



Members of the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) carry placards with messages of peace and non-violence during the 2011 elections in Liberia



Policy & Practice Brief

Knowledge for durable peace

Creating an enabling peacebuilding environment: How can external actors contribute to resilience?

Authors: Gustavo de Carvalho, Cedric de Coning and Lesley Connolly¹

This Policy & Practice Brief forms part of ACCORD's knowledge production work to inform peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

PPB
028
Feb 2014

Executive Summary

Peacebuilding theory and practice has evolved over 20 years in response to highly complex and fluid factors and contexts. Over this period, peacebuilding has developed several salient features, including its reliance on implementation in the long term, the interdependence of various actors and the multidimensional nature of processes. Current post-conflict situations indicate that in practice, peacebuilding needs to become even more innovative, flexible and responsive to the requirements of local actors and contexts, while remaining sensitive to the potential for unintended consequences and doing harm. This Policy & Practice Brief (PPB) departs from the premise that the creation of an enabling peacebuilding environment cannot be achieved through application of standardised prescriptions. An enabling environment is achieved as a result of actors' ability to stimulate the development of social institutions² that are sufficiently resilient. This PPB thus aims to analyse how certain approaches can foster and strengthen the creation of enabling peacebuilding environments and provide recommendations as to how external actors can support these processes while avoiding pitfalls, focusing particularly on the concepts of fragility and resilience.

Introduction

In the early 1990s, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined peacebuilding as 'action to identify and support structures which tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict'.³ In the post-Cold War era, emphasis shifted from peacekeeping, which is centred on the need to maintain peace, to peacebuilding, which is concerned with managing change and putting in place the foundations to ensure the achievement of sustainable peace. Peacebuilding has since expanded beyond being understood, as it was in the early 1990s, as the post-peacekeeping phase to becoming an expansive concept and practical framework which increasingly engages in efforts to understand the causes of armed conflicts and political violence, and the conditions necessary for peace to emerge and be sustained.

Peacebuilding has evolved to emphasise the importance of supporting the development of social institutions and local ownership of these structures to develop their resilience. Resilience is necessary to ensure self-sustainable processes and structures that can manage and survive tensions, external influences and shocks. This PPB thus argues that peacebuilding approaches should target and aim to enhance a society's institutional capacities, at both national and community level, so as to stimulate the development of local human abilities and collective social institutions, processes and mechanisms, so that societies are better able to manage change. The more resilient a society's capacity to manage change, the more it is able to prevent relapse into violent conflict and the better it will be at establishing foundations for durable and sustainable peace.

In principle, internal actors should take the lead in peacebuilding processes. However, often external actors can be found in the foreground more than is appropriate or desired.⁴ This brief defines external actors as all individuals or entities that do not originate from the country or society they are intervening in, and have a direct or indirect interest in a particular peacebuilding process. These actors include international or regional peacekeeping operations, various UN agencies, donor agencies, a large range of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), interested governments, including from neighbouring countries, and countries with commercial interests in the recipient country.⁵

With this background, the most important questions to emerge out of 20 years of peacebuilding practice are: What are the critical elements that enable a society to avoid relapsing into violent conflict and to build sustainable peace? Linked to that question, what can external agencies do – and what should they not do – to assist a society or country to develop an enabling peacebuilding environment? How can external actors provide such a society with the space it needs to allow its own resilience to emerge and for the country to achieve sustainable peace?

This brief reflects on these questions by providing an overview of some conditions necessary for the creation of an enabling peacebuilding terrain. It discusses the concepts of resilience and fragility and examines the importance of understanding these in the context of achieving viable peace. Finally, the PPB reflects on key peacebuilding conceptual and practical issues as a precursor to sharing recommendations aimed at ensuring that external actors can better support local activities and projects to ensure successful peacebuilding processes.

Fragility and peacebuilding: From deficiencies to opportunities

The concept of fragility is complex and multifaceted, yet, there is still no internationally accepted definition of the term. It is important to note that many remain highly sceptical of the significance of the concept. The sceptics' main concern is that the idea 'implicitly contains normative assumptions of how states should perform and a misguided notion that all states will eventually converge around a Western model of statehood'.⁶

This section discusses the concept of fragile states and critically examines it from a perspective that links peacebuilding and state building with resilience. The brief advocates for an approach to addressing fragility that is focused on achieving stability, development and change. The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (New Deal)⁷ and the g7+⁸ provide an important departure point that views states affected by conflict as particularly threatened by fragility, which creates further challenges for states in reaching a stage of resilience and eventual stability. The g7+ offers a definition where:

A state of fragility can be understood as a period of time during nationhood when sustainable socio-economic development requires greater emphasis on complementary peacebuilding and state building activities such as building inclusive political settlements, security, justice, jobs, good management of resources, and accountable and fair service delivery.⁹

The g7+ advocates for an approach that emphasises the need for societies to develop their own resilient social institutions. Resilience is understood as the ability of social institutions to absorb and adapt to internal and external shocks and setbacks that they are likely to face.¹⁰ In the peacebuilding context, fragility implies that in a given country and setting, the consolidation of nationhood and the safety, security and well-being of citizens are at risk due to the potential of relapse into crisis or violent conflict. This risk is gradually reduced as social institutions develop and strengthen their ability to cope with the different types of threats they are exposed to.

This brief maintains that if a society is fragile, it means that some or all of the social institutions that govern its politics, security, justice and economy lack resilience.¹¹ In that sense, an understanding of fragility is intrinsically linked to the concept of resilience. If the resilience of a particular society determines the extent to which it can resist pressures and shocks that carry the potential for relapse

into violent conflict, the creation of an enabling peacebuilding environment should concern itself with safeguarding, stimulating, facilitating and creating sufficient space for societies to develop resilient capacities.¹²

External dynamics and factors often also have a direct effect on fragility, making it important to acknowledge the roles played by regional and international factors in contributing to the fragility of a given society. Peacebuilding actors should, therefore, invest in research and programmes that probe and explore the impact of international and regional influences on state fragility and what can be done to mitigate and counter negative external influences such as bribery and corruption, the facilitation and encouragement of capital flight, international organised crime, exploitative industries and harmful trade and aid practices.

... if a society is fragile, it means that some or all of the social institutions that govern its politics, security, justice and economy lack resilience. In that sense, an understanding of fragility is intrinsically linked to the concept of resilience

Stimulating and facilitating the development of resilient social institutions should also contribute to positive transformation of the relationship between the state and its people. Improving resilience implies a dynamic predicated upon two specific components: the manner in which people within a given society cooperate with one another and the ways in which these people use shared institutions to improve society as a whole.¹³ Such dynamic relationships between the state and its citizenry, and among the people, are comprised of interdependent relations, including both formal and informal socio-economic and political interactions and institutions. These complex systems also feature numerous intervention points and can be subjected to external influences and systematic shocks. Thus, efforts to improve resilience at local and national levels must incorporate multidimensional analyses of both the relationship between citizens and the state, as well as critical cross-cutting peacebuilding issues.

The role of external actors

The long-term nature of peacebuilding

While it is not possible to offer an exhaustive list in the scope provided by this brief, it is important to note that there are a number of important factors that

contribute to the creation of an enabling peacebuilding environment. One of these relates to how time is understood and approached, that is, the time it takes for a society to develop the social institutions it needs to manage and sustain itself without risking a relapse into violent conflict. Within scholarly and policy contexts, there is now recognition that peacebuilding is a long-term process, one which requires the sustained commitment of various actors over many years and even generations. Practitioners, researchers and policy makers are now increasingly conceptualising peacebuilding as a much more complex and long-term process than they did 20, and even 10, years ago.

For instance, within the context of the New Deal, the g7+ peacebuilding and state building goals (PSGs) are understood within the context of a fragility spectrum, where the processes aimed at achieving the PSGs take into account that there has to be gradual development of capacities over a long time, and that such a process slowly builds momentum towards the eventual achievement of the PSGs. The g7+ fragility spectrum provides for five broadly defined phases that include crisis, reform and rebuild, transition, transformation and ending with resilience.

It is essential that peacebuilding be undertaken with realistic expectations of the time it takes for local social institutions to develop. Unrealistic time frames and the plans and programmes that flow from them often result in external agencies compromising on the quality and sensitivity they bring to their engagement with societies. These external actors have less time to invest in the kinds of partnerships that allow societies to organise themselves such that local stakeholders can be meaningful partners able to articulate their communities' needs and interests, adapt interventions to fit local contexts and take the lead in order to encourage and achieve local ownership. Instead, with limited time, agencies resort to superimposing externally designed models and practices. These approaches may have been successful in the contexts where they were developed, but as long as they have not emerged from the local social and historic contexts in which they are applied, they are foreign. Many external peacebuilders appear not to realise that by imposing unrealistic time frames, and by insisting on foreign institutional models, they are contributing to the very fragility they are committed to addressing.

Multiple peacebuilding frameworks

Another element that supports the creation of an enabling environment for peacebuilding is the ability to manage a multiplicity of peacebuilding frameworks, conceptual approaches, mechanisms and initiatives.

Peacebuilding should be understood as a complex and interdependent conflict management system which has, as one of its defining characteristics, a large number of diverse international and national actors. While this is viewed as problematic in some quarters, the arrangement is necessitated by the intrinsically complex nature of the issues and transitions that peacebuilding responds to. No strictly managed process by a single agency would be able to address the highly complex, fast changing and wide ranging dynamics observed in societies in transition. To that effect, a large variety of peacebuilding initiatives operating simultaneously and at various levels is required. This is where opportunities and challenges related to multiple aspects, among them employment, political participation, governance and others, need to be simultaneously pursued by relevant agencies, constituencies and stakeholders. Whilst all of these initiatives cannot be planned and managed as if they were part of one master plan, it is important to pursue them as coherently as possible, according to a common strategic framework, compact or vision that is in line with what the country wishes to achieve.

Peacebuilding should be understood as a complex and interdependent conflict management system which has, as one of its defining characteristics, a large number of diverse international and national actors

In such complex environments it can be difficult to identify the most critical priorities amongst many needs and proposed initiatives. It is often the case that everything seems to be needed at the same time, with the consequence that competing priorities are generated. It is the responsibility of governments, in consultation with their people, via elected representatives, and in consultation with local communities and civil society, to determine priorities and, in the process, to create focused and harmonised peacebuilding initiatives.

The existence of multiple peacebuilding frameworks – for instance focused on peace and security where others are focused on humanitarian assistance, development or macro-economic and public finance – may appear to some as confusingly complex. It is argued, however, that it should be understood as an indication that different practice communities are simultaneously working on the same transition process. This is an appropriate, even if complex response, as each practice community contributes to the peacebuilding process with information

and approaches informed by its own specialised disciplines, and based on interactions with its own set of internal counterparts who share similar professional cultures. Each practice community thus utilises its own unique entry and connection points. It is important, however, that different frameworks are aligned behind a common, comprehensive and locally led vision or compact.

Coherence and coordination within peacebuilding

To ensure that the diverse range of peacebuilding initiatives underway at any given time are as interdependent, coherent and coordinated as possible, the benefits of improving coherence of the broader peacebuilding environment must be clear to all involved. The need for coherence is not always obvious to those engaged in peacebuilding, particularly to actors working in highly specialised fields. Often, stakeholders operate with varying time frames and with independent goals which do not take into consideration linkages between the issues and processes they are working on, other dimensions and the system as a whole. International development actors can work to increase the clarity of different roles played in a particular environment, strengthen the coherence of the system and increase its effectiveness. However, in order to develop and apply effective state building and peacebuilding measures towards strengthening resilience, it is vital to understand what is realistic and possible within specific contexts. Overinvesting time and effort in trying to achieve an unrealistic degree of coherence in any context is a wasteful use of these and other resources.

This brief argues that since peacebuilding requires a complex response, the multiplicity of practice communities should be embraced and various dimensions and levels acknowledged and incorporated. This is particularly important for those that seek to align the various actors behind locally led compacts, visions and strategic frameworks. The brief also suggests that instead of wishing for linear and predictable processes, stakeholders need to be focused on stimulating self-organisation among the multiple actors involved. It is important that international peacebuilders focus on assisting actors to become more aware of how their initiatives are linked to broader peacebuilding goals and how the work of others creates an enabling environment for the achievement of their own peacebuilding aims, and vice versa.

There should also be a move towards encouraging increased and more meaningful partnerships between and among the main actors, such as the

African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the UN. These stakeholders can implement and oversee a large range of actions and can make a significant impact on the peacebuilding environment, yet, even they are unable to generate the overall ‘whole-of-system’ effects on their own. They should thus work together, both conceptually and operationally, in order to create the momentum necessary to ensure effective implementation of initiatives towards the achievement of sustainable peace.

Against this background, the nexus between development, peace and security is increasingly and frequently highlighted as key in unlocking the potential for viable peace. International conflict management policies now highlight the complexity of peacebuilding and its relationship to sustainable development, state building, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping processes. For instance, in discussions about the formulation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, a critical concern was ensuring recognition of the linkages between peacebuilding actions and development. In this process, stakeholders observed that the creation of an enabling *development* environment is directly linked to the creation of an enabling *peacebuilding* environment, and that without addressing the root causes of conflict, sustainable development cannot take place in affected countries. The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda argues that ‘freedom from fear, conflict and violence is the most fundamental human right, and the essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies’¹⁴. Indeed it is now widely recognised that violence and fragility have become the largest obstacles to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹⁵ and that no low income conflict-affected or fragile states have been able to achieve any one of the MDGs.

...stakeholders have observed that the creation of an enabling development environment is directly linked to the creation of an enabling peacebuilding environment, and that without addressing the root causes of conflict, sustainable development cannot take place

The importance of local ownership

A key aspect to consider when developing policies that seek to address sources of fragility is linked to the advancement of approaches that fit within

specific local contexts. External actors need to support those by investing in uncovering and providing alternatives that support the creation of enabling environments. Within fragile states, multi-dimensional challenges and forces continuously influence and redefine the relationship between the state and its citizens. Propelled by dynamics that include demography and technology, fragile states are under pressure to regularly re-visit the assumptions that inform understanding of peacebuilding challenges and the means by which the countries' institutions are equipped to address them.

In many international contexts, local ownership is understood as the process of consulting and involving locals in implementing externally designed models, where the problems or challenges have already been diagnosed by external experts and solutions found through experiences from elsewhere. Thus local ownership, in this understanding, is about how those external models should be made to fit the local context. For self-sustainable peace, local societies must generate their own social institutions and make their own choices about their future. The role of international development and peacebuilding agencies is to stimulate and facilitate such processes, taking care to stop short of taking decisions on behalf of locals.

In addition to specific suggestions provided above, it is important to link those issues to broader considerations that the international community needs to keep in mind when addressing different layers and priorities in fragile countries. It is important to recognise that in the process of addressing various sectors, actors and cross-cutting issues in multi-faceted and multi-dimensional contexts, peacebuilding often presents itself as an irregular process, vulnerable to setbacks and unexpected challenges that could appear at any point during state formation processes.

In this context, it becomes key to approach local peacebuilding with the aim of increasing sustainability of achievements in the long term. As such, in order to ensure enhanced sustainability of processes, actors need to strengthen the capacities of countries to respond to particular challenges related to fragility. The international community should enhance support for local actors to drive their own peacebuilding processes, ensuring that responses are not only context specific, but that they increase capacity to design and implement long-term peacebuilding processes. In that context, capacity building¹⁶ must be directly linked to efforts aimed at enhancing institutional capacities to respond to challenges, particularly those related to the work

and impact of the public sector. This requires that international actors redefine their approaches to capacity building, so that stakeholders can better identify and initiate relevant and context-specific responses.

International actors should also be conscious of incremental progress coming out of interventions. Progress will not occur in a linear manner and methods which measure progress by only looking at signs of positive outcomes and impact run the risk of missing important signs that can forewarn of unintended consequences, negative side effects and other setbacks. For instance, political stability may encourage economic growth, but because social and economic dynamics will always outpace the development of institutions, such changes may also go hand in hand with increased corruption, crime and other social ills. Positive developments will thus not only generate further beneficial outcomes, but also some negative ones.

Conversely, while negative aspects need to be addressed, they do not necessarily signal only negative trends. In fact, some developments may be indicative of social change and economic growth and can be viewed as a necessary or normal – but not desirable – side effect of the normalisation of a society emerging from a closed political and economic system. Thus, considering such indicators only from a negative trend perspective may result in missing their significance as indicators of necessary and healthy systemic feedback that should, in response, stimulate the development of local laws, institutions and initiatives to support the management of social ills such as corruption and crime that may manifest in unique ways in a particular society.

Recommendations to external peacebuilding actors

When dealing with the issues discussed, it is important that the international community contributes to the development of an approach that is sensitive to the experiences and needs of fragile countries. It may also improve the responsiveness of partners and countries to country- and region-specific challenges, strengthening relationships between different actors. The following table contains more specific recommendations, related to suggestions made earlier in this brief, which aim to assist external actors when designing interventions and engaging in fragile countries. These recommendations may also be useful for application when designing sector specific responses.

Aim	Recommendations for external actors and entities
Stimulate the emergence of local social institutions	<p>International actors should focus on stimulating the development of local social institutions so that resident stakeholders and actors develop the resilience necessary to address and manage context specific tensions in a sustainable way</p> <p>Avoid developing and implementing projects that merely replace local capacities. This is important not only in the implementation phase, but particularly in the design of initiatives (e.g. mapping exercises that are developed through application of local knowledge and led by locals themselves)</p>
Implement capacity building to develop sustainable local institutions and capacities	<p>Focus on countries' institutional capacities, at both national and community level, to stimulate the development of local human capacities and collective social institutions, so that societies are better able to manage social change</p> <p>Shift focus to implementation of effective capacity building initiatives by running longer-term processes that include mentoring and coaching of local and national actors, as opposed to activities such as training workshops and meetings.</p> <p>Encourage closer interaction among individuals and foreground the importance of supporting the development of institutional structures</p>
Encourage understanding of complexities inherent in peacebuilding	<p>Support initiatives that adopt a long-term approach to peacebuilding, with particular reference to approaches developed under fragility spectrums conducted by g7+ countries as these will contribute to understanding of the peacebuilding environment as a complex and long-term process</p>
Harmonise multiple frameworks and enhance coordination between external actors	<p>The creation of a common strategic framework, compact or vision for what a particular country wishes to achieve is a key step in the achievement of coherence, particularly as this supports initiation and utilisation of coordinated mechanisms that reinforce wider interests</p> <p>The development of compacts under the New Deal can also provide international development actors with important opportunities to support the development of common visions. The identification of common areas of convergence with other African organisations, the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), among others, would contribute to efforts which aim to achieve and support coherence, coordination and effectiveness</p> <p>There is potential in the development of the AU's African Solidarity Initiative (ASI) to allow the international community to further convergence with other continental actors. In turn, this will increase the AU's role in peacebuilding. It may also increase support for African views and initiatives and allow for greater focus on enhancing ownership of context-specific responses initiated</p>
Enhance tracking and measuring of progress	<p>Pay attention to ensuring that peacebuilding timeframes are realistic and that they allow incremental progress to be identified. This will enable actors to better plan their actions, while avoiding frustrations as a result of unrealistic expectations</p> <p>Provide more support for countries to better manage risk, including through identification and management of setbacks and unanticipated challenges</p> <p>Develop country-specific progress indicators as these help stakeholders to track and speed up progress in cross-cutting areas</p>
Better understanding of international and regional dimensions of fragility	<p>Invest in research and programmes that explore the impact of international and regional influences on state fragility and come up with solutions on how to mitigate and counter these external effects. This knowledge will also support development of context specific responses and increase accountability of external actors</p>
Raise awareness of the importance of utilising local and context specific approaches	<p>A shift in thinking among external and internal actors is necessary if impact is to be increased. Whilst 'ownership' discussions are prevalent in peacebuilding, the rhetoric advocating for support of local ownership of processes is often challenged by the reality of the practices and methods used by external actors. Stakeholders should thus support efforts that raise awareness of the importance of utilising context-specific approaches</p>

<p>Encourage understanding of fragility as a concept beyond 'fragile countries'</p>	<p>Fragility as a concept should not only be utilised in countries that are considered fragile. Fragility is not only about national classification; countries experience different levels and degrees of fragility over time. In general, policies and responses should be broadened and include an appreciation that fragility might occur in broader settings than in countries identified as unstable. This would enable relevant actors to view fragility as part of a wider context that transcends country classification</p>
<p>Achieve greater flexibility in developing approaches and take into consideration the particular needs of marginalised groups</p>	<p>In order to create a stronger enabling environment for peacebuilding, international development actors need to identify more effective ways of meeting the peacebuilding needs of particular stakeholders, including young people, women and marginalised groups</p> <p>Actors should also be ready and able to provide more creative and flexible responses to challenges experienced in fragile states. While risk management should be maintained in approaches and interventions, providing more creative and flexible responses is necessary to enable actors to reach out to specific groups and communities and to ensure that development initiatives benefit their target countries</p> <p>In this context, flexibility does not necessarily mean increasing risks, but that international development actors should be able to provide responses that are more adaptive to local contexts and needs</p>

Conclusion

This brief argued that there are several different conditions that support the creation of an enabling environment for peacebuilding. The highly dynamic nature of peacebuilding means that investing in such an environment needs to be based on a long-term approach, where planning recognises the complexity and non-linearity of crises and dynamics. Often, the linear approach prevails and peacebuilders should be aware that processes need to be implemented by a multiplicity of actors and sectors and that they involve many dimensions, spanning the peace and development spectrum. Peacebuilding operates within contexts of varying degrees of vulnerability and fragility and countries need to self-identify the key impediments that challenge development and operationalisation of their social institutions. It has been argued that the risk of fragility can be gradually reduced as local social institutions develop and improve their ability to cope with the various threats they are exposed to.

Institutions adapt to changes in their environments, based on positive and negative feedback received. Excessive external interference can thus inhibit a society's ability to learn and deal with such problems.¹⁷ External actors should develop their approaches based on the assumption that peacebuilding is in desperate need of more realistic planning, greater frankness about the uncertainties and risks involved and greater awareness of the incremental progress, and occasional setbacks, societies are likely to experience in transitioning from fragility to resilience.¹⁸ An approach such as

this would contribute to external actors being better capable of identifying needs and opportunities for contributing to the development of peacebuilding approaches.

Endnotes

- 1 This PPB is based on a background paper developed for presentation at the African Development Bank (AfDB) High Level Panel on Fragility by Vasu Gounden, Founder and Executive Director of ACCORD. A number of ACCORD staff members, particularly those from the African Peacebuilding Coordination Programme (APCP), contributed to content in the paper. In particular, the authors would like to acknowledge ACCORD staff members Priyal Singh, Daniel Forti and Abu Sherif for their input.
- 2 The 2011 World Development Report defines institutions as the formal and informal 'rules of the game', which include formal rules, written laws, organisations, informal norms of behaviour and shared beliefs – as well as the organisational forms that exist to implement and enforce these norms. World Bank. 2011. World Development Report 2011: Conflict, security and development. *World Bank*. Washington, D.C., World Bank. p. 41. Available from: <<http://go.worldbank.org/1BOIJMD8H0>> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 3 Boutros-Ghali, B. 1992. An agenda for peace. *United Nations*. New York, United Nations. Available from: <<http://www.un-documents.net/a47-277.htm>> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 4 African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. 2013. *ACCORD Peacebuilding Handbook*. African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. Durban, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. p. 41. Available from: <<http://www.accord.org.za/our-work/peacebuilding/peacebuilding-handbook>> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 5 Ibid. p. 37.
- 6 Mcloughlin, C. 2009. Topic guide on fragile states. *Governance and Social Development Resource Centre*. Birmingham, University of Birmingham. p. 4. Available from: <<http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/con86.pdf>> [Accessed 6 February 2014].

- 7 The New Deal is an agreement between fragile states and partners which aims to achieve changes in policy and practice of engaging in fragile countries. For more information visit <http://www.newdeal4peace.org/>
- 8 A group of self-identified fragile countries composed of: Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Togo.
- 9 g7+ (2013) *Fragility Spectrum Note* <http://www.g7plus.org/s/06112013-English-Fragility-Spectrum-Note.pdf>, accessed on 24 February 2014.
- 10 de Coning, C. 2013. Complexity theory and the local in peacebuilding. *Local First Blog*, 30 May. Available from: <<http://www.localfirst.org.uk/2013/05/complexity-theory-and-the-local-in-peacebuilding/>> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 11 de Coning, C. 2013. Understanding peacebuilding as essentially local. *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, 2, (1). Available from: <<http://www.stabilityjournal.org/article/view/sta.as>> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Kaplan, S. D. 2008. *Fixing fragile states: A new paradigm for development*. Connecticut, Praeger Security International.
- 14 United Nations. 2013. A new global partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development: The report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. *United Nations*. p. 9. Available from: <http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 15 UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. 2012. Peace and security thematic think piece. *United Nations*. p. 3. Available from: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/peace_and_security.pdf> [Accessed 6 February 2014].
- 16 While there are several definitions, capacity building in this context refers to a wide range of processes through which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to: (i) perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives and (ii) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and sustainable manner. Concept used from: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. 2006. Chapter 3: Capacity building. In: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *UNESCO Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction*. Paris, International Institute for Educational Planning. Available from: <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Research_Highlights_Emergencies/chapter3.pdf> [Accessed 11 February 2014].
- 17 UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. 2012. op. cit.
- 18 Ibid.

The Authors *Gustavo de Carvalho* is Coordinator of ACCORD's Peacebuilding Unit. De Carvalho leads the coordination and implementation of all Peacebuilding Unit initiatives, which revolve around a focus on training, support for policy development and research at the local, regional and international levels. De Carvalho holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the University of Brasília and a Master of Science degree in African Studies from the University of Oxford, UK.

Cedric de Coning is Advisor for ACCORD's Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Units and Head of Peace Operations and Peacebuilding at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). He is also a special advisor to the Head of the AU's Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) and has been appointed by the UN Secretary-General to the UN Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Board. De Coning served as a South African diplomat in Washington D.C., United States of America and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as an election observer with the AU in Ethiopia, Sudan and Algeria, and as a civilian peacekeeper with the UN in Timor Leste and New York. He holds a PhD from the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Lesley Connolly is the Programme Officer in the Peacebuilding Unit at ACCORD. Connolly holds an M.Phil degree in Social Justice from the University of Cape Town in South Africa. She also holds a B.Soc.Sci in Political Science, Sociology and History and a B.Soc.Sci (Honours) in Transitional Justice, both from the University of Cape Town. Her areas of interest include peace and security issues in southern Africa.

ACCORD is a non-governmental, non-aligned conflict resolution institution based in Durban, South Africa. Produced by ACCORD, the Policy & Practice Briefs are managed and coordinated by ACCORD's Knowledge Production Department (KPD). The role of KPD is to establish ACCORD as a positive and constructive learning organisation that enhances theory, policy and practice in the field of conflict management. The department's activities and outputs are aimed at promoting effective and sustainable peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa and beyond. All ACCORD publications, including research reports, the *Conflict Trends* magazine and the *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, can be downloaded at no charge from our website.

Policy & Practice Briefs aim to provide succinct, rigorous and accessible recommendations to policy makers and practitioners and to stimulate informed and relevant debate to promote dialogue as a way to peacefully resolve conflict. Each issue draws on field research or the outcomes of thematic events, with analysis underpinned by rigorous research, academic theory and methods.

Subscribe to receive e-mail alerts or copies of ACCORD's publications by sending an e-mail to publications@accord.org.za

Copyright © 2014 ACCORD. Short extracts from this publication may be reproduced unaltered without authorisation on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to ACCORD. Views expressed in this publication are the responsibility of the individual author(s) and not of ACCORD.

ACCORD, Private Bag X018, Umhlanga Rocks 4320, South Africa,

Tel: +27 (0)31 502 3908, Fax: +27 (0)31 502 4160

Email: info@accord.org.za Website: www.accord.org.za

