



Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting

Peace and Security in the Post-2015 Framework: What Role for Civil Society in influencing and implementing?

Thursday 28 November 2013, Brussels

Introduction

Throughout 2013, the main item on the international development agenda has been the framework which will replace the Millennium Development Goals when they expire in 2015. EPLO's member organisations and other peacebuilding civil society organisations (CSOs) have been and continue to be engaged in trying to ensure that peace and human security (i.e. the security of people) are included in the new framework.

There is widespread agreement that the process for establishing the post-2015 framework should be as inclusive as possible. Civil society has a clear role to play in this regard. Furthermore, if – as seems likely – the issue of accountability will be central to the new framework, effective civil society involvement will be vital to ensure that commitments on peace, human security, gender equality, governance etc. are fully implemented.

The aims of this Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) policy meeting were to identify (1) the types of civil society organisations (CSOs) whose participation in discussions on the post-2015 framework should be ensured and how the EU and European CSOs can help to contribute to promoting such participation; and (2) possible strategies and points for advocacy for the EU and European CSOs to ensure effective civil society participation in the implementation of the framework.

The meeting brought together representatives of European CSOs, officials from both the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS), representatives of EU Member States' national administrations and officials from a number of international organisations.

This report is a summary of the discussion and the key recommendations made by participants during the meeting, which was held under the Chatham House Rule. No opinion expressed here may be attributed to any participating individual or institution, nor necessarily represents the views of EPLO or its member organisations. For more information about this CSDN meeting, please contact Ben Moore at EPLO (E-mail: bmoore@eplo.org).

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a three-year project co-financed by the European Union (Instrument for Stability) and aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and EU policy-makers. It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), in co-operation with the European Commission and the European External Action Service. For more information please visit the [EPLO website](#).

Welcome

The moderator reminded participants about EPLO's ongoing advocacy focused on the EU on the post-2015 framework, including its recent statement entitled '[Putting Peacebuilding at the Heart of the Post-2015 Framework](#)'.

The EC presented its communication on the post-2015 framework entitled '[A Decent Life for All: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future](#)' and posed two questions: (1) Where can the new framework make a difference? / Which topic should we operationalise? and (2) How can we build consensus?

The EEAS presented its ongoing work on the next EU multiannual financial framework (2014-2020) and joint EU-EU Member State programming, provided an update on the planned joint EC-EEAS communication on the EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and repeated the question which had been posed by the EEAS: How can the EU build consensus?

Session 1: Ensuring that peace and security are included in the post-2015 framework: The role of civil society

The focus of the first session was on the role of civil society in ensuring that peace and security are included in the post-2015 framework.

Participants made the following points:

Process

- Up to now, there has been substantial consultation (e.g. High-level Panel, UN Task Team thematic consultations, UN 'global conversations' etc.) and the issues of governance, human rights and peace have featured strongly.¹
- The next stages in the process will be very state-centric.
- The eighth session of the Open Working Group (OWG) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will take place in February 2014, will cover *inter alia* 'Conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and the promotion of durable peace, rule of law and governance'. The UN system has been asked to contribute to the OWG discussions by investigating ways of measuring progress on these issues and has developed a set of 15 indicators on conflict (e.g. violent deaths, social cohesion and inequality), rule of law (e.g. national identity, capacities of judicial systems, and women's property and business rights), and governance (e.g. corruption, transparency, participatory politics, freedom of expression and social accountability).
- The President of UN General Assembly is holding a series of thematic events, one of which will be on conflict and fragility.
- The ongoing debates in Africa, including in the African Union, will be very important given the importance of African countries in the G77.

Challenges

- Despite the consensus which appears to exist in Europe about the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework, the discussions which took place during the UN summit in September indicate that there is opposition from certain UN Member States (MS), including from the Group of 77 developing countries (G77) to the inclusion of references to peace, security, human rights, access to justice, legitimate political institutions etc. in the outcome document.

¹ See <http://www.myworld2015.org/?page=results>

- The fact that the Experts Committee on Financing is working parallel to but separate from the OWG poses a risk that there could be a proposal for a financial framework which does not match the political framework.
- There is an ongoing debate about how to make the case for the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework without being accused of pursuing a neo-colonial agenda.
- A major challenge for European CSOs is to ensure that voices from actors in developing countries continue to be heard.
- The early debate focused on ‘peace goal versus no peace goal’ then the High-level Panel report proposed goals on peace and governance.² However, it remains a controversial issue.
- The EU Member States, the OECD Member States, the members of the group of conflict-affected countries (g7+), some African countries, Guatemala and Lebanon all support the inclusion of peace and security in the post-2015 framework but the rest of the G77 are mostly unsupportive.
- A major challenge, even among those people who support the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework, including some of those who have been involved in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS)³ and the work on implementing the New Deal for Engagement with Fragile States,⁴ have not fully resolved the dilemma of addressing issues which have so far been defined as specific challenges for countries in situations of conflict and/or fragility as part of a universal framework.
- The sensitivity surrounding the topic is reflected in the outcome document from the UN summit in September which refers to ‘special challenges’ and groups ‘conflict and post-conflict countries’ small island developing states, landlocked developing countries etc. as special cases.
- There is no natural constituency to support the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework. Even those countries which are broadly supportive have not demonstrated the extent to which they will support it in the context of a universal agenda.
- A key challenge is in articulating the link between peace and conflict, and environmental sustainability
- There was a big debate regarding the UN summit outcome document: future framework for development vs future framework for environment. This will most likely be reflected in future debates: development assistance versus climate financing.

Opportunities

- It is very hard for the governments of developing countries to argue that the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework is a developed country agenda when so many CSOs in developing countries are also asking for it.
- Peace and security are not “niche topics”; they are central to development effectiveness.
- It is very useful to discuss indicators to counter arguments that issues such as peace and security cannot be measured
- A lot of work on indicators has already been undertaken in the framework of the IDPS.
- It may be possible to build consensus on the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework by focusing on tangible issues such as homicide rates and numbers of child soldiers and internally displaced persons etc.

Participants also made the following recommendations:

To all actors

² See <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf>

³ See <http://www.pbsbdialogue.org/>

⁴ See <http://www.pbsbdialogue.org/documentupload/49151944.pdf>

- Invest in building the necessary infrastructure of data collection in order to monitor and support whatever UN MS agree to measure (e.g. global commitment to investment in collection of independent data on number of violent deaths).
- Build on the work which was already been done on the need to reduce inequality.
- Commit to building inclusive transparent and accountable institutions at all levels.
- Try to broaden the coalition of developing countries which are supporting the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework.
- Aim to achieve consensus on the political priorities before working on indicators.
- The new framework should include binding commitments.
- The new framework will not be international law. Therefore, it should not be legally-binding.
- Map CSOs in developing countries continuously in order to ensure that new voices are included in the ongoing discussions on the new framework.
- Ensure that the two discussions which appear to be ongoing (1. impact of peace and security on sustainable development versus 2. G77 fragile states agenda) are integrated.

To CSOs specifically

- Join the Beyond2015 campaign.⁵
- Make common cause with the gender equality community in order to ensure that peace and conflict, and gender issues are addressed together.
- Go beyond 'preaching to the converted' and mobilise a global constituency to ensure targets on peace, access to justice, human rights, the prevention of violence etc.
- Listen to and act upon the views expressed by CSOs in developing countries in order to ensure that the issues that European and other CSOs have identified as important really correspond to their concerns.
- Mobilise constituencies in those countries which are likely to be 'spoilers' in order to push important issues.
- Make a link between conflict violence and sustainability: engage with big global CSOs which work on issues such as food security, environmental sustainability, climate change, poverty eradication etc.
- Monitor other events which are not directly linked to the negotiations on the post-2015 framework (e.g. meetings of the group of 20 leading economies (G20))
- Refer back to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development⁶, particularly Principle 24 (Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development. States shall therefore respect) and Principle 25 (Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible) in advocacy.
- Link to other organisations and platforms which are working on issues such as gender, humanitarian assistance, governance, corruption, illicit financial flows etc.
- Activate the private sector to engage in the debate on the new framework.
- Remember the common origins of the peace and environmental sectors and reach out to environmental organisations.
- Exploit the capacities of multimandate CSOs and national platforms in EU Member States.
- Engage with the EC's Directorate-General for the Environment.

Session 2: Peace and security in the post-2015 framework: Implementation

⁵ See http://prezi.com/1atf1hrnmzlp/post2015-chris-underwood/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy

⁶ See <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm>

The focus of the second session was on the role of civil society in the implementation of peace and security in the new framework (based on the assumption that those issues are indeed included).

Participants raised the following issues:

Role of the EU

- The EU is currently programming its development assistance for the period up to 2020. It is trying to ensure that it is conflict-sensitive and that it tackles the root causes of conflict in the partner countries.
- The EU is also developing a staff handbook for operating in situations of conflict and fragility

Challenges

- The following questions regarding the role of CSOs are raised often: Who are CSOs in conflict-affected countries? What is their outreach? How can they shape political processes?
- Regarding service delivery, the transition from donors to the governments of partner countries is crucial. How can local capacity be built and what role can CSOs play to support it?
- Discussions about the post-2015 framework seem very remote for CSOs in developing countries.
- The New Deal represents a serious effort to ensure mutual accountability between donors, developing country governments and CSOs. However, there is a lot of disenchantment about its implementation due to a perceived diminution in the political commitment of the governments of some G7+ countries.
- The participation of CSOs in the implementation of the New Deal commitments varies from country to country depending on governments' willingness to implement the inclusiveness principles and CSOs' capacities to engage in the processes.
- It is not easy to organise CSOs. Since there is no single civil society voice it is necessary to engage in processes even though they can be difficult and time-consuming.
- A key challenge faced by CSOs is to avoid being swamped in a highly technical debate.
- There seems to be a view that capacity building is required in order to increase the participation of CSOs from conflict-affected countries. This is based on the false assumptions that they lack capacity to work on governance issues and that international CSOs both have the relevant knowledge and are able transfer it to them.
- Regarding New Deal compacts, it seems that too much attention has been paid to building the capacities of states and not enough to building the capacities of CSOs to hold their governments to account.
- CSOs have a role to play in ensuring people's security. However, it seems that New Deal compacts are slipping towards the state security end of the security spectrum. This has implications for the debates on the inclusion of security in the post-2015 framework as it raises concerns about the securitisation of aid etc.
- CSOs are highly fragmented. They do not co-operate with each other or with donors. It is, therefore, extremely difficult for donors to engage with them.

Opportunities

- The negotiations on the post-2015 framework could be influenced by demonstrating positive results of the implementation of the New Deal.
- Many aspects of the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) are embedded in the High-level Panel report.

- CSOs have key roles to play in the implementation of the New Deal, including monitoring results, implementing peace and security commitments, ensuring consistency between countries, capacity building and mapping existing capacities within countries.
- Are CSOs willing to engage the private sector, especially those private sector actors who are active in countries which are in situations of fragility and/or conflict?
- The Capacity4dev⁷ online knowledge sharing platform could be a useful source of information.
- Human security is currently missing from the ongoing discussions but it is potentially the most convenient approach to the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework.
- If human security is integrated throughout the new framework, it could enable CSOs to play an important role in its implementation
- The discussions on setting and eventually implementing the new framework will be led by UN MS governments. However, CSOs could play an important role in ensuring that universal goals are translated into local realities.
- There is also a role for regional organisations, including the African Union (AU). Their effective involvement could help to counter the argument that the new framework is a developed country-imposed agenda.
- The debate about indicators is important as it helps to facilitate discussions about the nature of the outcomes towards which we are aiming: state security versus people's security.
- It may be possible to learn lessons from the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Civil society initiatives

- The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict and IKV Pax Christi⁸ have launched the Human Security First campaign⁹ in order to bring perspectives from local communities in developing countries into the discussion on the new framework.
- The CSO Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding was established in order to try to address the CSO capacity issue. It has been relatively successful in terms of enabling CSOs to access the negotiations on the New Deal implementation but it has not been sufficient and there has only been limited engagement of CSOs from countries which are in situations of fragility and/or conflict.
- The CSO Platform is a way of reducing the high transaction costs of CSO participation in debates about the implementation of the New Deal.
- The Human Security First campaign is trying to identify a number of human security 'champions'.
- It would be very interesting to hear the perspectives of environmental organisations on relevant processes. EPLO would be happy to host discussions in Brussels.
- CARE Nederland is considering commissioning a small piece of research on perceptions of security.
- The Human Security First campaign will organise a side event during the eighth session of the OWG on the SDGs in February 2014.
- Saferworld is focusing on the approaches taken by Brazil, China, India, South Africa and Turkey. It has undertaken a number of scoping visits and is planning to organise meetings in Brazil, China and South Africa.
- The Centre on International Cooperation is organising a number of meetings in New York.

Participants also made the following recommendations:

⁷ See <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/>

⁸ In February 2014, IKV Pax Christi changed its name to PAX.

⁹ See <http://www.humansecurityfirst.org/>

To all actors

- Provide financial support to CSOs from conflict-affected countries in order to facilitate their deeper involvement in discussions on the post-2015 framework we need to support them financially.
- Focus on armed violence reduction, including the EU-based causes of armed violence (i.e. 'external stresses').
- Consider the implementation of the new framework before it is agreed in order to repeat the mistake which was made with MDG 8 (Develop a global partnership for development).
- Try to ensure the deeper involvement of political parties and media organisations in developing countries in discussions about the new framework.

To CSOs

- Bridge the gap between the high-level, technical debates (which are dominated by actors from developed countries) and the demands of CSOs in developing countries.
- Advocate the inclusion of a peace and security goal in the new framework and support CSOs in developing countries to make the political case to their governments.
- Go into details about the nature of a peace and security goal and provide the space for people in countries which are in situations of fragility and/or conflict to discuss what security means for them
- Try to engage regional organisations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Organization of American States (OAS) in discussions on the new framework.
- Bear in mind the shrinking space for CSOs in some developing countries and the risks which CSOs face in trying to hold their governments to account.
- Improve coordination between CSOs.
- Identify what CSOs can do (1) between now and the eighth session of the OWG on the SDGs in February 2014; (2) between February and June 2014 (when the first draft of the OWG report should be sent to UN Member States); and in September 2014 (when the OWG report will be discussed). They also need to consider what they can do to influence the composition and the agenda of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.
- Start a dialogue between CSOs from the peace, development and environment sectors in order to establish a political narrative which can be reflected in the high-level political process.
- Document evidence of peace and security contributing to sustainable development and share it with UN Member States.
- Show that armed violence is an issue in both developed countries and developing countries.
- Try to make CSOs in developing countries aware of the importance of the new framework for the future of their funding.
- Share information about (1) sources of resistance to the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework and (2) issues which resonate with different actors; in order to inform our advocacy.
- Try to persuade a well-respected public figure to write an op-ed piece about peace and security advancing the sustainable development agenda.
- Join up the various CSO initiatives.
- Map different UN Member States' positions on the inclusion of peace and security in the new framework.

Conclusions

The moderator thanked participants for their contribution and reminded them that EPLO would continue to work on trying to influence the post-2015 framework in the coming months.

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