutionalised conflict early warning and early response system—ECOWARN—in formal collaboration with civil society and governments across the region.
3. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations—**ASEAN**—is setting up the ASEAN Institute on Peace and Reconciliation and charter Dispute Settlement Mechanism.
4. The Organization of American States—**OAS**—has a Department of Multi-Dimensional Security focused on the security of peoples in the Americas.
5. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe – **OSCE**—has a Conflict Prevention Centre with a network of analysts, and in the case of the High Commissioner for National Minorities, this network is composed by CSOs.

If an organisation does not have an explicit mandate on peace and security, CSOs can be creative in **finding entry points** by framing these issues in one of the areas where the organisation does have a mandate—such as social affairs, development, democracy assistance or other. For example, CSOs in South Asia have been engaging with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation—**SAARC**—under the mandate of promoting people to people interaction in the region.

Regional organisations tend to be heavy on **bureaucracy and protocol**, and like state actors, it is important to be fully aware of the mandate(s) of the department and individual involved. Regional organisations also tend to operate under a **non-interference** policy; therefore, their participation is only likely if accepted by the national government. In other situations, security issues that are sensitive on a national level can be even more sensitive within regional platforms, where the regional organisation is torn between the interests of its member states.⁴⁷

Among international organisations, the **UN system** is a key reference point for conflict prevention efforts, both in terms of the mandate and its presence at local level through regional and national branches. In particular, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Political Affairs (DPA) can be highlighted for their **focus on resilience and Peace Infrastructures**, and network of locally based **Peace and Development Advisors**. These agencies have hands-on experience in supporting MSPs in different contexts. However, depending on the context, other UN bodies or agencies such as the World Bank, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) or the OECD may be more involved locally or have contributions to make in terms of analysis and connections.

Because of their institutional setup, UN and other intergovernmental agencies have an obligation to work with their member states and tend to be beset by internal rules and policies, which can make for **slow decision-making** and involvement. They can also have **limited resources** that are earmarked for specific initiatives. It is therefore better to build relationships with these agencies, where the entry point for collaboration is the capacity support and convening power they can lend to the process.

⁴⁷ Regional Organizations and Peacebuilding - The Role of Civil Society.



Useful references

Bratic, Vladimir, and Lisa Schirch. “Why and When to Use the Media for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding.” GPPAC Issue Paper. ECCP, 2007.

Shank, Michael. “Media Training Manual.” GPPAC, 2009.

Thomas, David. “Engaging with the Media Guide.” Advocacy Toolkit. The Sustainable Development Programme and CIVICUS, 2014.

6.4 The Media

Mainstream media, including radio, television or print media, have the potential to play positive roles in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. However, since the media reflect the overall mood in a country, they have also been known to exacerbate or fuel tensions and polarisations. Involving media owners and professionals in MSPs can therefore bring both opportunities and risks. In relation to MSPs for conflict prevention, we focus here on local media representatives rather than international press.

The media can serve as **information provider** and **messenger** of the process to a broader public. They can also act as **watchdog**, by holding the process participants to their commitments once these are in the public domain. Similarly, they can **influence policymakers or public opinion** as they are at the forefront of making sense of events and filtering the information that is disseminated publicly. The editorial decisions of media representatives can ensure that reporting is conflict sensitive, and that diverse opinions and stories related to a conflict are covered, contributing to deconstructing negative images and serving as **bridge builder** or **diplomat** between groups where direct contact is not possible.⁴⁸

Conflict sensitive reporting, or **peace journalism**, can be useful concepts through which to engage the media. However, it is first necessary to understand what drives media interests and their core professional values. The principles of **independent media reporting** and what is perceived as being in the public’s interest may be a matter of differing opinions. What is considered newsworthy is also often guided by the **‘if it bleeds it leads’** approach, where conflict dynamics are sensationalised.

When attempting to engage or work with the media, it is crucial to understand **the people behind the outlets**. The perspectives of those who run the media shape the stories that are covered. Journalists have opinions and beliefs based on their experiences. Media owners have economic interests; they want to sell their stories and programmes to a public who will buy their newspapers or watch their programmes. Increasing corporate control over media in some countries also plays a role in controlling the types of stories that are covered and the way stories are framed.

Social media has changed how news is shaped and how journalists work. Not every influential media outlet or personality has a large institution behind it—for instance, many journalists may work for several publications while also running a blog or website in their own name. Social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn, also provide **entry points for engaging** media representatives as opinion shapers, while online searches can help identify their areas of specialism.⁴⁹

Ideally, trust can be built with media professionals by establishing a **relationship** over a longer period. For instance, in some contexts, civil society has provided training or facilitated dialogue between motivated media professionals as a peacebuilding measure. It is also possible to approach media owners and professionals such as journalists in their personal capacity, as people who have personally witnessed the costs of violence or whose own country is at risk.

⁴⁸ **Vladimir Bratic and Lisa Schirch**, *Why and When to Use the Media for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding*, GPPAC Issue Paper (The Hague: European Centre for Conflict Prevention, December 2007).

⁴⁹ **David Thomas**, *Engaging with the Media Guide* (The Sustainable Development Programme and CIVICUS, May 2014), p. 7.

Example 16:

Engaging the media in Ghana during 2012 elections

WANEP engaged with the media before and during elections through various election-related activities that it organised. Through these engagements, WANEP appealed to the media to report objectively on issues that had the potential of generating violence. WANEP was regularly invited by the media to share perspectives on contentious issues that arose as a result of disputes emanating from the electoral process. In 2008, as part of the call on the media to contribute to a violence-free election, WANEP was asked by the Public Agenda (a local print media) to organise a training workshop with focus on “Media Practice in Ghana and Efforts towards Peaceful and Non-violent Elections in 2008?” The workshop brought together all the major media organisations in Ghana. This paved the way for continued media contact during the 2012 general elections.

Source West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)

It is especially important to be clear on **confidentiality** agreements from the outset when engaging media representatives. If shared at the wrong time, the exposure of sensitive issues in the public domain can undermine the process or halt it altogether.



Useful references

Bastick, Megan, and T. Whitman. “A Women’s Guide to Security Sector Reform.”

The Institute for Inclusive Security and DCAF, 2013.

Bennett, Will. *Community Security Handbook.* Saferworld, 2014.

Schirch, Lisa. “Handbook on Human Security: A Civil-Military-Police Curriculum” Alliance for Peacebuilding, GPPAC and Kroc Institute for Peace Studies, 2015.

6.5 Security Sector

The UN defines the security sector as “the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country”.⁵⁰ As such, it comprises a broad range of actors, including national armies and military, national or community police, and their political overseers in the form of the Ministries of Defence and Justice. National security actors tend to have a primary focus on **national security**, concerned with protecting a country’s borders and territory and maintaining internal stability, law and order. In some cases, this mandate has some overlap with human security. In some contexts, international peacekeeping missions are also a part of the picture, ensuring protection of civilians or pursuing stability mandates.

Ultimately, security sector actors are an essential component in safeguarding people’s **physical security** and in implementing the **Rule of Law**. Security forces are often the first port of call in conflict early warning systems, and in times of crisis have a role in ensuring the **protection of civilians**. Due to their direct experience of the realities of violent conflict, security sector actors are sometimes known to have a personal motivation for peace.

However, in some contexts, engagement with the security sector is a sensitive matter, especially where army and police have been a **source of insecurity** due to human rights breaches, corruption, politicisation or abuse of power. The concept of civilian oversight does not always translate into practice, and associating with the security sector can pose **reputational** and direct physical **risks** in the context. Nevertheless, whether the security sector is a conflict driver or simply inefficient, engagement is one avenue of communicating and unpacking the expectations towards people-centred security.

Some commonalities among different **military** actors include the highly **hierarchical** command structures and **doctrines** that define their mandate. Any engagement must in one way or another relate to this mandate and take into account the command structure. Because of their national security focus, security forces may have a different assessment of what the causes of conflict are and the strategies to address them. They can have a limited understanding of **how to relate to civil society**, as most guidelines on civil-military engagement tend to mainly relate to humanitarian organisations and agencies. Differences in terminology and operational approach between civilians and military actors can cause a **lack of understanding** and stereotyping in this engagement.

⁵⁰ The United Nations Secretary-General, ‘Report of the Secretary-General for SSR (A/62/659)’, 2008.

6. Considering Stakeholder Groups

- 6.1 Civil Society
- 6.2 State Actors
- 6.3 Intergovernmental and International Organisations
- 6.4 The Media

- 6.5 The Security Sector
- 6.6 The Private Sector
- 6.7 Academia
- 6.8 Donors

BOX 33: KEY DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN CIVILIANS AND MILITARY		
	CIVILIANS	MILITARY
Organisational structure and culture	Less structured, more informal	More structured, more formal
Assessment and planning	Participatory research with local communities; shared analysis	Often classified intelligence and internal analysis
Stated goals and objectives	Human Security	National security and (in some cases) human security
Theories of change	Based mostly on social science	Based mostly on military science, and application of force as a means for change
Operational	International Humanitarian Law principle of distinction: requiring impartiality and independence to enable acceptance by local communities and armed groups; safety of beneficiaries	Comprehensive and integrated approach including 'deconfliction' ⁵¹ cooperation, and integration.

Adapted from source Schirch, 2015.

Unlike the military, **police** are usually civilians and have **non-combatant** status under international law, except in some conflict or post-conflict contexts where there may be international Stability Police Units deployed from states that have a gendarme or paramilitary model of policing. The police mandate is generally to keep the peace and enforce **criminal law**, protecting life and property. Policing models around the world vary from decentralised to single national police forces. They are also characterised by their legal powers, by how the use of force is regulated and by how accountable they are to local or national authorities, governance institutions and communities.⁵²

Useful entry points for engaging with the security sector range from policy or programme frameworks to specific functions and institutions specialised in managing civil-military or community relations. For instance, from a programme perspective **Security Sector Reform** commitments can provide openings for a dialogue with security sector actors at different levels. For military and police forces, Civil-Military Interaction and Cooperation (**CIMIC**) **officers** or police **community liaisons** have specific functions to engage with broader society, albeit as part of a specific mandate. Another avenue is **defence academies or training centres**, where civil society organisations can play a role in sharing peacebuilding principles or in developing conflict early warning and early response systems.



Useful references

Ballentine, Karen, and Virginia Haufler. "Enabling Economies of Peace: Public Policy for Conflict-Sensitive Business." UN Global Compact, 2009.

Bardouille, Dost, Chloe Berwind-Dart, and Anita Ernstorfer. "Business for Peace: Understanding and Assessing Corporate Contributions to Peace." CDA, 2014.

"The Costs of War Project," 2011. <http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/about>.

6.6 The Private Sector

Businesses often carry a **negative connotation** in relation to conflict, in particular those connected to the extractive industries (oil, mining and natural gas companies) due to associations with illicit trade that fund armed groups, or their effect on different groups' access to a country's resources. Business in general tends to **adapt to conflict situations**, which can lead to the development of a certain type of economy that incorporates the effects of war and instability. Local businesses often mirror conflict dynamics, where structural links between business and social class, or other root causes, may contribute to conflict drivers.

On the other hand, a thriving economy can contribute to stability and peace. Businesses are needed to promote and enable **peace dividends**—the benefits of a prosperous stable society such as livelihoods and financial stability. An important distinction here is that between international

⁵¹ Military term for keeping units or missions apart to reduce the likelihood of so-called friendly fire

⁵² Alan Ryan and Marc Rurcell, *Same Space – Different Mandates: International Edition* (Australian. Civil-Military Centre and the Australian Council for International Development, May 2015), pp. 25–28.

6. Considering Stakeholder Groups

- 6.1 Civil Society
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- 6.6 The Private Sector**
- 6.7 Academia
- 6.8 Donors

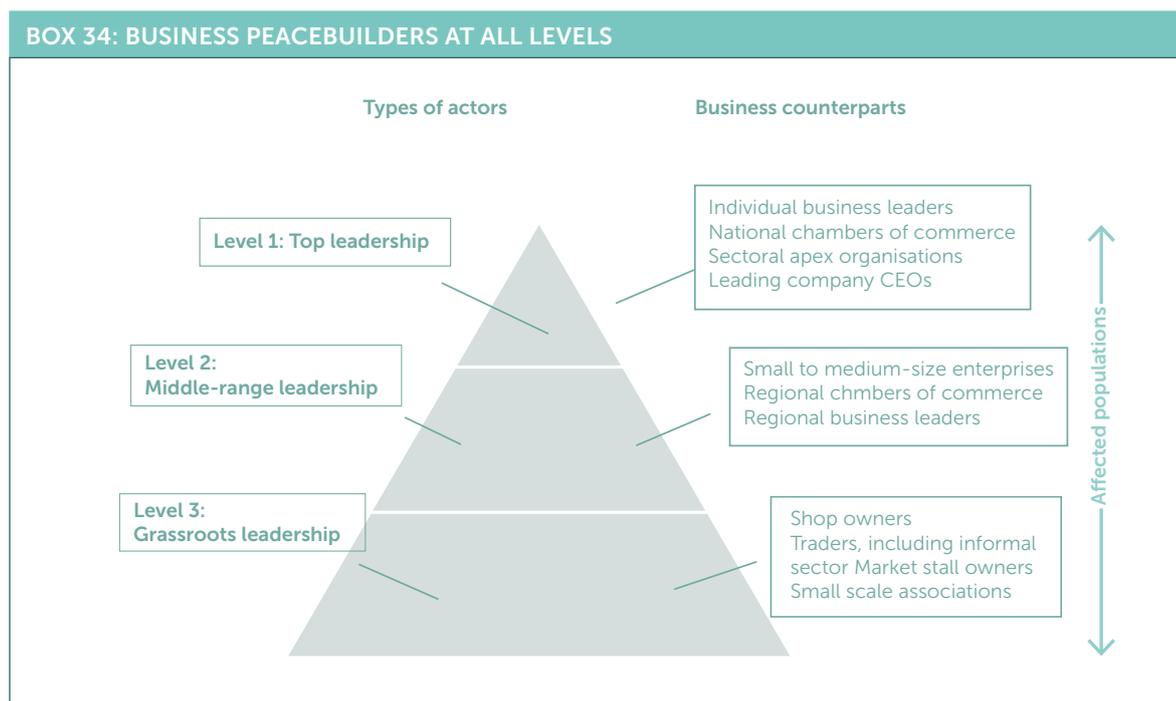
businesses (Transnational Corporations, or TNCs) that answer to foreign management, and local businesses that are locally owned, run and staffed. For locally owned MSPs, it is the **local businesses** and their representatives at different levels that are most relevant. In scenarios where TNCs are directly linked to conflict dynamics, higher-level lobby and advocacy directed at these corporations may be part of actions taken.⁵³

The domestic private sector covers all levels of society. Umbrella groups such as chambers of commerce or business associations are useful entry points towards a more collective involvement. Businesses tend to have strong **networks** and linkages to different segments of society, and in some cases, their economic agenda is perceived as relatively **impartial** in the midst of other political conflict dynamics. Big businesses may use their **influence** to lobby for peace at the political level, whereas small or micro businesses have a reach at grassroots levels of society. Business leaders in small towns or villages are often **de facto community leaders**, whereas women are often effective mediators and initiators at micro-finance levels.⁵⁴

MSPs can tap into the relevant capacities of private sector partners, ranging from the **practical skills** (logistical or administrative) to the high-level **policy engagement** (lobby and political connections), or use their reach to **mobilise society**, for example through publicity campaigns. Business initiatives can contribute **resources** to peacebuilding action plans or facilitate economic activities **across conflict divides**.



See the Kenya case study in Section 8.5 for examples of private sector involvement in conflict prevention.



Adapted from source Local Business, Local Peace: The Peacebuilding Potential of the Domestic Private Sector – Executive Summary (International Alert, 2006).

The main incentive for such involvement is the premise that conflict is bad for business, since the **costs of conflict** often affect trading and businesses the hardest. Thus, to engage private sector actors, it is helpful to present the evidence of cost of conflict and how this impacts on business interests. For local business men and women, there is also the moral and personal imperative to contribute to the greater good of one's own society.

⁵³ Nick Killick, V. S. Srikantha and Canan Gündüz, *The Role of Local Business in Peacebuilding* (Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2005), p. 7.

⁵⁴ Killick, Srikantha and Gündüz, p. 7; Jessica Banfield, Canan Gündüz and Nick Killick, *Local Business, Local Peace: The Peacebuilding Potential of the Domestic Private Sector* (International Alert, 2006), p. 7.

6. Considering Stakeholder Groups

- 6.1 Civil Society
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- 6.4 The Media

- 6.5 The Security Sector
- 6.6 **The Private Sector**
- 6.7 **Academia**
- 6.8 Donors

BOX 35: MAKING THE CASE—COST OF CONFLICT

For most local private sectors, business in a conflict zone is more a matter of survival than growth. The chaos and uncertainty brought on by conflict is characterised by:

- Destruction of infrastructure.
- Loss of skilled workforce.
- Reduction or collapse of foreign investment.
- Heightened security and insurance costs.
- Loss of markets.
- Diminished support from the government.
- Closed borders or broken business ties that undermine trade.

Source Killick, Srikantha and Gündüz, p. 4.

The legitimacy of private sector involvement might be challenged if negative perceptions and **mistrust** exist in society, for example due to corruption or economic self-interest. One way of addressing such issues in the long term is to support businesses in conducting self-assessments and, where relevant, adopt **conflict-sensitive practices** and **corporate social responsibility** policies. Some political contexts are less conducive to involving the private sector as partners, for example where the independence of local businesses is restricted.



Useful references

“University for Peace,”
www.upeace.org/.

Conflict Prevention and
Peace Forum (CPPF) of the
Social Science Research
Council

Rethinking Research
Partnerships: Discussion
Guide and Toolkit (Christian
Aid, Open University, 2017)
[https://rethinkingresearch-
partnerships.com](https://rethinkingresearch-partnerships.com)

6.7 Academia

While often associated with the civil society category, it is worth considering academia as a specific stakeholder group, with its own characteristics that can be useful for MSPs and peacebuilding processes. **Universities, think tanks** and **research centres** with programmes dedicated to peace, security and development issues are multiplying in all parts of the world. Not only are they researching, teaching and documenting peacebuilding processes, academics are often directly involved as practitioners in such processes.

To build ownership and ensure sustainability of the process, **local** academic institutions should be the first port of call where possible. Internationally recognised experts and institutions may be sourced from regional or global **academic networks**, and can work alongside local counterparts to build capacity in the process, where needed. Exceptions to this rule may be required where an outsider is more likely to be trusted by all local parties.

Given their evidence-based, scientific approach, academics may in some cases be perceived as impartial and less threatening as **conveners** to a broad range of otherwise politicised actors. Their input and support to context and conflict **analysis** as well as **methodologies** can add to the quality and thus credibility of the process. In addition, they can support participants in **making the case** for peace, whether it is by supplying data about the cost of conflict, or relating to broader trends and developments.

Some academics are equipped with facilitation and mediation **skills** and have hands-on experience of dialogue processes. Once the process is underway, academic actors can also support the **reflection and evaluation** on progress, barriers and outcomes, and are well placed to **document and share** lessons learned. The opportunity to study, understand and publish case study materials on an MSP in the making can be a key motivation for academics to take part in the first place. It is therefore important to be clear on **expectations and confidentiality** agreements from the outset.

Example 17:

Academic conveners as a safe space for dialogue

In the TACE process for Cuba–USA dialogue, the process was framed as a series of academic workshops, which was politically more acceptable and non-threatening for both sides to engage in. It also made it easier for the participants on both sides to physically meet, since official policy and visa regulations would restrict diplomatic engagement between the two countries.

When including academics as key participants in the process, it is wise to balance academic versus practical approaches, and be mindful not to alienate other participants with the use of **jargon** or overly academic language. This can affect the power dynamics in often hidden ways and can affect the level of participation and confidence of others (see Section 3.2).



Useful references

“*The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: The Role of Funders in Conflict.*” Peace and Security Funders Group, 2014.

“*Peace and Security Funding Index*”

6.8 Donors

A category that cuts across several stakeholder groups, donors can represent governments, civil society, charitable foundations or private businesses. Nevertheless, it is useful to consider the role of these actors in their capacity as donors, and how their involvement may affect the process.

Donors can be more likely to commit to **funding** a process long-term if they are involved and part of the process. Therefore, in addition to justifying how the MSP is meeting both a locally identified need and the donor’s priorities, consider what strategic role the donor agency could play. For instance, donor agencies can contribute their own **conflict analysis data** as well as their **overview** of other peacebuilding efforts and actors. Depending on what type of agency they are, they may also have useful **connections and policy insights** that can be vital to ensure the sustainability of the MSP.

Government donors of northern, high-income countries⁵⁵ usually have their own aid agencies that are part of or linked to ministries or departments of foreign affairs, and as such are informed by politically endorsed strategic plans. They will also have **bilateral agreements** with governments and regional organisations in conflict-affected regions, in many cases linked to **global policy frameworks** mentioned in Section 6.2 on State Actors. A case for such actors to lend their support must usually relate to these broader frameworks.

Non-governmental donors, such as foundations or INGOs will also have their own strategic priorities, but can be more flexible since they are not subject to the same level of political scrutiny. In turn, they may have their own set **advocacy agendas** in their home countries or at global levels, and rely on the commitment of a supporter base—generally high-income countries in the Global North—for donations. While this can contribute to a greater reach of a local conflict prevention agenda (for example where international trade patterns or foreign interference affect conflict dynamics), their involvement and contribution in MSPs could also be influenced by this agenda.

Any involvement of donors in the agenda setting or discussions of an MSP must be considered carefully to avoid it affecting **power** dynamics and **ownership** as discussed in Section 3. As the sustainability of the MSP is directly related to both ownership and the availability of resources, one of the most constructive contributions that a key donor can make is to **mobilise other donors and resources**. So-called ‘basket funds’ or joint funding frameworks, where various donors contribute and coordinate their support in discussion with recipients, can establish a more responsive and equal partnership than conventional project approaches.

⁵⁵ The countries we are referring to are generally, though not always, in the Global North, and are usually high-income countries. In some publications they might be referred to as the West; while they represent a political reality, most of these terms are problematic and open for criticism.

7 Tools and Templates

“The tools can be picked up at any stage of a process to support analysis, sorting information, prioritising and planning actions.”



7.1	Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid	7.5	Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
7.2	Checklist for an Effective MSP	7.6	Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
7.3	Interview Questions for Potential Participants	7.7	Basic Action Plan Template
7.4	Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks	7.8	Tailoring Communication Strategies

Introduction

This section provides some tools and templates that have been borrowed or adapted from existing resources, or developed in the process of producing this manual. Most of the tools refer to a specific section in the manual, but they can also be picked up at any stage of a process as deemed relevant to support analysis, sorting of information, prioritising and planning actions.

Depending on the character of the group and the process, as well as individual preferences, not all tools will prove useful to everyone. Different alternatives have been provided to allow for mixing, matching and adapting as each group sees fit. Additional tools are available in the GPPAC Conflict Analysis Field Guide and highlighted in the Bibliography.

We welcome feedback and examples from the use of these tools, as well as suggestions for additional resources that have proven helpful to support multi-stakeholder processes!

The templates are available to download from www.preventiveaction.org.

7.1 Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid

This grid helps you to summarise and sort some of key factors to consider when deciding whether to organise a multi-stakeholder process as a strategy for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as described in **Sections 4, 5.1 and 5.2**. It can be used alongside the checklist in 7.2.

The grid can be used in several ways, for example:

- The Core Group of organisers can fill it out individually based on internal discussions, and then come together to compare; the grid can be updated as potential stakeholders are approached in bilateral meetings.
- The Core Group can do a collective brainstorm supported by a facilitator, with teams from the respective organisations taking part. Key words and post-its can be used to visualise everyone's input on larger flip chart sheets, which are described and discussed in turn in smaller groups or by the group as a whole (depending on size).
- Potential participants can use the grid along with the checklist in Section 7.2 to cover all eventualities when deciding whether to join a process.

7. Tools and Templates

- 7.1 **Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid**
- 7.2 Checklist for an Effective MSP
- 7.3 Interview Questions for Potential Participants
- 7.4 Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

- 7.5 Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
- 7.6 Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
- 7.7 Basic Action Plan Template
- 7.8 Tailoring Communication Strategies

	PROS & BENEFITS	CONS & RISKS	ALTERNATIVE(S)
OPPORTUNITIES			
TIMING			
RESOURCES			
COMPETENCIES			

Example:

	PROS & BENEFITS	CONS & RISKS	ALTERNATIVE(S)
OPPORTUNITIES	Political influence through collaboration with other groups	Political reputation risk – association with certain participants	Lobby/campaign through outsider strategy
TIMING	New legal framework to be proposed by government	Emphasis on legal aspects rather than action/its implementation?	Civil society platform being formed around the government proposal
RESOURCES	Funding for lobbying to strengthen local governance	Earmarked for certain type of lobbying; donor conditions	Engage process participants in lobbying for basket fund by donors?
COMPETENCIES	Have's: mediation skills, coordination, process management	Don't have: convening power, administrative capacity	Mapping of skills of other participants, or outreach to additional participants with missing skills

7.1	Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid	7.5	Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
7.2	Checklist for an Effective MSP	7.6	Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
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7.2 Checklist for an Effective MSP

This checklist can be used either by organisers to inform the Go/No-Go decision discussed in **Section 4**, or by potential participants to gauge whether to join an official multi-stakeholder process. The list can also be a useful reference to inform design and planning stages of the process, as well as monitoring and evaluation once the process is underway. In addition, these pointers can give CSOs the ideas for formulating their own checklist tailored to their own priorities and needs.

Individual

- Inter-personal dynamics or chemistry between the potential participants
- Gender balance and other power dynamics
- Communication skills
- Negotiation skills
- Listening skills
- Participants see the relevance of the MSP
- Trustworthiness and responsiveness of participants
- Clear vision or individual or organisational mandate to participate
- Individual participants accountable towards colleagues, partners and constituencies
- Availability of participants to take part

Organisational

- Cost-benefit analysis
- Risk analysis, including reputational risk assessment and management
- Relevance of the MSP to the organisational vision and mission
- Relevance of the MSP to the organisation's constituency
- Institutional support for the MSP
- Clear expectations
- Role, contribution and added value to the MSP
- Exit strategy
- Available resources (staff, time, funding) to participate in the MSP
- Subject matter expertise (e.g. specific conflict issues)
- Internal accountability/reporting back mechanisms
- Involvement of more than one staff (at least as part of the information/feedback loop)

Civil Society

- How the MSP relates to/interacts with what other CSOs are doing: possible complementarity or risks of undermining other efforts
- Options for strategic division of insider/outsider roles
- Policy developments and regulatory frameworks concerning civil society

Process

- Power dynamics among the participating agencies
- Credibility of the convener
- Credibility of the process: clear decision-making, expectations, accountability structures
- Skilled facilitator
- Logistics and information that support inclusiveness and interaction
- Ownership of agenda, protocol, outputs and outcomes
- Feedback and monitoring mechanisms
- Agreement on internal and external communication rules
- Funding and resources to support the process
- Dispute resolution and grievance mechanisms
- Incentives for participation and for staying involved
- Evaluation, learning and adjustments

Adapted from source van Huijstee.

7.1	Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid	7.5	Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
7.2	Checklist for an Effective MSP	7.6	Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
7.3	Interview Questions for Potential Participants	7.7	Basic Action Plan Template
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7.3 Interview Questions for Potential Participants

A crucial step in the process is the preparation stage when potential stakeholders are approached in bilateral meetings to inform the stakeholder and situation analysis, as well as trust-building mechanisms such as terms and rules of engagement, as discussed in **Section 5.2**. It is useful if a facilitator/mediator is already involved at this stage to take the lead in preparatory meetings.

Ideally, the meetings are conducted individually and in person. When time and distance stand in the way, interviews can also be conducted over the phone or in groups. The interview approach may have to be modified for each group/individual for the most productive results.

The interviews can help to gather insights into the causes, characteristics, and the complexities of the context. In these initial interviews, the facilitator begins to:

- Frame the issues.
- Identify the parties that should be involved.
- Assess their commitments to a process and outcome.
- Assess data and technical resource needs.
- Get information that will shape the preliminary process design.

In relation to the potential participants, the facilitator:

- Consults with the potential participants about their needs and concerns to help them decide to participate in the process.
- Provides information on the intended purpose and proposed proceedings of the process.
- Works with the parties to explore and assess their options for addressing the issues at hand, so that the parties can weigh all of their options, and so that the convener gets a sense of the level of commitment from parties.

Interview questions for suggested participants:

What are the issues?

- Which issues are most important to your group?
- Are there limits to the issues that are open for negotiation?
- Are there outside dynamics that affect negotiation of these issues at this time?

Who needs to participate?

- Who can represent your group or constituency in a credible and responsible fashion?
- Who needs to be at the table from other stakeholder groups? (i.e., who is needed to make a decision, has valuable information, will be affected by a decision, and/or has the ability to impede implementation of a decision?)
- What is the history of relationships among stakeholder representatives and groups?
- Are there stakeholders who are critical to the process who may be reluctant to participate? What would be the impact of their refusal on your participation?
- What will it take for you and your group to participate? What commitments would you want from others (parties or decision-makers or agencies) in order to participate?
- Other than the stakeholders at the table, who would support such a process and who would oppose it? Other than the stakeholders at the table, who is critical to bring along or link with the negotiations?

Assessing options and commitments

- What is most important to your group about each issue? (i.e., procedural, psychological and substantive interests)
- Do you have fears or concerns about negotiating these issues?
- What are your alternatives to participation in a cooperative decision-making process? (i.e., best, worst, most likely outcome)
- What do you have to gain or lose from a negotiated decision? What do you have to gain or lose from the status quo?
- Do you understand the consensus decision-making process, and are you willing to try it?

Process design considerations

- How could the negotiations be structured to gain the cooperation of your group and other key interest groups?
- Are there any procedural ground rules that you believe will make the negotiation more effective and productive?
- What do you see as the major barriers, if any, to such a collaborative process? What could a neutral facilitator do to overcome these barriers?
- What are the processes that need to take place within your group or constituency regarding decision-making and ratification?
- Are there limitations on your time or resources that might affect your capacity to negotiate?

Data needs

- What kinds of data will you need during the negotiating process?
- What kind of data or information exchange is needed to build a common base of knowledge for all the stakeholders?
- Whose information would be most credible? Who should present it? How should it be presented? When?
- What kind of technical expertise/support will you need during the negotiation process?

What haven't I asked that you think would be helpful to us in convening this group?

7.4 Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks

As the organisers are initiating the process and start approaching potential participants and donors, as described in **Section 5.1**, they may be required to present a convincing case of what they are hoping to do and achieve through the process. The following summary of building blocks from CIVICUS can be helpful in summing up and communicating the rationale and expectations of the process as a whole, and can lay the basis for a concept note that is updated as the initial consultations and steps are taken.

BUILDING BLOCKS	1. Identifying the added value of working together	2. Co-creating a vision and shared priorities, imagining new scenarios	3. Action! Adopting collective and individual initiatives	4. Monitoring the process and learning along the way
RATIONALE/ LEAD QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is not working well in our society? What would be the added value in collaborating with different actors that typically do not work together to address a common challenge that is too big/ complex to be tackled alone? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What would the ideal solution/ situation be? What could be done differently, more effectively? What needs to change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What needs to be done, by whom and how? How can each of us embed the collaborative priorities in our respective groups or organisations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the progress going? What corrective measures are needed to better address the challenge? Do we need to bring on board new actors?
POSSIBLE ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the system Identify and engage key stake holders Create shared knowledge and a common language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create visions of desired change Develop change narratives Conduct learning journeys Share research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement projects/actions/ campaigns Share knowledge, raise awareness Collect and analyse data Empower vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess progress against plans Share views around challenges and gaps, if any Share lessons learned Plan way forward based on learnings
POSSIBLE WAYS OF WORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk research Interviews/focus groups with key informants One-on-one dialogues or small focus groups and interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a core group of Champions Hosting initial face-to-face meeting(s) Organising a big kick-off meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalised partnerships A joint action plan Small meetings/ conference calls at periodic intervals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convening meetings at periodic intervals Collecting feedback through online/ telephonic surveys
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification of issue at stake, common goals (added value) and expectations from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of priorities for collaboration and ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the agreed initiatives Achievement of the envisaged results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of necessary adjustments/ additional actions/new stake holders, if needed

Source Towards New Social Contracts: Using Dialogue Processes to Promote Social Change, p. 16.

7.5 Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment

This summary chart brings together and illustrates how the analysis and ideas about the peacebuilding strategy can be linked with self-assessments. It can provide a useful overview when the process is underway and the participants are at a point of considering what actions they can take, whether individually or collectively—as described in **Section 5.4**.



See the *Conflict Analysis Field Guide*.

The facilitator can use the chart to summarise the findings of conflict assessment exercises of the groups, which can be followed by individual and/or collective self-assessments and planning input. It can also be a useful overview for taking stock and testing whether the initial analysis and assumptions (theories of change) are still valid or whether they need updating.

	Self-Assessment	Conflict Assessment Lens	Theory of Change	Peacebuilding Planning
WHERE	How well do you understand the local context, language, cultures, religions, etc.? Where will you work?	Where is the conflict taking place—in what cultural, social, economic, justice, and political context or system?	If x parts of the context are at the root of conflict and division or provide a foundation of resilience and connection between people, what will influence these factors?	How will the context interact with your efforts? Given your self-assessment, identify your capacity to impact the elements of the context that drive conflict and your ability to foster institutional and cultural resilience.
WHO	Where are you in the stakeholder map? Where do you have social capital? To which key actors do you relate?	Who are the stakeholders—the people who have a stake or interest in the conflict?	If x individual or group is driving or mitigating conflict, then what action will incentivise them to change?	Who will you work with? Given your self-assessment, decide whom to work with to improve relationships between key stakeholders or support key actors who could play a peacebuilding role between key stakeholders.
WHY	How do stakeholders perceive your motivations?	Why are the stakeholders acting the way they do? What are their motivations?	If x group is motivated to drive or mitigate conflict, what will change or support their motivations?	Why will you work? Given your self-assessment of your motivations and how stakeholders perceive your motivations, identify how these align with the motivations of the key actors. What is your goal?
WHAT	What are you capable of doing to address the key drivers and mitigators of conflict?	What factors are driving or mitigating conflict?	If x power sources are driving and mitigating conflict, what actions will influence these factors?	What will you do? Given your self-assessment, identify which driving and mitigating factors you will address.
HOW	What are your resources, means, or sources of power? How will these shape your efforts?	How is conflict manifested? What are the stakeholders' means and sources of power?	If x power sources are driving conflict, what will influence these sources of power?	How will you shift power sources in support of peace? Given your self-assessment, identify and prioritize your capacities to reduce dividers and to increase local capacities for peace.
WHEN	Do you have an ability to respond quickly to windows of vulnerability or opportunity?	Are historical patterns or cycles of the conflict evident?	If x times are conducive to violence or peace, what will influence these times?	When is the best timing for your peacebuilding efforts? Given historical patterns, identify possible windows of opportunity or vulnerability and potential triggers and trends of future scenarios.

Source Schirch, Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning, pp. 69–70.

7.6 Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions

An action plan is only useful if it is realistic and specific, as described in **Section 5.4**. This matrix can help the facilitator support the group to prioritise which actions to focus on in their planning. It works by rating each issue you identify against given criteria.

1. Identify three or four possible priority issues, using the group's context analysis, upon which you can base your action strategy.
2. Discussing each issue in turn, the group can work through its chosen criteria to rank each from 1-5 (5 = maximum effectiveness). A practical way of doing this as a group exercise is to draw up the table on a white board or flip chart, then give each participant a marker pen or a set of stickers that they can use to allocate points over the different priority issues. This gives a visual impression of where most people see the priorities. Note: the criteria used below are just examples, which can be amended according to the group's own situation and perceived level of importance.
3. Add up the totals (or visually identify where most of the stickers have been placed): the issue with the most points should in theory become your strategy priority. Note: While in theory you may just add up the points, in practice it is the discussion that is crucial and not just the numbers. It should not be a mechanical process where you just add up numbers. Ideally, the group should decide the most important issue(s), by consensus.

CHOICE MATRIX: PRIORITISING ACTIONS			
CRITERIA	Action proposal 1 Organise delegations to the Electoral commission	Action proposal 2 Facilitate community discussions on human security	Action proposal 3 Train local monitors on early warning and response
Link to conflict analysis (relevance)	4	4	4
Theory of change (how likely are the assumptions)	3	3	4
Link with participants' vision and mission, institutional support	2	3	5
Funding/resources available	4	4	4
Expertise required vs. expertise in the group	2	3	4
Supporting coordination or complementarity (e.g. joint actions)			
[Other criteria here...]			
TOTAL	15	17	21

Adapted from source Choice Matrix - Advocacy Toolkit: Influencing the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Participatory Advocacy: A Toolkit for VSO Staff, Volunteers and Partners (VSO, 2012), p. 26.

7.7 Basic Action Plan Template

There are many different formats for action plans, and the facilitator with the process participants should opt for one that is familiar and easy to understand and update for the group as a whole.

Key components of the action plan are:

- **Why?** Relation to the broader goal/objective the group is working towards (the more specific the better; note that there may be more than one specific goal).
- **What?** Specific activity that is planned.
- **Who?** Lead person and organisation responsible for making the activity happen; supporting or participant people/organisations.
- **When?** Timeline for the activity and when the lead person/organisation will report back to the group.

This basic template is one way of keeping an overview of what the group is planning to do together. Note that for each specific activity, the responsible lead may have to develop a plan with more detailed steps and time frame/dates and related budget. When using the action plan as part of fundraising bids, it may be necessary to add progress indicators and results/outputs.

Goal	Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible • Who is involved 	By when

Example

Goal	Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible • Who is involved 	By when
To collaborate with the National Defence Council on the protection of minority rights as part of conflict early warning and early response in the Country Development Strategy	Draft position paper/ recommendations	Organisation(s)/ individual(s)	Dates, occasion
	Advocacy delegation to (individual/department) at the National Defence Council		
	Communication strategy (radio, statements, social media)		
	Plan regional discussion event		
	Follow up/monitoring of recommendations		

7.8 Tailoring Communication Strategies

This chart can support the group to develop a communication strategy once the process is underway and an action plan has been formed, in particular in the implementation phase described in **Section 5.5**. This strategy can contribute to making the process more inclusive and accountable to a broader audience, as well supporting any advocacy objectives the group may have.

The communication strategy is more effective if different messages and means of communicating are tailored to different audiences, as suggested in the chart below. One way of using it is to work in small groups that each select a target group identified in the stakeholder analysis, considering the following questions that are subsequently presented and discussed in plenary:

1. **Who** are you trying to reach, and why?
2. **What** will you say, and how does your message relate to what they care about?
3. **How** will you reach them?

Remember that for each broad category below there are sub-categories that will be more or less relevant to your strategy!

	WHO	WHAT	HOW
 <p>SMALL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE</p> <p>LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE</p>	Policy makers, opinion formers.	Detailed, evidence-based arguments, link to how the issue relates to their position and status.	Detailed policy documents or simpler letters or meetings to establish the importance of the issue to them.
	Relevant groups and individuals interested in the issue.	Explaining what you are aiming for and why, identifying barriers to change, in broad lines; how to find out more.	Newsletters, leaflets, newspaper articles/ Op-Eds; More detailed information to those who ask for it.
	Wider public.	Simple and emotional stories and messages that make it easy to understand and engage with the issues.	Using public profile personalities or personal testimonies of those who have suffered as a result of violence/conflict issues.

Adapted from source **Advocacy Capacity Building: A Training Toolkit**, The People's Peacemaking Perspective Project (Conciliation Resources and Saferworld, 2011).

8 Practitioners' Reflections

“The question for me is, if we don’t sit down and talk, if we don’t have these mechanisms, what happens?”



8.1 Introduction

This section presents and compares the personal reflections of practitioners on case studies, based on four in-depth interviews with GPPAC regional representatives in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan), Eastern & Central Africa (Kenya), the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. They have all have been centrally engaged within their organisations and through domestic and international networks in promoting, developing and participating in different types of multi-stakeholder processes aimed at preventing conflict or the recurrence of conflict. **While the interviews took place in 2013 and some of the specific events described have moved on, the reflections and challenges remain of broader significance.**

The starting point for each interview was a series of open-ended questions aimed at providing a framework for comparison across the particular experiences. The interviews showed that while there are many similarities of experience, the differences within this small sample are equally noteworthy. Defining the uses and constraints on multi-stakeholder processes is obviously heavily influenced by national and regional political contexts, individual and organisational experiences and capacities:

- In the days just prior to a potentially explosive national election, the focus in **Kenya** was on how different actors could work together (and independently) to persuade politicians and their followers not to use violence to try to win power. In the circumstances, overlapping and functionally linked networks and institutions, including a range of state security, justice and electoral agencies, had more or less well-developed working relationships, plans and capacities to act to deflect political events.
- In the **Kyrgyz** context, in the absence of an imminent crucial election or another overarching threat to human security, the main challenge was working cooperatively on national level action, where stakeholder conflict prevention and mitigation processes were used with varying degrees of effectiveness at the local and region levels.
- In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, the objective was to develop a working relationship between civil society and intergovernmental organisations with common interests in the prevention of armed violence. This was particularly difficult because, though social and criminal violence were of greater concern to ordinary people than organised political violence, it was not considered to have reached crisis proportions.
- In post-coup **Fiji**, the two multi-stakeholder processes discussed are aimed at enabling a return to democracy, while on a regional level the **Pacific** Islands Forum provided a venue for broad-based security discussions between government officials and civil society groups, in this case networks advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Initiator or joiner

The different cases show some clear distinctions between experiences of trying to initiate a multi-stakeholder process or joining one designed and convened by others as an invited participant. In none of the cases did an individual CSO or even a CSO network successfully design, initiate and take the political lead in a multi-stakeholder process, where government was one of the main participants. At best, NGOs, former officials and diplomats and religious leaders have formed purpose-built processes, for example, Kenya's Concerned Citizens for Peace, which then reached out to state actors, opposition politicians and other sectors.

More common were processes initiated and facilitated by the UNDP, in which governments agreed to participate with civil society actors and others who were invited into the process by the convener. For CSO joiners to processes developed and facilitated by intergovernmental institutions, opportunities to shape the process can depend to a large extent on the convener and the convener's willingness and ability to encourage and negotiate contributions of structural issues and procedural ideas from all participants.

Participation

Regarding participation in these processes, the two main categories of participants were CSOs involved in peacebuilding, human rights monitoring or in faith-based activities who engage with government politicians and officials with governance and security responsibilities.

...intergovernmental organisations at times played central or key supporting roles in different processes.

In all four case studies, the UNDP and other intergovernmental organisations at times played central or key supporting roles in different processes. Three-legged initiatives—CSOs, national government bodies and intergovernmental entities—can represent wide-ranging interests and can justifiably be labelled multi-stakeholder processes. At the same time, they may ignore or purposefully not directly engage with other potentially important sectors such as business leaders, legal political opposition groups, extra-legal opposition groups, minority groups and others.

The multi-stakeholder processes discussed in the interviews all appeared to involve relatively high-profile individuals representing well-established national institutions, whether civil society organisations, government agencies, religious institutions, the media, the private sector or the security sector—in effect, members of national elite groups.

Some of the processes had concrete links with grassroots organisations and could be said to indirectly represent them. Some interacted with external groups to try to influence their behaviour, such as youth gangs or militias, but did not necessarily seek to represent those groups. None of the cases suggested that a primary function of a process be to include difficult or belligerent oppositional groups, but certainly to interact with them as necessary and when possible.

8.2 Towards Infrastructures for Peace in Kyrgyzstan

Raya Kadyrova is the Executive Director of the Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI) in Kyrgyzstan, and the Regional Representative of the GPPAC Central Asia network.

Context

In Kyrgyzstan we have interethnic tensions, even bloody clashes, regularly. We have regionalism, the South versus the North. We have tensions within Islam, between the so-called moderate Muslims and the so-called non-moderate Muslims. We have tensions on the language issue. There are nationalists who want to force everybody to speak and write in Kyrgyz, the state language. Another conflict driver is corruption. These issues fragment the population, and everything is politicised. The way people express their agreement or disagreement always holds the danger of becoming violent.

In areas where we have had interethnic clashes, the representatives from minority groups are now afraid to express themselves. This is a national problem. After violent clashes broke out in June 2010, the leaders of the Uzbek minority were imprisoned, and there are no new leaders who can express the needs of this minority. The language issue has become so politicised that ethnic minorities are afraid to address it openly. People try not to talk about it, or if they do, it is in conflictual, aggressive ways.

Defining multi-stakeholder processes

In this context, we have a national understanding that multi-stakeholder processes are necessary, that they provide opportunities to represent gender diversity, age diversity, and various sectors, to hear different views and to see different priorities, on how to work with

conflict. We recognise that we need to have capacity on various levels, in different sectors, to understand conflict, to learn about the Do No Harm conflict sensitivity approach, and the need for systematic monitoring and analysis. We have also discussed national and local mechanisms known as infrastructures for peace.

Process components

We have multi-stakeholder processes at the national, regional and grassroots levels. These processes involve representatives of NGOs and civil society, representatives of state agencies with mandates to deal with conflict, representatives of international organisations, and community residents, who are the ultimate beneficiaries.

These are the groups that are influential and can convince and motivate people.

At the grassroots level, we involve women's peace committees, councils of elders, youth councils, local NGOs, media, business structures, as well as religious leaders (especially the southern part of the country is very religious). These are the groups that are influential and can convince and motivate people. Government usually has a representative from the Governor's Office or from the Deputy Governor, who is responsible for security issues.

The Oblasts are our seven administrative regions. The Oblast Advisory Committees are multi-stakeholder groups that come together more or less monthly to analyse conflict situations. Field monitoring is done by NGOs. Early warning reports are discussed by the Oblast Advisory Committees, with recommendations on what should be done, and by whom. And then implementation activities are mostly carried out using donors' funds, so the implementation process is project-oriented and financed by the donors.

On the national level, we didn't have a structure until recently. In fact, we had lost all hope after months of lobbying Members of Parliament, analysts, politicians, famous people. Then, at the beginning of December 2012, President Almazbek Atambaev established the position of Advisor on Inter-Ethnic Issues, mandated to set up a structure in the government to coordinate peacebuilding. This advisor has an office within the Presidential Office, and staff.

Origins and development

Kyrgyzstan is a dynamic state where civil society is pretty strong and vocal, and both the business sector and NGOs are quite active. Opposition was always strong at different times. That's why we have had two revolutions (2005 and 2010). Both the President and the Prime Minister have expressed that to have stability we all need to work together. We also have the understanding that conflict prevention and peacebuilding cannot happen in an ad-hoc way. This is such a complicated field that without joint efforts we will never be successful. The UNDP has also supported these processes, and not only financially. They understood that civil society and state organisations should definitely be involved.

CSOs insisted that it should include a national strategy on conflict prevention, peacebuilding, or national coherence.

Some six years ago, a Country Development Strategy was adopted—a huge national programme supported by the international organisations and financial institutions. Unfortunately, it was mostly focused on economic development. CSOs insisted that it should include a national

strategy on conflict prevention, peacebuilding, or national coherence. But with a corrupt government in place, the strategy was not implemented. So after the 2010 revolution, we again insisted on such a national peacebuilding strategy.

We [NGOs] tried to convince our government that within their structure there should be units responsible for early warning and early response. Secondly, that we needed capacity building at all levels, especially involving state employees and CSOs, to understand conflict and how to work on it. Thirdly, we wanted national deliberations on issues that were in the national interest, such as civic identity and language. We insisted that some topics should be discussed all over the country, and that the government should support that national discussion both financially and politically. Eventually, in January 2013, the national country development programme was adopted [by the government]; it was the result of more than five years of work. The components about human rights, interethnic development, and the state language—these came from civil society. Of course, our recommendations were not taken up fully, but we are pleased that some pieces are now part of this national strategy.

Process objectives

For us as the Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI), working with the UNDP, the objective is to set up a systematic process and structures where the government is responsible for peace, and where it invests funds and is not dependent on international donors. By government structures, we mean multi-stakeholder structures supported by government, because what happens today is that government has left all the responsibility to international organisations. The research, the early warning reports, the monitoring are mostly done by NGOs, financed by intergovernmental donors. We want our government to invest funds from the national budget in Oblast Advisory Committees, and for this national unit to be responsible for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Participation

Representatives on the Oblast Advisory Committees are chosen based on criteria developed by us at FTI and the UNDP's Peace and Development Programme, and presented to the governors or deputy governors for their approval. Each region in Kyrgyzstan has its own conflict areas and conflict issues. Depending on the conflict issues, we have criteria for participation. For example, if language is a big issue, then we need somebody from our governmental Language Council. If ethnic issues are conflictual in an area, we need somebody from the government who is responsible for ethnic issues. We also have criteria for gender, age, ethnic and issue balance.

We asked the CSOs and the business community who they should be represented by. One of the criteria was their capacity in conflict prevention and peacebuilding; that, at least, they had participated in workshops on conflict prevention. Still, the legitimacy of the committees is questionable because to have all NGOs from a region participate in selecting representatives is not realistic. To get all the business organisations to select one representative is also just not possible. But it is problematic because there are different voices saying, "Why is this NGO part of this? Why not the other one?" or "Why not me?"

Different members of the Working Group have different understandings of conflict prevention and peacebuilding...

Power and process

We have some difficulties within the newly formed national working group; some tensions between agencies and between some people. NGO representatives see things differently than, for example, representatives from the Defence Council, who tend to define the issues as being just about borders. We want to table other tough national issues—religious matters, regional voices. Different members of the Working Group have different understandings of conflict prevention

and peacebuilding, of what this group should do, and what results we want to get. There are no structures like this in neighbouring countries, so we have just been using our intuition.

Actions and outcomes

As part of their early response activities, some Oblast Advisory Committees do research on concrete issues, like wearing of the hijab, which led to conflict in some northern secondary schools over students being punished by secular teachers for wearing headscarves. It led to a multi-stakeholder conference involving parents, police, the national Department on Ethnic and Religious Policies, school personnel, imams and others.

Another response was in Osh in the South, where committee members did research on micro-credit companies. People were going to micro-credit companies to get quick money, and then losing their houses and ending up in the street because of non-payment. The research found that the interest rates the companies were charging were very high, documents were only in Russian, which many Kyrgyz are not able to read, and even for Russian speakers the language was very technical and very hard to understand. Following the research, an Oblast Committee letter to Members of Parliament led to a discussion in Parliament on the micro-credit companies and how they should work.

Action plans

Each of the seven Oblast Advisory Committees has an action plan. Each is slightly different, depending on the needs of the particular Oblast. On early warning, some do regular daily, weekly or monthly monitoring according to the situation. Actual conflict situations or different types of tensions monitored include border incidents or religious tensions, tensions over drinking or irrigation water, or fighting at markets.

Main challenges

I think the problem is that the conflict is so complicated and so broad. There is something very strange in this country. There are so many donors, there is so much money, there are so many NGOs working on human rights and conflict prevention and so on. There are so many trainings, so many conferences, so many multi-stakeholder activities. And yet there is still no stability and there is still a big threat of violence. As citizens, we do not see that there is capacity in the country, or that there are structures in the country that are able to prevent violence.

Pre-conditions for success

You need to work on public awareness and publish a hundred articles and get on TV as many times as you can. You need a small group of like-minded people who believe that conflict prevention and peacebuilding require a systemic approach and systematic, sustained work. Training and materials for advocacy and lobbying are needed, as well as proposal writing and fundraising skills to avoid running out of money and interrupting the work every few years.

As non-governmental leaders, we have our own networks in the country and we share what we learn. We support each other.

Kyrgyzstan was lucky to have many international donors who worked with us as real partners. That's why I think the capacities of national NGOs are pretty strong in terms of doing advocacy, to be able to express ourselves, to be on the same level with government structures. Another reason for that is that we are members of international networks. For example, FTI being part of GPPAC has helped grow my personal expertise. I have learned how my partners from other parts of the world speak, what they do and how they do it in their own countries. And it's not only me. Other NGO colleagues have gained experience from other parts of the world. As non-governmental leaders, we have our own networks in the country and we share what we learn. We support each other.

Critical mistakes

After the bloodshed in June 2010, [a bilateral donor] financed a national multi-stakeholder process focused on the need for Kyrgyz and Uzbeks to live together. Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful. There were about 30 people—the leaders of leading political parties, representatives from among the Uzbeks, from the Kyrgyz and other ethnicities. We met several times and nothing happened. Despite the donor and all the experts, we could not agree on goals and objectives, on why we needed to meet together, what we should discuss, and what to expect from all our meetings.

Another problem was when we first introduced the idea of Infrastructures for Peace using a graphic triangle.⁵⁶ On the top of the triangle was a national body, and on the bottom, the local organisations at the village level. I think we were wrong in presenting it like that, because it was understood by local level and mid-level government authorities as presenting the hierarchy. Local government authorities complained that, because of the (governance) hierarchy, it was very difficult to do something at the local- and mid-level. And then others at the regional level, Oblast governors started complaining that they could not do much because that higher level, such as a National Peace Council, did not exist.

Another mistake was [an international organisation] putting big money into Oblast Advisory Committees, and appointing particular NGOs to run the committees' secretariats and establishing the protocols for those NGOs' work. This created jealousy and a lack of support from the NGOs that weren't chosen. It also actually created a barrier between communities where signals of tension were apparent, which government officials should have been responding to. Officials could say, "Let the NGOs do it, they have the money", instead of assuming their responsibilities.

Guidance and tools

Guidance for NGOs on setting our own goals and objectives would have been helpful, because we have lacked that capacity. Also guidance on the evaluation of results of processes, goals and objectives, and on how to write proposals, working with logical framework analysis and so on. We have been using intuition rather than political skills. On establishing Infrastructures for Peace, I would like to have something that sets out various steps in the process and contains options. Visits to countries where organisations have been successful at establishing these types of structures would also help, to see and talk with the people who have been involved.

8.3 Fiji and the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls is the Director of FemLINK PACIFIC, Fiji, the Regional Representative of the GPPAC Pacific regional network, and since 2015 the Chair of GPPAC's Board of Trustees.

Context

In Fiji, as we respond to the military coup of December 2006, we are mindful of the underlying issues like governance, constitution and power structures, which stem from the first coup of 1987. A lot of historical issues have to be understood, including the role of the military, how the military perceives different non-state actors, in particular faith leaders. The military have always been vulnerable to exploitation by different institutions, which they now say is a rationale for the coup. There is also an interconnection between church, state and traditional government structures, which makes it hard to identify the multiple roles played by individuals.

At the regional level in the Pacific, it has often been very difficult to engage directly with the national officials in the four countries that we're working in—Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea.

⁵⁶ See Lederach's 'Peace Triangle' in Section 2.3.

Defining multi-stakeholder processes

A multi-stakeholder process is one that can be both public and private, depending on the situation, but I believe it enables a diverse representation of society to inform and define the process and issues to be discussed. I see it as a long-term process of building understanding of the different perspectives on the causes of the conflict, as an opportunity to enter into dialogue, particularly to discuss peacebuilding strategies. It [The multi-stakeholder process] is a critical non-violent response to conflicts.

Process components

In the context of Fiji, a series of different tracks of dialogue and engagement are enabling some level of engagement with the state and government officials at a time when there are constraints and limitations on personal freedoms. It has been about bringing actors together, about who you trust to allow you to come together, and articulating the connection between peace and development.

At the regional level, the adoption of the Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security demonstrates what is possible when civil society organisations are able to collaborate with the UN, regional intergovernmental organisations and government officials. This was a particular kind of multi-stakeholder process, which was about being able to engage with government officials, who meet as the Regional Security Committee of the Pacific Islands Forum. Our collaboration brought together government officials, political advisors, representatives of regional entities, as well as UN agencies and development partners.

Origins and development

Due to Fiji's political crisis, a process we have been involved in is the Track 2 government-civil society dialogue underway since 2010 around peace and development, known as CPAD (Strengthening Capacities for Peace and Development in the Pacific). There has also been a Track 1.5 roundtable dialogue bringing together civil society players, political parties, the private sector, as well as government representatives in a series of conversations using the Chatham House Rule to discuss some of the ways forward around the return to parliamentary democracy in Fiji.

A key initiator and facilitator for both these processes has been the UNDP. Governments feel comfortable, I guess, when it is the UN, because government and military can get nervous when civil society invites them. In the Fiji context, there is also a struggle within civil society to even think about engaging with the state. So the UNDP's country and regional offices have assisted in convening the high-level roundtable. They have a good understanding of the context and from talking to organisations like FemLINK, asking about the idea of coming together and having these conversations.

Regionally, we have been involved in advocacy for the Women, Peace and Security agenda framed by the UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325. While working on this, we became aware of the Pacific Islands Forum's Regional Security Committee. To feed into the committee's work, we collaborated with the UNDP and Forum's secretariat to convene the initial high-level gender, conflict, peace and security discussion with committee officials and then a larger women, peace and human security consultation. This fed into an even broader civil society and officials' meeting. Then a number of us participated in the first civil society-officials' dialogue during the Forum's actual Regional Security Committee meeting.

The question for me is, if we don't sit down and talk, if we don't have these mechanisms, what happens?

Process objectives

At the level of the Pacific Islands Forum Peace and Security Committee discussions, our objective has been to demonstrate that having women at the table is necessary because we have a stake in regional peace and security. As women we have mobilised during times of conflict, yet we are often not part of the formal process. At the Regional Security Committee, we were able to present our perspectives through the 1325 lens on women's participation in preventive action, in the protection of women's rights, and with GPPAC presenting the conflict prevention work as well.

In Fiji, the high-level dialogue has very much been about the resurgence of violent conflict that we have experienced over time. The question for me is, if we don't sit down and talk, if we don't have these mechanisms, what happens? The dialogue process is about being able to communicate that we are collectively trying to prevent the resurgence of violence. When we talk to the military, they say that they are trying to do the same thing. But we also say to them that by stifling people and violating human rights, by entrenching a militaristic approach, there are things festering that can explode. I see the peace and development dialogue as the building of the seawall. While political players can come and go, if we're not building the foundations of long-term peace, we're not going to have it. It will be washed away.

Participation

For the CPAD process in Fiji, the UNDP was looking at peacebuilding organisations, faith-based organisations, trade unions, and the private sector. Since civil society is well engaged, it was fairly easy for them to identify would-be participants, but we certainly had input through a kind of informal referencing. The UNDP were building on existing networks. They put out calls for expressions of interest, and we made sure that our partner organisations submitted applications. We were able to ensure that organisations that weren't visible [for the work they were doing at the national level] were participating.

Those who attend the meetings are representative of those of us, key NGOs, who are working on the democratisation of Fiji at a very broad level. A few of the organisations are doing peacebuilding work, and one in particular is very human rights and women's rights oriented. The participation does represent the kinds of coalitions we have within civil society. While it's not trickling down to inviting grassroots people, it does focus on those organisations that are working at national level, but that clearly have rural connections. The umbrella private sector organisations get invited more to the higher-level roundtable rather than the peace and development programme activities.

For the women's meeting at the regional level, we used the model of not just convening women's civil society representatives, but included counterparts from government. We didn't want it just to be seen as a women's civil society agenda from the outside, but really integrated into the regional peace and security architecture.

Power and process

The issue has been about how civil society engages with that power from the state. Whether you are a public servant or you are a military officer taking part in the dialogue process, you represent this illegal state, this illegal regime. The power is in their hands and it is power that has been taken through a coup and not as a result of elections or democratic process. That's our political reality.

For several months after the military coup in December 2006, there were arbitrary arrests and detentions, and physical assaults on different civil society leaders and others. The human rights violations clearly affected the way women and youth leaders participated in the dialogue processes later. Some civil society leaders were unwilling to go into the dialogue space because of this. For those who did participate in the early meetings, some were very cautious, physically present but not saying too much. Others, myself included, felt that if we weren't in that room having conversations with government officials we wouldn't be able to say, "I'm here, I'm going to state my issues, I'm going to talk it through, I'm going to utilise this process."

More generally, having a military coup certainly exacerbates the already patriarchal or traditional power structures in our country and in the Pacific context, where male leadership is seen to be where the power decisions are made. The move for gender equality, for engaging with young people and ensuring equity in that process, is still part of the struggle. I think I've been quite lucky because of the peacebuilding approach to engagement and communication. But for a lot of people, sometimes they would just sit there and not say anything.

Actions and outcomes

I think that you can attribute the easing of Fiji's public emergency regulation at the highest level, to being able to talk to state officials who can then influence the decision to amend that regulation. In January 2012, the state revised its decree, which meant that we didn't have to apply for permits to have community-level meetings. Where I see some progress is in the willingness of government officials to remain engaged and to receive information, policy briefs and advice on key issues, such as the gender agenda.

We recognise that there are certain decisions by the state, given the political reality, that they will go ahead and make. But the onus is also on us to stay engaged in the spirit of goodwill. We need to take advantage of the process, recognising that the fear is not just among civilians or civil society, but there is also a lot of fear amidst state officials, because they are also working within a certain framework that is a result of the coup.

On the regional level, the security agenda has always been focused on traditional security issues, post-conflict or border patrol issues and has not included peacebuilding or peace practitioners' perspectives. Prior to 2006, there was no formal and regular engagement by civil society at all around regional security issues in the Pacific region. Now, twice yearly, there are Pacific Islands Forum Political Division consultations with civil society, where we are able to raise issues, present policy papers or just interact leading up to the Regional Security Committee meeting, and then afterwards the Forum leaders' meeting.⁵⁷

Action plans

As civil society, we have had to tacitly agree with the state's strategic framework for change, what they refer to as the People's Charter, as one of their non-negotiables. The military say that they are working towards their exit strategy, the elections, and that it's all in the strategic framework for change. So, we've had to say, "Okay, that's your framework, that's the government's agenda."

On the civil society side, the approach has been reactive. The Women's Forum came up with a set of priorities that we wanted to see advanced as part of the democratisation process—an electoral system that includes temporary special measures, a process towards security sector reform, upholding human rights, principles and issues. This is probably the only grouping within civil society that has some kind of four-point plan that we talk about in public spaces. Otherwise, it's the individual civil society groups and their own priority areas that come up.

Main challenges

In Fiji, while some of us have a willingness to engage because we see this as an important piece of peacebuilding and preventive work, it is not seen as such by all civil society partners. Some are taking a very hard stand and saying, "I'm not going to engage." Secondly, it has been six years since the military coup,⁵⁸ which is quite a protracted period of time, and we are still trying to have some public agreement on issues. We recognise that dialogue is important, but we are not seeing change in the way the state is approaching things. Participants want to see immediate change. Sometimes the onus is on us to be able to keep things moving and communicating. Dealing with all the different people and personalities saying, "It's not working. Why should we go back?" can be very frustrating.

57 Editorial note: There were no PIFS-CSO dialogues formally convened in 2013; there is however now a Reference Group on Women, Peace and Security

58 At the time of the interview.

Some are taking a very hard stand and saying, "I'm not going to engage."

We have been discussing how to take the dialogue process up one notch. We need to continue these different tracks of dialogue, but we also need to see them played out in the public space, so that the citizens can see that there is diversity of opinion. But there is also the coming together to discuss and dialogue. How do we demonstrate that public dialogue and discussion is taking place, when under the media regulation, state officials can say things but there is no right of reply?

Another challenge is that in all of this there is still the assumption that just one or two women in the room will do, that and—just because they are women—they will all agree, rather than have different political viewpoints.

Pre-conditions for success

One pre-condition is the investment in the preparation of all the key parties, so that we all understand what has happened or where we're coming from; that we can agree to disagree, but we also agree that we must be in this space for dialogue. Quite often you don't find that, and some of that baggage then comes into the room as well. In light of the kinds of state controls that can be exercised, another pre-condition would be that participants won't be victimised afterwards for the opinions they share. Goodwill in going into a dialogue and talking about some very difficult issues should not result in intimidation afterwards. Communication and styles of communication are also important. And it is also about how to utilise peacebuilding skills and language.

Critical mistakes

I think one mistake is simply saying, "We need to have women in the room;" you can put people in the room who may not be conducive to the process. Another mistake would be lack of preparation, where facilitators work with the participants to get to understand the agenda, the process and work through the kinds of issues that they might want to talk about, so when they are going into the room, they are not just going in really angry in a "I'm just going to tell them" mode. Confidentiality of discussions is another issue. There was a lot of concern that information got out of the room, which almost meant that we didn't have a subsequent session. Some of the civil society participants were saying, "I'm not going back into the room. Things being discussed get leaked."

Guidance and tools

External facilitators certainly help in bringing external viewpoints. Sometimes if you have local facilitators there is a question of what their political position is, and this may not necessarily help the process.

8.4 Mobilising Early Response in Latin America and the Caribbean

Dr. Andrés Serbin is the President of the Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales (CRIES) and formerly Regional Representative of GPPAC Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)

Context

In our region, we generally don't have situations of traditional violent conflict between two parties who are fighting each other on a domestic or international level. What we have is social violence, high levels of criminality and citizen insecurity, and interpersonal violence. In spite of this, there isn't a widespread perception that this has reached crisis levels, so there is no general reaction of the public, of civil society, to get involved. There are only specific situations where civil society is working with the police or other state agencies to deal with citizen insecurity. The problem in Latin America is that almost everything is done by the state. In the last 10–15 years, there has been a comeback of the state, with all its weaknesses, as the main actor.

Defining multi-stakeholder processes

For us, an MSP is a process where we involve different actors in a coordinated way and try to develop joint working plans to deal with conflict prevention. What we are trying to show is that civil society organisations are able and well prepared to deal with some issues, and governments should have some kind of partnership with those CSOs. My impression is that this works marvellously in the books. But in reality, it can be very difficult to develop this approach, with some exceptions.

But although there might be initial commitments and political will, obstacles appear along the way, which makes collaboration difficult.

Process components

You have the ideal picture of what we want to do. For instance, we want to join forces with the Organization of American States (OAS), the Central American Integration System (Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana—SICA), and governments to prevent conflict. But although there might be initial commitments and political will, obstacles appear along the way, which makes collaboration difficult. Drawing from experience, in other cases there are some actors who are keen to be part of collective processes, even with their own agendas—as in the case of the UNDP in Central America—but they have been the exception.

To build a multi-stakeholder approach takes lots of energy, time and resource investment, and sometimes the results are not what you are expecting or at the level of what should be done in terms of conflict prevention. You can have a very democratic formal approach of, “let's listen to everybody, let's give the ownership to everybody”, but it doesn't happen. One of the key components is that some of the actors have enough political will and commitment to lead the coordination of the process. You need some kind of leadership in terms of moving the process forward.

Origins and development

We developed the Mobilising Early Response Project (MERP) for Central America following a discussion in the Preventive Action Working Group within GPPAC. The initiative was about analysing the conflict foci and actors in Central America, to inform a regional action plan for conflict prevention. A team of regional experts conducted the research, which was presented and discussed in a multi-stakeholder process. Afterwards, an Action Plan was drafted. We started this as a test case, but it was a pity and particularly disappointing when we didn't have sufficient financial resources to follow through, in the sense of implementing the action plan.

A more successful initiative was TACE (Taller Academico Cuba-Estados Unidos), the academic dialogue workshops between Cuba and the United States, where the process was initially restricted to two specific sectors: former diplomats and government officials on the one hand, and academics and think tank representatives on the other. CRIES convened the process from 2009 onwards, and worked together with National Co-ordinators in the respective countries. It has been a very focused process; no governments were involved until we started promoting the recommendations. So you have two groups of goodwill that you coordinate and work with to influence the governments.

...the objective was to pull the efforts of different actors in one direction in a joint, coordinated way...

Process objectives

For the MERP project, the objective was to pull the efforts of different actors in one direction in a joint, coordinated way to develop a preventive strategy on a sub-regional level. Ultimately, it aimed to provide the basis for an Early Action Plan for Conflict Prevention in Central America promoted by and through civil society.

For TACE, as a citizen's diplomacy initiative, the goal was to develop trust and to collectively produce a series of recommendations on how to advance cooperation in areas of mutual interest. These could in turn be a useful tool to influence decision-makers in both countries on foreign policy issues especially related to the bilateral agenda.

Participation

As the state assumes that it is legitimate, because it is democratically elected by the people, there is often no space for civil society. The attitude is, "Why should we give some space to civil society when we are the representatives of the people?" In some cases, the state is able to deal with crises on its own, for example, in El Salvador, where the government came to an agreement with criminal gangs through dialogues with the leaders who were in prison. But it was the state mainly acting unilaterally.

Other sets of participants can also be very difficult to involve in Latin America. For example, the military have a completely different logic, and it is practically impossible to have some kind of joint initiative that somehow reconciles their goals and logic with ours. The private sector generally avoids being involved in sensitive issues. If they commit to philanthropy, it is mostly 'giving some money to the poor'. On working with the opponents of states, this is very sensitive. If you don't have a clear assessment of the political situation, it is absolutely impossible to get involved in these kinds of polarised and, ultimately, very violent settings like in Colombia or Venezuela.

From our experience in the region, the best way of choosing participants is to find a champion within a regional organisation who wants to work with civil society, and then develop a Memorandum of Understanding with this organisation through the champion. That's the ideal picture. In reality, how we choose partners is often by chance and following opportunities. For example, we had a window of opportunity with the UNDP and it worked, but then we tried to do things with [some of the regional and sub-regional organisations], and after several years of investing in it, it still didn't work.

Ultimately, partners need to be chosen—whenever possible—according to their potential impact on the conflict situation. Some actors might have a positive impact on certain settings, but a negative one in others. In Latin America there are examples of inter-governmental interventions that resulted in negative outcomes from the perspective of local actors, who are deeply suspicious of foreign intervention.

With TACE, we involved people who had had government experience or who had worked closely with government officials in the past. Their involvement had the tacit approval of key government officials, who were kept informed of the process. The National Co-coordinators helped select and invite the participants, following a set of criteria: capacities, area of expertise and knowledge; political reach, and representation among the academic and political community. The list of potential participants from one side had to be approved by the other side, as part of the trust building.

..we involved people who had had government experience or who had worked closely with government officials in the past.

Power and process

Intergovernmental organisations reflect the interests of their member states, so if governments are not interested, this is also reflected at that level. Even if they express publicly the wish to involve civil society, regional organisations are reluctant to accept an equal partnership with civil society. Several years ago, we finally reached a point where we were able to have a conference with the secretariats of the regional organisations and civil society to discuss a multi-stakeholder approach to violence in Latin America. We invested two years in dealing with the different departments to align them and push this idea. When finalising the conference programme, they told us that we couldn't put the civil society logos at the same level as theirs. It's silly, but an illustration of how they see civil society.

The problem in Latin America is that the officials rarely understand that they are public servants and that they owe something to civil society. A high-level political affairs officer once told me, "I don't believe in civil society. If you were representing a political party and were voted in, everything would be OK. But who do you represent?" This is a problem we encounter regularly.

Actions and outcomes

The main result of the MERP project was a preliminary conflict assessment published in 2009.⁵⁹ However, with the Central American Action Plan, while it was conceived as a multi-stakeholder effort with input from governments and inter-governmental organisations, it ended up a document proposing how to strengthen civil society's capacities for conflict prevention. It was presented to SICA, which at various times had expressed willingness to develop a joint project to crystallise the actions suggested. But as in many other meetings, commitments were made, but no actions were taken, leaving the partnership adrift.

The TACE dialogue has been the most successful experience for us in recent years. We are reaching the point of making several recommendations to the governments, and we expect it will be successful in reaching a certain level of decision-makers.⁶⁰ TACE delivered the first joint document of recommendations elaborated by academia and diplomats from both countries in over fifty years.⁶¹ The process was successful because it focused on only two types of actors.

Action plans

We had been working on an Action Plan for the region since 2004, and then we redesigned that plan for the Central American case. The problem is that you can have a beautiful plan, but if you don't have the financial resources there is no way of doing anything. For the TACE process, an Action Plan was built around the group's emerging common agenda and the recommendations as a next stage in the process. Recommendations were divided into short and long-term implementation clusters, and the group found common ground for visibility and advocacy

59 D. Matul and others, Conflict and Foci of Conflict in Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador: A Preliminary Assessment (CRIES, 2009).

60 See more in Ana Bourse and others, Creating Spaces for Dialogue – A Role for Civil Society, ed. by Zahid Movlazedeh, GPPAC Dialogue and Mediation Series, 1 (The Hague: The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 2015).

61 Opportunities for US-Cuban Relations: Proposals for Cooperation in Areas of Mutual Interests, Cuban-United States Academic Workshop (TACE) (Buenos Aires: CRIES, 2012).

actions, including a series of events, presentations, and bilateral meetings across the region. At that point, the process moved from a bilateral approach to the multilateral arena.

Main challenges

In addition to the challenge of mobilising conflict prevention in response to social violence, the second main challenge is the lack of sustainable funding for anything that we start. People get frustrated and feel that those leading the process made them invest a lot of time and energy in something that was not going to happen. From the CRIES perspective, we now only start programmes and processes when it's clear that we have diversified financial resources.

On a political level, beyond the frequent reluctance of governments and intergovernmental organisations to engage with civil society, the idea of coordination is not well understood. Even the governments of the region have difficulties coordinating their actions within their multilateral organisations. From an institutional point of view, they are weak, and in most cases avoid having clear rules about how to act collectively. Equating the intergovernmental experience to what is going on with civil society and other actors, you have to multiply the coordination difficulties.

Pre-conditions for success

Historically, in Latin America, the most appropriate circumstances for a multi-stakeholder approach are when we have a general crisis, as we had in Argentina in 2001. When the state is not able to deal with [a political crisis], a number of actors pool their efforts to try to stabilise the situation. In Argentina in 2001, civil society, the UNDP and the Catholic Church practically pushed the political actors to stop the instability and rebuild the capacity of the state to deal with the issues driving the crisis. The triggers for civil society involvement are the crisis itself and the inability of the state to respond. Political crisis generates a pull towards the idea of multi-stakeholder process.

The main pre-condition is having somebody willing to negotiate a multi-stakeholder approach with you. To accomplish that, you have to establish good relationships or have previous experience of working together with some of the stakeholders. You have to recognise that not all of them are going to respond favourably, and eventually there will be a need to smooth out the differences between some of the different agendas.

The main pre-condition is having somebody willing to negotiate a multi-stakeholder approach with you.

Complementarity is another key component, as MSPs can contribute to avoiding overlapping actions and wasting valuable resources in the field. Stakeholders need to recognise the added value of each other's involvement, and be able to take advantage of each other's capacities. This could lead to avoiding competition and focusing efforts towards achieving a common goal; and to reducing asymmetries in power within the partnership, as each stakeholder involved is recognised for the resources and know-how for which they are most valued.

Consensus on the most relevant aspects of the conflict, and on the key issues to be addressed, must be built from the outset of the process.

A shared conflict analysis could lead to a road map to follow. It is important to be realistic about what can possibly be achieved through collective action. This prevents discouragement and helps determine a realistic cost estimate of the financial and human resources needed. Finally, champions within governments or international organisations are needed to advocate for the multi-stakeholder approach and conflict prevention/peacebuilding strategies.

Critical mistakes

The first big mistake is to apply things from the book to the realities of our region, not understanding that reality is more dynamic. Perhaps what is being prescribed is completely inadaptable to what we should do in terms of conflict prevention in the region. We can bring the idea of a multi-stakeholder approach to Latin America, but we need to adapt it to our reality. Another mistake has been to rely on single sources of funding. If you start a process and then you cut it off for any reason—budgetary or political or whatever—the level of disappointment and disengagement of the organisations involved is very high.

Guidance and tools

There is no one partnership fits all formula. Different dynamics and characteristics change from one sub-region to another, and from country to country. Violence erupts or emerges from a complex combination of social, political, economic, environmental and cultural factors, which also requires strategies at different levels and involving different fields. We are learning from our own experiences and the tools we are developing are based on these experiences.

8.5 Preventing Electoral Violence in Kenya

Florence Mpaayei is the former Executive Director of the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI)–Africa in Kenya, and formerly the Regional Representative for the GPPAC Eastern & Central Africa regional network.

Context

Since the early nineties, Kenya has witnessed election-related violence with the worst case being 2007–2008. As we approached the 2013 general elections, there were fears that violence might break out again. The elections were heavily contested and more complex, because we were voting for a devolved government system. In this context, a multi-stakeholder process was necessary to provide various platforms for continuous constructive engagement among citizens and with politicians on their manifestos; as well as initiatives on peaceful elections from the national to the grassroots levels.

Defining multi-stakeholder processes

Since an MSP process involves different actors and groups with varied expertise aimed at a common goal, it can unfold in many ways and take different approaches. To ensure continuous information sharing about each actor's progress and challenges, meetings take place regularly. In this process, individuals from different sectors use their comparative advantages to be able to reach this shared objective of peaceful elections in Kenya.

Process components

At the national level, there was the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC) established by the government. In its efforts to build a national Infrastructure for Peace, the NSC came up with District Peace Committees (DPCs).⁶² These committees bring together women and men of integrity selected from the communities to be voices of reason or insider mediators in case of any signs that could lead to violent conflict. These committees work with civil society and the security sector. There was also the Uwiano Platform for Peace ('uwiano' means cohesion in Kiswahili), which sought to coordinate numerous peace activities carried out by different sectors.⁶³ This platform relies on the use of social media.

The religious leaders led civic education initiatives in the churches and mosques, while the business community launched the Mkenya Daima initiative to promote cohesion among Kenyans by sponsoring messages of peace through the media. Urai (Kiswahili word for citizenship) was another platform that contributed to peaceful elections by using print media in accessible language and format.

⁶² In line with the new government administrative units based on the Constitution, the DPCs were gradually being replaced by County Peace Forums.

⁶³ Uwiano Peace Platform Project (UN Development Programme).

Among civil society, there were initiatives that cut across all levels. At the high-level, you had the Concerned Kenyans Initiative that engaged with the presidential candidates. We also had the high women panel supported by UN women. Other initiatives were on elections observation; civic education; monitoring electoral gender based violence, and human rights violations. All these initiatives were going on simultaneously with occasional information sharing gatherings.

Among civil society, there were initiatives that cut across all levels.

Origins and development

In the late 1990s, when there was agitation for multi-party politics, affected citizens had also started calling for the release of political prisoners detained illegally. Sit-ins took place at Uhuru Park in central Nairobi at a spot now called the 'freedom corner' to put pressure on the government. Incrementally, human rights activities and concerned Kenyans joined the sit-ins while some religious leaders voiced out the injustices. The solidarity demonstrated by various actors in these times of agitation for change in the political system gave impetus to citizens rallying together to demand for change on issues they felt were unjust.

Before the 1997 general elections, the Partnership for Peace Forum comprised of peacebuilding CSOs, the police and the media was established. Its aim was to foster peace before and during the elections. This same model of bringing together strategic actors on a common goal was replicated in 2008 but on a larger scale under the banner of the Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP) initiative. CCP was a movement that rallied Kenyans from all walks of life with an agenda to restore order and peace in society, while seeking solutions to the long-term issues that generated the chaos (see Example 10). The human rights CSOs led an initiative called Kenyans for Peace, Truth and Justice (KPTJ) that emphasised the importance of observing justice in the concluded presidential elections for the peace to be genuine and lasting.



See more on the CCP initiative in Example 9, Section 5.

Process objectives

In the 2013 situation, the main objective of the various stakeholders was to have peaceful elections that are credible, transparent and fair. For this to happen, the activities taking place had to be strategic, wide reaching and coordinated for maximum impact where possible.

Participation

Wide participation by citizens is crucial for purposes of ownership and legitimacy of outcomes. In almost all of the initiatives for peaceful elections, participation involved many different individuals, depending on the focus of the initiative and the comparative advantage of the actors or institutions.

Some initiatives had a core group of five to ten professionals, who were credible and represented the face of Kenya—meaning they were from different ethnic groups—and who had the ears of Kenyans. There were also technical teams, comprised of people from the media, the private sector, peace and human rights organisations, manufacturers association, who added value to the analysis and helped find solutions. If there was a need to broker peace, you had people who had the right information regarding the issues and actors, and therefore knew the right channels to use and who should be approached.

Many actors need to prove to their immediate constituency that they are engaged

Power and process

The key thing for actors in an MSP is to appreciate the synergy experienced when each actor compliments the collective efforts of the whole, using their comparative advantage. But you will find that different actors also have vested interest in the process. For instance, for some stakeholders visibility becomes critical. Many actors need to prove to their immediate constituency that they are engaged and doing something about peaceful elections. So when selecting individuals to represent all stakeholders, there can be a bit of jostling for positions. Spokespersons for multi-stakeholder processes need to be selected wisely to avoid the messenger blocking the message.

Another issue is inevitably the funding. Well-funded initiatives such as the Mkenya Daima initiative by the private sector has had a wide reaching effect and took the lead in the campaign for peaceful elections. They partnered with the National Cohesion and Integration Commission to seek accountability from the politicians on the elections. Donors contributed substantively to numerous organisations in support for the elections. To avoid duplication of efforts and scrambling for limited finances, actors need to be more strategic in their planning including the donors. There needs to be coordination on this matter to avoid money-related power struggles that easily overshadow the bigger goal of the funding purposes.

Actions and outcomes

Civil society interacted closely with the Independent Election and Boundaries Commission on civic education required during the election and pointing out anomalies that could happen. A biometric voter registration system was used for the first time, so one of the things we did was to visit the chairperson and discuss the challenges that could come with that. There were also groups meeting with the political aspirants to have them commit to peaceful elections.

The Mkenya Daima initiative organised a conference that brought together the Members of Parliament and political aspirants to sign a charter and commit to peace. Others assembled traditional elders to defuse tensions within their communities, or worked with youth militias to educate and create awareness of the futility of being used by political operators to intimidate opponents.

The Uwiano platform established the early warning and early response mechanism with monitors posted all over the country to collect information and feed it to a situation room for analysis. Through Uwiano, the National Cohesion and Reintegration Commission was listening to what the politicians were saying in their campaigns, monitoring messages going out across social media and the mainstream media to ensure anyone making inflammatory remarks was arraigned in court. The platform worked closely with the security forces, in case there was need for enforcing peace.

Media houses organised Kenya's first televised presidential debates, in which all the contenders committed themselves to peace. Among many other uses of the media to promote peace were the adverts during the Africa Cup of Nations, running the tag 'Just peaceful elections for Kenya'. With the Ministry of Education there was a peace torch going to every county, with schoolchildren composing poems and songs for the gatherings around the peace torch. Peace caravans traversed across the country with key personalities giving talks on the importance of peace. Musicians composed and recorded songs, organised concerts and vigil activities with the youth to also promote the message of peaceful elections. There was a real web of connected activities.

Obviously in this kind of process it is difficult to have military precision in coordination.

Action plans

The different actors and institutions each had their own action plans. These action plans were sometimes revised when coalitions are formed to incorporate collective ideas. Since the elections covered the whole country, there were numerous activities at community, county and national level. These activities are context specific and are sometimes reinforced when there is coordination. For instance, the Peace and Development Network Trust—an umbrella organisation for all the local peace organisations in Kenya—has a wide constituency across the country. In collaboration with the Partnership for Peace and Security network, they are able to coordinate their work across the country.

However, there is still a need to improve more systematic coordination that will provide a place where people can come and share information so you know who is working on what. Obviously in this kind of process it is difficult to have military precision in coordination. The best one can hope for is that information will be shared, and a common platform where this information can be found is available. Perfect coordination is an ideal we all aspire for.

Main challenges

There can be tensions and misunderstandings with regard to emphasis. For instance, during the 2008 crisis, some groups criticised Concerned Citizens for Peace because they felt the emphasis was on peace at the expense of justice. The human rights groups came out very strongly that they wanted justice to be done so that peace could prevail. Approaches to a common goal can vary. The various actors also have to guard against unhealthy competition and territorial behaviour that excludes others.

Another challenge is collaboration, as the number of groups and institutions working on peace has mushroomed—at the universities, in government, within the judiciary, civil society, among artists, the private sector. The established ones that have longer experience and are more seasoned, see the need for collaboration. The ones that have newly emerged are trying to make a name for themselves and don't want to lose their identity.

A challenge confronting actors on a daily basis is how to respond in a timely manner to inflammatory remarks made by the politicians. If you are part of a network/partnership or coalition, it takes time to consult everyone before issuing a statement. The release of rapid funds for intervention is also a challenge at times. Those in remote areas need to be given airtime for communication in order for them to provide updates.

...Kenya's strategic location and our influence in the region is unique.

Pre-conditions for success

Actors have to be agreed on a common purpose and goal for the good of the country. Our common vision is peaceful elections. How actors relate with each other in support of this common vision is critical to avoid sending out conflicting messages. Regular meetings where each group gets the opportunity to chair or host the fora is important for information sharing and getting updates on where different processes are at, and where reinforcement is needed. You need to do your groundwork well in order to manage the group and process dynamics without losing focus of the goal.

I think Kenya's strategic location and our influence in the region is unique. The international institutions present here add to the dynamics. Kenyan civil society is very knowledgeable and vibrant, and so is the private sector. The vibrancy of the various sectors goes all the way to the grassroots—people's awareness of what kind of leadership they want, and how they want to be governed. We are still very ethnic-oriented in our choice of leaders, but there is also a level of growth towards constructive politics as demonstrated during the presidential debates.

The growth in our information technology sector and inventions like the Ushahidi (incident reporting) platform and the use of phone messaging to promote peace are welcomed initiatives. There have been lots of ideas and creativity in support of peaceful elections. It has been an interesting time to be in Kenya and to witness the changes taking place.

Critical mistakes

Sometimes MSPs can start without clear objectives of the process and omitting the importance of ownership and inclusivity. Another mistake is not having a technical team dealing with the facts of the matter, able to substantiate and frame those facts in a way that does not create more division. This partly involves having a wide enough network that is open to diverse groups, having wide representation and collecting information in an objective manner. Quality information helps in assessing situations and making appropriate recommendations.

Overlooking scenario building of possible outcomes, and putting the necessary measures in place is another critical mistake that can happen. It is important to reflect on options of interventions, and not leaving things to chance. It is contemplating on questions such as: 'What if there is a rerun? How do you keep the country united, because that would be a very, very emotive period, there would be a lot of tension in the country?'

Guidance and tools

I think resources are key, not only in terms of money, but also in terms of people with knowledge, technical and people skills to support the processes. You might have people of integrity who are influential, but without the necessary skills to be mediators or facilitators of dialogue processes. Having expertise available to accompany some of these processes is important. Developing a database of experts in electoral processes or the issue at hand is a must. The need to document the various initiatives and processes helps generate new knowledge and lessons for the future. **Accountability:** the acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility for actions, decisions and policies. Accountability describes a relationship between the person or organisation, and those they are accountable to.

9 Glossary



Advocacy: deliberate actions to bring about change in policies and practice, usually by formulating a position and engaging or pressurising those who are in a position to make the changes happen.

Capacity building: The process of enhancing, improving and unleashing skills, competencies and abilities.

Chatham House Rule: a meeting protocol usually understood to mean that any participant is free to use the information of a meeting, but cannot reveal who said what. This rule is designed to promote the openness of the discussion, allowing everyone to speak freely.

[Conflict] Early Warning and Early Response: the attempt to detect the escalation of violence early on, and to prevent further escalation to save lives and prevent violent conflict. An Early Warning **system** is the systematic collection and sorting of early warning information, packaged and communicated to inform early response actions.

Conflict prevention: actions and strategies that aim to prevent violence from starting or restarting by addressing factors driving conflict towards violence. **Operational** prevention focuses on short-term crisis response (for example preventive diplomacy), whereas **structural** prevention focuses on long-term efforts to address root causes such as economic, social and political exclusion of some groups

Conflict resolution: the process of facilitating a peaceful ending to armed conflict, often through negotiation, diplomacy and other peacebuilding efforts.

Conflict sensitivity: an approach to programming and policymaking that aims to minimise unintentional negative impacts of interventions in conflict-affected contexts; also known as the Do No Harm approach (see Box 17).

Constituency: a group of people with shared interests or opinions, who are represented by an individual or organisation who speaks on their behalf and advocates for them.

Convener: the person who organises and officially calls people together for a meeting, discussion, or in this particular case, an MSP.

Credibility: the quality of being trusted and believed in. Organisations and individuals are perceived as credible when seen as trustworthy and knowledgeable.

Dialogue: a process that brings together actors from across a conflict divide, using confidence building measures in order to develop a common understanding of the concerns, interests, and needs of each side.

Deliverables: the products, or outputs, of an activity or process.

Engagement processes: In this manual, we refer to the full spectrum of MSPs as engagement processes, where a particular set of groups interact around joint objectives and rules of engagement, whether formalised or not.

Feedback loop: a system of information sharing whereby the people and organisations involved or affected can report on activities undertaken, as well as react and respond to the information/reports received.

Gatekeeping: individuals or organisations claiming a space and then exerting influence over which of their peers can participate.

Gender: the socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to male and female

identities. While biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. A **gender sensitive** approach implies an awareness of how different people and groups think about gender, to minimise relying on assumptions and traditions. A **gender analysis** uncover how gender relations affect a conflict situation.

Human security: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity of individuals, communities and their global environment. The term understands security as ranging from physical security to economic, political and social. It is context-specific and puts local people's perceptions at the heart of defining and measuring human security.

Impartiality: not favouring one group, belief system, culture or tradition over another, but looking at all options in a just and unbiased way.

International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding: a forum for political dialogue that brings together countries affected by conflict and fragility, development partners, and civil society: see www.pbsbdialogue.org/

Infrastructures for peace: a collective term for the various mechanisms, resources, values, skills and interdependent structures which contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in a society. For example, this may include dedicated resources allocated by local authorities/government, legal or policy frameworks, institutional networks, educational policies or local peace committees.

Initiator: the individual or organisation setting up the meeting, dialogue or MSP. This is not always the same person/organisation as the convener, as the initiator can also be working behind the scenes to bring together a core group of organisers, and can instigate a process by convincing an influential third party to officially convene the MSP.

Mediation: a process in which a third party impartially assists in resolving a dispute between two or more parties, based on communication between the parties and assisting the parties to design a solution to address the dispute. Dialogue can be used as a tool for mediation.

Milestones: in project management, milestones mark events, achievements or other points of progress along a project's timeline. Milestones can be used to track the progress of an MSP.

Multi-stakeholder process: For the purposes of this manual, we define MSPs as processes that convene three or more stakeholder groups, which together seek solutions and develop strategies around specific conflict prevention objectives over a period of time.

Peacebuilding: a wide range of efforts by diverse actors in government and civil society to address root causes of violence before, during and after violent conflict. It can refer to the direct work that intentionally focuses on addressing the factors driving and mitigating conflicts, or to efforts to coordinate different strategies that address such factors.

Preventive: a proactive approach to violent conflict focussing on prevention, instead of reaction after conflict has already escalated. Within GPPAC it is associated with ensuring that conflict early warning leads to early response actions.

Rule of law: the principle that everything within the state, including the state itself, is ruled by, and subject to the law. This law is understood as being represented by a body that speaks on behalf of the people, and should be enforced equally and independently to ensure fairness.

Security Sector Reform: the political, institutional, economic and social restructuring of the security sector in order to ensure an accountable and democratically controlled security sector promote peace and stability.

Sense-making: the process of giving meaning to experience.

Stakeholder: anyone who has a stake or interest in a specific problem or issue is a stakeholder—those who are affected by a particular problem (e.g. conflict), and those who can affect it.

Structural violence: systematic violence of social institutions that oppress certain social groups (often condemning them to abject poverty) and the marginalisation that accompanies severe inequality.

Sustainability: the capacity of a project or process to endure indefinitely and remain effective, or to produce results that have a lasting impact.

Sustainable Development Goals: the global framework and set of goals on sustainable development and poverty eradication which will replace the Millennium Development Goals after 2015 based on the agreement of all UN member states; also referred to as the post-2015 Development Agenda.

Systems approach: the attempt to understand the interdependent relationships between different peacebuilding efforts, people, institutions and forces in a conflict-affected context.

Theory of change: the ‘rationale’ or logic of how a programme hopes to foster change to produce intended outcomes and impacts. The first part of a theory of change is a belief about what factors are driving or mitigating conflict and need to change. The second part is about the assumptions about how a project, programme or policy will change those factors. See the examples in Section 8.5.

Tokenism: the gesture of nominally including members of minority groups in a meeting or process, but only to deflect accusations of not being inclusive in advance.

Track 2 dialogue process/Track 1,5 dialogue process: while Track I diplomacy could be defined as official, governmental diplomacy, Track II diplomacy refers to dialogue or other diplomatic activities between non-state actors and in an unofficial capacity. Track 1.5 diplomacy refers to situations in which both official and non-state actors cooperate or engage in dialogue, usually for conflict resolution.

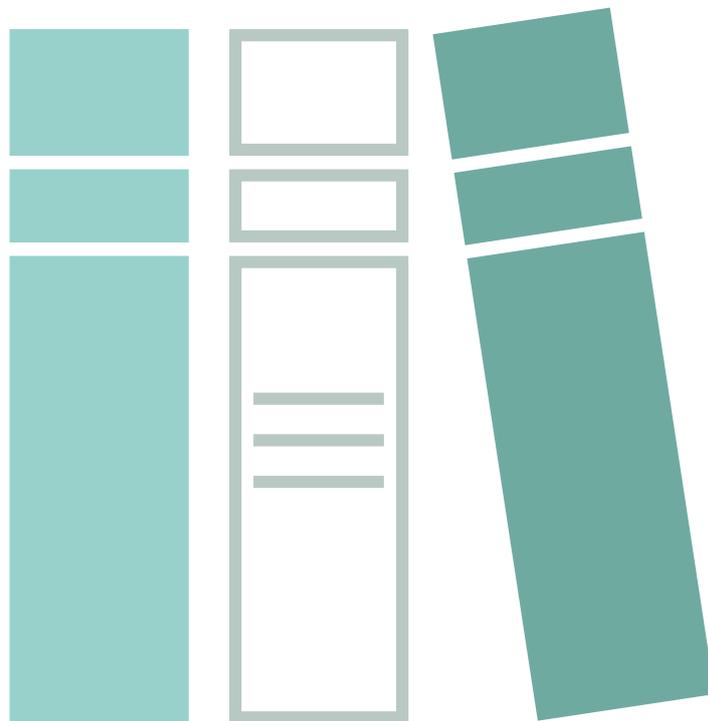
Transparency: in social contexts transparency means openness, communication and accountability. It implies policies are in place to allow individuals access to information held by authorities or those in power.

Umbrella group/organisation: an association representing a group of institutions or organisations that hold a collective identity or common interests, that work together to achieve common goals.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: this resolution recognises the unique impact of violent conflict on women and girls. It calls for gender to be considered in all aspects of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and for consideration for the special needs of women in conflict situations.

Sources key resources that informed this glossary include Schirch (2013), the ACCORD Peacebuilding Handbook, and WANEP’s Dialogue and Mediation – A Practitioner’s Guide. Processes and Lessons for Participatory Dialogue and Mediation (2012)

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We would like to acknowledge all the useful resources that we have cited, borrowed from and referenced throughout this manual, which are outlined in this Bibliography.

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GPPAC's Preventive Action Working Group

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is a network of civil society organisations working to prevent violent conflict and build sustainable peace. One of the cornerstones of our work is the convening of thematic working groups, where practitioners from our global network come together to share, learn and develop their collective knowledge on conflict prevention and peacebuilding in practice.

The Preventive Action Working Group was originally active between 2006 and 2015, with a focus on conflict early warning and early response. Over the years, the group focused on the tools, processes and capacities needed by civil society to not only play a role in conflict analysis and early warning, but also to react on such information and mobilise preventive action.

The following Preventive Action Working Group members contributed to the development of this manual:

- Ana Bourse, Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales (CRIES), Argentina – Working Group Chair
- Gustavo Barros de Carvalho, (then-) African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), South Africa – Co- Chair
- Grace Ghaleb, Permanent Peace Movement (PPM), Lebanon – Co-Chair
- Caroline Owegi-Ndhlovu, (then-) Nairobi Peace Initiative–Africa (NPI–Africa), Kenya
- Francis Acquah, West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Ghana/West Africa
- Gus Micalat, Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID), Philippines
- Moonis Ahmar, Programme of Peace Studies & Conflict Resolution, University of Karachi, Pakistan
- Andre Kamenshikov, Non-Violence International, Russia
- Raya Kadyrova and Tajykan Schabdanova, Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI), Kyrgyzstan
- Kai Brand-Jacobsen, PATRIR, Romania
- Peter Woodrow, CDA Collaborative Learning Project, USA
- James Laki, Peace Foundation Melanesia, Papua New Guinea
- Rev. Sikhalo Cele, Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF), Zimbabwe
- William Tsuma (resource person), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

7. Tools and Templates

- 7.1 Go or No-Go? Self-Assessment Grid
- 7.2 Checklist for an Effective MSP
- 7.3 Interview Questions for Potential Participants
- 7.4 Envisioning a Multi-Stakeholder Process: Building Blocks
- 7.5 Conflict Assessment, Peacebuilding Planning and Self-Assessment
- 7.6 Choice Matrix for Prioritising Actions
- 7.7 Basic Action Plan Template
- 7.8 Tailoring Communication Strategies**