DeLoG Joint Learning Event on
"Local Governance and Sustaining Peace"
12-15 March 2019, Brussels

Organized under the lead of UNDP, UNICEF and SDC,
hosted by Enabel.

I. Background and Justification

Over 1.6 billion people, or 22 percent of the global population, live in fragile or conflict-affected settings.[1] 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.[2] 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.[3] 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.[4]

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*".[5] 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, extreme inequalities, high level of inter-group animosities, political tensions, communal violence and soaring criminality, not to mention cases where full-scale civil wars have returned.[6] Echoing SDGs and the 2030 Agenda on peace, the UN Resolution 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.

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

[2] 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).

[3] World Bank (2011), World Development Report 2011. https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf

[4] OECD (2016)

[5] UN (2016), *Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016)*, p.1

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

Another outcome of the redefinition of global policies towards peace and development,[7] is a push to take a 'local turn' and support local conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes. This comes also as a recognition that attempts to rebuild state authority in fragmented societies from the central level out have at times actually lead to a deepening of conflict.[8] The rationale underpinning this "local turn" is that local governance is inherently where the state intersects with society and the point at which national policies meet local aspirations: it provides a better avenue to demonstrate to conflict-affected societies the value of inclusive governance for peace and development than the national governance level does. According to this thinking, the 'local' remains a crucial entry point to (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, for achieving the Agenda 2030, including local governments, which have been often neglected in the aftermath of conflict. The collection of works from the Doing Development Differently community[9] 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.

Yet, despite this welcome recognition in global policy that peacebuilding must also, and increasingly, start from the bottom up, resources allotted to local governance programming in fragile and conflict-affected settings, whether from domestic budgets or ODA, remains lower than in mainstream developing countries.[10] This timid shift of financial resources directly to the local level shows different things. First, that it remains complex conceptually and operationally to work at the local level in fragile settings; second, that there are high risks associated with increasing support to the local level in such contexts, not least from a safety and security perspective but as well as fiduciary; and third that there remains important policy questioning as to what it means going 'local' for sustaining peace, how it can work best and what it can actually deliver – or not. There are tensions between different approaches, some promoting institution-centred vs. community-focused 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 alongside the formal state. In fact, many of the postulates behind the shift to a local approach to sustaining peace are still to credibly verified across a variety of contexts and programmes privileging the local level in fragile and conflict-affected settings need to be built on a deeper understanding of several critical mechanisms, in particular of the role of state legitimacy in sustaining peace and how state-society relations at the local level can help rebuild it.

With so many remaining questions and different approaches followed across the donor community, including among DeLoG partners, it is important to regularly take the time to unpack some of the commonly accepted concepts behind the "local turn" to sustaining peace

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[7] 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.

[8] EBA (2017), *Local Peacebuilding – Challenges and Opportunities*. Stockholm.

[9] http://doingdevelopmentdifferently.com/

[10] UNDP (2016), *Guide on Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States*, p. 15.

and explore the different approaches found on the ground and what they actually deliver. This is what this DeLoG Joint Leaning Event is aiming to do.

II. Thematic Outline of the Course

1) Aim, scope and objectives

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

Building upon a few case studies, the Course will discuss the nexus between local governance and sustaining peace from a conceptual as well as programmatic point of view. The role of local governance in strengthening service delivery (for social and economic needs), social cohesion and ultimately state legitimacy in fragile and conflict-affected settings[11] within an integrated and conflict-sensitive approach, will be prioritized. The Course will discuss approaches and tools for better analyzing local governance contexts, for fomenting inclusive local multi-stakeholder coalitions, for building systems and capacities for conflict-sensitive local decision-making and for monitoring more strategically the impact of programmes. Also, different types of fragile and violent contexts will be explored.

The proposed objectives for the JLE course are as follows:
- 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: (i) the role of localized service delivery for supporting the social and economic recovery of conflict-affected livelihoods in rebuilding state legitimacy; and (ii) the ways in which inclusive local governance can help restore social cohesion.
- to familiarize participants with different programmatic tools for local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings;
- 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.

2) Thematic content:

The Course will be divided into three thematic sessions as follows:
1. Overview of the local governance and sustaining peace nexus
2. Local governance for service delivery
3. Local governance for social cohesion

Compared to 2018 Course, JLE partners have decided not to have a dedicated session on local governance & local economic development, due to time constraints, but the role of local governments in helping economic recovery and livelihoods of conflict-affected societies (e.g. job programmes, social welfare payments) will be considered under "service delivery".

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[11] 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.

For each session, concepts, lessons learned, and challenges will be explored building upon evidence gathered from academic research and empirical programme-based case studies. Overall, the key questions guiding the learning process proposed in this Course are listed below.

- How can our actions in support of local governance contribute to overcome fragility and conflict?
- How are our actions in support of local governance affected by situations of fragility and conflict?
- How can we measure better the impact of our actions in support of local governance on reducing sustainably fragility and conflict?

The roles of women and youth in the transformation of local governance, and the many challenges they face in doing so, will be addressed throughout the three sessions. Also, whenever possible, the specific case of migrant-hosting communities and the wider impact of migration on local governance, will also be discussed.

In the Training Plan that will follow this Inception Report, a set of specific learning objectives and key understandings will be defined for each thematic session. Below are short presentations of the proposed content for each session.

1. The local governance & sustaining peace nexus:

In this session, participants will be given the opportunity to unpack the assumption that *the transformation of* local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings can contribute to building sustainable peace and explore the different challenges facing it. This assumption basically states that transforming local governance (towards a more inclusive, accountable and responsive model) can help to (i) extend the presence, authority and protection of the state 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 some drivers of conflict and violence by strengthening social cohesion and supporting the inherent resilience capacities of local communities.[12]

Specific questions to be discussed in this session: When are local government structures the most appropriate vehicle for establishing a local process of peacebuilding – and when are they less preferable than other options? Is the capacity for peace inherently found in local societies and their traditional structures and how can it benefit to/from national peacebuilding dynamics? What does comparative experience tell us about the importance of phasing the transformation of local governance systems within a national peacebuilding trajectory?

2. Local governance for service delivery:

In this session, participants will discuss the pros and cons of entrusting local governance actors, and first among them local governments, with service delivery functions in fragile and conflict-affected settings. They will reflect on how the localization of service delivery can contribute to building state legitimacy and how it can be done with a conflict-sensitive lens. The session will consider service delivery through a wide angle as being the state-organized provision of goods and services to the wider public in order to meet a range of human needs (security, justice, shelter, education, health, jobs, etc.).

Specific questions for discussion: Is improving service delivery sufficient to restore trust in the state? How far does the involvement of local actors accelerate or challenge this process of legitimacy-building? Which services are most indicated for localization in fragile and conflict-affected contexts considering the peacebuilding imperative? What are the relative merits of

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12 UNDP (2016), *Guide on Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States.*

deconcentration vs. devolution in service delivery in such contexts? What can help accelerate capacity building for service delivery at the local level in resource-depleted contexts?

3. *Local governance for social cohesion*:

In this session, participants will discuss the opportunities and risks to rebuild social cohesion in fragile and conflict-affected societies through greater empowerment of local governance systems. Different contexts will be considered, such as violent urban quarters, ethnically diverse post-conflict rural areas and refugee host communities. Participants 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, 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 to rebuild social cohesion and will make recommendations on how to better support social cohesion through development programmes.

<u>Specific questions for discussion</u>: How does social cohesion impact on peace and development in local contexts? What tools and approaches can local governments use to achieve social cohesion and what are examples of relevant programmes? Are local governments necessarily well placed to reduce inequalities and social exclusion, and why? How far can social cohesion at community level become resilient against higher-level shocks (e.g. major political crises, ethnic strife, disasters, migration, etc.)?

III.   Participants & Presenters

Participants

In total, 30 slots have been awarded for the Course on a selective basis. The application period closes on January 16th, 2019. The final selection of participants will be conducted by the JLE partners, aiming to fulfill the following conditions:

- At least 5 years of experience with local governance in fragile settings
- Gender balance (50/50)
- Minimum of 2/3 programme staff and 1/3 policy staff
- Balanced geographical distribution
- Not more than 7 participants per any agency

Presenters

- **Facilitators / Presenters:** Nicolas Garrigue (Thematic Course Coordinator) and Noel Matthews (Methodological Facilitator).
- **Experts:** a total of 3 academic experts are slated for the course for the following topics:
    - Local governance for service delivery: still to be identified
    - Local governance for social cohesion: still to be identified
    - Urban governance and sustaining peace: still to be identified
- **Case Study presenters**
  Tbc

Please contact Lea Flaspoehler (<u>lea.flaspoehler@giz.de</u>) from the DeLoG Secretariat for any questions.