



DeLoG Joint Learning Event on  
“Local Governance and Sustaining Peace”  
22<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018, Brussels

## Course Outline

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## I. Introduction

Under the leadership of UNDP, UNICEF and UNCDF, and hosted by the European Commission, the Development Partners Network on Decentralization and Local Governance (DeLoG) is organizing a joint learning event (hereafter, the Course) from January 22 to 25 in Brussels, to explore the nexus between local governance and sustaining peace in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The Course targets up to 35 staff from DeLoG member organizations, both from their headquarters and field offices. A Thematic Course Coordinator (TCC) has been assigned by UNDP to oversee the preparation of the Course and started his functions on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Based on consultations with the organizing partners and desk research, this Inception Report presents a detailed outline of the proposed event, including its justification, thematic content, draft agenda and an operational workplan. This Report will be followed by a detailed Training Plan.

## II. Background and Justification

Over 1.6 billion people, or 22 percent of the global population, live in fragile or conflict-affected settings.<sup>1</sup> Even if many of these settings are not subject to widespread conflict, such as inter-state or civil wars, they suffer nevertheless from high levels of violence linked to unbridled criminality buoyed by the spread of organized crime, to local conflicts over land and other natural resources, to inter-ethnic, religious and communal violence and/or to repression of social and political contestation movements by oppressive and corrupt regimes. Violence is a main factor of under- or reverse development.<sup>2</sup> People in fragile and conflict-affected countries are more than twice as likely to be undernourished as those in other developing countries, more than three times as likely to be unable to send their children to school, twice as likely to see their children die before age five, and more than twice as likely to lack clean water.<sup>3</sup> They also experience curtailing of their civic and political rights, even after conflict or violence has receded. Among civilians, women, youth and children in particular disproportionately bear both direct and indirect consequences of violence.<sup>4</sup>

In response to the significant peace challenges and deep concern about the human suffering caused by armed conflict, the UN Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016) introduced ‘sustaining peace’ as an integrated and coherent approach to achieve peace and development with an expanded scope from traditional peacebuilding. It encompasses activities aimed at “*preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development*”.<sup>5</sup> This conceptual shift has not only reinforced the interlinkage between peace, security and development, but also puts emphasis on conflict prevention with collective efforts. It comes as a recognition that fragility and conflict operate as a trap, which affected countries face enormous challenges coming out from. They usually experience for years after the ‘official’ end of conflict war-like conditions characterized by low socio-economic development, high level of group animosities, political tensions, communal violence and soaring criminality, not to mention cases where full-scale civil wars have returned.<sup>6</sup> Echoing SDGs and the 2030 Agenda on peace, the UN Resolution

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2016), States of Fragility 2016: Understanding Violence, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264267213-e>

<sup>2</sup> The economic costs of violence in terms of lost GDP in affected countries range from two to more than ten percent annually (World Development Report 2011, World Bank).

<sup>3</sup> World Bank (2011), World Development Report 2011. [https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011\\_Full\\_Text.pdf](https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> OECD (2016)

<sup>5</sup> UN (2016), Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016), p.1

<sup>6</sup> 90% of civil wars occurring in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century took place in countries that had experienced conflict in the preceding 30 years (World Development Report 2011, World Bank, p.2).



addressed in particular the importance of considering the needs of all segments of society and inclusive participation of all stakeholders, especially governments, civil society and communities, in sustaining peace.

Another outcome of the recently-concluded period of redefinition of global policies towards peace and development,<sup>7</sup> is the ‘local turn’ that characterizes them and that highlights the importance of local processes, while attempts to rebuild or extend central authority in fragmented societies have at times actually lead to a deepening of conflict.<sup>8</sup> The rationale underpinning this turn is that local governance is inherently where the state intersects with society and the point at which national policies meet local aspirations; it can be more inclusive in terms of participation in democratic arenas than national governance. The ‘local’ is seen therefore as a crucial entry point to strengthen collective action as a factor of social cohesion, (re)build state capacities, strengthen state-society relations and eventually reshape the social contract between state and society and restore state legitimacy. It implies that national governments accept that the state is multi-dimensional and multi-scalar (or multi-level). SDG 16, for example, draws the attention of policy-makers to the importance of involving and building capacities at *all* levels of the state, including local governments, which have generally been neglected in the aftermath of conflict, for achieving the Agenda 2030 as a whole. The collection of works from the Doing Development Differently community<sup>9</sup> also strongly argues for a localisation of aid and peacebuilding. The outcome document of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness stressed the key role that local government plays in linking citizens with the state and ensuring ownership of countries’ development agendas. The Rio+20 Outcome Document pledged to further support local government to enable it to fully assume its roles beyond service delivery, enhancing community participation and accountability at sub-national levels. It is therefore important to ensure a close link between local governance and sustainable human development.

Despite the emergent recognition that peacebuilding must also, and increasingly, start from the bottom up, through building local capacity and fomenting inclusive local governance mechanisms, resources allotted to local governance support in most fragile and conflict-affected settings, whether from national budgets or international sources, remains lower than in mainstream developing countries.<sup>10</sup> There are indeed risks associated with increasing support to the local level in such contexts, not least from a safety and security perspective as well as fiduciary, but this discrepancy between the new global policy discourse and the reality on the ground also comes from divergences in the understanding among the international community of what going ‘local’ for peacebuilding means, what works and how it can be supported and promoted. There are tensions between different models, some promoting institution-centred vs. community-driven approaches, some promoting decentralization as a means to assuage local grievances while others see it as a danger to state-building in fragile settings, some promoting formal public authority while others embrace hybrid systems and the legitimacy of non-state actors. Also, it is worth noting that thin or inconclusive evidence may also be used to challenge some of the conceptual underpinnings commonly used in designing local governance programmes in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and could explain why the impact of such programmes in triggering sustainable changes at scale at the national level in terms of political stability and reduction of violence is not always evident.<sup>11</sup> As often, the question is how far external governance interventions, including at the local level, are shaped in a way that can help transform *de jure* and *de facto* socio-political

<sup>7</sup> United Nations (2015), High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) on the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, Global Study report on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Agenda 2030.

<sup>8</sup> EBA (2017), *Local Peacebuilding – Challenges and Opportunities*. Stockholm.

<sup>9</sup> <http://doingdevelopmentdifferently.com/>

<sup>10</sup> UNDP (2016), *Guide on Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States*, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> Justino, P. (2017), *Governance Interventions in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries*, IDS (draft).



structures rather than strengthen existing problematic forms and entrench conflict or conflict risks. More needs to be done therefore to help ‘peacebuilders’ understand the contexts where they work, envision the impact of their interventions (and their limitations) and harmonize their approaches, so that the potential of local governance for sustaining peace is maximized.

### III. Description of the Course

#### a) Aim, scope and objectives

The Course aims to contribute to an enhanced understanding and application among DeLoG partners of successful localized approaches to sustaining peace in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

The Course will discuss the nexus between local governance and sustaining peace from an evidence-based conceptual as well as programmatic point of view, and therefore consider how far local governance<sup>12</sup> as an entry point is effective to deliver sustainable outcomes in terms of political stability, reduction of violence and state legitimacy. Three main functions of local governance systems commonly addressed in fragile and conflict-affected settings by external interventions will be tackled in the Course: local governance for strengthening service delivery, social cohesion and local economic development.<sup>13</sup> Practically, the Course will review the effectiveness of current approaches against the available evidence and discuss tools to better analyze local governance contexts, to devise more effective strategies for building inclusive local coalitions, systems and capacities for organizing local decision-making and producing positive development outcomes, to increase the conflict sensitivity of external interventions and to measure more reliably programme impact. During this learning journey, different types of fragility contexts will be explored, and the differentiated needs of urban and rural areas will be brought up where relevant.

The Course objectives are:

- to raise awareness of and re-affirm the significance of local governance for sustaining peace in fragile and conflict-affected settings.
- to facilitate knowledge- and practice-sharing on local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings, with focus on the role of local governance for service delivery, local economic development and social cohesion;
- to equip participants with effective approaches and tools for programming in local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings;
- to nurture dialogue between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners for increased cross-fertilization and effectiveness of local governance programming;
- to strengthen the DeLoG network by engaging its members in discussing conceptual and programmatic approaches and identifying potential joint actions such as country-based joint programming.

The Course targets staff from DeLoG member organizations who work and/or are interested in the fields of local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

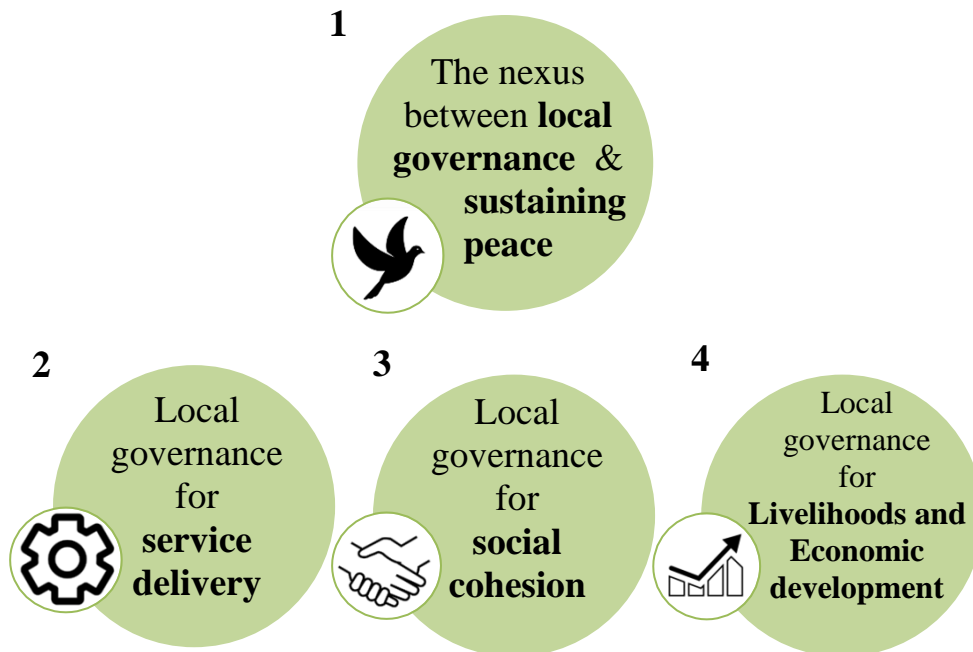
<sup>12</sup> For this course, Local governance is taken in the broad sense, including all governance actors and mechanisms of decision-making at the subnational level, rather than how it is sometimes equated in publications with community-level governance only.

<sup>13</sup> Fragility as understood for the Course includes dimensions of violence/security, justice, institutions and economic foundations. Disaster-related fragility is considered when it comes as an additional dimension of fragility onto situations of conflict and violence, not as single-factor situation.



## b) Thematic content

The Course will be divided into four thematic blocks, the first looking at the course theme from a general perspective and the three following blocks focusing on one of the recognized critical areas of need of conflict-affected populations for which local governance has a strong role to play.




For each thematic block, concepts, lessons learnt and challenges will be explored against research and practice-based evidence. Also, for each thematic session, a number of theme-specific questions will be directed to participants (see further down) as well as the following generic questions:

- How can our actions for local governance contribute to overcome fragility and conflict (taking into considerations different fragility/conflict contexts as well as urban & rural settings)?
- How are our actions for local governance affected by situations of fragility and conflict?
- How can we measure better the impact of our actions on reducing sustainably fragility and conflict?

In the Training Plan, a set of learning objectives and key understandings will be defined for each thematic session.



1.  **The local governance & sustaining peace nexus:** the role of local governance in contributing to building and sustaining peace is often approached from two angles:

(i) Its role in providing an inclusive space for dialogue and collective action. It is assumed that inclusive local governance can shift the incentive structure for local leadership and organizations towards cooperation in problem-solving rather than confronting each other with identity-based grievances and competing legitimacy claims.

(ii) Its role in legitimizing the state by rebuilding its functional presence closer to citizens and making it more responsive to immediate local needs and grievances. It is assumed that strengthening local governance institutions and systems can change incentives for government actions from a top-down accountability chain towards the alignment to local needs and priorities.<sup>14</sup>

In this model, through achieving more responsive, inclusive and accountable local governance, state-society relations improve as local governments represent the state authority closest to citizens and are able to link the local to the national level. The social contract between state and society can be reshaped, ensuring greater legitimacy to the state and therefore lesser tendency for violent contestation and greater ability to absorb tensions, sustain shocks and resolve crises peacefully. Therefore, responsive local governance systems not only provide peace dividends but more importantly induce state legitimacy and accountability from the bottom up. On the opposite, a low state legitimacy means disrespect for the rule of law and a lack of mutual trust and effective political mechanisms to address grievances, which all contribute to violence becoming the main recourse for contestation.

While no development partner (DP) would contend anymore that local governance must be part and parcel of state-building and peacebuilding processes, there are differences as to what they consider ‘local governance’ for that purpose. On one hand emphasis is put, mostly by multilateral organizations (UNDP, World Bank, EU), on local governments, decentralization or local political structures within a democracy-oriented and ‘peacebuilding-as-statebuilding’ approach, while on the other hand, bilateral donors such as DfID, USAID and a large section of international NGOs put emphasis on non-state and community actors, civil society and traditional structures within a bottom-up community-driven peacebuilding approach. Nevertheless, all emphasize the role of local governance in rectifying national peacebuilding and peace sustaining failures by localizing problem-solving and dialogue.

Whichever the approach, challenges and barriers to transforming local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings are daunting, as the local level is where the unmet needs of populations and the institutional weakness of the state interact in the most explosive manner. Ineffective and rent-driven local governance based on predatory elite pacts can exacerbate fragility and conflict. Local governments frequently lack the means and capacity to deliver basic services, ensure social cohesion and offer diversified livelihood opportunities by promoting local economic development. Increasing participation in and inclusiveness of decision-making through importing local ‘good governance’ democratic structures often does not bring the expected outcome in terms of political stability and reduction of violence as these approaches fail to understand and transform sufficiently power structures at the root of the problem. Indeed, localizing peacebuilding cannot be limited to localizing the tenets of a national liberal peace agreement and requires understanding and acknowledging local realities, including the fact that public authority may not lie with formal actors, adopting an integrated approach bringing together the security, social and economic needs of communities and effecting change in different dimensions, in particular institutional responsiveness,

<sup>14</sup> UNICEF, (2017), *Peacebuilding through Decentralization & Local Governance*, Draft Technical Note.





political inclusiveness and societal resilience. On the other hand, concentrating on the local level is also not and should not be seen as panacea to the challenges confronting liberal peacebuilding.

**In this session**, the Course will bring participants to discuss the theory of change according to which restoring the social contract is at the heart of achieving sustainable peace in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Within this framework, the contribution of inclusive and accountable local governance contributes will be reviewed more particularly, assuming that it helps (i) extend the presence, authority and protection of the state, under a more responsive and inclusive model, to all regions, cities, villages and quarters; (ii) build confidence in the political settlement by enabling a fair distribution of resources to the local level; (iii) direct efforts of the state toward responding to the needs of affected communities in a more inclusive manner; and (iv) address drivers of insecurity and conflict by strengthening social cohesion and supporting resilience capacities inherent to local communities.<sup>15</sup> Additional dimensions, as well as necessary conditions that may be necessary to unlock the potential of local governance for sustaining peace, and challenges and risks coming in its way, will also be discussed.

Key specific questions for discussion: How may local governance systems that emerge at the local level in fragile and conflict-affected settings reinforce violent and non-violent, or inclusive and non-inclusive, legitimate and illegitimate institutions of governance at the national level? If peacebuilding and state-building are to be brought closer together for sustaining peace, how can this be best done at the local level considering the different dynamics that they usually follow (bottom-up vs. top-down)? Are greater participation and inclusion alone in local governance sufficient to effect sustainable change over power / governance structures that generate violence? Are capacities for peace (or peaceful governance?) inherently found in local societies and their traditional structures and how does it affect the way the international community can support resilience vs. making peace? How do DPs' actions affect the balance of power between de jure vs. de facto power holders? Where is the right balance between the need for being politically/conflict-sensitive in your analysis and approach and the need for acting in response to crisis or at-risk-of-crisis situations?

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<sup>15</sup> UNDP (2016), *Guide on Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States*.



2.



**Local governance for service delivery:** as recalled in the introduction, fragility and conflict have highly negative effects on the capacity of states to deliver services and, in particular, closer to end-users. The three major dimensions of availability, accessibility (economic and physical) and quality of services are severely limited when infrastructure, capacities and resources for service delivery are lacking in large swathes of the country coupled with potential insecurity. For decades, crisis response policies of development partners have in effect led to by-passing state structures, including local governments, for service delivery because of the (extremely) weak state capacity and/or ruined infrastructure. Such an approach ignores local capacity, delays state-building and creates dependency. It reduces opportunities for post-conflict or transition governments to establish their legitimacy.

A growing body of evidence seems to suggest that state-led delivery of public goods and services has an important role to play in reducing or mitigating violent conflict.<sup>16</sup> In a post-conflict situation, it can signal the political will of the state to perform its protective and redistributive functions in a more equal manner, limiting the destabilizing effect of the fact that there are always winners and losers (or they perceive themselves so) in such context. Therefore, restoring or building capacities – infrastructural as well as human, financial, managerial and technical – of local governance institutions to partake in service delivery is an essential feature of the assumed virtuous nexus between local governance and sustaining peace as proposed by the Course. In most cases, local governments, statutorily mandated and formally linked to the central government, are best positioned to coordinate or even manage directly service delivery and assigning them service delivery responsibilities and revenues, through decentralization reforms for example, is often seen as a means to address root causes of conflicts related to a broken social contract.<sup>17</sup> Yet, local governments are only able to take charge of coordinating, planning, budgeting, implementing and/or monitoring service delivery and development projects in an accountable and inclusive manner if their prerogatives are supported by a conducive administrative framework (e.g. effective division of responsibilities between state agencies) and if they are sufficiently equipped with e.g. facilities, qualified male and female staff, financial resources and managerial and technical capacities. Supporting local governance for service delivery in fragile and conflict-affected settings is therefore primarily about the extension of the state presence and administrative systems, about restoring and/or reforming public finance management systems, including taxation, so that they can sustain local efforts in the long-term while limiting corrupt rent-seeking practices, and developing core institutional capacities of local governments as well as of non-state actors, including civil society and the private sector, that also play an important role for service delivery in most contexts.

But it is also important to understand that, if state-led service delivery has a role to play in peacebuilding, it should not be seen merely as a technical issue – and that it can also have adverse effects. Political elites at the local level engage in service delivery for different reasons, such as promoting social cohesion, consolidating their power base or even building rent. Hence, a frequent element of the policy debate in fragile and conflict-affected settings is the extent of the role local governments should play in service delivery. Also, it is in most contexts a long-term process as capacity for service delivery cannot be built in a day where it has never been present. Beyond institutional capacity, suitable and functional service delivery frameworks, which help delineate the respective roles of national and local, state and non-state actors in delivering different services and establish realistic service standards are needed as the duplication of responsibilities leads to ineffectiveness and inefficient use of scarce

<sup>16</sup> Justino (2017).

<sup>17</sup> UNICEF (2017).





resources. Unclear delivery frameworks and the use of parallel delivery systems have entrenched unsustainable service delivery arrangements in many fragile contexts. Temporary solutions often need to be worked out but only until such time that service delivery can be reorganized comprehensively through sector-wide reforms and decentralization.

**In this session,** participants will discuss the assumption that the accountable provision of public services in fragile and conflict-affected settings contribute to stability and peace, including through legitimizing the state, in the light of academic evidence and their own experience. They will analyse the pros and cons of entrusting local governance actors, and in particular local governments, with service delivery functions in these settings, under which level of decentralization and how it can be done with a conflict-sensitivity lens. Throughout, participants will be able to discuss as well the distinctions that need to be made between different kinds of public services (security, welfare / social, infrastructure, environmental, etc.) when discussing the above points. At the practice level, participants will identify key information needs for assessing local-level service delivery options, key capacity needs of local governance actors to deliver service more responsively, and recommendations to better budget, plan and manage service delivery in fragile states.

Key specific questions for discussion: In what ways does the strengthening of service delivery restore trust in the state and how does the involvement of local actors influence that process? What are merits and risks of decentralization for service delivery in FCS? Which services are most indicated for localized delivery in FCS considering the peacebuilding imperative? What works well to re-establish community trust in state-led service delivery? What makes an intervention in support of local governance for service delivery conflict-sensitive? How do we measure the impact of localizing service delivery onto fragility and conflict?



3.



**Local governance for social cohesion:** Social cohesion is usually understood as referring to two intertwined features of society: (i) the inequality dimension, which relates to the goal of promoting equal opportunities and reducing disparities and divisions within a society, hence addressing social exclusion as well; (ii) the social capital dimension, which concerns the goal of strengthening social relations, interactions and ties between individuals, social groups and institutions.<sup>18</sup> Good social cohesion is a building block of a strong social contract, just as is effective institutional convergence, i.e. commonality of values and norms and coordination of action among state institutions. Fragile states are usually characterized by high level of inequalities and underlying patterns of exclusion of parts of the population, at times the majority, be it from enjoying basic human rights, accessing public goods and services, finding decent livelihoods and/or participating in decision-making. Social, cultural and/or legal norms may also highly constrain the development of positive relations among different groups and social institutions for the common good. All in all, deeply divided societies demonstrate in general a lack of social cohesion, i.e. the inability of their various constitutive groups to agree on how they can live together, including govern and be governed, and to solve their dissents peacefully. A breakdown in social cohesion opens the door and contributes to violence and conflict, which in turn exacerbate distance between social groups, create more inequalities and exclusion and shatter remaining social capital. It also reduces opportunities for civil society and civic actors to influence government policies and achieve social change, also because the deliberate targeting of independent voices during conflict. The impact of conflict on social cohesion is also long-lasting, even when peace is won or political stability retrieved.

Restoring, building and maintaining constructive relations in society start from mutual trust and experiencing the benefits of collaboration. While building relations depends on skills, capacities, resources and supportive institutions, it can only really unfold only if these elements interact in a mutually-reinforcing manner.<sup>19</sup> The theory goes that local governance provides a golden opportunity to do this as it can address issues of horizontal inequalities and strengthen social relations. If conducted inclusively, that is with the participation of hitherto marginalized groups (including women, youth, for example) and with non-state actors, local governance has the potential to offer groups a formal non-violent space for participating in the political process, articulate their needs and (re)build relationships with one another. It can offer opportunities to build issue-based vs. identity-based coalitions to reinforce the common good. It can help establish networks within civil society and between civil society and the state, intersecting and surpassing traditional sectorial or class divisions and thus establishing certain key conditions for lasting peace (these networks are often referred to as “infrastructures for peace”). Local governance actors, and this would include rule of law agencies as well at the local level, can work together to improve the daily security of communities exposed routinely to violence and/or coming out of conflict. They can do this by nurturing positive linkages, peaceful transactions and increased solidarity between individuals and community subgroups in daily life (e.g. community projects, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, sports and cultural activities), by eliminating threats of physical and psychological violence in households and communities (e.g. small arms control), with special attention to gender-based violence and child protection and by allowing for safe and peaceful coexistence in public space (e.g. community policing, arms-free zones, etc.). Safer human settlements mean incentives and capacity for public and private investors to re-engage with territories that had fallen out of the state, rebuild infrastructure, extend services and create jobs, thus reducing territorial inequalities that often fuel conflict.

<sup>18</sup> Jenson, J. (2010), “Defining and Measuring Social Cohesion”, Commonwealth Secretariat and UNRISD.

<sup>19</sup> Giessmann, H. (2016), *Embedded Peace – Infrastructures for Peace: Approaches and Lessons Learned*, SDC, UNDP & Berghof Foundation.



While the theory exposed above might hold from a conceptual point of view, evidence so far is rather thin that its programmatic translation has functioned convincingly. Indeed, many community-driven development programmes in fragile and conflict-affected settings have had limited lasting effect on social cohesion, local capacity for collective action or social inclusiveness.<sup>20</sup> There are also examples where local self-governance, including decentralization, has exacerbated conflict or heightened conflict risks. For example, local elections after a conflict, if certain safeguards are not adopted in the electoral system, can lead to local leaders being elected along ethnic lines and with a strong identity-based discourse, defeating the purpose of reducing political marginalization of minority groups. Capture by predatory elites is common at the local level in conflict-affected settings and can entrench an inequitable allocation of resources and provision of services, hence accentuating inequalities which work against strong social cohesion. Also, post-conflict states can view the task of transforming local governance as meaning the imposition of a single liberal order based on state-sanctioned norms and institutions (local governments), excluding social institutions such as traditional or religious structures, even though they are for many communities the bedrock of social cohesion. Finally, ineffective local governments, handicapped by limited administration and fiscal devolution, can dampen the formation of social capital as collective action on the part of society is met by institutional apathy.

**In this session,** participants will discuss the generally-held assumption that participation and inclusiveness in decision-making is good for social cohesion and, by way of consequence, for reducing the use of violence in local governance systems and in livelihood strategies. They will reflect on the value of different approaches to rebuilding social cohesion through local processes, such as infrastructures for peace (e.g. Local Peace Committees), inclusive local political processes (participation, representation), citizen security programmes, community-based reconciliation and transitional justice, sports, cultural and religious activities. They will identify key information needs for assessing the strength of social cohesion, key capacity needs of local actors, including local governments and civil society, to rebuild social cohesion in war-torn or violence-ridden societies and will make recommendations on how to better support social cohesion through local governance programmes, including by supporting informal actors and using ICT innovations. In discussing the above, different contexts will be considered, such as violent urban quarters, ethnically diverse post-conflict rural areas and refugee host communities.

Key specific questions for discussion: How does social cohesion impact on peace and development at the local level and vice-versa? Under which conditions are participation and inclusion in local governance effective means of strengthening social inclusion in the long term? What are the main attitudes and mechanisms by which local institutions can contribute to restoring social cohesion? What are the risks that decentralization may pose to social cohesion? How can social cohesion at community level become more resilient against higher-level shocks (e.g. major political crises, ethnic strife, disasters, migration, etc.)? What makes an intervention in support of local governance for social cohesion conflict-sensitive? How do we measure the impact of strengthening social cohesion onto fragility and conflict?

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<sup>20</sup> Justino (2017).



4.



**Local governance for livelihoods and economic development:** Not only is the majority of the world's poverty concentrated in conflict-affected countries but these countries are also where economic growth is the most difficult to resume. Trade can take on average 20 years to recover to pre-conflict levels. Conservative estimates of the economic costs of high levels of violence for countries affected in terms of lost GDP range from two to more than ten percent annually. In fragile and conflict-affected settings, competition among people and groups to eke out decent livelihoods increases when poor governance, corruption and violence all combine to derail local economic dynamics, fuel unemployment and greater pressure on land and natural resources. And in turn, local economies that fail to create sufficient livelihood opportunities for all, to reduce absolute poverty and to exploit natural resources sustainably and equitably exacerbate state and societal fragility. Conflict settings are prone to the spread of war economics which increase inequalities in access to jobs and capital and entrench exploitation of the most vulnerable. As a result, the poorest usually flock to urban centres or emigrate, putting additional pressure on these fragile environments already highly prone to unrest and violence.

In a conflict-affected context, access to decent employment and economic opportunities is one of the most prized peace dividends – often above access to basic and social services.<sup>21</sup> Difficulties facing women and youth in this regard are often greater than for the rest of the population. Women are systematically less active in the workforce than men in fragile settings<sup>22</sup> and are usually cantoned in low-paying unskilled jobs; their access to production means (including land and natural resources), markets, capitals and training opportunities are limited – and in particular due to the high level of threat to their personal security they experience in the public sphere. Societies that cannot tap sufficiently in the economic potential of women lose growth points and are less resilient to shocks. Youth also face similar hurdles to establish their livelihoods, for example for accessing land and capital or for finding jobs commensurate with their level of education, and their economic marginalization has nefarious consequences for society. When combined with pull factors such as personal empowerment given by membership in radical groups or organized crime or the proliferation of small arms, such marginalization explains an increasing role of youth globally in spreading and perpetuating situations of violence and conflict.<sup>23</sup>

The capacity of the state and other economic governance actors at all levels, including businesses, to reshape socio-economic rules, structures and processes so that they deliver *inclusive* livelihood opportunities and catalyze economic development is critical to recovery and sustaining peace, as also shown by a growing body of evidence.<sup>24</sup> Holders of private capital who have the capacity to generate employment need a functioning public authority to provide security, physical and financial infrastructure. They also need credible assurances that their benefits will not be arbitrarily taken from them. Yet, it is also critical to envision economic recovery and development in fragile and conflict-affected states not just through national macro-economic policies, but also at the local level, through fomenting 'local' economic recovery/development strategies, as the highest potential for job creation lies in such contexts with local markets and MSMEs.<sup>25</sup> The 'local' in local economic development implies an approach consisting in giving a voice to local stakeholders, in valorizing local assets and resources of a territory, in building upon traditional forms of cooperation, in

<sup>21</sup> World Bank (2011), *World Development Report*, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> Female-to-male unemployment ratio is on average 18 percent higher in fragile settings (sample of 41 fragile countries) than the world average (World Bank, Gender Statistics, 2012).

<sup>23</sup> For example, only 0.5 percent of people worldwide (young men) account for 75 percent of homicidal violence in major cities (see: John Vidal, "Why fragile cities hold the keys to stability and development," *The Guardian*, 26 January 2014).

<sup>24</sup> Justino (2017).

<sup>25</sup> Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.



identifying and fighting vulnerabilities and exclusions from the job market, such as for women and youth, in fostering the resilience of economic actors and value chains, and in using conflict-sensitivity in policy and investment choices made to support the local economy.

Local economic development (LED) covers a wide array of activities and entry points and envisions a multi-stakeholder approach, including civil society, local communities, cooperatives, private businesses with a strong role for local governments and national support institutions. It is integrated, because of the complex stakeholder actions and interactions at the local level to which they are linked and because of the inherent connections that local economic activities have with other areas of priority action for local governance, such as service delivery or social cohesion. LED is not a linear process: it needs to combine different tracks, some focusing on the imperative of stabilizing livelihoods – for example through labour-intensive public works and/or cash grants – while longer-term strategies seek to implement market and business sector development activities, including through credit provision and vocational training. Eventually, LED needs to embrace broader policy objectives, in particular for setting in place safety nets to reduce the economic vulnerability of populations, especially the most vulnerable ones, against different shocks. LED is not just about providing individual livelihood opportunities and contributing to economic growth; it is also about creating social added-value. In that sense, LED in fragile and conflict-affected setting should provide impetus to the social and solidary economy (SSE) model as it adopts the common good, social interactions and inclusiveness as foundational values. The SSE model, because it depends on cooperative business forms, suits particularly the goal of facilitating the inclusion of women and youth as economic agents.

The role of local governments in LED in fragile and conflict-affected settings is usually not sufficiently aptly recognized and supported by development partners and central governments, especially during a post-crisis recovery phase. Local governments need to be able, in collaboration with other actors, to devise sustainable models of economic development for their region, recognizing their locality's comparative advantages, regulating equitable access to the economic assets of their territory, and to implement these models and rules with sufficient capacity and financial external support. Nevertheless, the risk level attached to devolving important responsibilities and means for LED to local governments in fragile environments can be high and often pushes development partners to seek other intermediaries to implement their LED programmes in such contexts. Those risks are linked to the limited administrative and technical capacity of local governments in such settings for tasks other than traditional ones (service delivery, public order), to their heavy bureaucracy which dissuades businesses and favors corruption, to their lack of investment in economic infrastructure and services, to the persistence of entrenched war economies (often closely linked to local political leadership) in the post-conflict period, to the pressure put on local governments by large business interests, especially in the extractive industry sector, to deregulate access to natural resources at the expense of inclusive and sustainable growth in the long run, to name a few. There are also tensions between institution-led local economic development policies and the interests of the informal economic sector, which remains the single-most common entry point into the economic sphere for conflict-affected populations, in particular for women and youth.

**In this session,** participants will review academic and empirical evidence to analyze the mechanisms by which more secure livelihoods in conflict-affected societies lead to peace and stability outcomes. They will discuss the opportunities and challenges of rebuilding local economies after a conflict or developing them in a context of fragility and violence, and what the role of different local actors should be in that process. Given the wide scope of LED,



participants will be asked to sift deeper the following topics: (i) creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for women and youth, including through the SSE model, and (ii) the LED missions that can be realistically devolved to local governments in fragile and conflict-affected settings and the capacities and means they need to master for this purpose. The risks that LED may pose onto peacebuilding processes will also be analyzed, in an attempt to identify how to increase the conflict sensitivity of LED programming and its potential for nurturing social cohesion.

Additional specific questions for discussion: What is it in local economic development that can best contribute to strengthening the social contract? What are the conditions for achieving local economic prosperity and the hurdles facing this process in FCS? What are the main roles that local governments / local institutions can play in supporting LED in FCS? How LED can be better targeted to women and youth and why is it important? What are the risks that local economic development may pose to social cohesion and peace-building? What makes an intervention in local economic development conflict-sensitive? How do we measure the impact of fomenting local economic development onto fragility and conflict?





## c) Methodology

### *Course format*

This will be a 4-day face-to-face course. It will consist in four main components:

**1. Introduction:** session on the nexus between local governance in fragile / conflict-affected settings and sustaining peace, including:

- recalling key definitions
- exploring concepts and theories of change
- scanning the different approaches found among DeLoG members
- validating how conceptual models apply to different types of fragile contexts

**2. Subject Area Sessions:** covering the three thematic blocks of service delivery, social cohesion and local economic development. Each subject area session will have a similar format:

- a) Learning Objectives: they will be presented upfront to participants before each session so as to be transparent on the learning journey proposed, manage expectations and also provide benchmarks for subsequent evaluation.
- b) Setting the context: expert presentation on the latest evidence illustrating how addressing the subject area through local governance functions and how effectively, what is the end-impact on conflict dynamics (positive/negative) and what are the lessons learned in terms of external (donor) support.
- c) Case study: country-based practitioner presentation on a concrete development programme in the area of local governance for sustaining peace (including at least one joint UN programme). The case study will present the context, programme design, implementation, impact, challenges and lessons learned.
- d) Reflecting: group discussions and sub-group work / activities using interactive methods only (see further down) and building upon the previous context-setting and case study sessions. In this ‘reflecting’ part, the following three sub-sections will be systematically explored:
  - **Concept and methods:** how can our actions [as DPs] in support of local governance contribute to bring more positive outcomes for the subject area in different settings?
  - **Conflict sensitivity:** how can we minimize negative impact and maximize positive impact on fragility and conflict of our actions for local governance?
  - **Measurement:** how can we better assess the contexts we are working on and measure regularly our impact on the subject area (indicators and methods)? This will include sharing knowledge on existing tools used by DeLoG agencies.<sup>26</sup>
- e) Key understandings: these are the key messages that participants should be able to take home and apply in their daily work. They will be presented as a closing point to each session.

**3. The donor perspective:** knowledge on donor’s global policies and strategic priorities vis-à-vis addressing sustainably fragility and conflict through local governance, as well as details on their aid programmes in this area, will be presented through:

- a dedicated session with presentations by representatives from 2 donor countries (e.g. Switzerland and Germany);

<sup>26</sup> For example, conflict analysis, PEA, functional mapping, capacity assessment tools, core government function diagnostic tool, etc.



- an exhibition gallery next to the training room for donors to exhibit their work on local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings through posters, publications and other information materials.

**4. Challenge groups and networking:** content-related and informal networking between participants will happen throughout the training sessions but will be also reinforced through: (i) an informal evening social event; (ii) a dedicated forum on the last day (World Café) where participants will choose a few topics that they wish to deepen through small group discussions. There will be two rounds: (1) challenges that practitioners meet in their day-to-day efforts to turn policies into practice; and (2) opportunities for increased networking and cooperation between DeLoG members in the area of local governance in fragile settings. Resource persons (experts, facilitators, agency representatives) will support the World Café discussions.

### *Training methods*

The Course will rest more on interactive learning than on lecturing so as to harness the collective knowledge of course participants. The training techniques proposed are:

- Expert lectures (one per subject area)
- Case studies prepared and presented by practitioners (one per subject area)
- Questions and answers after each presentation.
- Group work: brainstorming, role-plays, mind maps, debates, scenario-building, etc.
- Exhibition panels
- Social event
- Icebreakers (morning) and Energizers (post-lunch)
- Participative evaluation:
  - group talk / posting board at the end of each day
  - assessment form on last day

### *Training materials*

Each participant will receive a set of 5 foundational publications to be consulted before the Course. These are:

- UNDP's *Guide on Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings* (2016)
- UNICEF's *Technical Note on Peacebuilding Through Decentralization & Local Governance* (2017)
- German Development Institute's *Discussion Paper on the Promotion of Decentralisation and Local Governance in Fragile Contexts* (2016)
- ODI/SLRC's Synthesis Paper on *How to support state-building, service delivery and recovery in fragile and conflict affected situations: lessons from six years of research* (2017)
- SDC/IDS Working Paper on *Governance Interventions in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries* (2017).

In addition, participants will receive a Participant's Manual at the course opening with additional training materials and logistical information.