Participatory Dialogue:

Towards a Stable, Safe and Just Society for All

UNITED NATIONS

DESA

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Foreword

More than ten years ago, leaders of the world, gathered at the World Summit for Social Development, agreed to address emerging economic and social challenges on a global scale. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action established a new consensus on placing people at the centre of our concerns for development. Social integration was identified as one of the three overriding objectives of development, together with poverty eradication and employment creation. However, so far, in relation to the other two themes, this concept has not yet gained sufficient attentions it deserves.

Member States made a commitment to promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe, just and tolerant, and that respect diversity. Such an inclusive society—a society for all—is one in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play. **A society for all** must be equipped with appropriate mechanisms that enable their citizens to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives, and ultimately shape their common future. Participatory dialogue is an important policy tool that can offer a range of practical means, and, therefore, should be considered as part of building more cohesive societies, as well as building peace, including in post-conflict societies.

The present publication offers an overview of social integration and related concepts, explores the role and principles of participatory dialogue in creating more socially cohesive societies, and provides practical examples of dialogue use and dialogic tools. It also reviews global trends influencing social integration dynamics, and examines what elements are essential to creating societies that are resilient with respect to social tensions/disintegration.

In its efforts to follow-up on the commitments made at the Social Summit, the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has undertaken a series of activities, including exploring the potential of dialogue as a means to resolve conflict non-violently and transform societies so as to make them more inclusive and participatory, and by extension to further social cohesion and the creation of a “stable, safe and just society for all”. Towards this end, the Division has hosted activities, including an Expert Group Meeting and electronic dialogues, designed to engage a range of stakeholders and experts in sharing experiences and building collective knowledge.

This publication is not meant to deliver a final verdict on how to build socially integrative societies, but rather, to serve as a device for robust discussion and for returning social integration to the foreground of discourse on peace and development. Further, it is our hope that a wide range of actors, spanning, inter alia, policymakers, arbitrators, facilitators, peace activists, civil society representatives and others will be able to mine this document for insights, tools and ideas that will inspire, guide and enhance their initiatives towards creating a society for all.

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Executive Summary

The present report is the outcome of part of the work that the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has been undertaking to explore the potential role of participatory dialogue as a tool for facilitating social integration processes. It offers an overview of social integration and related concepts, explores the role and principles of participatory dialogue in creating more socially cohesive societies, and provides practical examples of dialogue use and dialogic tools.

Thus, the report covers a range of approaches to the subject of participatory dialogue for social integration, and is meant to satisfy a variety of readers' interests, ranging from conceptual explorations through normative thinking to practical tools and methodologies.

The World Summit for Social Development (the Social Summit) was held at Copenhagen in 1995 to forge agreement on social challenges and responses to them. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development established a new consensus on placing people at the centre of our concerns for sustainable development (see box for a synopsis of all relevant United Nations mandates). Member States committed themselves to promoting social integration to create "a society for all", through fostering inclusive societies that are stable, safe and just and that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people, including disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable groups and persons.

A society for all is one in which people play an active role in peace and development, engaging in socially integrative processes that are guided by the fundamental principles of seeking unity within diversity with social justice. Participatory dialogue is a key catalytic mechanism in such processes and should be part and parcel of building more cohesive societies.

Introducing the thinking behind social integration and its linkages to participatory dialogue includes clarifying terms and concepts that help to explain social integration as a process relevant to all societies. This process is highly complex, as it is multidimensional and dynamic and includes a wide range of diverse stakeholders. Social transformation processes spiral, continuously moving through different stages while building on previous stages. Social relations are in constant flux—from fragmentation, exclusion and polarization (formative stages) to coexistence, collaboration and cohesion (expansive stages).

It is argued that inclusion, participation and justice form the main ingredients of social integration, ideally bringing forth the active engagement of all citizens in building their common future. Dialogue is among the interventions necessary to bring about engagement and represents the shape that such engagement needs to take. In other words, dialogue processes should be an integral part of a compre-

hensive strategy of interventions towards social integration, and dialogue should be the method of interaction used in relation to other interventions such as healing, reconciliation, mediation, education, and policies and mechanisms for equality and equity, etc. It is evident that all stakeholders need to be included and need to take active and complementary roles in building more cohesive societies—government, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, and so on, with a particular emphasis on the participation of marginalized groups whose voices have not, or have hardly, been heard.

While measuring social integration is a complex and difficult undertaking, it can serve as a powerful tool in the process of building more cohesive societies, and preliminary thinking in this regard is presented, including consideration of developing a social integration index.

The report includes a number of examples of dialogic practices from around the world, illustrating the arguments made, and demonstrating global trends towards increased use of dialogue at local, national and international levels.

Conceptual thinking and analysis of both case examples and global trends form the basis of emerging principles of participatory dialogue for social integration. The report argues that such principles should be upheld in order for dialogue processes to be effective but that this has to be done in a highly flexible manner, ensuring that dialogue practices are appropriate to the context in which they are used and that all stakeholders assume ownership of the process.

The report also presents a range of practical tools and methodologies that fall under the broad umbrella of "participatory dialogue", serving purposes ranging from increasing mutual understanding through facilitating to create collective visions of the future to joint decision-making and collaborative action, as well as building skills and capacities. These tools represent merely a small number of examples from among the plethora of practices being used around the world, encompassing the traditional and modern as well as many hybrid forms.

The report finally offers conclusions and recommendations for actions, aiming to increase our understanding of participatory dialogue processes as well as to promote and support them, to be considered by United Nations entities, Member States, international donors and stakeholders within civil society and the private sector.

It is hoped that the report besides offering these explicit recommendations, will encourage readers to learn more about dialogue and explore ways to apply dialogic practices to building inclusive societies and fostering the active engagement of all in building a society for all. It is also meant to inspire innovation and experimentation in the various related programmes and projects in which readers are engaged at the local, national and international levels.

RELEVANT UNITED NATIONS MANDATES: A SYNOPSIS

- To live together in peace with one another as good neighbours (*Charter of the United Nations, signed on 26 June 1945*).
- To promote human rights (*the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on 10 December 1948*).
- To promote social integration, employment and poverty alleviation as interrelated objectives. In 1995, the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development established a new consensus on placing people at the centre of sustainable development efforts. The Member States committed themselves to promoting social integration to create "a society for all", through fostering inclusive societies that are stable, safe and just and that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons.[a]
- To promote a culture of peace (*General Assembly resolutions A and B 53/243, of 13 September 1999*): In 1999, the General Assembly resolved that "peace not only is the absence of conflict, but also requires a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation".[b]
- In 2000, in its five-year review of the Social Summit, the General Assembly, at its twenty-fourth special session, adopted resolution S-24/2 of 1 July 2000 on further initiatives for social development and resolved to further its commitment to promote social integration by strengthening mechanisms for the participation of all people, promoting cooperation and dialogue among all levels of government and civil society, strengthening the effectiveness of organizations and mechanisms working for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, and increasing the capability of United Nations bodies to promoting social integration in post conflict situations.[c]
- To reduce poverty (*the Millennium Development Goals, 2000 and ongoing*).
- In 2004, The World Urban Forum declared that "the current visible shift away from marginalization to consultation to participation, and the concurrent trend of promoting partnerships are positive developments which must be encouraged".
- To devise a strategy for change: a collective response to current opportunities and threats facing humanity.[d]
- To take action to promote a culture of peace and dialogue at the local, national, regional and international levels: On 16 September 2005, Member States, in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, reaffirmed their commitments to working towards a security consensus based on the recognition that many threats are interlinked, that development, peace and security, and human rights are all interconnected and mutually reinforcing, and that no State can best protect itself by acting entirely alone.[e] At the same time, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to creating a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic world and to undertaking concrete measures to continue finding ways to implement the outcome of the Millennium Summit and the other major United Nations conferences and summits, so as to provide multilateral solutions to problems in four areas: development; peace and collective security; human rights and the rule of law; and strengthening of the United Nations.[f]

- In 2005, regarding the *development agenda*, the Secretary-General in his annual report on the work of the organization, acknowledged that "the concept of social integration has yet to be fully incorporated" and that the "challenge is to ensure that the concept of social integration is at the centre of all (development) policies and to find practical ways and means of achieving a 'society for all' ".[g]

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[a] Copenhagen Declaration sect. C, commitment 4.

[b] Resolution 53/243 A, entitled "Declaration on a Culture of Peace", fourth perambulate para.

[c] See resolution S-24/2, annex, sect. III, commitment 4.

[d] See report of the Secretary-General of 21 March 2005 entitled "In large freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005 and Add. 1-3).

[e] See General Assembly resolution 60/1, para.72.

[f] Ibid, para. 16.

[g] Official Records of the GA, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/60/1), para. 103.

Introduction

In this report, ***dialogue*** is explored as a central mechanism within the social integration process. In turn, ***social integration*** is seen as central within the broad endeavours of peace, development and human rights, as outlined by consensus at the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995.

The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 1996), a key outcome of the Social Summit, contain a specific commitment to advancing social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe, just and tolerant and that respect diversity. As noted by the Secretary-General in his annual report on the work of the Organization in 2005, the Millennium Declaration also subsumes social integration in its synthesis of peace, security, development and human rights. While some progress has been made in such areas as accession to legal instruments, gaps still remain in addressing some important elements, such as ***overcoming exclusion, promoting inclusive institutions*** and ***promoting participation***. These are among the key elements of social integration processes. The challenge is to ensure that the concept of social integration is at the centre of all policies and to find practical means of achieving a society for all.[1]

Participatory dialogue is an important policy tool that can offer a range of practical means. It should become part and parcel of building more cohesive societies and building peace, including in post-conflict interventions. Such dialogue is based on and advances inclusion, participation, and justice, and enables the active engagement of all citizens in shaping their common future.

Dialogue is not a panacea: It does not replace justice, equity policies, inclusive education or any other key interventions towards social integration. Rather, it should be understood, and used, as one component of a comprehensive strategy towards inclusive and just societies. Within a social integration strategy, dialogue complements, enables, and enhances other interventions. It helps to weave a stronger fabric of social relations, thus building social capital.

The present focus on participatory dialogue is guided by current United Nations efforts to build a more comprehensive, integrated approach to peacebuilding, development and human rights. Within that wider effort, the current report is the result of several activities that the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations has been undertaking through the convening of a wide range of stakeholders and experts to complement its own desktop research activities.

All societies may experience disruption and conflict, and all societies have developed tools and mechanisms to resolve conflict and (re-)build unity. Hence, we find examples and traditions of social integration, both spontaneous

and deliberate in all cultures throughout human history. The present report contains examples of such traditions and experiences, including pertinent mechanisms and tools, from all over the world. These are meant to serve as inspiration toward building on and enhancing one's own traditional tools and mechanisms, through adapting and tailoring those that have developed in other cultures, or in more recent years.

The costs of inaction

The present report argues that investing in social integration processes can yield a number of important societal benefits. In contrast, a lack of investment in social integration processes implies risks and missed opportunities in terms of economic development, peace and security. Risks may include:

- Growing tensions and violent conflict due to rapid socio-economic transitions with growing inequities
- Increasing public expenditure due to lack of solidarity among private networks and low levels of voluntary engagement
- A decrease of status in the international community

Missed opportunities may include:

- Underuse of human resources in the labour market due to social exclusion
- Less creative societal problem-solving when new development challenges are being faced

Socially more cohesive societies that develop a democratic culture of dialogue are more resilient to challenges and more likely to develop peacefully and equitably.

Contents of this report

This report offers an overview of social integration and related concepts, explores the role of participatory dialogue in creating more socially cohesive societies and provides practical examples of dialogue and dialogic tools.

Chapter 1 aims to introduce the concept of social integration and its linkages to participatory dialogue. It presents relevant terms and concepts and offers frameworks for thinking about social integration and social relations and their development. It also considers three main building blocks of social integration: inclusion, participation and justice as main ingredients; useful interventions that can form a comprehensive strategy for transforming societies into more peaceful, stable and just ones; and the wide range of stakeholders who need to play their parts in that transformation. The chapter also discusses the linkages of social integration with peace and development, and offers suggestions regarding the measurement of social integration.

Chapter 2 looks more closely at the linkages between participatory dialogue and social integration and tracks global trends that show an increase in the use of dialogue in various contexts. The main goal of the chapter is to outline the principles on which participatory dialogue processes need to be based in order to successfully contribute to building more peaceful, stable and just societies.

Chapter 3 turns to the practical tools and methodologies that fall under the broad umbrella of "participatory dialogue" which encompass the traditional and the modern as well as many hybrid forms. The chapter discusses the different purposes that participatory dialogue may serve, from increasing mutual understanding through facilitating collective visions of the future to joint decision-making and collaborative action, as well as capacity-building within communities at different levels. The chapter also offers a number of examples of tools and methodologies that can be copied, adapted and used flexibly in accordance with the basic principles of participatory dialogue.

Chapter 4 provides conclusions and offers recommendations for United Nations entities, Member States, international donors and stakeholders within civil society and the private sector. The recommendations are meant to offer ideas for possible action that could increase our understanding of dialogue, promote its use and support its practice at all levels.

The ***Annexes*** provide further materials, including a checklist for designers of multi-stakeholder processes (annex I), overviews of methodologies and tools for participatory dialogue (annex II), a glossary of key terms (annex III), and detailed references and resources (annex IV).

Altogether, the present report covers a range of approaches to promoting social integration through participatory dialogue by elaborating on: conceptualizations of the main elements of social integration, its interventions and stakeholders; social relations and their development; normative thinking about principles underpinning successful dialogue processes; and practical tools and methodologies. Different readers may be interested in particular approaches to understanding and practising dialogue, and may focus on individual chapters. For example, those familiar with the conceptual thinking behind social integration and the principles of participatory dialogue may turn their attention to the description of practical tools (chap. 3) and may, it is hoped, inspire others to experiment with one or more methodologies in the development of practical action.

[1] See United Nations (2005), para. 103.

Chapter 1. Social Integration: A Concept for building a safe, stable and just society for all

Social Integration: The Concept and Guiding Principles

Goals, principles, process The Social Summit approached social integration in terms of goals, principles, and process. The goal of social integration is to create "a more stable, safe and just society for all", in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play. Such an inclusive society must be based on the principles of embracing—not coercing or forcing—diversity and using participatory processes that involve all stakeholders in the decision-making that affects their lives.

It is important to understand that social integration is not an end-state that societies can achieve but a dynamic ***process*** in which societies engage in order to further human development, that is to say,"an integrated society … continually adapts and adjusts to accommodate different elements and through such adaptation it maintains its inner cohesion".[1]

Guiding Principles: Unity within Diversity with Social Justice

Successful social integration processes encourage "coming together" while respecting differences, and consciously and explicitly putting great value on maintaining diversity. Many societies have developed certain mechanisms for accommodating diverse perspectives of its citizens, so as to maintain social cohesion. In this sense, diversity is a key to healthy societies, and indeed a foundation for continuous learning, creativity in problem-solving, and other capacities and skills that are crucial for individual and societal development.[2] Social integration represents the attempt not to make people adjust to society, but rather to ensure that society is accepting of all people. In other words: "We can, and should, 'integrate' the rules of society, so that they apply to all identity groupings. But we must not try to integrate the identities themselves"[3]

An ongoing process, everywhere Social disintegration, and also integration, are not linear but rather dynamic processes that occur in all societies at all stages of development. They occur at every level within and between family and community, and institution and country—regardless of a country's level of development. While challenges intensify when social relations become fragmented, exclusionary and polarized, challenges are inherent in all societies, even within the healthiest of social relations; for this reason, it is understood that all societies are constantly in need of processes directed towards making and keeping them cohesive.

Socially integrative societies create and manifest values and ethics that accommodate diversity, and enhance values of freedom, security and democracy. In such societies, violence is less likely to develop when disagreements arise. It should be recognized that complete social integration of diverse groups is not likely to happen, but that it is nevertheless an ultimate goal and an essential ongoing task

Social Integration and Related Notions

What follows is meant to provide a brief introduction to the term "social integration" and related concepts, as preparation for the discussion of the principles and stages of social integration contained in the remainder of the present section.

Social integration The mention of the term "social integration" may sometimes elicit expressions of bemusement, as the notion is elusive while the term has been used in different ways. Some people may be more familiar with other terms such as "social inclusion", "social cohesion" and "social justice", or their antitheses, such as "social exclusion" and "social injustice". Still others may have had previous exposure to the term "social integration", but to them it might denote a concept akin to ***assimilation*** or, in a more egregious form, the ***coercive perpetuation*** of a repressive social order.

The Social Summit assigned more ambitious connotations to the term "social integration". It turned its back on its implication of coerciveness, and instead underpinned its meaning with connotations of ***participation, inclusion*** and ***justice***. The Summit concept of social integration encompassed maximum involvement, and participation of each member of society in social activities. In dynamic terms, social integration suggests a process possibly able to predict, prevent or avoid large-scale social marginalization. In static terms, social integration suggests a state of social harmony or social cohesion that, under certain conditions, could be achieved.

Social cohesion is a related concept that parallels that of social integration in many respects. A socially cohesive society is one where all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy.[4] These positive attributes of cohesion are often complemented by references to negative variables, such as isolation, exclusion, non-involvement, rejection and illegitimacy, exemplifying the absence—or the perceived absence—of cohesion. In contrast, a socially cohesive society is characterized by common values and a civic culture, social order and social control, solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities, as well as extensive social networks.[5] In a socially cohesive society, "everyone has access to establishing basic social relationships in society, e.g. work, family life, political participation and activities in civil society".[6]

In short, in socially cohesive societies, there are no stark inequalities in terms of power, wealth and opportunities.[7] Such societies are not necessarily demographically homogeneous. Rather, by respecting diversity, they harness the potential residing in their societal diversity (in terms of ideas, opinions, skills, etc), and by doing that reinforce cohesion.[8] Thus, they are less prone to slip into destructive patterns of tension and conflict when different interests collide.

Social transformation can be characterized as a shifting of associations within a society and changing social relations, influenced by the interplay among resources, agents, institutions and power relations.[9] Social transformation is inevitable, and in its ideal state it is represented by an evolution towards a more ***inclusive, cohesive***, and ***integrated society***. At times, however, social transformation is marked by social tensions that can lead to fragmentation. The key is to

strike a balance among the forces that drive the transformative process so that it effectively harnesses the available resources, leading to a society that embraces peaceful, just and inclusive policies and practices.

Social capital refers to the fabric of social relations that holds a society together: general trust in people and institutions, and the degree of civic engagement. Therefore, the general quantity and quality of social relations are indicators of social capital.[10] Social capital consists of personal connections and interpersonal interaction, together with a shared set of values that are associated with these contacts. One can distinguish between the social capital related to relationships within a particular group (***bonding social capital***) and that related to relationships between social groups (***bridging social capital***). Stable networks of mutual acknowledgment and recognition allow individuals and groups to secure access to other forms of capital and resources. (The socially marginalized therefore lack this kind of capital.) Socially cohesive societies have significant social capital and are continuously building it.

Stakeholders can be defined as those who have an interest in a particular decision, either as individuals or as representatives of a group. These include people who influence a decision, or can influence it, as well as those who are affected by it.[11] In the social integration context, stakeholders are defined as individuals, representatives or collectives who can or do influence social integration or are affected by the process. Stakeholders who engage in social integration processes bridge ethnic and religious divides, and in doing so, develop social capital as well as their individual and group capacities. Examples of stakeholders include both individuals, such as victims, perpetrators, and spoilers, as well as groups, such as communities, civil society, the private sector and government actors.[12]

Multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) is an umbrella term referring to a wide range of processes that provide a vehicle for achieving social integration—from national round tables through companies engaging with their stakeholders to Local Agenda 21 projects.[13] Such processes include solution-finding, and at times decision-making: some are aiming to further mutual understanding; others go further and include consensus-building and collaborative action. Principles like equal participation, accountability, transparency, honesty, inclusiveness, learning, and ownership are cornerstones of MSPs.[14] Multi-stakeholder processes thus serve as "breeding grounds" for participatory dialogue by creating for stakeholders safe spaces within which to convene and engage in joint learning. MSPs contribute to social integration by giving equal voice to all stakeholders, thus enabling people to recognize each other's strengths and devise creative solutions.[15]

Dialogue is the process of coming together to build mutual understanding and trust across differences and to create positive outcomes through conversation.[16] Whereas in many settings the term "dialogue" implies various forms of conversations, the derivation of "dialogue"—from "dia" meaning "through", and "logos" translating as "meaning"—suggests a synergistic fit with the concept of social integration. Within the context of social integration, dialogue refers to interactions for the purpose of uncovering shared meaning and mutual accommodation and understanding. This report thus adopts a broad definition of dialogue to include interactions beyond those utilizing forms of verbal communication.

Participatory dialogue is one of the chief mechanisms for encouraging full participation of all members of society, strengthening capacity building mechanisms, and preventing and resolving conflict. It adopts the guiding principles of unity within diversity with social justice. A dialogic approach values the art of communication and planning as constituting a process of "thinking together" among a diverse group of people.[17]

Social Relations and their Stages in the Social Integration Process

Social relations are characterized by the quality of interactions among people within a society. The following framework, devised by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, helps to assess levels of social integration by examining the state of social relations (***see figure 1***).[18] It identifies ***six stages of social integration***, which are formulated as ***stages of social relations***. It invites stakeholders to explore different stages of social relations—both negative (lower half of circle) and positive (upper half). This framework is meant as a heuristic device for suggesting the general processes involved in moving towards peaceful social relations.[19]

The framework describes the stages presented in the lower half of the circle as formative stages, representing opportunities for positive social transformation. These stages or conditions, which may arise in all societies but are more pronounced where there is conflict and poverty, comprise:

- ***Fragmentation***, which arises in situations of abuse, armed conflict and social breakdown. In this case, ***social relations disintegrate (most profoundly at the psychological level)***, giving rise to healing
- ***Exclusion,*** which arises where there is neglect or oppression. In this case, ***social relations are asymmetrical***, giving rise to inclusion strategies that build self-help and livelihood capacities
- ***Polarization,*** which arises when groups can mobilize. In this case, ***social relations are hostile and combative (most profoundly at the level of religious/ethnic identity)***, giving rise to mediation/reconciliation

The transition from ***polarization to coexistence*** is pivotal. It marks the point when the focus shifts from healing and mending social relations to investing in strengthening relationships.

The stages of ***coexistence, collaboration***, and ***cohesion***—presented in the upper half of the circle—are described as ***expansive***, carrying the potential for more advanced social relations. More specifically:

- ***Coexistence*** arises with tolerance of difference, that is to say, ***social relations revolve around civic dialogue***
- ***Collaboration*** arises with a widening sense of socio-economic justice, that is to say, ***social relations lead to, for example, participatory development planning***
- ***Cohesion*** arises with peace-culture, that is to say, ***social relations support discovery/creation of shared meaning and value while respecting and even celebrating diversity***

The stages can be framed within a circle or hexagram to help stakeholders envision options for transforming social relations within one stage in order to move or jump to another.

Figure 1: Stages of Social Relations

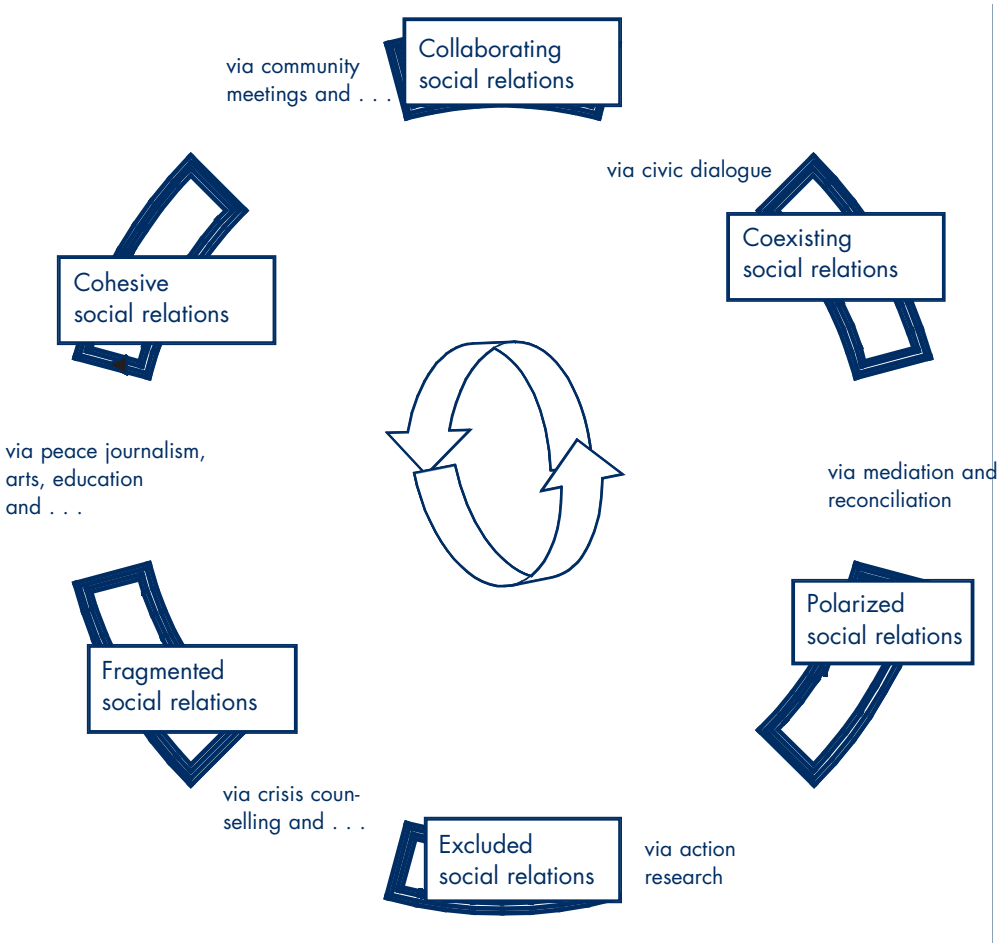

Table 1 (below) provides more detail on the stages and how they relate to possible methods for transformation towards increasing social integration.[20] It elaborates the definitions of the six stages above and relates the particular needs/intentions to be met at each stage with the dialogue procedures appropriate for each stage. It is evident that dialogue procedures play a key role at every stage of social relations—for preventing and resolving conflict, for healing trauma suffered in conflict, for rebuilding post-conflict, and for building lasting, positive peace in dynamic, diverse societies.

Table 1: Stages of Social Relations

Stage description	Methods for transformation
Fragmentation refers to the experience of having few or no connections to a system of support. This can be life-threatening. It can produce distress or trauma that limits the ability to communicate at the psychological level, inhibiting the ability to act effectively in the best interests of self or others. Fragmentation occurs in crisis situations when there is a total social breakdown, that is to say, in war, epidemics, natural disasters, rapid social change, major dislocation, and habituation to "normalized violence".	Fragmented relations can be *transformed* when stakeholders have the need and intention to heal distress *using such dialogue procedures* as peer or crisis counselling (psychological domain) within a context where there is a commitment to stop fighting and address survival needs (by service providers, police or peacekeepers, etc.).
Exclusion refers to a lack of capacity or opportunity to meet daily subsistence and livelihood needs owing to isolation, oppression or neglect and is disproportionately experienced by the poor, minorities, displaced populations and workers whose skills have become obsolete. Exclusion occurs where wealth and power are unevenly shared (and disparities are wide).	Excluded relations can be *transformed* when marginalized groups and those in power to prevent/end marginalization have the need, intention and opportunity to build sustainable livelihood capacities *using such dialogue procedures* as action research (in the socio-economic domain). Sometimes, marginalized groups can create the opportunities themselves but those with power need to remove obstacles and/or create opportunities for inclusion. Opportunities for dialogue need to be an integral part of an overall strategy towards justice and social justice.
Polarization refers to the experience of taking sides in a conflict leading to the extreme relations of "us-them." Polarization can occur in any type of conflict but is most damaging in protracted intergroup hostilities that coalesce around religion or ethnicity. Trust and respect decline as stereotyping and strife take over.	Polarized social relations can be *transformed* when stakeholders have the need, intention and opportunity to resolve differences by peaceful means *using such dialogue procedures* as mediation or reconciliation (socio-political domain). When polarization is linked to protracted discrimination against specific groups, processes that create justice and social justice will often be important components, or preconditions, in a social integration process.
Coexistence refers to the experience of mutual recognition among people. Coexistence occurs in a culture of tolerance for diversity.[a]	Coexisting relationships can be *advanced* when people have the need, intention and safe space to express diverse viewpoints and seek consensus *using civic or democratic dialogue* (socio-political domain).
Collaboration refers to the experience of collective responsibility for socio-economic well-being. Collaboration tends to occur in societies that recognize and implement socio-economic justice.	Collaborative relations can be *advanced* when stakeholders have the need, intention and opportunity to participate in the design of socio-economic development that affects their lives, *using dialogue procedures* such as community meetings and focus groups (socio-economic domain).
Cohesion refers to the experience of social unity within diversity with social justice. Cohesion occurs when stakeholders recognize their common humanity and shared destiny.	Cohesion can be *advanced* when stakeholders have an opportunity and a safe space within which to explore shared meaning and values as they create a peace culture, *using dialogue procedures* such as theatre and media, including peace education (psycho-cultural domain).

[a] This does not necessarily imply that there are many bridges across social groups and sectors (see also Porter, 2005).

Box 1

THE MALI PEACE PROCESS

The Mali peace process of the 1990s allows for retrospective evaluation using the six stages framework. The Mali process, for example, manifested iterative change, starting from *exclusion,* when the Kel Tamashek (Tuareg) and other northern peoples had been isolated from the development occurring in the met-ropolitan centre. That exclusion had been exacerbated by a series of droughts in the 1970s and 1980s when livelihood sources were destroyed and many of the youth went into exile.

Exiled youth, having gained employment in foreign armies, later returned to Mali with military skills with which they pitted themselves against the Mali Government (*polarization*). The Government responded by convening a meeting with one stakeholder group (*attempting coexistence*). The stakeholders who were excluded from this meeting grew resentful and suspicious. Fighting resumed and spread. The Government fell and there was a threat of nationwide *fragmentation*. The turning point came when the new Government was opened to all the parties. This gained impetus after one elder's peace dialogue was supported by an international donor: when it proved successful, it was replicated in neighbouring communities.[a]

In a short time, a broader regional (and even national) peace movement emerged (*coexistence)* with the participation of many stakeholders: Government, traditional leaders/elders, youth, women and civil society groups. Once key stakeholders were engaged in dialogue (*coexistence*), the issue of socio-economic needs was raised and addressed in terms of practical livelihoods and responsive national planning.[b] In 1996, in a public square in Timbuktu, 3,000 firearms were burned in a sym-bolic Flame of Peace that was commemorated in subsequent years by festivals including, in 2003, an international music festival in the desert (*cohesion*).[c]

The Mali peace process led to greater social cohesion, which is not to say, however, that the other types of social relations have disappeared from society. All stages continuously coexist, though in different proportions. This example shows how dialogue procedures were used to leverage social transformation. Dialogue procedures responded to a range of needs/intentions including in the socio-political domain, when *mediation* resolved polarized relations between rebels and the Government, and when *civic dialogue* brought all stakeholders to the point of co-existing peacefully; and in the socio-economic domain, when local livelihood issues were addressed and national plans were made inclusive (the mode of dialogue was not specified). And while no psychological needs were noted, *cultural needs/intentions* had been activated by the 1996 Flame of Peace, which led to music festivals in subsequent years.

Retrospective uses of the framework can help to discover lessons learned in social integration and people-centred peacebuilding and, specifically, to explore how social relations were transformed, whether dialogue was used, and what local principles guided the process.[d]

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[a] See Poulton & Youssouf (1998).

[b] See Lode (1996).

[c] Information on Festival in the Desert, a music DVD of the event is available from www.triban-union.com

[d] See Donelan (2005).

Transforming Negative Social Relations to Positive Ones

This framework is meant to be a flexible, fluid depiction of a highly complex process. The stages of social relations are ***non-linear***. Conflict is characterized by multidimensional interactive dynamics, and hence it is entirely possible for a society to skip stages, to exhibit multiple stages simultaneously (for example, when inter-communal relations in Northern Ireland were evidently ***polarized***, Catholic and Protestant women were ***collaborating*** on community needs such as

education and health care for their children[21]), or to regress to earlier stages. The model may be used to diagnose a society and offer suggestions as to the course of treatment. By transforming the three formative stages of social relations and advancing the three more expansive ones, degrees of disunity in social relations should decline while unity within diversity with social justice should increase.

The somewhat fluid nature of the stages requires stakeholders to define more precisely where they are now and where they wish to be—that is to say, their need and intention. If a priority need is to heal distress (at the ***fragmentation*** stage), it elicits crisis counselling or healing ritual or professional therapy, as decided by the stakeholders. Once distress is resolved, people are "freed" to move to other stages where other needs/intentions arise. Through accepting their past and acknowledging their current situation, people can become empowered to free themselves from resignation, cynicism and despair, and choose behaviours in stages that are an expression of their renewed perspectives on what is possible.

The framework can be used not only retrospectively in order to understand what happened (as in the case of the peace process that unfolded in Mali [see box 1]), but also prospectively to support social transformation processes. Three different approaches are distinguished in this regard:

- An ***intuitive approach***, whereby the framework invites two perspectives: (a) if the framework is seen holistically as comprising six coexisting social relations, stakeholders stuck in one or another condition can contemplate alternatives, that is to say, when trauma engenders fragmented relations or oppression shapes excluded relations, the framework offers alternatives that may be explored; (b) if the framework is seen dichotomously, as comprising the interrelation of formative and expansive stages of social relations (or of negative/positive poles), stakeholders can leverage the framework so that an awareness is imparted regarding the fact that negatives and positives are ever-present potentials and hence that in terms of social disintegration there is hope and in times of progress there is wisdom (rather than oversight or neglect in respect to unseen pockets of disintegration). These two perspectives, by inspiring vision, have the potential to generate motivation for change.
- A ***systematic approach***, through which the framework can be used to explore social transformation including when stakeholders transform ***within*** a stage of social relations or transform ***between*** the stages in any direction. This kind of transformation can be achieved in many ways, including by means of dialogue tools that have evolved in all cultures and within many disciplines. For example, when social relations are polarized, all cultures have devised transformative mediation and reconciliation procedures.
- A ***strategic approach***, through which one would build alliances with like-minded stakeholders in order to put participatory dialogue procedures already in use within the context of current social relations and their dynamics[22], or to mainstream a social integration and participatory dialogue approach into peace and development strategies (for example, the Millennium Development Goals).

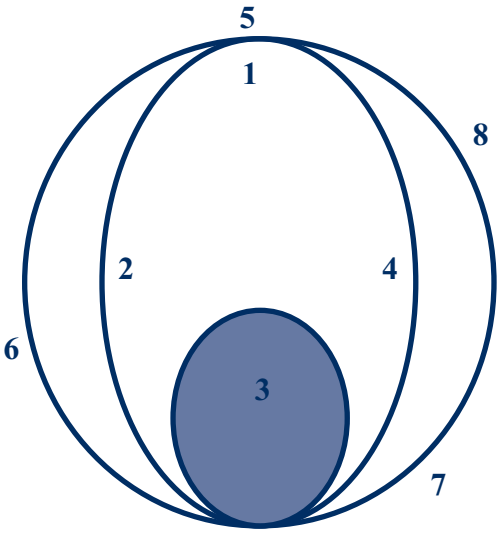
It is important to acknowledge the role of power relations, and that those in power must be willing to share power in order for societies to become more cohesive. This, of course, is a major challenge whenever people or institutions are accustomed to being powerful, and especially more powerful than others. It is an even more difficult challenge when ***sharing*** power is confused with ***losing*** power, as is often the case in politics.

It should also be noted that mutual accommodation is a particular challenge when groups have fought each other, when wealth and power are unevenly distributed, or when groups have clashing interests. It can remain a challenge in more peaceful social relations as well—in relations of ***coexistence, collaboration*** and ***cohesion***—when tolerance of difference, agreement on priorities and explorations of shared meaning are subjects of debate, discussion and dialogue.

In light of a broader perspective, it is important to keep in mind not only that positive social relations are desirable as ends in themselves, but also that they create the conditions on which the achieving of development goals—such as eradicating poverty, achieving gender justice, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and other goals outlined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2) depends.

Stages of Social Relations in Practice

Aiming to capture the interactive dynamics of working towards a more cohesive society, Spies (2005) presents a model adapted from the Cape Town-based Community Development Resources Association called the Development Practice Framework, tailored to the reality of the Social Cohesion Programme's dialogue processes in Guyana (***see figure 2***). The model portrays ***nested stages of social transformative processes***, which spiral, one building upon the next in a dynamic process, with specific activities and competencies attached to each stage.



1. Building relationships of trust
2. Gaining understanding of the situation and accepting responsibility for the change
3. Facilitating transformation
4. Grounding and support to ensure institutional strength
5. Review contents and process
6. Learning lessons towards improved future strategy and practice
7. Appropriate systems and support
8. Building capacity for and enhancement of active or servant leadership

Figure 2: Social Cohesion Programme, Guyana (UNDP)

Building relationships of trust involves holding one-on-one discussions with stakeholders that should be marked by transparency, neutrality, knowledge-sharing and feedback.

Gaining an understanding of the situation and accepting responsibility for the change involves developing a shared understanding and facilitating local ownership of the initiatives.

Facilitating transformation entails capacity-building in order to ensure a high-quality process, and creating a vision for the future.

Grounding and support to ensure institutional strength involves addressing the issues at the institutional level so that the institutions possess the strength and integrity in order to support stakeholder initiatives.

Adopting an inclusive modus operandi to ***review the contents and process*** of the approach allows for a midterm modification of ineffective strategies.

Learning lessons toward improved future strategy and practice provides the opportunity to record the lessons learned for the benefit of future endeavours.

In rallying ***appropriate systems and support***, a key consideration is to avoid dependency in favour of supporting locally owned, sustainable programmes.

Finally, ***building capacity for and enhancement of active or servant leadership*** highlights the importance of cultivating leaders who use the interests and inputs of their constituents as the basis of their actions.

The model reflects the Guyanese Social Cohesion Programme's approach to developing and sustaining a multidimensional and dynamic dialogue process that continuously moves through the stages described above. Again, it should be underlined that social relations change dynamically, and may skip modelled sequences. Spies (2005, p.8) notes: "While it is true that conflict can erupt suddenly and without any warning, it is equally true that, given a few identifiable conditions of good process, peace can also erupt".

In practice, the Social Cohesion Programme includes a range of activities that are supporting and enhancing all stages described in the model. The same can be observed in many examples of programmes relating to peacebuilding, post-conflict intervention and social integration. Such complexity, operating at multiple levels and in various societal domains, and entailing work with multiple stakeholders, in turn makes it possible to respond to the dynamics of social relations and their transformation, and the various needs of multiple stakeholders.

The Building Blocks of Social Integration

While the meaning of the term "social integration" is still being debated, it is one of the hallmark objectives agreed upon at the Social Summit, and carries relevance for a wide spectrum of actors at multiple levels. The emergence of a global society that not only ***champions*** but also ***exercises*** the principles of social integration depends on three main building blocks of social integration:

- **The main ingredients:** inclusion, participation, and justice/social justice[23] allow meaningful and effective engagement for a common future
- **The interventions:** a range of interventions in different domains of society, from the psychological through the social and cultural to the economic and political, are available to facilitate social integration processes
- **The stakeholders:** the change agents consist of groups and individuals in societies that influence, or can influence, decision-making, and that need to be part of implementing plans and solutions

MAIN INGREDIENTS

The three main ingredients discussed below—inclusion, participation and justice—are not conceptually the same. While justice, and achieving a shared sense of justice, can be defined as an objective or ultimate goal and, at the same time, as a process, inclusion and participation are processes or tools, which, in conjunction with other tools, help to achieve justice.

Inclusion refers to policies and institutional arrangements designed to include people. It is a top-down process, utilizing tools and spaces designed by policymakers for people. Inclusion is an action directed towards citizens. Inclusion can also be understood as a guiding principle: whenever a decision-making mechanism is being designed, it should be made maximally inclusive.

Participation refers to the active and constructive engagement of people. It is a bottom-up process within which people enter (and often help to create) spaces for interaction with and influencing of decision-making mechanisms. Participation is an action undertaken by citizens. It is a process that enhances the quality, credibility and ownership of decisions.

In other words, justice is an objective, and inclusion and participation are among the strategies created to achieve that objective. The processes of inclusion and participation help to give practical meaning to a shared sense of justice and contribute towards reaching the goals to which individuals and communities aspire. At the same time, even in a situation when/where justice has been relatively achieved, inclusion and participation are still essential ingredients for maintaining a healthy society.[24]

Inclusion

They drew a circle which kept me out,
A heretic, a rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win
We drew a circle which drew them in.
— Edwin Markham

Socially inclusive societies are based on the values of equality and non-discrimination, which are manifested by the measures a nation adopts to prevent or respond to discrimination. The primary indicator of a socially inclusive society is the ability of all citizens to claim all of their rights.[25]

Whether they are youth, migrants or women, those excluded from participation in formal and informal activities designed to promote social integration pose a major risk to such processes. Authentic integration involves bringing everyone into the arena. And everyone includes ***every last one***.[26] A genuinely participatory multi-stakeholder dialogue requires reaching out and involving every concerned social group, especially those with less power, those with little or no voice, and those separated by huge distances from the mainstream, whether geographically or in terms of their ideas and allegiances. This requires institutions to make every effort to hear the voice of those who have been voiceless.

Any policies or institutional mechanisms, therefore, need to incorporate the needs and concerns of the voiceless in society as well as provide opportunities for them to represent themselves in building their future at the local and community levels. Thus, inclusion serves several purposes:

- The needs and perspectives of the voiceless are heard
- The voiceless learn that they can speak and can be heard and acknowledged and respected in a peaceful way
- Institutions make more common the inclusion of the voiceless
- A balanced map of interests is created

On the flip side of inclusion is its widely discussed nemesis: exclusion. Social exclusion can be described as the opposite of social integration and as the process by which systematic neglect, oppression or discrimination against people exists in social institutions, whether government, organizations, communities or households. Social exclusion manifests itself both in policy and in the behaviour of individuals and groups, in conspicuous as well as veiled forms. Socially excluded groups often include ethnic or religious minorities, patients with HIV/AIDS , people with disabilities, migrants, ex-combatants, and many others. In fact, there is hardly any human characteristic that has not been made the basis of discrimination and exclusion.

Societal institutions should be serving as models of inclusion, exemplifying what is desired and acceptable in a society. By contrast, exclusionary policies send a powerful message to citizens that certain discriminatory behaviours are also acceptable at the individual level: If I am harbouring some mistrust towards migrant workers in my community, and my municipal government doesn't treat them very well, why should I feel compelled to rethink my attitude, or to treat them any better?

Social exclusion has a number of undesired consequences in societies, which include the underusage of resources for development, leading to the perpetuation of poverty. Social exclusion hampers people's access to the labour market; they therefore remain unable to partake of the economic resources available and stay mired in poverty.[27]

Another undesirable consequence of social exclusion is that it can result in both violent and non-violent conflict. In the absence of alternative methods for combating inequality and injustice, social exclusion may give rise to both political and social forms of violent conflict, ranging from prolonged civil wars to gang violence, human rights abuses (such as trafficking in persons and inhumane employment practices) and individual anti-social behaviour.[28]

Processes oriented towards social integration and cohesion are intended to overcome these barriers through social transformation that includes interventions at all levels, ranging from individuals through social groups to national Governments. These could include more inclusive policies and institutions, participatory dialogue procedures such as action research or collaborative planning processes at the municipal and neighbourhood levels. These interventions also should address the underlying structural causes of conflict. The challenge is to change what causes inequality while assisting those who suffer from it.

Box 2

EXCLUSION AND CONFLICT IN SIERRA LEONE

"In Sierra Leone, social exclusion is now understood to have been a main cause of prolonged civil war, to a greater extent than either the diamond trade or political instability. Eight years of conflict helped provoke a revolt of the youth, who turned to guerrilla insurgency in reaction against their political, economic and social exclusion by powerful urban elites, rural chiefs and elders. In the post-conflict period, the DFID, as the largest bilateral donor, has supported youth inclusion in government and civil society projects to empower young people."[a]

[a] UK Department for International Development, 2005, p. 8.

Participation

While barriers to inclusion need to be removed by those who exclude (institutions and individuals), through a top-down approach, successful inclusion also depends on the willingness and ability of the formerly excluded to participate, through people-driven bottom-up approaches. It may take time to build their trust and capacity.

However, participation is an integral component of social integration that is inclusive of and sensitive to the needs of the people it aims to address. Participation involves "enabling people to realize their rights to participate in, and access information relating to, the decision-making processes that affect their lives".[29] Accordingly, "democracy entitles (the people) to choose leaders with broad policies most acceptable to them. Participation in public affairs enables them to influence details of policy legislation, and to continuously monitor their implementation".[30]

Key groups that often need to be targeted for participation in social integration processes include, among others, youth, women, the ageing population, persons with disabilities, families, refugees, displaced persons, ex-combatants, ethnic/religious minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, and other community groupings —precisely the ones that historically have been excluded.

Participation serves several important purposes, namely:

- ***Awareness-raising:*** Through participation, stakeholders become more self-aware in terms of their own perceptions and the need to articulate them. They also learn about the perspectives of others, and become aware of the subjectivity of perceptions in general.
- ***Building positive social relations***: Participants build working relationships among themselves and across ethnic and religious divides. Once people are able to relate to each other as human beings, they are able to see beyond prejudices and to build trust.
- ***Quality of outcomes:*** Once multiple backgrounds and perspectives become part of the process, a greater wealth of knowledge, experience and perspectives is brought to bear when tackling a problem or developing a plan.
- ***Credibility:*** A policy that has been developed with all relevant stakeholder groups involved will be more likely to gain support from all groups. People know that a process that includes all stakeholders is the result of consensus-building and/or compromise, and—in the best of cases—of joint learning. The result of an inclusive, participatory process is viewed as more valuable than the product of a single group or organization.
- ***Ownership, sustainability and implementation:*** Top-down decision-making is often too removed from the reality of people's lives, resulting in reduced applicability of policies on the ground. In contrast, participation breeds a sense of ownership and commitment to the process and its outcomes, which become collectively held and subsequently more sustainable, increasing the likelihood of implementation and lasting change.[31]
- ***Outreach:*** The participation of all relevant stakeholders will help to disseminate and promote the outcomes of a dialogue process. All participants relate the outcomes to their groups and constituencies, which in turn will spread the message.[32]

Additional benefits of regular, broad participation include its ability to serve as an early warning mechanism of emerging issues and to ensure that society's benefits are shared equally.[33]

All of the above benefits are at risk, however, if participation takes place but remains without impact: People will become tired not of participation and dialogue, but rather of investing their time and energy and not seeing change. Therefore, consideration of the question of what will be different as a result of participation and dialogue has to be the guiding principle in the design of change processes; otherwise, the impact will remain elusive.

However, participation may also result in increased conflict as disputes are brought to the surface. Careful management of conflict can not only prevent a violent response, but also lead to a transformation characterized by mutual understanding and acceptance of opposing views.

It is important to keep in mind that individuals usually belong to several social groups at once, based, for example, on their gender, age, ethnicity, religion, profession and so on. In other words, people have ***multiple social identities***, and while they may participate in a process as a representative of a particular group, they always also "carry" all of their other identities with them. For example, consider an elderly farmer representing the farmers of her village. Her presentation of their perspectives would unavoidably reflect her own life experience based on upbringing and other factors—an experience significantly different from that of a young person.

Justice

In building socially inclusive societies, "justice" assumes two important functions: ***protection***, in terms of upholding human rights, and accountability, in terms of upholding the rule of law. Ineffective judicial systems engender fear among the populace and, in the worst cases, may elicit a violent response.[34] The levels of protection and accountability vary in different countries around the world. In regards to upholding human rights, some countries are further along the path than others, with human rights instruments having become an important tool for achieving more socially inclusive societies.

Building institutions and services that protect people's rights and enforce legislation is crucial. When a discriminatory regime is being replaced, careful revision of all legal instruments is equally important. In South Africa, for example, the complete body of legislation at all levels and relating to all governmental departments was reviewed post-apartheid after liberation in 1994 and the review is still continuing to date. About 12,000 apartheid entrenching instances of direct or indirect discrimination against black and other marginalized citizens were discovered in the body of South African statutes, proclamations and regulations.[35] These were subsequently removed, as prescribed by the principles contained within the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.[36]

Accountability also inherently assumes that governmental institutions have a responsibility to act in a way that speaks to the values of mutual respect and non-discrimination in order that a sense of justice may be instilled in a nation emerging from a past characterized by injustice.

In societies emerging from conditions of violence, it is necessary to observe conventional forms of justice, including legal proceedings, as a contribution to the achievement of a just society and a shared sense of justice. At the same time, these conventional forms of justice need to be strengthened with a focus on social justice. Social justice refers to fairmindedness among stakeholders as they negotiate, according to the unity-within-diversity principle, while recognizing that people have rights and responsibilities as well as different needs and opportunities. It also refers to processes that address past injustices associated with the violent past, including economic and social inequalities, in a

manner that transforms social relations and creates a shared sense of progress towards the achievement of justice.[37] Many victims have expressed the belief that reconciliation cannot exist without justice.[38]

Thus, processes that aspire to contribute to justice and social justice serve complementary purposes in terms of promoting positive social relations, and, by extension, socially inclusive societies. The concept of social justice is intricately intertwined with the concepts of inclusion and participation. Processes that are inclusive according to the above definition will contribute directly to building social justice. Conversely, in situations where groups of people and entire communities remain marginalized or excluded, participation will often be reduced to forms of protest, mass action and civil disobedience.[39]

Scenarios and conclusions

Figure 3 is meant to illustrate the various combinations of inclusion, participation and justice, and the degree of their presence or absence in a society—resulting in eight situations. As all three "main ingredients" are never absolutely present or absent, that is to say; their presence is a matter of degree, these eight situations are merely illustrative. Some groups, such as ethnic/religious minorities, refugees, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, the ageing population, etc., might fit into a number of these situations depending on their experiences within a particular country.

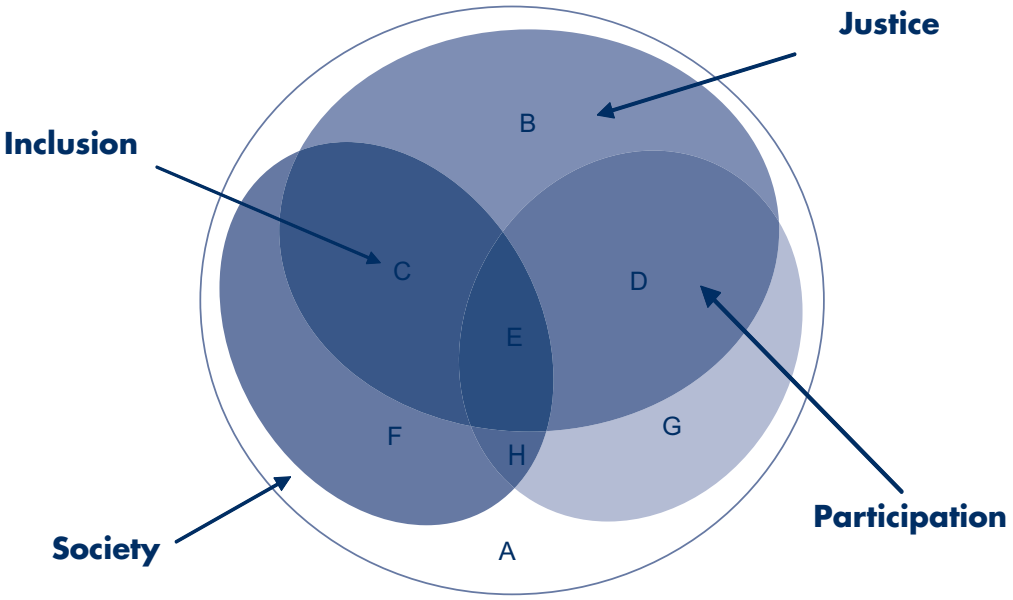


Figure 3: Eight scenarios illustrating inclusion, participation, and justice in societies

Scenario A encompasses situations combining no justice, no inclusion, and no participation. Internally displaced persons, victims of trafficking and children forced to work may be found in such situation.

Scenario B encompasses situations combining justice, no inclusion and no participation. The urban poor, the chronically poor and migrant workers may be found in these situations.

Scenario C encompasses situation combining justice, inclusion and no participation. Certain groups that have chosen not to participate in the larger society (often on religious grounds) may be found in such situations.

Scenario D encompasses situations combining justice, no inclusion and participation. People who participate in protests and demonstrations and engage in civil disobedience may be found in such situations.

Scenario E encompasses situations that combine justice, inclusion and participation. This reflects an inclusive society where everyone actively engages in building a common future.

Scenario F encompasses situations combining no justice, inclusion and no participation. These situations are those of the political opposition in an autocratic political regime.

Scenario G encompasses situations of no justice, no inclusion and participation. This scenario includes separatist groups engaged in political activities under an autocratic regime.

Scenario H encompasses situations combining no justice, inclusion and participation. Illegal immigrants who do not enjoy protection but are still active members of society may be found in such situation.

Engagement

Engagement flows from the three elements discussed above, and relates particularly to participation and its purpose. Engagement constitutes participation in inclusive, just societies, utilizing the spaces where people can participate in decision-making and take voluntary joint action for the common good. When people enjoy justice and are provided with spaces that include them in decision-making, they will become actively engaged in building their common future, as their society evolves, while responding to changes, innovations and challenges from the outside and the inside. In developing countries, engagement will involve efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals, while in the societies of developed countries, it will include the response to global environmental challenges, increased immigration and new technologies that change the way people communicate or travel.

As noted by Sandy Heierbacher of the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation:

> *Dialogue participants' increased sense of power and determination to initiate change, combined with the knowledge they gain from the vastly different experiences and perspectives of their fellow members, puts dialogue groups in a unique, powerful place to solve community problems.*

INTERVENTIONS

Different kinds of interventions are needed to support processes towards social integration. In essence, all dimensions of society need to be considered—from the psychological through the social and cultural to the economic and political. Ideally, such interventions form complementary components of an integrated strategy towards a more cohesive society.[40] To be successful, such a strategy needs to be developed in a participatory manner, with special consideration given to the local context (***see box 3)***.

Box 3

AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION

The Valdivieso Centre in Nicaragua was helping people to recover from the ravages of Hurricane Mitch when people began to talk of still more painful losses experienced in the earlier civil war. The Centre helped people make an "inventory of wounds" and designed an integrated response comprising four modules: personal, organizational, cultural and developmental.

The personal module addressed the emptiness and meaninglessness that many ordinary people felt in the wake of a revolution that had given their lives meaning. The *organizational module* addressed the proclivity of some community leaders to foment discord and polarization when community and institutional rebuilding were urgently needed.

The cultural module was two-pronged: it addressed a "culture of silence" that had prohibited "washing dirty laundry" in public, stemming from a belief that talk would make things worse. It also focused on gender norms that allowed women to express pain and distress but no anger, and men to express anger but no pain—a pattern that was seen to be fuelling domestic violence in households of many ex-combatants (especially when unemployed).

The development module, following Manfred Max Neef's Development on a Human Scale, addressed subsistence needs together with needs for affection, belonging, identity and creativity. This holistic approach taken by the Valdivieso Centre was predicated on the unity of mind, body and spirit. The secular, scientific world separates mind, body and spirit and assigns their care to psychologists, physicians and religious personnel respectively.[a]

[a] See Cabrera (2003).

Box 4

THE SOCIAL COHESION PROGRAMME, UNDP GUYANA

The Social Cohesion Programme, having been operational since 2003, has invested in capacity-building workshops on *conflict transformation and human rights* which have been attended by more than 250 people from a variety of social groups including youth political organizations, parliamentary political parties, ethnic relations commissioners, religious and cultural leaders, trade unions, the Private Sector Commission, magistrates and judges, police, non-governmental organizations and others.

Another part of the programme consists of train-the-trainer workshops. By November 2005, 22 participants had completed the first set of these courses in f*acilitation* and *process design*. This group, at their own initiative, then formed the "Spirit of Guyana Movement", pursuing several ideas including peace campaigns and training at the community level. Some of these 22 participants had also already trained 92 people from neighbourhood democratic councils and head teachers of schools.[a]

In 2006, the Movement trained 30 facilitators who facilitated 143 multi-stakeholder forums at local level across the country, 10 regional conversations, and conversations with women, religious leaders and youth. The Guyanese are showing signs of owning the process of deepening participatory democracy and enhancing social cohesion.[b]

[a] Spies (2005).

[b] Spies (2006), personal communication.

Spies (2005) notes that in the context of the model used by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Guyana, a host of activities have supported the elements of the programme while complementing each other, ranging

from creating safe spaces for dialogue, through building capacity on human rights, facilitation and peace education, to providing psycho-social services to victims of trauma and using a United Nations Special Rapporteur, government commissions and business initiatives to review legislation and monitor the implementation of legal instruments (***see box 4 on previous page***).

Dialogue

As defined above, "dialogue" refers to conversations for the purpose of uncovering shared meaning and mutual accommodation and understanding. Shared meaning is an important "bonding social capital" that strengthens and empowers a group in its dealings with the outside world.[41] Against this backdrop, dialogue for social integration can take a variety of forms such as action research, community meetings, peace theatre, healing rituals, mediation, community mapping, and focus groups. Dialogue processes may also be represented by activities that emphasize participatory approaches, such as community policing and community-based microcredit activities. Whatever the method employed, dialogue for social integration is grounded in the principles of participation and inclusiveness. Actors that engage in participatory dialogue processes consciously elect to adopt these principles in lieu of disengagement or violent means of resolving conflict. They also choose dialogue over negotiation, debate or discussion,[42] which are techniques focused on bringing out positions and differences more clearly, and are conducted with an interest in "winning" or compromising. In contrast, dialogue seeks to develop understanding and shared meaning and serves as a ***lubricant of social relations*** at all levels.[43]

Empowerment and awareness-raising through public education

Measures to create socially inclusive societies, such as inclusive policies, or a new forum for stakeholder participation, are effective only if people are aware of them. All citizens need to have easy and affordable access to information about socially integrative policies and mechanisms and how they can use them. Governments, media, civil society and others can play a key role in raising awareness of rights, anti-discrimination measures, and opportunities for participation, as well as the values of unity within diversity with social justice. As pointed out at the Social Summit, such efforts need to be tailored to their audiences, through language and media proved to be effective for conducting outreach. For example, radio, theatre, and cartoon stories are among the popular media used by many civil society organizations, particularly—but by no means only—in rural areas in developing countries.[44]

An important policy lever for enhancing social cohesion is ***education***. It can help provide public knowledge about the very idea of social contracts among individuals and between individuals and national Governments. Schools and other educational institutions help provide the context within which students learn the appropriate behaviour for upholding social contracts, and develop an understanding of the expected consequences of breaking social contracts. However, the potential of education for furthering social integration can be realized only if curricula are designed (and updated) accordingly, teachers are trained, and the necessary educational materials are provided. In addition, education does not end with schools or other formal institutions. Learning is a lifelong endeavour.

Capacity-building

Three main elements stand out in the context of capacity-building for social integration: (a) capacity-building as related to social transformation, which includes increasing people's understanding of the roots of conflict, methods for preventing and resolving conflict, process design and facilitation skills, etc.; (b) raising awareness in relation to inclusive policies and mechanisms that are in place; and (c) supporting participation and local initiatives (for example, through financial support, childcare facilities during meetings, grants for local multi-stakeholder partnership initiatives, etc.).

One of the strengths or comparative advantages of dialogue is that it works directly on building social capital, which can be described as encompassing bridging social gaps, developing capacities to facilitate and mediate stakeholder relations, and linking people with their government in socially and economically productive ways. This in turn is the foundation for reconciliation and rehabilitation. That dialogue is relationship-focused and people-centred allows, in ideal scenarios, for meaningful participation by all parts of society, ultimately leading to healing, harmonious integration and active engagement in a common future. In this regard, societies that achieve a certain degree of cohesiveness can benefit as much as those in fragmentation.[45]

Listening

Box 5

WISDOM OF LISTENING

"If you are listening to find out, then your mind is free, not committed to any-thing; it is very acute, sharp, alive, inquiring, curious, and therefore capable of discovery." (Krishnamurti)

"The Talmud says that we were given two ears but only one tongue to teach us that we should listen"twice as much as we speak. The key to all good hu-man relations is in listening." (Rabbi Phillip J. Bentley)

"The greatest gift you can give another is the purity of your attention." (Richard Moss)

"As you go through life, you are going to have many opportunities to keep your mouth shut. Take advantage of all of them."(James Dent)

"Listening is not a skill; it is a discipline." (Peter Drucker)

"If you're not listening, you're not learning." (Lyndon Baines Johnson

"A better idea than my own is to listen." (Mark Twain)

"People don't get along because they fear each other. People fear each other because they don't know each other. They don't know each other because they have not properly communicated with each other." (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

"Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. When we are lis-tened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand. Ideas actually begin to grow within us and come to life. When we listen to people there is an alter-nating current, and this recharges us so that we never get tired of each other ... and it is this little creative fountain inside us that begins to spring and cast up new thoughts and unexpected laughter and wisdom. Well, it is when people really listen to us, with quiet fascinated attention, that the little foun-tain begins to work again, to accelerate in the most surprising way." (Brenda Ueland)

"One of the best ways to persuade others is with your ears." (Dean Rusk)

"An enemy is one whose story we have not heard." (Gene Knudsen-Hoffman)

Listening is a capacity that is crucial to dialogue at all levels (***see box 5***). Learning to listen actively and attentively benefits people's communication within the family, their own social groups, and the wider community. It increases understanding and hence tolerance. In political processes, listening necessarily opens politics to differences. In order to listen, one must be willing to question one's own assumptions and practices in the light of others' views. In that sense, listening is risky: people in dialogue need the capacity to engage equally, embracing the "otherness" of the other, and to be vulnerable—after all, they may hear things that will require them to change: "Between speaking and listening lie the spaces wherein we accept the responsibility of the risk to dialogue across differences".[46]

Psychosocial considerations

Healing

> *One of the most valuable things we can do to heal one another is listen to each other's stories.*
>
> —Rebecca Falls

Interventions in the socio-economic domain and those in the socio-political domain—even when combined—will often not suffice to build sustainable peace if there is lingering trauma or an embedded culture of violence. Hence, the need to address trauma and grief points to a key intervention at the psychological level (***see boxes 6 and 7***). Distress, bitterness, guilt and grief are among the effects of traumatizing experiences such as violent conflict in all its forms and manifestations. These can, at least to some extent, be addressed through essentially dialogic procedures, such as peer or crisis counselling provided by medical and psychological services, police, peacekeepers and/or families and communities (particularly women relatives and friends). The simple technique of active listening takes time and care, but when applied, it prevents anger from hardening into bitterness and retaliation.[47] Such support must be extended in a context of safety where survival needs are met. Healing takes time, typically progressing through several phases, including circular processes for different experiences (for example, guilt of the survivor, sadness, emptiness). An identity fundamentally threatened by traumatizing experiences needs restoring and strengthening, and a sense of purpose in life to look forward to. Listening, acceptance, encouragement and official recognition are among the key elements necessary to restoring an identity of dignity and self-respect.

There is great difficulty in participating actively in a dialogue when stakeholders have experienced tragedy, fragmented social lives, relatively deprived economic conditions, and individual traumatization. Particularly in post-conflict situations, there is a need to rehabilitate the social fabric and social institutions. Further, there is a need for addressing and prioritizing psychosocial needs and coordinating and strengthening existing capacities in order to mend and heal traumas of individuals, families and groups so that they can regain the strengths required for rebuilding fragmented communities.

Box 6
BESLAN

After the tragedy at Beslan in the Russia Federation, in which 330 children and others had been killed on the first day of school in a community of 30,000, a group of psychosocial providers noted community fragmentation, family fragmentation, individual traumatization, complicated mourning processes, and secondary adversities, (where, for example, after its mother had died, a child had to enter a new home while dealing with wounds and new disabilities.)

The psychosocial providers raised awareness of symptoms of community fragmentation such as mutual blame, distrust subsisting between those affected and those that "got away", children's refusing to return to school and increased suspicion between neighbours.[a]

[a] See Aronson (2005). Also see, for example, "Healing Through Remembering", a cross-community project that undertakes extensive consultation on ways to deal with the past: www.healingthroughremembering.org

Box 7
KENYA AND ESTONIA

Case studies in Kenya and Estonia have highlighted the significant impact of past history on current social relations. Psychological traumas rooted in past conflict, characterized by, for example, hatred, suspicion, feelings of betrayal and unhealed wounds, have been transmitted from one generation to another and still haunt the present.

Without healing these psychological traumas, true reconciliation cannot be achieved. Dialogue between influential members from both conflicting parties/groups can provide the opportunity and space for going through the healing/forgiving process, which will ultimately lead to reconciliation. Traditional rituals and ceremonies can play an important role in the process.[a]

[a] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social Policy and Development, (2005 b).

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is closely associated with social justice, and indeed is an objective underlying social justice processes. It is both a ***goal*** and a ***process***. A prerequisite of a true reconciliation process is the process of healing psychological traumas (***see above***).[48] Reconciliation undertakes the conflicting tasks of acknowledging past pain and mapping a path for the future; accounting for truth and spreading compassion; and seeking justice and peace. It rests on the three constituent components of truth, mercy and justice

A reconciliation process ultimately needs to develop a common narrative of the painful past; otherwise, it will lead to a shallow form of coexistence, which will be vulnerable to future incidents that recall what has been suppressed of the past.[49]

Any attempt to undertake a reconciliation process must be accompanied by an enactment of structural and systemic change in the political and economic spheres, and this may be achieved if participants in reconciliation processes devise strategies for addressing structural and systemic injustices. This outgrowth of reconciliation processes centres on building relationships and forms the heart of that intersection at which dialogue, reconciliation and social integration meet.

Elimination of barriers to the full enjoyment of all human rights

The very fact that the international community has reaffirmed the goals and measures directed towards social integration as outlined in the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 1996) several times since 1995 indicates that there are many gaps between vision and reality. In fact, it is difficult to identify a place in the world where overcoming one or another form of discrimination has not remained a challenge, this despite the fact that many countries today have a constitution that guarantees that all people are equal under the law, regardless of their race, sex, language, faith or religion, social status or family origin, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 217 A (III)). While discriminatory legislations still exist in some places, the more common gap lies between de jure and de facto inequality and discrimination (***See box 8***).

Identifying and amending discriminatory laws constitute a first step, still, transforming these legal instruments into real-life tools and closing the implementation gap remain a matter of urgency in many societies. In other words, social justice in its broader sense—a meaning not limited to constitutions and legislations—is a goal unattained in many societies.

Continued repression and failure to accommodate diverse identities within a society lead to renewed resistance and rebellion, whereas recognizing and actively protecting minority peoples' rights lead to, and are central to maintaining, peaceful social relations.[50]

Box 8

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

The ongoing discrimination against women illustrates the chasm between de jure and de facto observance of human rights. Gender equity and equality are enshrined in most constitutions. Many countries indeed have very detailed legislation and various affirmative action measures created to advance gender equality.

Nearly all States Members of the United Nations have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[a], which features an independent monitoring body (the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) and the rather revolutionary Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[b] enabling individual women to ultimately appeal to the United Nations as a supranational body. Several United Nations conferences on women have produced far-reaching, forward-looking agreements. Gender mainstreaming has been advancing since it was identified as a key mechanism at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

Despite all this and more, no country has yet achieved genuine gender equity. Even those that regularly achieve top rankings in the gender-related development index and for the gender empowerment measure (both found in UNDP, *Human Development Report*) still report income disparities and disproportionate representation of women in positions of political and economic power. This is not meant to deny the significant progress that has been made in many countries but rather to call attention to the lengthy and difficult process of overcoming entrenched inequalities.

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[a] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No 20378.

[b] Ibid., vol. 2131, No. 20378.

Policies for equity/equality

In order to further equality and equity, appropriate policies can also help close the gap between fundamental human rights and existing exclusion and disintegration. Such policies can be categorized in terms of whether they reduce political, economic and social inequalities and create equal opportunities.

Reducing ***politica***l inequality would mean that all major groups in a society participate in political power, the administration, the army and the police, and that civic and political power structures do not adversely affect the participation of different social groups.

Reducing ***economic*** inequality would mean ensuring balance in group access to benefits from government expenditure and aid (for example, distribution of investment, jobs), equitable/equal distribution of assets, and equal opportunities for work and remunerated employment. It would also include monitoring sources of horizontal inequality and introducing policies to correct them when needed (for example, equal pay for equal work).

Reducing ***social*** inequality would mean ensuring balance in group access to health services, water and sanitation, safe and healthy housing, and consumer subsidies. Of particular importance is access to knowledge (school enrolment, quality of educational institutions, information and communication technologies).

Institution building

While acknowledging progress towards social integration around the world, the Copenhagen Programme of Action pointed to a range of negative developments and in particular to violence as "a growing threat to the security of individuals, families and communities everywhere" (UN, 1996, annex II, chap. IV, para. 69).[51] Within the list of suggested measures and mechanisms to address negative developments and further social integration, the first one was to build "transparent and accountable public institutions that are accessible to people on an equal basis and are responsive to their needs" (ibid., para, 70).

Government action taken towards achieving more responsive institutions includes measures involving ***dialogue*** and ***increased engagement*** with people and stakeholders, such as enabling the participation of all stakeholders in decision-making, facilitating maximum access to information, opening channels and promoting full confidence between citizens and government agencies, especially as regards seeking redress of grievances, and generally strengthening popular political participation. In a well-functioning democracy, the institutions and practices of governance tend to have an integrative function in society. Where democratic governance institutions are weak, there are less powerful levies to protect against social disintegration.[52]

Box 9

ASIA: IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR MEDIATION

Examples from Asia illustrate the importance of institutional capacity, for example, for mediation. The way the State responds to and incorporates groups affects the nature and outcome of conflict. A responsive State that creates an environment in which individuals enjoy mobility, secure employment, and meet their basic needs has an important role to play in mitigating political attacks on the minority by members of the majority. Whenever State responsiveness had been weak, segments of the majority group in both Malaysia and Indonesia perceived the State as a tool of the ethnic minority in their country, which was targeted for violence.[a]

[a] See Confesor (2005, p.8) slide presentation.

Mediation

Mediation is generally defined as a process through which a third party provides procedural assistance to help individuals or groups in conflict negotiate solutions to conflicts (***see boxes 9–12***). Negotiation, broadly defined, is common in all aspects of our lives and for all kinds of disagreements, large and small. However, negotiations are often difficult to organize and conduct successfully. As a result, mediators increasingly have been called upon to help parties convene negotiations, to prevent impasse during the negotiations, or to assist parties in continuing when their discussions have broken down.

Mediation is used in intra- and inter-communal disputes as well as for victim-offender, business and other conflicts. Problem-solving mediation is mainly focused on the issues, while transformative mediation (not unlike reconciliation) is concerned more with relationships.

Mediation (and reconciliation) are universal approaches to harmonizing polarized social relations, while negotiation and alternative dispute resolution, for example, are usually more focused on resolving issues. Obviously, the difference between a focus on relationship and a focus on issues is one of emphasis only. As previously discussed, social relations move through different stages where different interventions are appropriate.

To attain consensual agreements, the focus on mediation lies upon collective rather than individual interests. Mediators often work with the different stakeholders individually to determine both the differences in the values that parties place upon the issue under discussion and the range within which each party is able or willing to negotiate. This enables the mediator to create alternative solutions, and group discussions may then focus on commonalities rather than differences. It is therefore one of the tasks of the mediator to limit discussions to the extent that this appears to serve to achieve consensus.[53]

Box 10

MAMAY—MEDIATION AS A STARTING POINT

Viewing a water dispute in Mamay on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border through the lens of the framework revealed that social relations between the Uzbek and Kyrgyz people were stuck at the polarization stage. Mediation helped to advance the social relations to the stage of coexistence and the formation of a water users association helped to maintain that stage through civic dialogue and peace management. Practical management of the water system was also addressed (action research for inclusion).[a]

[a] Maasen and others (2005).

Box 11

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S PRACTICES

Traditionally, women have played a key role in preventing and resolving conflict and healing its consequences.[a] Women act as mediators, perform rituals, and prepare peace offerings. They also use certain gestures to shame the men into stopping the fighting, such as exposing their faces or bodies. Often, indigenous dialogue processes do not start in the form of conversations in words or on paper. In most indigenous communities, people will engage in rituals, feasts, songs and dances, and women initiate these activities.

"While existing customs and practices within our communities recognize the role of women as peace negotiators and mediators, the reality is that there are policies and systems that make these efforts and roles invisible. Our roles in the community as peace mediators seem to be but an extension of our role in the kitchen—that is, to keep the peace within the family and contain conflict among the children and family members. There is no recognition of the women as peace negotiators in the more 'formal, public, and official sense'."[b]

"Indigenous women have played key roles in peacebuilding in their communities. Yet they have not been given due recognition in the conflict resolution processes. Indigenous women are not adequately represented in peace negotiations in all levels. At best, they are seen as auxiliaries in conflict, and are portrayed as passive victims and silent spectators of conflict. When conflicts lead to violent confrontations, indigenous women, lacking support mechanisms, face the brunt of repression and therefore become a vulnerable sector."[c]

[a] See Tamang's analysis (2005) of indigenous cultures from around the world: the Tamang (Nepal), the Maranao (Philippines), the Naga (northeast India) and the Maasai (Kenya). See also Ängeby (2005).

[b] Tamang (2005), slide 24.

[c] Ibid., slides 23 and 24.

Box 12

MANO RIVER BASIN

The case of the Mano River Basin emphasizes the importance of dialogue at the national level. The Mano River Women's Peace Network, a NGO comprising women from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, succeeded in preventing the outbreak of hostilities between the three countries through its advocacy and lobbying. This contributed to bringing the three Heads of States back to the negotiating table.[a]

[a] See United Nations, DESA, Division for Social Policy and Development, (2005 a).

Leadership

> *The world has for so long been run by those who have usurped the power to run it, and in the manner that is to their best advantage, we frequently forget that they have no more right to do so than anyone else.*
>
> — Ashok Khosla, 1999

The importance of strong leadership in building inclusive societies cannot be overstated. However, strong leadership does not necessarily imply autocratic, paternalistic or manipulative modes of leadership that tend to disempower those whom they are supposed to serve. Nor do leaders need to be heroes or benefactors, who tend to elicit admiration or to foster dependency rather than self-reliance. In contrast, modern social scientific definitions of leadership indicate that it is a process in which group members are permitted to influence others and motivate them to help attain group goals.[54] Visionary, empowering and collaborative leadership is indeed necessary to inspire stakeholders to overcome their preoccupation with narrow-minded interests and recognize that the security and well-being of all depend on a strengthening of social integration and engaging in processes of participatory dialogue.

One of the difficulties in thinking about leadership lies in the common perception that leadership is what ***leaders*** do: leaders lead and followers follow. However, the emergence of "servant", "facilitative", or "collaborative leadership'" has contributed to a shift in orientation, namely, to an orientation of leaders as ***serving*** the needs of "followers" so that the followers are in fact the leaders.[55] ***Visionary leadership***, for instance, tends to shift our concept of leadership away from leaders towards a ***shared purpose and vision***. Such leadership propagates the results of participatory processes for social integration towards the larger society. When people clearly understand and embrace the purpose and vision of social integration, they will be empowered to work together to bring a ***common vision*** into reality.

From the perspective of social integration, leadership no longer means "issuing orders" or "'being in control". Rather, it expresses itself in service to and empowerment of others and of the community as a whole. It will foster collective decision-making and collective action and will be motivated by a commitment to justice, inclusion and participation. Participatory dialogue processes represent a model through which new forms of leadership can be explored and developed. Among those new forms are ones where leaders are indeed servants and examples, reflecting the following words of Mahatma Gandhi: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

It is important to keep in mind that servant leadership does not exclude inspiring vision or giving direction: reviews have shown that effective leadership is flexible and sensitive to needs of groups, who usually move back and forth between calling for direction and engaging and leading themselves.[56] Finally, the ultimate vision of a well-functioning participatory dialogue process would reveal the group in dialogue assuming a leadership role in and by itself by engaging in the kind of social relations that demonstrate and further social integration.

Building and strengthening partnership between and among various stakeholders

> *The act of collaboration must start with dialogue. You cannot build relationships without having an understanding of your potential partners, and you cannot achieve that understanding without a special form of communication that goes beyond ordinary conversation.*
>
> — Daniel Yankelovich

There is an ever-increasing number of calls for working in partnership, and an ever-increasing number of actual partnerships between various stakeholders, including the United Nations and Governments, working with civil society organizations, indigenous groups, women's networks, private sector corporations, and so on.[57] Activities aiming to inspire partnerships and strengthen the partnership approach have been developing at the international, national and local levels in recent years.

For example, the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, built on its emphasis on stakeholder ("major group") involvement already highlighted in Agenda 21 (United Nations, 1993, annex II) adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and strengthened this focus on ***partnerships*** as a key tool for implementing sustainable development agreements. In such partnerships, multiple stakeholders come together to develop and implement sustainable development programmes on the ground. The process preparatory to the World Summit developed the "Bali Guiding Principles for Partnerships", based on in-depth deliberations about participation, stakeholder responsibilities, and monitoring progress towards sustainable development[58] Locally-driven, locally-owned initiatives are of particular importance for building more cohesive societies.

Taking a dialogic approach to partnerships "is built on the premise that connectivity, cooperation and communication are keys to the creation of sustainable futures .... The invitation to integrate multiple perspectives is seen as a cornerstone for the joint enactment of reality in favour of the collective good".[59]

STAKEHOLDERS

> *Global governance is no longer viewed as primarily an intergovernmental concern but one that involves intergovernmental institutions, CSOs, citizens' movements, transnational corporations, academia and the mass media.* [60]

Stakeholders drive the social integration process, whether towards fragmentation, exclusion and polarization—or towards coexistence, collaboration and cohesion. They do so in keeping with their needs and intentions as well as their capacities and opportunities (including for multi-stakeholder dialogue). Thus, analyzing a social situation from the perspective of social integration reminds us that a new platform of social relations is most sustainable when all relevant stakeholders are included and anyone with an interest has a voice in the deliberations. Social integration emphasizes active participation and total inclusiveness; without that

perspective, attempts to build post-conflict governance are likely to fall short of full stakeholder participation and will inevitably exclude some dissatisfied stakeholders. Thus, the social integration perspective points out both the justice of full participation and the practical perils of lack of full participation.

Social integration is a multi-stakeholder process that includes individuals and collectives such as family and civil society entities, local and national government, United Nations agencies and bodies and others such as business, the arts and the media. These stakeholders may participate in the social integration process in ever-changing combinations. It has been argued that the world is moving from a "government world", where social contracts were negotiated between national Governments, big business and big labour, to a "governance world" which encompasses the dynamic relationships between the political system (Governments), the economic system (businesses) and the social system (community-based organizations, NGOs, etc.), all of which interact within the boundaries of and amid the changes of the natural environment.[61] Such a view of the world points to an increasing significance, and diversity, of actors, and also underlines the increasing ***engagement*** of stakeholders in institutions, systems and processes that govern the global commons, and their own role in enjoying and protecting the global commons.

As defined above, stakeholders can be those who have an interest in a particular decision, plan or programme, either as individuals or as representatives of a group. This includes people who influence, or who can influence, as well as those who are affected by, a decision, plan or programme.[62] This is a broad—and pragmatic—definition of "stakeholders", inviting us to think outside the box of traditional categories of social groups and carefully consider who has, or should have, a "stake" in a matter at hand (***See boxes 13 and 14***).

Thus, stakeholders in the dialogue process can include community/traditional leaders, indigenous peacemakers, elders, youth, religious leaders, faith-based organizations, oral artists, community members, local NGOs/CSOs, the private sector, international organizations, donor representatives, and national and local government.

Convening or engaging stakeholders should be conducted in a manner that ensures that all who need to be participating will not only have a chance to do so, but also be motivated to do so (need, intention, opportunity). In many cases, specific outreach may have to be undertaken to motivate people to engage in a dialogue process; and in many cases, investment in capacity-building for effective participation is needed.

Special attention should also be paid to those who stand back and do not usually participate ("bystanders"). They need to become motivated to participate—by appealing to their sense of justice and/or to their self-interest. When building multi-stakeholder dialogue processes, one will need to be "multilingual", that is to say, to "speak the language" that different groups respond to. Within the private sector, for example, appeals to business-related interests will often constitute the most effective "language".

Box 13

ALGERIA: DIALOGUE PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS THE COUNTRY'S CONFLICTS

Kouaouci (2005) describes several dialogue procedures that Algerian politicians and others have engaged in to address the country's conflicts. One of these dialogues, gathering all political parties but held independently of the government, took place in Italy in November 1994. The meeting was successful in that it agreed on a platform to end the crisis, but it subsequently was rejected by the army and the President.

At this time a new party was created, as the others were discredited by their involvement in the dialogue. The author draws the lesson that "all stakeholders should have been involved including the army, other armed groups, civil society organizations."

Box 14

FIJI: WHEN DIALOGUE AMONG RELIGIOUS LEADERS IS NOT COMPREHENSIVE ENOUGH

Hassall (2005, p.9) provides an example of how crucial it is to involve all who have a stake:

> Dialogue among religious leaders has not proved sufficiently comprehensive to assist in resolution of the most critical issues. While there is a Council of Christian Churches in Fiji the dialogue required is between leaders of Christian, Hindu and Islamic communities. The multi-faith forum Interfaith Search Fiji brings together Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Islamic representatives but the Methodist Church of Fiji does not participate—an important omission since it is the strongest religious influence on the majority of Fijian villagers

Thus, an important group is not linked into the process as much as would be desirable. This weakens not only the representative but also the credibility of the process and its acceptance among villagers of Fiji.

Social identity

Looking at what creates an individual's identity and self-esteem helps to explain the linkages between societal realities and individual (psychological) reactions.[63] Society can be described as composed of social groups. People perceive themselves partially as individuals with unique characteristics, stories, perceptions, thoughts, dreams, hopes and so on. This constitutes their ***individual identities.*** People also perceive themselves as members of social groups (such as women/men, youth, workers/academics, urban/rural, etc.) and others perceive them as such. This constitutes their ***social identities***. Different social groups differ with regard to their status or the resources available to them. Individuals are aware of their group membership and its implications. Typically, people desire a positive social identity, which means belonging to a group that is valued, respected, and resourceful (***See box 15***). Consequently, low social status can threaten a positive social identity and reduce self-esteem. Therefore, low status groups (minorities in power or number) strive for improved social identity so as to increase self-esteem. There are various ways for individuals and for groups to achieve positive social identity; for example, through discriminating against other groups of higher or lower status than themselves. Thus, groups that experience exclusion and discrimination will likely discriminate against other groups. Group

membership will dominate the individual perception of oneself and others and be the main source of identity. Attention will be focused on the conditions that sustain or modify the boundaries between groups (the status and power of different groups, the legitimacy of these variables, the boundaries between groups). The changing social context is of utmost importance; thus, groups are in dynamic states of alliance or conflict.

Box 15
SOCIAL IDENTITY OF EX-COMBATANTS

As demonstrated by Hazen (2005), during war, social integration also takes place within groups of combatants, who develop a social identity as fighters, sharing their feelings of belonging to their "war family". These groups are also characterized by a set of shared beliefs and norms effective for fighting a war. This "pocket" of social integration must, however, be transformed when civil wars end, so that broader social integration and peacebuilding can take place.[a]

As pointed out by the same author (p. 5):

> There are two main challenges for positive social integration of combatants back into the broader social fabric of the country. First, there is the challenge of breaking the social bonds of the war family and encouraging combatants to voluntarily leave their war family. Second, there is the challenge of how to reintegrate, in practice, these ex-combatants into their communities and into society at large. One important key to addressing these challenges is to understand the dynamics of the processes involved: integration into the war family, disintegration of the war family, and reintegration into society. Without an understanding of the first two processes, achieving social reintegration will be extremely difficult. The failure to ensure the disintegration of the war family and enable the combatant to choose to return to his/her community, poses great obstacles to successful reintegration

[a] Hazen (2005).

When we look at social identity processes through the lens of the concept of social, the psychological dimension can add to our understanding of what helps or hinders positive social relations, in as much as people are drawn to societal hierarchies out of the need for self-esteem and self-worth. The more pronounced the hierarchy, the stricter the boundaries between different groups. In times of destructive conflict, various stakeholders become deeply entrenched in their respective identities: the boundaries between groups are extremely tight, and the willingness and ability to engage with "the other" are very limited. "Exclusionary politics of identity" that do not recognize the legitimacy of other identities make constructive dialogue impossible.[64] In a dialogic process towards social integration, powerful, or winning, parties will have to abdicate some of the power and prestige to which they have grown accustomed. Victims encounter this stumbling block as well, as their victim status automatically assigns them to a status of higher moral ground, which they may be very reluctant to relinquish.

Again, it is important to underline that social integration is not about attempting to "overcome" diverse identities and collapse them all into one identity but rather about valuing the freedom to assert one's identity and achieve satisfaction through the sense of belonging, while embracing diversity.

Role of National Government

The State plays a critical part in the realization of socially inclusive societies. Governments may choose to invest in inclusion-sensitive policies and practices through legislation, institution-building, and service provision. It is the role of government to ensure that barriers to the full enjoyment of all human rights are eliminated, that discriminatory laws are corrected, and that laws and regulations devised to overcome discrimination are enacted. Building appropriate institutions and accessible mechanisms of redress is as important as raising awareness of non-discrimination laws and policies and using education and the media accordingly. In short, there is a need to invest in creating a society for all, and Governments are a key actor in this regard.

The State and civil society can assume roles that counterbalance each other in the social integration process. For instance, where the State drafts policy, civil society may initiate, evaluate, challenge or support that policy, and where the State funds programmes, civil society may implement the programmes.

More specifically regarding participatory dialogue, national government can further an enabling environment through actions such as:

- Recognizing the need for, and exploring the potential of, participatory dialogue as one of the opportunities to build peace
- Incorporating participatory dialogue into national peacebuilding and development strategies
- Making explicit its ongoing commitment to sustaining the dialogue process, both during and in the absence of crisis
- Building capacity among all stakeholders, at both national and local levels: this includes providing access to information and knowledge as well as supporting the investment of time and resources
- Supporting institutions that are promoting and facilitating dialogue with the purpose of achieving conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding;
- Strengthening innovative partnerships among government, the United Nations and civil society organizations, including indigenous peoples' organizations[65]
- Considering initiatives of decentralization and devolution that can serve as "bridges" and create entry points for participation that are closer to people's homes and lives

This points to the role of government as an initiator in respect of convening and facilitating dialogue among stakeholders. For example, in the case of clash or conflict between citizens and recent immigrants, both government and civil society organizations can promote dialogue leading to understanding and mutual accommodation (***see box 16***).

Box 16

CANADA, KENYA, SWEDEN: SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION OF GOVERNMENT

Examples from Canada and Kenya show how successful interventions of national or local governments have helped to create an enabling environment. The example from Canada illustrates the role of the national Government and local community in financially supporting the creation of a free and ongoing family intervention workshop to prevent disconnection in family relationships. The case study from Kenya shows how a Government created assemblies of elders for communal security and peace.

Sweden's integration policies provide another example, illustrating how the strong social democratic welfare State has contributed to the creation of rather liberal integration policies. Residency requirements for naturalization are relatively short and there is an explicit goal of integrating immigrants into the civil society, which is opposed to the classical politics of assimilation, where cultural adaptation is seen as a prerequisite for naturalization.[a]

[a] United Nations, DESA, Division for Social Policiy and Development (2005 a).

Role of international organizations

International organizations can contribute to social integration processes by convening Governments and stakeholders in participatory dialogue processes, thus also inspiring Governments and stakeholders to engage in participatory dialogue in their countries. Often, they sponsor or facilitate a dialogue process responding to a broad challenge such as poverty, economic crisis, political paralysis or violent conflict. In fact, the United Nations has played a key role in establishing dialogic procedures and leading the "participatory dialogue movement".

International agencies also serve as designers, convenors and facilitators of participatory dialogue processes in individual countries. They work to support national strategies that may contribute to reducing, through political citizenship, the profound tensions existing today between the principle of equality and the functioning of the globalized markets.

UNDP, for example, has undertaken various activities in the stakeholder process, including situation analysis, opportunity assessment, and support in dialogue design, resource mobilization (an important element for sustainability), logistic and technical assistance, and capacity-building for national stakeholders.

Role of local government

Within the next few years, more than half of the world's population will be living in and around cities. The governing of people is becoming equivalent to the management of cities, and many of the strategies for social integration have historically as well as currently been developed in urban planning and local government. The city is also the home of the socially excluded as well as the supposedly included. Since mayors and city councils take most of the decisions that have a practical bearing on social integration, they share many of the tasks of national Governments in creating an enabling social and political environment for participatory dialogue as discussed above. In many areas, they can be even more effective than national Government because they are "closer" to the people, and are perceived as such. Local Governments can also engage in

furthering social integration by the way they design, develop and maintain the built environment in cities. The careful development of public spaces is a case in point: these can be designed in ways that allow people to feel safe in them, to easily find their way around in them, and to use them for gathering (leisure and work), recreation and other purposes that express and further citizens' perception of home and belonging and their "sense of place" as a shared identification with the place.[66]

Role of civil society

Civil society can be described as the web of social relations that exist in the space between the State, the market, and the private life of families and individuals. This reflects a widespread tripartite or trisectoral model that identifies three main sectors in societies: government, the private sector and civil society.[67] This web manifests itself in groupings, communities and associations, and it contributes significantly to social integration by developing social capital.[68] Civil society also includes voluntary charities, community-based groups, traditional leaders and religious institutions; movements (social, political, environmental, solidarity); non-governmental organizations (advocacy, implementation); and parastatal companies, political parties, trade unions and professional associations, private foundations and donors, media (private non-profit and State), educational and research institutes, organizations and networks of youth, persons with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons, ex-combatants, migrant workers, ethnic/religious minorities and others.[69]

Civil society organizations fulfil a multitude of roles and are essential to development, in particular in respect to addressing exclusion and furthering social and economic justice, and respecting human rights, as well as protecting the natural environment. They, inter alia:

- Work to prepare the poor and the socially excluded for effective participation in the affairs of society, to develop human resources, to help mitigate the adverse effects of market weaknesses and market failures, and to enhance the bargaining power of marginalized groups
- Through advocacy and campaigning, serve as a check against excesses of government, human rights violations and abuse of the rule of law, as well as monitor the application of constitutional provisions and help to establish inclusive policies and mechanisms
- Through awareness-raising activities, promote civic, voter and peace education to popularize democratic norms and culture among citizens

A stable, predictable State is a prerequisite for a strong civil society. As civil society interacts with governing authorities, it: ***contributes***, by participating in policy dialogue; ***complements***, by working in parallel as a separate/autonomous entity; ***contracts with***, by carrying out government programmes; ***contests***, by challenging government actions, priorities and behaviours; and ***colludes***, by supporting State-sponsored discrimination and oppression.[70]

Civil society actors may play a role in manufacturing either negative or positive social relations. Examples of the former include drug cartels and human trafficking rings; examples of the latter include the work of conflict resolution practitioners, peace activities, and in academia (***see boxes 17 and 18***).

Box 17

GHANA: THE KONKOMBA-NUNUMBA CONFLICT AND THE INTER-NGO CONSORTIUM

In order to address protracted violent conflict among different ethnic groups in northern Ghana, non-governmental organizations founded the "inter-NGO consortium" to provide humanitarian relief in the aftermath of violence, destruction and displacement of thousands of people.

Part of this undertaking involved their engagement in a process through which leaders of all the different ethnic groups were invited to advise on how development activities could continue in conditions of such violence and inter-communal hatred. They engaged in a series of dialogues, beginning with a comprehensive assessment through meetings with influential leaders, chiefs, social groups, political leaders, community meetings, etc. They built an expanding and deepening dialogue process that included ever more groups and people and led to the signing of the "Kumasi Accord".

The programme also includes capacity-building elements and establishing institutions, struc-tures and networks that help to respond to emerging issues.[a]

[a] See Bombande (2005).

Role of communities

Communities are the smaller, overseeable entities within societies, and social relations within them often mirror the relations between groups at a national level. However, social relations among different groups can also vary greatly at different levels, and "pockets" of trustful relations and functioning communication can exist between individual group members at a community level even when relations are fragmented and polarized at the societal level. Such individuals are often the "best candidates" for inclusion in national dialogue processes, in addition to group leaders, who may have to behave in a more adversarial manner, at least in public. Local communities enjoying positive social relations can serve as foundations for social integration processes, even if they exist within a larger context of fragmentation.

However, communities are also the places where violent conflict can first erupt and spread upward to a regional or national level. Hence, investment in social integration at the community level is of the utmost importance.

Local ownership of social integration processes is crucial to their success. Ownership of, and commitment to, the design and implementation of social integration processes rest with individuals and communities. Often, it takes more time and resources to build such ownership in phased dialogue processes up from the local to the regional and national level, yet the benefits of such bottom-up development outweigh the costs. "Top-down" activation elements and "bottom-up" mobilization and ownership need to be combined, and this is particularly evident at the community level.

Box 18

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY NGOS IN RESPONSE TO VIOLENT CONFLICT IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS

Violent conflict is not always the result of purposeful activities of specific actors, which have been thought through. In intraState conflicts, the role of spontaneous and occasional factors becomes more important. In such a situation, both outside actors and local civil society institutions' mobility and capability of immediate intervention can play an important, and sometimes decisive, role. An initiative undertaken in the right place and at the right time may channel a conflict towards a non-violent form. An ongoing peace dialogue process is a crucial element of success in such a situation. Activities undertaken and results achieved by NGOs in the northern Caucasus included those presented below:[a]

Actions	Results
Work with the local Chechen community, providing an "outside perspective" on their actions and statements	Helped them prepare statements and take actions that worked towards easing tensions Increased the influence of the reasonable and moderate local NGO leaders within their community
Work on restoring relationships between Chechen and Dagestan villages	Prevented the development of a general negative stereotypic reaction directed towards Chechens
Appeals to local and federal authorities, prepared immediately as tensions rose	Drew attention to the problem Overcame the feeling of isolation of the local Chechen community, offering hope for a non-violent resolution
Work in the conflict zones; monitoring the situation "on the ground"	Encouraged local authorities to stop human rights violations Provided objective and up-to-date information about the situation in the conflict zone
Work with federal authorities, alerting them to possible negative developments	Helped the republican leadership establish a clear position regarding the need to prevent an escalation of inter-ethnic conflict
Organize joint work of representatives of various ethnic communities on restoring the devastated villages	Overcame the psychological tensions between ethnic communities

[a] See Kamenshikov (2005).

Social integration processes take place at every level, and it is within communities that such processes are enacted at the individual and small-group level. Circumstances at the local community level may vary greatly across a country—between rural and urban communities, between different regions populated by different proportions of ethnic or religious groups, etc. Hence, local social integration policies should be designed flexibly, and rooted in community settings and traditions. Different dialogue practices may be appropriate in different communities, and a variety of tools and room in which to act should be made available in ways appropriate to each community.

Community-based organizations, which are often the local nodes in nationwide networks, have an important role to play in social integration at the local level, and in exemplifying constructive engagement among social groups, which can have a positive impact on the wider societal development. Communities and their organizations should be supported through capacity-building measures, recognition and resource support in order to enhance their potentially leading role in social integration and in building a culture of dialogue.

Role of the private sector

Many actors in the private sector are, owing to globalization, now operating in more remote, insecure or conflict-prone areas in developing countries, where local populations are often excluded/marginalized. Increasingly, these private sector actors are facing difficult situations where they find themselves caught in conflict between, for example, national authorities, to whom they are paying taxes, and local communities that have not benefited from their operations. Many of them recognize that including the local communities from the beginning and facilitating their participation, building positive social relations, and improving their livelihoods are the best ways to avoid conflicts in the long run. With this realization, they are joining with other stakeholders in "promoting universal environmental and social principles",[71] or responsible corporate citizenship, so that business can be part of the solution to the challenges posed by globalization. In such a way, the private sector—in partnership with other social actors—can help realize the Secretary-General's vision of a more sustainable and inclusive global economy.

Potential positive contributions of the private sector to social integration include: investing in community and civil society development (for example, education and training of employees); supporting enterprise development and wealth creation in the local area; adopting conflict-sensitive business practices that are guided by tolerance, diversity and other human rights principles; and engaging in dialogue regarding structural inequalities, corruption, patronage, unfair distribution of tax revenues, and inequitable access to work and training.[72] Many such measures benefit greatly from consulting with stakeholders, that is to say, engaging in participatory dialogue.

Again, the United Nations has been inspiring and leading much of this debate, for example, in the context of the United Nations Global Compact, the UNDP Growing Sustainable Business programme, and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNDP engagement in the Seed Initiative: Supporting Entrepreneurs for Environment and Development.[73]

Role of political parties

Political parties can foster networking, social inclusion and cohesion as they gather people who share certain interests and build bridges between their different chapters, for example, across cities or provinces. In a functioning democracy, the excluded can use a political party as a means to secure inclusion. The party also provides a forum where both ideas and policies for social integration are elaborated, articulated and moved into the political agenda. Moreover, parties play an important role in the dialogue between different interest groups: in par-

liaments and local councils, parties, at their best, represent the groupings that foster the conduct of a constructive conversation, in other words, a dialogue.

The latter point highlights an important responsibility of political parties, which is not to create or widen rifts between different groups in society. Competition among political parties, particularly, of course, during election times, can be tough. Keeping negative campaigning against other parties—as compared with campaigning in favour of particular policies—to a minimum not only limits the dangers of breeding hostility among different interest groups but also leaves the door open for constructive coalition-building when the need arises. Forging government coalitions can, in turn, be an important demonstration of a culture of dialogue, with a potentially significant impact on the whole of society.

Role of the media

While the media can be categorized as a part of civil society, media actors warrant separate consideration owing to their potential influence on the direction of social integration processes. Media, by virtue of their access to a wide audience, may serve either to hinder or foster the development of socially cohesive societies. In other words, their power can be used for either purpose; and if they act responsibly, media can indeed hold up a mirror to society to promote self-reflection and dialogue, to educate on rights and responsibilities, to portray discriminated groups in a less stereotypic and prejudiced way, and thus also to defuse conflict potential. Media can also serve to hold government accountable and to guard against the abuse of power.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) offers an example of how media can be used by international organizations in support of protecting human rights. The UNESCO-sponsored International Freedom of Expression Exchange network mobilizes international public opinion, non-governmental organizations and professional associations against violations of the rights of journalists, through working with media that publicize instances of such human rights violations.[74]

Measuring Social Integration

Social integration is a complex and dynamic concept, and there are instruments and indicators to measure a number of aspects of social integration. However, in order to further our understanding of social integration and to measure progress in implementing the Copenhagen Programme of Action, it would be useful to develop a ***social integration index*** that integrates the key components of the concept into one overall indicative measure. Such an index, if widely used, would also draw more attention to social integration processes and would allow more widespread identification and dissemination of good practices. Finally, a regularly applied social integration index could serve as an early warning mechanism and help prevent societies from slipping into undesirable stages of social relations.

To develop such an index would require a research programme, partly based on action research approaches, involving experts from a range of disciplines and community groups experiencing various levels of social integration/disintegration (***see box 19***).

The present report cannot and is not meant to encompass such an undertaking. Hence, the following remarks represent an attempt to initiate discussion rather than to present a conceptual framework ready for implementation.

Box 19

INDIA: SOCIAL NETWORKS AND VIOLENCE

Varshney (2001) measured the pre-existing networks of civic engagement, comparing urban and rural communities, in India and their respective likelihoods of erupting into violent inter-ethnic/inter-religious conflict. The density of such networks turned out to be the single best predictor for whether or not communities would errupt into violence. The effect can be explained with reference to the higher level of anonymity and the lower likelihood of dense cross-sectoral networks' developing in urban settings. Such networks allow for quick communication, including for clarification of events, and for easier access to each other when there is a need to agree on a common strategy, for example, when community leaders ask the members of the communities to refrain from violence.

Components of a Social Integration Index

In respect of identifying the building blocks of social integration, indicators and measurement instruments would be needed:

- To assess levels of ***inclusion***, including an assessment of institutions, mechanisms and procedures for inclusion that are provided in a given country. Questions: What entities exist? How inclusive are they?[75]
- To assess levels of ***participation***, including measuring the frequency, equality, equity, transparency and effectiveness of participation by all social groups, with particular attention to minorities and marginalized and (formerly) excluded groups.
- To address ***justice/social justice***, including assessing the constitution and laws of a country. Questions: Are they free from discriminatory aspects? It is equally important, however, to assess policies and mechanisms to ensure the full implementation of all human rights and further equality and equity among citizens. Questions: What policies are in place? Are they supported appropriately? How do designated beneficiaries assess them?

The level of social integration depends on the above factors, and has an impact on the quality of ***social relations***, which could be measured by assessing relationships across all sectors of society: government, civil society (and its numerous social groups), business, and—for the developing world in particular—intergovernmental organizations and donor institutions. Are there relationships across the sectors, and, if so, of what quality as measured by trust, frequency and quality of communication, mutual understanding and mutual respect, frequency and quality of collaboration)? Measuring social relations can benefit greatly from tools developed for measuring social capital, both within and across the domains of different stakeholders/sectors.[76]

It would be useful to develop standards and margins that indicate the different stages of social relations discussed above. For example, what frequency of inter-group communication can be considered indicative of fragmentation or coexistence, for example?

In all cases, there is a need to look at the different domains within society (political, economic, social, cultural and psychological) and to determine if and how social integration is manifested in each of them.

It is equally important to keep in mind that there is an "outside" and an "inside" perspective on most of these aspects and components that influences how people perceive their situation and the situation of their country, pointing to a need to compare the "objective" data, and the "subjective" perception and interpretation of these data.

Box 20

MEASURING SOCIAL RELATIONS: THE SCOTTISH OFFICE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The Scottish Office Development Department has engaged in a monitoring and evaluation process to measure social inclusion, for the explicit purposes of providing measurements of success or failure, and providing feedback to allow review of policy and practice. This implies that monitoring indicators must be: (a) capable of specification in terms relevant to the strategies' objectives and outcomes; and (b) capable of being collated frequently enough to allow adaptive management approaches to operate effectively.

Qualitative monitoring captures additional forms of information gathering and evaluation. It draws on the main themes of community capacity, partnership and involvement in the process of implementing the social inclusion partnership and regeneration policy framework.

Key criteria applied with respect to the selection and use of indicators are:

- Robustness: data must be statistically robust (as reflected, for example, by the use of persons per room rather than an occupancy density measure for overcrowding)
- Relevance: data should be reliable and valid indicators of the measure involved
- Flexibility: reflecting the preference for simpler variables, which can be more readily combined into aggregate indices, and separated for different purposes

Indicators selected must be consistently available throughout the programme period at the required frequency and on the required spatial scales. Monitoring activity is itself seen as a learning exercise rather than the conduct of a pre-determined application. This implies that: (a) the appropriateness of indicators is itself kept under review; and (b) linkage indicators that inform the relationship between key policy areas (for example, stability and prosperity) are identified. The themes covered by the indicators are: stability; sustainability; prosperity; and empowerment.[a]

[a] See www.trp.dundee.ac.uk/research/geddes/monitor/indicat.htm for further details.

It has been argued that inclusion, participation and justice all benefit from ***participatory dialogue processes***. Hence, measuring the frequency and quality of participatory dialogue will have to be an important component of measuring social integration.

Inclusion, participation and justice are prerequisites for ***active engagement*** of all citizens in envisioning and building a common future. Hence, the following should be considered: Which social groups are engaged in building a common future at the local and national levels? In what way? One would also need to assign certain levels of "intensity of engagement" to certain activities of engagement. Assessing the pervasiveness of a "culture of dialogue" would also be part of such an endeavour (***see box 21***).

Box 21

GUYANA: MEASURING POSITIVE CHANGES

The UNDP Social Cohesion Programme in Guyana provides an example of a context-specific, multidimensional and practical set of indicators with which to assess positive change, namely:

- Strategy on prevention of election violence ensure national ownership; support key nationals; facilitate coordinated approaches for the national and international development partners
- Support for a national conversation process
- Commitment of the youth arms of the two dominant political parties to a joint calendar of activities and to dialogue as the first response
- Change in language: everybody talks about the need for cohesion
- Better collaboration between international donor community and government institutions
- High level of interracial marriages and social interaction

Approach or Process?

Before attempting to tackle the puzzle of measuring social integration, it is necessary to consider whether social integration is an approach or a process. In this regard, one notes that:

- An approach represents a suggested course of action, a prescriptive means to an end. The principles and values inherent in the concept of social integration provide the ingredients of such an approach. Social integration as an approach provides the framework for a people-centred, participatory, inclusive, just path to healthier communities and societies.
- A process refers to development over time, a continuing path with no definitive end. Social integration as a process offers room for continuous assessment, and improvement of the current situation.

The distinction has significant implications for measuring social integration, as measurement will always be based on ***comparison***. For example, how much violence makes a society "violent"? This depends on how much violence is prevalent in different places and has been prevalent in human history, and how these different levels have been and are being perceived by citizens.

In treating social integration as an ***approach***, one would compare different societies with different assumed levels of integration in order to produce some standards on what societies might count as fragmented, polarized, coexistent, and so on. One would also compare societies regarding how aware they are of the important role that social integration plays with regard to development, peace and security and what strategies are in place to further social integration. This would indicate whether the approach is being implemented and if so, how.

Treating social integration as a ***process***, one would compare measurements of the same societies over time, and, for example, assess whether social relations have improved or deteriorated.

It is evident that both forms of understanding of social integration are important and valid and that they complement each other. Implementing both forms of understandings in measuring social integration allows us to study a range of hypotheses about the relationship between social integration strategies and their impact on furthering more inclusive societies.

Box 22

FREEDOM HOUSE INDEX [a]

One example of an index partially related to social integration topics was developed by Freedom House. It measures freedom according to two broad categories: political rights and civil liberties. The survey does not rate Governments or government performance per se, but rather the real-world rights and freedoms enjoyed by individuals. The Freedom House Index covers a range of aspects, some of which are particularly relevant for measuring the justice component of social integration, for example:

- *Political Pluralism and Participation:* 1. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings? 2. Is there a significant opposition vote, de facto opposition power, and a realistic possibility for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections? 3. Are the people's political choices free from domination by the military, foreign powers, totalitarian parties, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies, or any other powerful group? 4. Do cultural, ethnic, religious, and other minority groups enjoy reasonable self-determination, self-government, autonomy, or participation through informal consensus in the decision-making process?
- *Associational and Organizational Rights:* 1. Is there freedom of assembly, and of demonstration, and open public discussion? 2. Is there freedom of political or quasi-political organization? (note: this includes political parties, civic organizations, ad hoc issue groups, etc.) 3. Are there free trade unions and peasant organizations or the equivalent, and is there effective collective bargaining? Are there free professional and other private organizations?
- *Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights:* 1. Is there personal autonomy? Does the State control travel, choice of residence or choice of employment? Is there freedom from indoctrination and from excessive dependency on the State? 2. Do citizens have the right to own property and establish private businesses? Is private business activity unduly influenced by government officials, the security forces or organized crime? 3. Are there personal social freedoms, including gender equality, and choice in respect of marriage partners, and size of family? 4. Is there equality of opportunity and the absence of economic exploitation?

[a] See www.freedomhouse.org.

Box 23

BOSTON INDICATORS PROJECT [a]

The Boston Indicators Project provides an excellent example of how to measure social inclusion. Indicators include, for example:

- *Civic Health:* racial and ethnic diversity; opportunities for civic discourse
- *Social capital:* trust in one's neighbours; civic engagement and social and racial trust; volunteer activity
- *Representative leadership:* corporate leadership by race and gender; diversity of elected leadership by race and gender
- *Voter participation:* registered voters; participation rates; number of contested elections
- *Healthy race and community relations:* reported hate crimes; residential segregation
- *Stability and investment in neighbourhoods:* people living at the same address by number of years and by neighbourhood; small business loans by neighbourhood
- Welcoming and inclusive environment: public building and amenities accessible to people with disabilities; multilingual capacity in public institutions
- *Access to information:* library books in circulation, by neighbourhood; community newspapers by neighbourhood and linguistic group
- *Strength of the non-profit sector:* non-profits by budget and type; revenues for the largest non-profits
- *Public support and philanthropy:* grants; public support from all sources; assets and grants of foundations; cultural sector funding
- *Others indicators* include the situation of the arts and their impact; expressions of cultural diversity; arts education; cultural participation; funding for the arts

[a] See www.tbf.org/indicators2004/civichealth/index.asp?id=2244

Measuring Social Integration as an Opportunity for Furthering Social Integration

It is particularly important to pay attention to how a social integration index could be developed: this involves considering every single indicator as it contributes to the construction of the integrated, and possibly weighted, index itself (***see boxes 22 and 23***). Indicator development is an important tool for social integration, as it, ideally, is based on dialogue and participation—or action research—that engages citizens from all relevant stakeholder groups in the process. Thus, the process itself becomes an intervention that uses dialogue for consensus-building while bringing the diversity of stakeholder views to light. An inclusive, participatory approach to index development would also ensure that the product was (more) applicable to different contexts.

Also, it would be desirable to formulate indicators that are (a) developed and measured in a participatory manner; as well as (b) already available (either as measurement instruments available for use, or, even better, as indicators that

are being measured already) (***see box 24***). This points to the need to consider how generally applicable an index must be and how context-specific it should be in order to: (a) be relevant for every context where it is used; and (b) allow for comparisons at the regional and international levels.

It is important to keep in mind that action research is not simply a more participatory method, but an alternative paradigm of research. It is a way of producing knowledge that acknowledges—in theory and in practice—that there is no neutral research. Participatory research starts from the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and draws upon this expertise by engaging community members in the collective analysis of social problems in an effort to understand and address them. Participatory research blurs the traditional distinction between "researcher" and "subjects", as all are equally engaged in the pursuit of knowledge for a common purpose. It assumes that the purpose of research is not only to gain knowledge, but also to use that knowledge to produce change that is consistent with the vision of a more equitable society.

Participatory evaluation should be pursued to the extent possible, so that participants can develop capacities in measuring the progress/impact of dialogue based on their own criteria. However, evaluation can be enhanced by bringing in external perspectives and/or inviting an external researcher/expert/practitioner to conduct an evaluation in collaboration with the participants of the process.

Collective evaluative processes (namely, participatory stakeholder surveys and focus groups) can be created in order to assess longterm impact and structural changes, such as policy shifts, institutional changes, priority changes, ideas generated, skills learned, attitudes changed, and/or group dynamics changed.

It would be particularly important to create assessment instruments that allow a lively and inspiring picture of social integration. Identifying "good practice" examples is a key component of promoting social integration, as successful examples that share lessons learned provide inspiration and lay the ground work for the replication, adaptation and scaling up of effective strategies for social integration.

Box 24

SUSTAINABLE SEATTLE[a]

One of the most comprehensive measurements of participation are the indicators developed in the context of the Sustainable Seattle project. They include indicators relating to: environment; population and resources; economy; youth and education; and health and community. These indicators are particularly interesting because they have been developed in a participatory manner. Through this process, people agreed on indicators that were meaningful to them, easy to apprehend, and easy to track. For example, people agreed to use the visibility of surrounding mountains from the city centre as an indicator of air quality—in addition to chemical measurements that people understood but found more difficult to "make sense of". Immediate feedback on progress or on emerging problems helped the community and its institutions promote sustainable development in Seattle.

[a] See www.sustainableseattle.org

Qualitative vs. Quantitative

Observing and analyzing a complex system and its dynamics, as in in social integration processes, will inevitably yield a variety of data—qualitative and quantitative. The variety of data have an impact on the complexity of the analytical work: the more discrete the data, the greater the challenge of integrating them into an assessment of the stages of social relations present in a society at a certain point in time.

From a purely methodological perspective, the greatest challenge that remains is the "synthesis" of qualitative and quantitative data. While both result from interactions between researchers and those being "researched", they are fundamentally different in nature. For example, regarding quantitative data, we have statistical methods for checking the significance of correlations and differences. Statistical significance, while conventionally defined, does offer convenient mechanisms for expressing the fact that a relation or a difference is indeed "established" or not. Non-quantified or non-quantifiable data do not offer such conveniences—but they tend to provide a bigger, broader, more nuanced picture of what we observe, because they are obtained through asking broader questions and offer more freedom of interpretation to those being researched.

There is no overall framework theory clarifying the relationship between quantitative and qualitative data, and we should not expect one to develop, as the two kinds of data stem from different approaches in the field of scientific enquiry.

However, we might assess the different approaches in relation to the preferences that we may have: measuring social integration can indeed work with both approaches. In whatever combination we use them, we should: (a) apply sound reasoning at every step and component of data gathering; and (b) acknowledge the challenge of combining quantitative and qualitative data and explain how we are dealing with it in every case, and why we are using a given approach.

Measuring Attitudinal, Behavioural and Relational Changes

Both measuring social integration and assessing participatory dialogue processes need rigorous analysis and evaluation of practice. Research and seminal thinking on evaluation are needed to identify existing and new indicators, including proxy indicators, criteria and frameworks that accurately measure subtle but critical attitudinal, behavioural and relational shifts in individuals and communities (***see box 24*** for a discussion of measures of success in different approaches to conflict management). It will be particularly important to draw upon disciplines that are not traditionally well represented in the international political, social and economic development discourses, such as psychology and social psychology, where assessing attitudes, behaviour, and relationships is rather common. Possibly useful examples of such tools include (***see also box 25***)[77]:

(a) ***Bogardus' Social Distance Scale:*** an instrument for measuring attitudes towards members of social or ethnic groups which is based on the assumption that one's liking for a group is reflected in the social distance that one finds acceptable in relationships with members of the group. People undergoing measurement by this scale indicate whether they would willingly allow certain ethnic groups to enter into increasingly close relationships with themselves;

(b) ***Osgood's Semantic Differential*** (and other tools based on this concept): an attitude scale that includes various subscales that measure the connotative meaning of the attitude object being measured. These subscales are bipolar and respondents are asked to place a checkmark along the line between the two bipolar opposites: (for example, good and bad). A respondent's score consists of the average of the ratings. This approach is based on the finding that there are three elements of meaning connected with all concepts: evaluation (good/bad), potency (strong/weak) and activity (active/passive). The first of these (evaluation) is directly relevant to attitudes; so by using scales that are defined at each end by purely evaluative opposites, one can measure attitudes towards any object;

(c) ***"Implicit Measures":*** instruments that help to uncover pre-existing automatic (and unconscious) information in the mind, using procedures that uncover a person's feelings and beliefs without having to question the person explicitly. Such "implicit measures" include sequential priming, the Implicit Association Test, and techniques like the Thematic Apperception Test;

(d) ***Observing direct interactions*** between members of different groups, measuring social/racial attitudes, motivation to control prejudiced reactions, and contextual factors that affect verbal and nonverbal behaviour in interactions between members of different groups.

Box 25

MEASURES OF SUCCESS IN DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Bloomfield and Ropers (2005) analyse different approaches to conflict management and what they focus on when measuring success, namely:

- **Conflict settlement** through diplomacy and power politics at the official leadership level: the measures of success are *result-oriented*, relating, for example, to the stabilizing effect of political settlements
- **Conflict resolution** through direct civil society management: the measures of success are *process-oriented*, relating, for example, to improved communication, interaction and relations between parties or respect for different cultures
- **Conflict transformation** through strengthening the capacities of disadvantaged groups to deal with conflict and the capacity of divided societies to integrate: the measures of success are *structure-oriented*, relating, for example, to the elimination of socio-economic inequalities between identity groups, good governance, power-sharing, creation of cross-cutting civil society structures, and building of conflict management capacities at the grass-roots level

NOTES

[1] See United Nations (1994), para. 69.

[2] Generally, it is important to keep in mind that societies differ as regards their levels of homogeneity/ diversity, and that cultures differ as regards the level of diversity, or non-conformity, that they respect and tolerate. Within any society, however, a level of diversity is a prerequisite of learning and creative problem-solving when facing new challenges.

[3] See Bloomfield and Ropers (2005). Also relevant, in this regard, is the Co-Intelligence Institute's notion of "deep democracy and community wisdom". According to the Institute: "As individuals, we are inherently more limited than a community. Although we can consult books and friends and critics, in the end we are limited to our own single perspective. We are, alas, only one person, looking at the world from one place, one history, one pattern of knowing. A community, on the other hand, can see things through many eyes, many histories, many ways of knowing. The question is whether it dismisses or creatively utilizes and integrates that diversity. Communities are wise to the extent they use diversity well" (www.co-intelligence.org/CIPol_CommWisdom.html).

[4] See Jensen (1998).

[5] See Beauvais and Jenson (2002).

[6] See the Government of Denmark's definition of social cohesion (Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, Senate of Canada, 1999, p. 22).

[7] See Schmitt (2002); Easterly, Ritzen and Woolcock (2005).

[8] See Easterly, Ritzen and Woolcock (2005), pp. 4-5.

[9] See Van Rinsum and de Ruijter (2002).

[10] See Bourdieu (1986); Coleman (2000); and Putnam (1993). For a comparative overview, see Field (2003).

[11] See Hemmati, (2002), p. 2.

[12] Effectively engaging all relevant stakeholders is one of the key success factors of participatory dialogue processes but also one of the main challenges. See Hicks (2001); and Hemmati (2002).

[13] Local Agenda 21 projects are an outgrowth of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in 1992 and emphasize engaging local authorities as the agents and custodians of sustainable development.

[14] See Hemmati (2002, 2005).

[15] Ibid.

[16] See Pruitt and Thomas, (2007, in press).

[17] See Künkel, (2005); and Isaacs (1999).

[18] See Donelan (2005).

[19] This builds on the Social Summit discussions, which described socially disintegrated relations in terms of *fragmentation, exclusion* and *polarization*.

[20] The present report will deal with participatory dialogic methods in more detail in chapters II. and III.

[21] See Porter (2005).

[22] See also Clements (2005), who calls for making all development policies and programmes conflict-sensitive.

[23] The term "Justice" as used in this report encompasses a broad sense of justice, including social justice and procedural justice, and not just legal justice.

[24] See "Guidelines for review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: bottom-up participatory approach" (forthcoming in 2007).

[25] See Donelan (2005); and UK Department for International Development (2005). Rights include civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as established in the International Bill of Human Rights.

[26] Bojer, Knuth and Magner (2006) assert that a multi-stakeholder process has internalized inclusionary practices when each participant assumes the role of co-host. They concede that while it may be difficult to truly involve each participant as a facilitator or leader of the process, this level of inclusion provides a benchmark to strive for.

[27] For example, UK Department for International Development (2005, p.6) contends that "Latin America would have half as many people living in poverty today if it had enjoyed East Asia's more equal distribution of assets in the 1960s". See also Schmitt (2002) and the International Labour Organization's programme on Strategies and Tools against Social Exclusion and Poverty (STEP).

[28] The UK Department for International Development (2005) attributes conflicts in the Sudan, India, Burundi, Rwanda, Kosovo, Indonesia, Northern Ireland, and Sierra Leone (see Box II) to social exclusion. The account by Levy (2005, p.2) of the social landscape in Jamaica mirrors these findings: Unemployment and the lack of social services are among the primary precipitants of the country's high rate of crime, with ... inner city black people suffering huge unemployment, poverty, often derelict infrastructure, few social services but considerable social stigma".

[29] UK Department for International Development (2005), p. 7.

[30] Mohiddin (1998).

[31] See Künkel (2005). In this regard, Ängeby (2005, p. 6) explains that dialogue is not a means of articulation but a means of mobilization.

[32] In addition, the message will be delivered by people and organizations "closer" to the various target groups and audiences than the government, for example, can be. This also ensures an increased credibility of the message. The similarity of the messenger to her/his audience increases the credibility assigned to the message—the effect is a "spillover" of people's being perceived as similar and also as more trustworthy.

[33] See Donelan (2005).

[34] See United Nations (1998).

[35] Francois Rogers, personal communication, May 2006.

[36] See Act 108 of 1996.

[37] The goal of transforming social relationships into more equal and just ones is emphasized by the term "transformational justice", which some people have started to use.

[38] See, for example, Maepa (2005); and Smith (2005).

[39] Special thanks to François Rogers, Gay Rosenblum-Kumar, Richard Smith and Chris Spies for their comments on earlier versions of these discussions on justice

[40] See Lawrence (1999); also presented by Donelan (2005).

[41] However, such in-group bonding can also be associated with, or indeed solidified by, discriminating against out-groups and their members—which does not further social integration across groups and sectors. It is useful to keep in mind the sociological distinction between *bonding social capital* and *bridging social capital* (Putnam, 1993), and hence distinguish between dialogue that helps bonding *within a group* and dialogue that helps bridging *between groups*.

[42] For a more detailed definition of these terms, see annex III.

[43] See, for example, Joseph (2005) who cautions that dialogue that resorts to such strategies often leads to a stalemate among stakeholders.

[44] However, as mentioned above, the need for empowerment, awareness-raising and education in relation to social integration is considered an essential investment in all countries.

[45] United Nations, DESA, Department for Social Policy and Development (2005 b).

[46] See Porter (2005), p. 6. and also see Sampson (1993).

[47] See Elsworthy and Rifkind (2005). However, non-verbal support may be preferred to the "talking cure", and many cultures have developed rituals to signify a rupture with a traumatic past and a new beginning.

[48] See, for example, Lederach (1997); Maepa (2005); and Smith (2005).

[49] See Porter (2005).

[50] It is important to keep in mind that "minorities" can be minorities in respect of number or of power.

[51] Figures from 2005 indicate that each year an estimated 300,000 people are killed by small arms in armed conflicts; 200,000 are killed annually in gun-related violence; and 1.5 million are wounded annually (Renner, 2005).

[52] See Ängeby (2005).

[53] See Enayati (2002, pp. 91-92); and Baughman (1995).

[54] See, for example, Smith and Mackie (2000).

[55] Spies (2005) also points to the necessity for a leader whose actions accurately capture the tone and interests of his/her stakeholders.

[56] Reviewing recent decades of research on leadership styles, Enayati (2002, p. 91) concludes that "it seems that effective leaders vary their styles to meet the demands of the situation".

[57] Relevant in this regard are the widespread collaboration of UNDP with civil society organizations; the United Nations Global Compact (United Nations, 1999b); and United Nations Global Compact Office (2005).

[58] Partnerships keep playing a key role in the Commission on Sustainable Development process, highlighting a range of knowledge on dialogue, trust-building, joint decision-making, multi-stakeholder team-building, complementary skills and responsibilities, and maximizing the involvement of the private sector.

[59] Künkel (2005, p. 2).

[60] UNDP and civil society organizations. A policy note on engagement.

[61] See Waddell (2005).

[62] Hemmati, (2002, p. 2).

[63] Social identity theory is one of the few approaches that successfully integrates individual (psychological) and societal (sociological) perspectives (see Tajfel and Turner (1979); Mummendey and Simon (1997).

[64] See Porter (2005).

[65] See United Nations, DESA, Department for Social Policy and Development (2005a)

[66] See, for example, the work of Gehl (1996) and Alexander (2004).

[67] In the context of the present report, it is argued that careful stakeholder analysis is required when participatory dialogue processes are being engaged in and that usually many more than three groups will be identified as having a stake in an issue.

[68] See Barnes (2005) (in Van Tongeren and others, eds. 2005).

[69] See Donelan (2005).

[70] See Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict/ C. Barnes (2004).

[71] See United Nations (1999 b).

[72] See Nelson (1999); and Donelan (2005).

[73] See United Nations, DESA (2006). Further discussion available from www.unglobalcompact.org; www.undp.org/partners/business/gsb/; and www.seedinit.org.

[74] See UNESCO and human rights: standard setting instruments, major meetings, publications, 2nd ed. (SHS-99/WS/16). (Paris, UNESCO, 1999). Information also available from www.unglobalcompact.org; www.undp.org/business/gsb; and www.seedinit.org.

[75] Existing measures of social exclusion could be used here as well. However, they tend to focus on the lack of inclusion and do not necessarily provide information on what types of inclusive policies and measures are in place.

[76] Typical dimensions for measuring social capital include groups and networks; trust and solidarity; collective action and cooperation; information and communication; social cohesion and inclusion; and empowerment and political action. This list demonstrates how much the concepts of social integration, inclusion, cohesion and capital overlap. Significant work with a focus on developing countries has, for example, been conducted by the World Bank social capital initiative (www.worldbank.org/socialcapital).

[77] It should be noted that there is indeed a plethora of measuring instruments, tailored towards different contexts and uses; the examples above are merely meant to provide glimpse. Kiecolt (1988) summarizes this: “A large body of research in social psychology has investigated the links between attitudes and social structure. Efforts have focused on: (a) relating attitudes to aspects of the social context and to indicators of location in the social structure; (b) investigating how social structure affects attitudes via such intervening mechanisms of influence as social networks and roles; and (c) identifying the psychological processes through which persons interpret their experiences, and which in turn affect their attitudes.”

Chapter 2. Linking Social Integration, Peace and Development: Emerging Principles of Participatory Dialogue

Social Integration, Peace and Development

As the result of rapid socio-economic transition, people often experience social and cultural dislocations, creating tensions among or between communities and social groups. These trends, which have been particularly prevalent in recent years, provide fertile ground for the creation of negative conditions that include social polarization and fragmentation, widening disparities and inequalities, and the marginalization of people, social groups, communities and institutions. Such conditions have increasingly been recognized as a critical factor in explaining why violent conflict erupts, particularly when inequalities are exploited by some groups to accelerate the movement of societies into violent conflict.

Today's violent conflicts are not fought between powerful States over political agendas or differences in ideology; most conflicts today are intra-State, occur in poorer countries, and are increasingly complex in nature. Moreover, the incidence of the recurrence of violent conflict within five years after a peace agreement is significantly high. When conflicts are fought in reaction against existing contradictions, or long-buried grievances over inequality or injustice, the mere cessation of hostilities does not bring resolution to these deep-rooted causes of conflict.

In response to the increasing number of intra-State or regional conflicts that are protracted and enter into long-term cycles of violence, international communities have made a commitment to finding better ways to help prevent such conflicts—before the toll of human and material destruction spirals and an international response becomes vastly more difficult and costly—through deepening their understanding of the root causes of violent conflict and its links with development.[1]

The United Nations system has shifted its approach from one reflecting a "culture of reaction" to one reflecting a "culture of prevention", and has made recommendations in several reports.[2] According to the report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict: "the earlier the root causes of a potential conflict are identified and effectively addressed, the more likely it is that the parties to a conflict will be ready to engage in a constructive dialogue, address the actual grievances that lie at the root of the potential conflict and refrain from the use of force to achieve their aims." [3] In addition, on 3 July 2003, the General Assembly adopted a substantial resolution on the prevention of armed conflict which recognized that peace and development are mutually reinforcing and that the root causes of armed conflict are multidimensional in nature, thus requiring a comprehensive and integrated approach to the prevention of armed conflict, and also recognized the need for mainstreaming and coordinating the prevention of armed conflict throughout the United Nations system.[4]

Dynamic Global Trends Influencing Social Disintegration/Integration

The world has been changing as it moves in two slightly contradictory directions: towards globalization and towards fragmentation, which is sometimes called "retribalization".[5] Globalization has both positive and negative manifestations. While it has expanded opportunities for some, it has undermined various forms of traditional systems, and thus has become a threat to systems that are losing influence. The processes of fragmentation as reactions to globalization are not in themselves negative, particularly when linked to a pluralistic global community and the concept of a civically rather than an ethnically based nationalism. The combination of these two general tendencies produces conditions that, paradoxically, make some violent conflicts less probable and others more so; the tendencies also make some societies more integrated, and others more disintegrated.[6]

The world has been changing in the direction of greater interdependence and mutual acculturation, and there is a resurgence of tendencies towards fragmentation in some of national experiences. In particular, migration has increased the heterogeneity of societies, in addition to increasing the incidence of complex and multiple fault lines based on ethnicity, geography, religion, class, tribe, age and access to resources.

Global environmental challenges, on the other hand, clearly demand an integrated, global response, which the international community has been working on, and struggling with, for a long time.[7] The increase of globalized civil society advocacy has certainly helped the push for the necessary responses, owing to increased awareness among citizens around the world, and active participation of civil society advocates in policymaking processes.

The Costs of Non-action: Risks and Missed Opportunities Associated with Investment in Social Integration

Investing in social integration processes can yield a number of important benefits. In contrast, the lack of investment in social integration processes implies risks and missed opportunities in terms of economic development, peace and security.

A society can exhibit either proneness or resilience with respect to violent conflict, depending on the way it is structured. For instance, a society capable of addressing grievances and resolving differences through ***dialogue*** is more resilient as regards to social disintegration. Therefore, investing in social integration means investing in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and is a condition of political stability and security.

As discussed above, social integration is also a source of wealth and economic growth, and thus strengthens a country's international status. Low levels of social integration, manifested in social exclusion from the labour market, a lack of solidarity within private networks, or a low level of civic engagement in voluntary work, may also have the effect of increasing public expenditure, for example, in terms of social benefits or the provision of services.

In short, failing to invest in social integration processes leads to costs and missed opportunities: conflict implies economic disruptions and the cost of rebuilding; social exclusion implies the underusage of the capacities of excluded

groups; and a lack of civic engagement increases the need for public expenditure (***see boxes 26 and 27***). Given such evidence as well as the potential benefits of investing in social integration processes, a lack of focus on social integration and one of its key catalytic mechanisms—***processes of participatory dialogue***—in the current development, peace and security agenda needs to be rectified. Such a focus emphasizes building resilient societies that may escape violent conflict and its costs (during and after) and maximizes the potential benefits of development efforts.

Box 26

NEPAL: COSTS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In a simple way, social exclusion leads to unequal power distribution—that is to say, less power for the excluded—leading to the formation of institutions that reinforce inequalities in power status and wealth. This in turn has a negative impact on the investment, innovation and risk-taking capacity that underpin long-term growth. In Nepal, with Dalits and Janajatis (almost 50% of the total population) kept out of mainstream development (by not using their skills and capabilities), economic growth remains at less than 3% per annum. As social exclusion and inequalities are interrelated, this also hinders the pace of poverty reduction. The impact of growth on poverty reduction is significantly greater when initial income inequality is lower.[a]

Moreover, social exclusion creates various forms of conflict and ultimately negatively affects stability and prosperity. In Nepal, the failure to address the issues of exclusion in a timely manner, based mainly on caste, ethnicity, gender and geography, is one of the root causes of the ongoing armed conflict (the Maoist "people's war"). More than 14,000 people have lost their lives, and the livelihoods of many people have been severely hampered.

[a] World Development Report, 2006: *Equity and Development* (Washington, D.C., and New York, World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 9.

Box 27

NIGERIA: COST OF NOT CONFRONTING SOCIAL EXCLUSION

"The cost of not confronting social exclusion can be clearly seen from the situation in Nigeria. In the Niger Delta, the poorest, the most excluded indigenous groups of people comprising men, women and children, have seen the oil companies and the State steadily grow richer, while their standards of living have remained the same over the past several years. The lack of infrastructure, the environmental problems, poor health facilities, lack of training, and lack of employment opportunities are all testaments to the serious challenges in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the Niger Delta region, and in turn amplify the costs of social exclusion.

Another serious cost currently at play as a direct result of social exclusion is conflict—armed youth rising against both the Government and the oil companies for reasons that these groups perceive as inequality and injustice meted out to them. They state … that they and their poor communities have been completely excluded from the riches brought by oil exploitation. On the contrary, if the oil companies and the Government had moved in a coherent manner, keeping in mind principles of sustainable development from the beginning of exploration of oil, say, around 15-20 years ago, the problems that exist today may not exist or may be much less, and therefore more manageable."[a]

[a] Ram Shankar, Contribution to the Virtual Round Table on Tackling Social Exclusion, UNDP Poverty Reduction Network (co-moderated with UK Department for International Development), May - June 2006.

Linkages Between Social Integration, Peace and Conflict

Peaceful social relations are relationships between and among people and groups of people that are non-violent, respectful, harmonious (without demanding conformity or using coercion) and cooperative. Just social relations are relationships between and among people and groups of people that are equitable, non-discriminatory and fair. Social justice is the bedrock of peaceful social relations.

While social justice is well served by universally agreed human rights instruments, the concept of peace remains vague. Too often, peace is defined not only by the absence of violence, but also by the absence of change. Many peace initiatives focus on "conflict"—its prevention, management, resolution or transformation. However, if peace is to ***be built***, it will need attention to be devoted to more than conflict (***see boxes 28 and 29***).

Peaceful and just social relations depend upon a level of social integration that allows, or encourages, active participation by all members of a society in creating dynamic and innovative options for their common future, through processes in which the rights of individuals and groups are ensured.

Box 28

HORN OF AFRICA: DEVELOPMENT OF CONFLICT—SENSITIVE APPROACHES

Countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia and the Sudan suffer from disputes derived from issues involving geographical boundaries, ethnic balances, tribalism and/or religious differences. The repeated efforts by the Africa Peace Forum and other non-governmental organizations to forge comprehensive peace agreements provide examples of dialogue processes designed to heal wounds and further development. The development of conflict-sensitive approaches includes a "toolkit" involving multi-stakeholder dialogue which has been tested in Kenya and will soon be tested in the southern Sudan.

Partially owing to globalization and global communications, there is also an increasing gap between the values held by older persons and those of youth. The fact that traditional leaders have lost their authority with youth and are no longer able to teach them community-oriented values, thereby contributes to disintegration. Disaffected youth are an increasing risk to social cohesion. Indeed, some prescriptions for dialogue and social integration recognize youth as a legitimate group to be included in as many situations as possible. When youth are not recognized and included, they may shift to negative behaviours that amplify the differences between age groups in society.

Box 29

NORTHERN CAUCASUS: HOW TO MANAGE EXISTING CONFLICTS

The future of the newly independent States will depend greatly on how they are able to manage existing conflicts and tensions in their territories. Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, almost all of the newly independent States have experienced serious inter-ethnic tensions, which in some cases resulted in violent conflicts. Several conflicts, especially those in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Tajikistan and the Russian Federation, have taken many thousands of lives, created huge refugee flows, devastated regional economies and led to serious setbacks in the process of democratic development in those countries.

From Chechnya, for example, violence is expanding into many parts of the region. In the 1990s the violence had mostly been due to inter-ethnic conflict. However, in recent years, more conflicts are related to the activities of organizations that have been built up around certain ideologies.

Peacebuilding activities need to be brought from the conference table to the field, and into the local communities and to the people directly affected by violent conflict. Restoring damaged infrastructure and paying compensation for lost property is not enough. Rather, organizations of the newly independent States/Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) need to work at the grassroots level, creating and implementing community-based programmes for peace and development with citizens. Dialogue is one of the key techniques for community-based peacemaking, including for addressing both intraState and ideological conflicts.[a]

[a] See Kamenshikov (2005).

Active participation and engagement need "spaces" where they can take place and be facilitated and sustained. Such spaces need to be safe and accessible to all, and Governments need to provide such spaces: "Only if we involve all stakeholders will we be able to build sustainable peace, bringing the cycle of bloodshed to an end."[8]

Processes directed towards creating more cohesive societies allow citizens to recognize and accommodate different values and identities of various social groups, and this will create social values and codes of ethics that can guide and monitor the culture of governance that promotes peaceful and just social relations.

However, this linkage does not come automatically. In order for there to be "coexistence" without polarizing views and growing disparities, more effort is needed in dealing with social complexity and social transformations: When people feel the need for change, they will develop an intention to engage. Intention is the driving force behind building peaceful social relations. If such intention is to be realized, the process needs to be guided by clear vision, and people need to have opportunities, and the capacity, to engage in processes directed towards improved social relations. Need, intention, clear vision, opportunity and capacity are thus the critical links between an unsatisfactory status quo and peaceful social relations that will allow society to build consensus around a set of core purposes and values, creating a strong foundation for managing and/or transforming the inevitable disagreements that arise.

Poverty, when associated with inequality and exclusion/marginalization, is closely linked with conflict, and social integration processes need to be integrated into efforts towards poverty reduction. Inequalities in the political, economic and social spheres, as well as systematic or general perception of exclu-

sion/marginalization, often create grievances. Such grievances, if accumulated over years, may create a climate ripe for group mobilization and if they are ignored or suppressed, may serve as precursors to violent conflict created for the purpose of rectifying the inequalities. The perpetrators are not always those negatively affected by the inequality: at times perpetrators consist of those fearful of losing power.

Box 30

NORTHERN CAUCASUS: HOW TO MANAGE EXISTING CONFLICTS

"Genuine peace will never be attained with the elimination of chaos, confusion and conflict. In fact, all three are essential to the continuance of life. Without chaos, there is no open space for future possibilities. Without confusion, old ideas and ways of thinking stick around well beyond their time. And without conflict, ideas and approaches fail to reach their full potential, never having been sharpened in the intense conversation of critical assessment. Peace of the sort that brings wholeness, harmony and health to our lives only happens when chaos, confusion and conflict are included and transcended".

— Harrison Owen, creator of Open Space Technology

Protracted, Intractable Conflict and Dialogue

There is a growing recognition that conflicts exist everywhere and in everyday life, and conflict itself is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as it is managed or transformed in a non-violent and constructive manner (***see box 30***). However, many protracted or intractable conflicts are extremely difficult to resolve, and often result in violent conflict. Intractable conflicts can be broadly defined as conflicts that are recalcitrant, intense, deadlocked and extremely difficult to resolve.[9] Others describe similar phenomena as deeply rooted conflict,[10] protracted social conflict,[11] or moral conflict.[12] Intractable conflicts emerge from a context characterized by a history of domination and perceived injustice. They regularly occur in situations where there exists a severe imbalance of power between the parties, in which the more powerful exploit, control or abuse the less powerful (Coleman, 2000) by using salient inter-group distinctions, such as ethnicity or class, to maintain or strengthen their power base,[13] and where there exists a preponderance of hierarchy-enhancing myths, which then legitimize the ongoing oppression of low-power groups.

Many issues are negotiable, and can be solved in discussions, negotiations or mediation. However, certain issues, such as those involving values, identities or beliefs of individuals, or certain groups, are often extremely deep-rooted, and therefore often non-negotiable, hence they cannot be compromised. In dealing with such situations where the different positions are grounded in differing ***values, identities*** and ***world views***,[14] traditional methods of conflict resolution or management that focus on problem-solving or decision-making are unlikely to produce the expected results: "When participants feel themselves threatened, typically there can be an upsurge in stereotyping, misrepresentation, marginalization, blaming and ultimately despair".[15]

However, dialogue, which provides a safe space for building relations, can facilitate, among conflicting parties with fundamental disagreements, the development or deepening of human connection, and enhance mutual understanding and trust through learning about each other's viewpoints.

Since dialogue participants are not confronted with the need to compromise or "give up" something of value, paradoxically, unexpected results can sometimes take place. People can become more willing to let down their guard, to truly and deeply listen to the other, and to behave in a less defensive and self-protective manner. Dialogue can then lead to a shift in relationships and the formation of trust, which can serve as the basis for a different kind of joint action that might never have been conceivable.[16]

Dialogue and peacebuilding Often, an increase in conflict is associated with a decrease in dialogue. The basis of international diplomacy is the creation of a method of dialogue capable of promoting communication between nations in order to avert violence in the form of wars, to further the well-being of all, and to protect the planet on which all nations depend. When violence or wars occur between nations, a first step towards resolution is the launching of dialogue. Providing a platform for regular dialogue and problem-solving among nations provides a practical means for avoiding violent conflict and, ideally, for reducing disrespectful behaviour among nations. Thus, communication, direct encounters and mutual understanding are crucial to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Similarly, at the national or community level, long-term engagement in dialogue is often the best method for averting persistent conflict and actions of disrespect.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation recognize good governance and the strengthening of civil society as the foundations for peacebuilding, and highlight the importance of redirecting all development cooperation strategies towards ***helping societies to manage tensions and disputes without resorting to violence***. They also highlight specific operational priorities for post-conflict recovery (such as demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants). The World Bank, UNDP and other bilateral development agencies have shifted their approach in this direction.

Similarly, other organizations have strengthened their capacity in the areas of social cohesion, social exclusion/integration, minority issues, and promotion of civil/social dialogue. These new approaches are considered to be a part of efforts in addressing structural causes of conflict. Particularly, civil/social dialogue has been gaining ground recently, as many leaders now prefer to prevent, resolve or transform conflict peacefully, through creating a space for civil/social dialogue. In particular, the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights and the Organization of American States (AOS) are active in using dialogue as a tool with which to strengthen democratic governance. EU defined "social cohesion" as an objective in its social policy agenda, and selected social cohesion as a priority theme for the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean Summit held in Guadalajara, Mexico, in May 2004.

Linkages Between Social Integration and Development

In human societies there will always be differences of views and interests. But the reality today is that we are all interdependent and have to coexist on this small planet. Therefore, the only sensible and intelligent way of resolving differences and clashes of interests, whether between individuals

or nations, is through dialogue. The promotion of a culture of dialogue and non-violence for the future of mankind is thus an important task of the international community.

—His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 1997

The Social Summit documented the groundbreaking acknowledgement of the need to marry economic and social policy for the sake of advancing human development. More than a decade later, this acknowledgement continues to spark discussions about the most effective methods for developing and implementing these policies.

Emphasizing social cohesion and the equitable distribution of economic resources makes economic sense. Inequality has been shown to be an important obstacle to economic growth in Latin America and Africa, and is fast becoming a problem in some parts of Asia (***see box 31***). More generally, social cohesion, a source of competitive advantage, is being supplied in increasingly scarce quantities.[17] Recent studies show empirical evidence of a positive link between the level of trust in people and the economic performance of a country. More-cohesive societies have always grown faster than less-cohesive societies. It should be evident that tackling social exclusion at large will be more effective, and efficient, than merely targeting specific disadvantaged groups—in terms of both short-term success in rectifying undesirable situations and avoidance of future costs.[18]

Trustful social relations build social capital, which significantly contributes to economic growth. Again, it needs to be emphasized that harnessing social integration for economic development also depends on institutions that can provide an enabling environment for civic engagement and cooperation (see box 32).[19] In other words, creating inclusive spaces for participation should be part and parcel of economic development programmes.

Box 31

ASIA: BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND SUPPORT FOR DIALOGUE

Although many Asian countries have achieved a growing national gross domestic product (GDP), the benefits do not reach all citizens, thereby leaving large segments of the population with a sense of injustice and unfairness. Globalization and migration have created new sources of political and social tensions across countries. Democratization has also "opened" a new dimension with respect to the management of conflict in societies, with the voices of the poor now being more powerful.

These new trends create fertile ground for polarization and violent conflict along the same "fault lines" in societies. Governments need to build institutional capacity as well as provide support to people for dialogue. Cross-cutting relations focusing on issues and "causes" can serve as key mediating agents among communal groups, Governments and markets. Civil society organizations often cut across the boundaries of different social categories, and therefore provide space for people with diverse backgrounds within which to work together on shared interests.

Tabang Mindanao can serve as an example of a successful multi-stakeholder process, initially focused on conflict resolution. It then expanded and became an integrated human development programme with the aim of empowering the indigenous population and building capacity in community organization, mediation, peace advocacy, basic services, and strengthening trust.[a]

[a] See Confessor (2005).

Box 32

FACTORS OF RESILIENCE [a]

Some societies are more resilient with respect to social tension and disintegration while others are more vulnerable. The following factors are crucial to facilitating resiliency:

- A strong social fabric that accommodates diversity
- Full integration of various groups and members of a society
- Social justice: not just policy but practice
- Institutional, traditional and legal system that allow fair and just recourse in disputes
- Good leadership
- Outside influence and contributions that generate creative solutions
- Culture of peace
- "The will and the way" to coexist, collaborate and cohere in peaceful/just social relations
- Capacity for self-reflection at a societal level
- Dialogue to help build a pluralistic society, and also eliminate or suspend the suspicion and fear responsible for social tensions
- Spirituality of the people and peace symbols that have been used to unite and reconcile various cultural and religious groups

[a] Summary of the e-dialogue facilitated by the United Nations, DESA, DSPD, June 2005.

Democracy

Democracy implies the non-violent political management of difference (of opinion, of ideology, of identity and so on) within a fair system of rules that apply to all. How is integration or cohesion achieved in a society? The democratic response is: by means of policy formulation and political and legal reform, through a process that establishes and maintains the rules of social justice across all social sectors. However, according to Bloomfield and Ropers (2005, p. 2), "that merely begs another question: how is such policy formulated, how are the rules established, in such a way as to be responsive to diverse opinions and competing interests? The simple answer is, through consultation and dialogue".

It would be easier to support democratization processes if democracy consisted of a unique set of institutions, procedures and practices, but this is not the case. The range of democracies that exist today illustrate that there is no form of democracy that is universally appropriate. While there are commonly accepted democratic values that form the basis for all democracies, the actual institutions, procedures and practices can vary depending on a society and its people. For democracy to function, it requires the consent of the people. Therefore, concepts such as inclusiveness, participation, ownership and sustainability are essential for the advancement of democracy. These concepts come together in the idea of

dialogue as a foundation for promoting democratic development. Dialogue is thus an integral part of the democratization process, and serves as an objective and an instrument at the same time. Citizens seeking to resolve differences peacefully through dialogue constitute the essence of democracy (***see boxes 33 and 34***).

However, it is important to keep in mind that dialogue processes are not substitutes for democratic institutions: they complement them and thus strengthen social integration and democracy.[20]

Box 33

DEMOCRACY INDEX

Idasa is an independent public interest organization in South Africa whose mission is to promote sustainable democracy by building democratic institutions, educating citizens and advocating for social justice. The following text is available from the organization's website (www.idasa.org.za).

Trying to find a definition of democracy that captures and incorporates the various institutional and procedural variations that exist in the world, and that everyone agrees to is an impossible task. There is no single checklist and even if there was, it is unlikely that all countries that are regarded as democracies would conform to every single item on such a list.

In keeping with the meaning of the origin of the word democracy—*demos kratia* in Greek—this principle literally means "people rule" or its modern equivalent, popular self-government. Thus rather than looking for specific institutions and procedures, we ask the question: To what extent does the political system in a particular country bring about popular self-government?

In our endeavours to answer this question in the South African context, Idasa developed a Democracy Index that attempts to assess the quality, and evaluate the performance of democracy in South Africa. In an attempt to refine the concept of popular self-government, the Democracy Index is designed around two key principles:

- The extent to which South Africans can control those who make decisions about public affairs (elected representatives and government appointees at all levels)
- The extent to which South Africans are equal to one another in this process

In other words—how much control do citizens have over the actions of government and how equal are they in exercising this control? Put differently—do the people rule and do they rule equally?

In terms of our understanding of democracy, therefore, the question is not so much about the institutional and procedural norms that are in place, but rather the extent to which those institutional and procedural norms facilitate the ability of citizens to rule equally, or at least participate equally in the governance of the country.

Idasa's diagnosis of South African society and its capacity for democracy identifies three general areas of activity, each of which has a civil society and State component. Each area demands equal attention. Idasa does not believe it alone can do this work, but considers capacity-building here critical to the achievement of its mission and primary objective:

- Representation of voters, and community and public participation
- Delivery of State services and constitutional obligations, and appropriately articulated and organized citizen demands
- Enforcement of laws, regulations, by-laws and the constitution, and informed compliance and consent by citizens.

Box 34

THE INTER-TAJIK DIALOGUE

The International Institute for Sustained Dialogue facilitated (in different roles over time) the Sustained Dialogue Process in Tajikistan from 1993 to 2005, a process that is still ongoing. The causes of conflict are manifold: Historical divisions hindered the development of a strong Tajik identity and strengthened the influence of regional identities. The Soviet policy of institutionalizing political and economic power in the northern district of Khojand led to imbalances. The advent of perestroika paved the ground for the formation of new political movements (democratic, Islamist and nationalist); the sudden independence created conditions under which local elites could challenge the old power formula. Regional politics played themselves out in internal alliances.

The Sustained Dialogue Process had started with a pre-negotiation phase (1993-1994), preparing for the negotiation and mediation phase that supported the official peacebuilding process (1994-1997). During a transitional period, the work focused on designing a process for national reconciliation (1997-2000) and is now in its peacebuilding phase, promoting and strengthening civil society organizations in Tajikistan (since 2000).

The Sustained Dialogue approach combines dialogue procedures and phases for building mutual understanding (a relationship focus) with dialogue procedures designed to enable solution-finding and collaborative action. It works with institutions and community leaders to establish a common body of knowledge as a basis for a new political narrative. The group jointly acquires problem-solving capacities that are participatory so as to define new terms of engagement with societal problems.[a]

[a] See Slim (2005).

How Participatory Dialogue Can Promote the Values and Principles of Social Integration

Participatory dialogue processes promote the values and principles of social integration through employing the strategies of inclusion, participation and justice that produce the foundation of the active and meaningful engagement of all citizens in building their common future.

Diversity Social integration processes involve bringing together diverse social groups through a pattern of actions that allow them to relate to one another more harmoniously. As previously demonstrated, dialogue is one key intervention towards social integration, and in fact is relevant to most other interventions, too: it serves as a vehicle for creating a culture of inclusion, participation and justice that enables active and meaningful engagement for a common future. Participatory dialogue processes achieve this by treating everybody equally, respecting everybody equally, and valuing equally everybody's contributions to society and its development.

Through the dialogue process, diverse persons, groups or peoples find commonalities, similarities and complementarities that can become the basis for mutual understanding and joint action. Whether the diversity is based on ethnicity, gender, age, disability, nationality or any other difference, the process of building mutual understanding and joint action is the manifestation of social integration. The building of mutual understanding and joint action involves communication and, indeed, increasingly frequent, regular and peaceful dialogic

conversations—beyond debate, discussion or negotiation. Dialogue is a process that involves reflection, respect and a joining of efforts to understand and take joint action. It is important to note that dialogues that are inclusive and fair are conducted so as to respect diversity and come up with mechanisms to manage difference ***not by integrating it out of existence but rather by creating unity within diversity with social justice.***

The "comparative advantage" of dialogue. Dialogue processes aiming to promote social integration do not necessarily carry with them an objective of achieving consensus: at times it is necessary to agree to disagree. Rather, dialogue enhances understanding on the degree of difference in view, and this can be useful as a step towards resolving or accepting differences.[21] Dialogue implies a search for shared meaning—for example, an understanding of and respect for each others' perspectives—and it is this search and process that makes dialogue a central catalytic mechanism for achieving unity within diversity with social justice.

> *In the word question, there is a beautiful word—quest. I love that word. We are all partners in a quest. The essential questions have no answers. You are my question, and I am yours—and then there is dialogue. The moment we have answers, there is no dialogue. Questions unite people.*
>
> *— Elie Wiesel*

In other words, dialogue delivers more results—and results different from—other forms of conflict management or problem-solving approaches—often intangible, long-term results but ones that can indeed have significant impacts over time and in unexpected quarters. Hence, participatory dialogue should be understood as an intervention that complements others.

The openness and transparency of dialogue processes increase the credibility of the results and the process of dialogue, and increase the likelihood of implementation, as more stakeholders are involved. In fact, multi-stakeholder dialogue contains the seeds (networks, relationships and shared understandings) of implementation of its recommendations by virtue of the overwhelming number of stakeholders that contribute to the decisions and view themselves as owners of the results and the process.

In development, the participatory nature of dialogue makes efficient use of various resources—especially in terms of human capital: the benefits of drawing more people into these processes permeate all aspects of development. By contrast, non-participatory development processes lack local ownerships, often do not target the most urgent needs in people's lives, and often use strategies that are not appropriate in the local context. More than a few development programmes have indeed caused conflict and inspired protest, and such costs need to be weighed against the costs of a longer participatory process that allows for learning and consensus-building in a partnership including Governments, donors, development experts, implementing agencies, civil society organizations, private sector investors, and local communities.

Finally, when continued dialogue processes succeed in unveiling and addressing the root causes of conflict, and lead to appropriate policy changes—political, social, economic, and/or environmental—then dialogue addresses conflict at its core. Hence, motivating, and indeed encouraging people to enter into dialogue is a worthy investment.

The core characteristics of a robust dialogue may be described as follows: it is value-based, locally driven, action-producing and relationship-focused. An important capacity developed through dialogue is awareness, which enables people to adapt to evolving environments, new and stronger tools, and changing needs.

Consideration of the advantages and challenges related to participatory dialogue offers lessons as to core principles and strategies that are at the foundation of successful dialogue processes.

Advantages of using participatory dialogue processes include:

- Local ownership: practices are flexible and thus responsive to local needs. Dialogue methods can be developed in a way that fits into the local culture. Stakeholders actively take the lead, as they feel that they own the outcomes. Local ownership makes process and outcomes more sustainable.
- Empowerment: dialogue builds confidence and harmony among stakeholders, as final agreements are reached through consensus and collective action.
- Wider reach: dialogue can be used in isolated areas where the State machineries are out of reach.
- Higher level of commitment: dialogue allows stakeholders to voluntarily make choices, in accordance with the level their own willingness and desire to be involved and change.
- Creativity: due to the flexibility of the forms that dialogue processes can take, lending participants a sense of freedom, the processes inspire individuals or communities/social groups to create extraordinary results with regularity. Diversity supports human creativity.
- Broad range of input—voices heard: voices of all the participants, particularly those who tend not to be heard, will be heard.
- Network-building: a support network that has the added advantage of sustaining outcomes is created.
- Capacity-building: participants learn new skill sets that can be applied both to the dialogue and to any joint action the participants might agree to, and also learn the value of self-reflection, and by extension, they gain awareness of how prejudices are formulated and learn how to overcome them.

Challenges of dialogue processes include:

- Biased stakeholder influence and political interference, which obtain when not all stakeholders have equal voices in the process, or when politicians influence the direction of the dialogue.
- Undue increase of stakeholder influence, as stakeholder involvement in decision-making might at times weaken the role of government. This is a concern voiced especially by civil society representatives, and in particular vis-à-vis the increasing role of the private sector.

- A lack of transparency towards the outside, which occurs when the general public is not well informed about a dialogue process, its topics and proceedings.
- Achieving real impact, as dialogue processes (if they do go beyond the goal of mutual understanding) need to lead to sustainable agreements and action plans that are implemented, and/or outcomes that inform policymakers who are making a visible impact. Otherwise, dialogue fatigue will be a result that puts future engagement at risk.
- Addressing structural causes of conflict and questions of power, as dialogue must not replace the dimensions that are at the root of most disputes: "Dialogue is a tool of politics, not a substitute for it".[22]
- A reputational risk of suboptimal processes, which arises when the process is not managed well, or fails, and lead actors run the risk of ruined reputations.
- Participants' drifting away from their constituencies, which can occur when dialogue participants change through their engagement in the process, while their communities or constituencies do not.
- Time to be spent and expenses, as dialogue processes are time consuming and can be expensive.
- Need for initial support, as engaging in dialogue requires new skills and supporting institutions that can provide safe spaces and capacity-building skills.

Spaces and platforms for a culture of dialogue. Dialogue is a general category that encompasses various styles of discussion among stakeholders at different levels of aggregation, be they national, regional, local, family or individual levels. If modern pluralist democracies and communities within them wish to evolve into more positive stages of social integration, they need spaces and platforms for dialogue, for mutual understanding, and for problem-solving and solution-building (***see box 35***).

Dialogue is a tool for managing content (contentious issues) and to help people live in harmony by taking actions by which they support and respect each other. At the same time, it is a process with value in its own right: looking at dialogue from a process perspective, the habit of dialogue itself becomes the accepted basis of engaging on contentious issues.[23]

While a conflict is often confined to one level of aggregation, dialogues at other levels may contribute to solution-building; for instance, the healing of a regional conflict could be catalysed or assisted by dialogue at a higher national level or at a lower community level.

When dialogue platforms and spaces exist at different levels, weaving a web of dialogic processes throughout society, a culture of dialogue emerges, paving the way towards further social integration. Another key component of a culture of dialogue is a shared understanding of values and of how to dialogue about these values.

Box 35

DIALOGUE AND POLITICAL CULTURE

According to Bloomfield and Ropers (2005):

One of the most important conceptual contributions which the dialogue approach can make to the creation of a pluralist society that manages cohesion across diversity is that of generally promoting a dialogue-based culture. This means that the characteristic elements of interest-led constructive dialogue should not just be used to positive effect in a handful of inter-group projects, but should also become a basic paradigm of political culture … Being used pervasively, dialogue can become—"a means for channelling and facilitating peaceful social relations …" that will "… also enhance the embedding of a truly democratic culture across the society, one of the strongest guarantees that the society, whatever its differences in opinion, belief or identity, will manage its diversity peacefully and be increasingly proofed against any resort to, or acceptance of, non-peaceful methods of conflict management."

Types of dialogue.

Participatory dialogue does not refer to one particular model or set of procedures but is rather an umbrella term. Different types of dialogue exist in different cultures, with more or less emphasis on specific tools and rituals to facilitate the process. Today, many hybrid forms exist that integrate traditional procedures, including those from different parts of the world, and modern process elements and tools, including those that have become possible owing only to recent developments in information and communication technologies.

Participatory dialogue can take place in private conversations and in public arenas. It emphasizes the fact that the individuals involved in dialogue listen to each other, speak to each other, and in particular share the dialogue space with respect and consideration.

We can distinguish between different types of dialogue by their specific goals and purposes, from focusing on listening and speaking freely in order to build mutual understanding, through building consensus and creating innovative solutions that integrate everybody's interests, to collaborative implementation and joint monitoring and evaluation.

Reflective participatory dialogue is defined as thinking that follows its course to completion and leads to tolerance and understanding of diverse world views and interests. ***Public dialogue*** denotes intense interaction among participants within a public, institutional framework, like a town meeting or a community-wide planning meeting. While public dialogue is less intimate than a private conversation, its public character has the advantage of promoting transparency and accountability through the visibility of the exchange and decision processes. ***Multi-stakeholder dialogue*** specifically refers to structured interactions in public arenas with a deliberately wide-ranging collection of participants who represent the key individuals, groups and interests involved in the topic of discussion. The multi-stakeholder process is particularly useful for bringing into the dialogue arena those people and interests that are often excluded or marginalized in society. At the best of times, dialogue becomes ***generative*** in that understanding, solutions and actions emerge that could not have been developed by the individ-

uals alone. The exchange serves to bring together diverse views and ideas; because they are brought together in a respectful and creative way, innovative solutions can be generated. This is particularly true when people joint in dialogue are diverse, as human creativity is enhanced by diversity.

These types of dialogue are not mutually exclusive, and they do not refer to specific methods and tools (which are discussed in chap. III). The descriptions here are meant to provide an idea of the variety of dialogic procedures.

Preconditions for effective dialogue. While participatory dialogue processes can be applied at all stages of social relations, they should be seen neither as the one method of intervention, nor as being appropriate for all kinds of situations and contexts.

For example, dialogue cannot replace justice (perpetrators need to be brought to justice), including processes of social justice such as restorative or reconciliatory justice. The truth about past atrocities committed by the perpetrators and the suffering of the victims needs to be brought before the public, and both sides of the story of groups engaged in conflict need to be told and possibly reconciled. Before this is done, it is unlikely that victims and perpetrators will be able to bring a participatory dialogue process to life.

Secondly, participatory dialogue procedures need to be rooted in the local context. Traditional methods and local knowledge are very useful for encouraging social cohesion, as they have worked in the past. In fact, it will be hard to identify a culture where no dialogic traditions have developed, and where those traditions have not grown within communities over a long period of time and been in tune with the overall culture and the challenges of its particular environment and history. The basic principles of dialogue—listening, mutual respect, and a focus on joint learning—are no strangers to any culture. People also tend to feel more comfortable and safe in a traditional setting that they are familiar with, and "sanctuaries of peace" exist in many conflict zones.[24] On the other hand, traditional methods may run the risk of excluding certain stakeholders who have historically and traditionally been excluded from the status quo mainstream (as is often the case for women, for example). In addition, traditional strategies have most commonly developed in the context of local communities, and their application in larger and more complex contexts and institutions at higher levels of aggregation may be difficult. As globalization has been eroding the functioning of traditional social regulatory mechanisms in many cases, dialogic processes could encompass a mix of recognizing local knowledge while at the same time taking advantage of modern dialogue techniques.[25]

Hence, the challenge is to extract the good elements from traditional methods while introducing new methods. This is best done in a participatory manner: designing a dialogue process in consultation with all relevant stakeholders who are likely to have diverse ideas about what makes a fair process, while providing process-related experience and expertise and possibly outside facilitation, is the best guarantee for the emergence of a process that will be perceived as procedurally just and comfortable for all. The need for acceptance and ownership of the process cannot be overemphasized: participatory dialogue processes depend completely on participants' respect for and shared ownership of the process.

Procedural justice Another related factor of importance is ***procedural justice***, "that is, the processes considered to be the right ones by all the stakeholders involved in peacebuilding, peace-making and sustaining dialogues. It is the guiding principles, or spoken and unspoken customary rules and activities that people use when talking about issues, differences of opinion, and making decisions; those that they consider fair".[26] Justice here is viewed as comprising the acceptable and appropriate rules for social behaviour and attitudes, according to the society of concern. A dialogue process is more likely to achieve a positive long-term impact if people consider the process fair and just.

Identifying or designing dialogue processes that all participating stakeholders consider fair and just is of the utmost importance, in particular when diverse groups with different identities, ethnic and cultural backgrounds need and/or want to talk with each other. The way in which something is talked about, discussed and decided is often as important as what is decided. Participants are more likely to comply with an outcome they perceive as just (even if the results are not in their favour), and are more likely to have a higher level of psychological satisfaction to keep relationships intact over a longer period of time, and to participate in the process again.

A process designed to fit the participants will certainly affect immediate outcomes, and more importantly, long-term ones. This is particularly important if the dialogue is intended to resolve, manage and transform conflicts between groups with different views. The process to be used needs to be carefully scrutinized if either side feels uncomfortable or unfamiliar with it, or believes it is unjust and unfair; if so, innovative methods need to be designed with the participation of all concerned. Procedural satisfaction is one of the basic ingredients for durable agreements.[27]

The usage of dialogue is also limited by the perceived need, the conscious intention, and the existing opportunities for engagement in dialogue. Stakeholders need reasonably stable living conditions to be able to devote time and effort to a participatory dialogue process. They must be genuinely interested and willing to learn and to "grow". Hence, entering into dialogue can be voluntary only: the process must be inclusive, inviting people to participate—it cannot coerce them into participating.

Emerging Principles and Strategies of Participatory Dialogue

Participatory dialogue rests upon a set of principles that inform the development of political institutions, norms and procedures.

Designing and implementing successful participatory dialogue processes mean maximizing their advantages and effectively managing their challenges. Based on the discussions above, the following principles and strategies can be formulated so as to guide the designing and facilitation of, and indeed the participation in, dialogue processes. Not all of them will apply to all situations, issues and settings but they should all be considered when planning, implementing and participating in a dialogue process.

These principles and strategies overlap, mutually reinforce each other, and can hardly be fulfilled without each other. They all serve to build trust among participants. All aim to create a culture of possibilities for dialogue and collaboration rather than one of separation and hostility. All challenge every member of the group to become a carrier and leader of and in the process—to make it his or her own process, and to engage actively and creatively.

The principles and strategies comprise:

Appreciation for unity: exploring possible common ground without passing over differences—agreeing to disagree when necessary/appropriate, focusing on shared values, shared meaning, shared histories and a shared goal.

Awareness: in order to sustain dialogue through challenges, stakeholders must be aware of their capacities, intentions and commitments to the goals. In addition, there is an emotional component among stakeholders that drives and sustains the process. The process of engaging with true feelings helps to create more genuine and realistic discussions of underlying issues, to develop strategies for reducing tensions and to promote levels of shared peaceful coexistence.

Choosing dialogue over violent conflict: initiating dialogue, as the main vehicle of governance, is the first and foremost response to emerging conflict in every societal domain. This includes the commitment of political, business and community leaders to demonstrating the value of dialogue by example. Such behaviour challenges the culture of politics; and engagement in a public discourse on this subject is an important aspect of building a culture of dialogue.

Community building: sharing the space created by a dialogue process builds a new community, and provides opportunities to effectively manage and share knowledge and skills, and build new social identities.

Equity: participation in dialogue processes must be equitable. Often, this represents the first time that people, particularly from marginalized groups, experience being treated equitably. Tokenism and paternalization have no place in a dialogue process.

Facilitation: dialogue processes need skillful facilitation, and the pervasiveness of dialogue will assist in building this essential skill for many people who engage in dialogue and assume, over time, the role of facilitator. This skill will also be useful in everyday life, in the family and at the workplace.

Flexibility: sustaining dialogue depends on the flexibility of the process, which should be designed to adapt to the changes stakeholders make during the process.

Honesty: in a dialogue, participants need to be honest and frank with each other; and this will depend on the existence of a safe space, which will need to be defined carefully, and in consultation with participants. Honesty builds trust, and the mutual accountability of participants as well as the accountability of the whole process depends on it.

Inclusiveness: dialogue processes should be designed with maximum inclusiveness. This may entail conducting active outreach, providing resources for participation, and motivating those who are reluctant to come forward.

Linkage to decision-making: dialogue processes need to establish clarity on how they are linked to, or indeed essential parts of, decision-making. This connection extending from dialogue to decision-making needs to be transparent and predictable; otherwise, people will turn away when their expectations are disappointed.

Listening and learning: when engaging in dialogue, all participants will learn and change—not only the excluded, the less powerful and/or the marginalized whose voices may be heard for the first time.[28] When a conversation is truly dialogic, all listen, all learn, all change. The outcome will reflect an integration of experiences and views, not the prevalence of one viewpoint. In other words, the meal will be different from, and taste better than, any of its ingredients.

Local ownership: dialogue procedures need to incorporate local knowledge and resources, and build on local traditions in order to create a comfortable space for participants and achieve sustainable outcomes.

Long-term perspective: dialogue processes are seldom one-time events. It is more accurate to see them as long-term and as involving conversations, time between conversations, shifting participation (usually expanding) and shifting focus.

Overcoming stereotyping: social groups are often separated by stereotypic ideas about each other. The successful outcome of a common endeavour is the best precondition for lasting change in respect of stereotypic perceptions of the "other group" and overcoming prejudice and discriminatory behaviour. Hence, it is advisable to begin a collaborative process with projects that tackle a task that is comparatively short-term and has high odds for success, where collaboration is indeed the most efficient approach, and where people from all participating groups share related norms such as work ethics and the valuing of environmental protection.

Power: it is necessary to address power differentials or imbalances when creating spaces where all views can be expressed and all voices will be heard. For instance, some authors assert that open forums hosted by those in power are, at times, merely token gestures, and that the decision-taking occurs at a different level that is inaccessible to forum participants.[29] Correspondingly, participation lies not in the consultation of stakeholders, but rather in their ***active engagement***.[30]

Reciprocity: the success of dialogue processes depends on mutuality and reciprocity: all participants need to open up, listen to each other, and learn from each other. This experience underlines the notion of universal equity, across the borders of status, power and traditional roles.

Resources: dialogue procedures require investment of financial and human resources—they cost time and money. Having to disrupt a dialogue process owing to a lack of resources can be worse than not beginning one at all. On the other hand, a process that is beginning to have an impact will be able to attract resources over time.

Respect for diversity: this is achieved by involving all relevant stakeholders (citizens, government, business), valuing all contributions, embracing differences of views, and investing in building trust and the capacity of all to participate effectively.

Results-oriented: dialogue processes need to deliver results: if they are perceived as "talk shops", they will not be valued. Desired results may vary considerably—from mutual understanding to consensus and joint action—but expectations need to be clear from the beginning. Precisely defining the purpose of the process, in dialogue with (prospective) participants, should therefore be a key component of the preparations.

Transparency: information about planned and ongoing dialogue processes should be available to all; otherwise, the legitimacy of the process in the democratic context is at risk.[31]

Global Trends Influencing Dialogue and Its Use: Dialogue Emerging in Public Discourse

Multi-stakeholder engagement processes, particularly those taking a participatory dialogue approach, are increasingly common. Many organizations at all levels—from the local to the international—have been and are experimenting with mechanisms and procedures that allow participants to go beyond stating their differences towards mutual understanding and joint engagement in finding and implementing creative and integrative solutions to complex challenges (***see boxes 36 and 37***). Some of these experiments work out well, while others fail, but all are important learning opportunities for Governments, international organizations and stakeholders.

This development is certainly enabled, and prompted, by a number of factors: the increased spread of democratization processes across the world; and widespread and increasingly accessible information and communication technologies (particularly phones, mobile phones, the Internet and e-mail), as well as increased international travel and thus exposure to different cultures (this, however, is limited mostly to travellers from developed countries). On the other hand, there exist growing global challenges, such as security issues (terrorism, energy security, etc.) and the increasing problems with the global natural environment (climate change, biodiversity loss, water quantity and quality, soil erosion and global agricultural production), as a result of which developments, people around the world are much more informed and much better connected to each other than they used to be.

International organizations, not the least among which is the United Nations, have been leading in the development of engagement mechanisms, often experimenting with procedures after being prompted by stakeholders who wish to bring their expertise and their outreach capacities to the United Nations Conference rooms. This opening is also spurred by the increasing realization of Governments and the United Nations that they can neither conceptualize the challenges ahead sufficiently without access to the knowledge and direct experience of stakeholders, nor implement agreements reached without the active collaboration of those stakeholders. The cycle of United Nations conferences and summits in the 1990s, and their subsequent review sessions, in particular, brought to light the need for effective engagement and collaboration with stakeholders.

The remainder of the present chapter provides a few examples of participatory processes that have developed over the past years.

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is an advisory body of the Economic and Social Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.

According to its mandate, the Permanent Forum will:

- Provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as through the Council
- Raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the United Nations system
- Prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues[32]

Box 36

YOUTH AND MEDIA

As regards the involvement of youth in policymaking, there have always been pressure groups that claim to speak on behalf of youth, but steps need to be taken to enable young people to represent themselves more directly and collectively to producers and policymakers. Regular regional conferences, preceded by web-based debates and linked to the media education curricula of schools, would give young people the opportunity to make well-prepared contributions to the media policy debate on a more consistent basis.

Likewise, resources could be made available for the creation of forums such as webzines or chat rooms on the Internet to facilitate dialogue between young people on critical policy issues. Arguments about young people's cultural and psychological needs are frequently used as a justification for protecting the vested interests of adults and as a defence against change.

Ultimately, policymakers should not simply consider young people's views or hear them out (as in consultations); rather, such listening should be developed into collaboration in the spirit of equitable partnership. In broadcasting, as in other areas of cultural policy, a dialogue must be created in which young people's voices will be heard, and cultural producers must be made more accountable to the audiences they claim to serve.[a]

Chat the Planet is an example of a global youth network that connects teenagers in the United States of America with teenagers around the globe.[b] *TakingITGlobal* is another example of a youth initiative, connecting young people from developing and developed countries, using new information and communication technologies.[c]

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[a] World Youth Report 2005: Young People Today, and in 2015. UN publication, Sales No. E.05.IV.6.

[b] See www.chattheplanet.com.

[c] See www.takingitglobal.org.

Box 37

INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

Dialogue processes that involve all age groups are still relatively rare. Few policies and programmes exist to promote genuine dialogue, exchange and transfer of knowledge between generations. Where they exist, the experiences are positive, as the processes serve both ends of the age spectrum.

For example, in order to meet the growing need for individualized attention in classroom learning, programmes exist in which older people provide classroom assistance to schoolteachers. Older volunteers work with students: they explain writing mistakes, listen to them read aloud, play educational games and test their application of the lesson plans.

Young people appreciate this type of programming, as it enables them to achieve interactions with older generations that go beyond activities related solely to caregiving.[a]

[a] See the 2005 report of the Secretary-General entitled "Making commitments matter: young people's input to the 10-year review of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond," (A/60/156) and *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid,* 8-12 April, 2002 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4).

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Working Group on Minorities, established in 1995 (see Economic and social Council resolution 1995/31 of 25 July 1995), is a subsidiary organ of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (previously called the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities). It aims to be a forum for dialogue: first, to facilitate greater awareness of the differing perspectives on minority issues and, consequently, to promote better understanding and mutual respect among minorities and between minorities and Governments; and second, in order that it may act as a mechanism for hearing suggestions and making recommendations for the peaceful and constructive resolution of problems involving minorities through the promotion and protection of their rights.

The problems that minority groups face relate to the existence of structures or systems that have the effect of perpetuating the marginalization of minority communities. Social, economic and political inequality between communities and groups has also been identified as a root cause of conflict. Equality, social justice and fair representation, as called for under minority rights protection and promotion, are increasingly perceived as conflict prevention measures.

Thus, discussions and documents adopted in various United Nations forums support the approach of the Working Group by advocating for the establishment of mechanisms for dialogue and arrangements for participation designed to address the exclusion and marginalization of minority communities.[33]

Organization of American States (OAS). The key areas of intervention of the OAS include: increasing the participation of civil society; promoting national dialogue; strengthening the democratic commitment; fostering a democratic culture; and mine action. In recent years, the annual General Assembly of the OAS has been preceded by an informal dialogue between representatives of civil society and heads of delegations of member States. The need for greater civil society participation has been endorsed by the member States at the highest level. As part of its mandate to foster and strengthen the democratic process in the

Americas, OAS has provided support to several countries seeking to heal wounds caused by internal conflicts, societal rifts and citizen distrust. OAS is working in several member States—for example, Haiti, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru and Suriname, to name a few—to carry out programmes for the promotion of dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.

The type of OAS support has varied according to the particular needs and realities of each country. Following Peru's divisive 2000 elections, the OAS had supported the national dialogue process for democratic reform. More recently, it helped the Government of Peru organize a Regional Forum on Political Dialogue, which sought to foster the exchange of experiences among the Andean countries and explore mechanisms for using dialogue as a tool with which to strengthen democratic governance.

Another regional initiative seeks to strengthen dialogue on social and political issues among government agencies and civil society organizations in Central America. Building on the field experience of the "Culture of Dialogue: Development of Resources for Peacebuilding" (OAS/PROPAZ) programme in Guatemala, the Central American programme provides opportunities for an exchange of experiences and best practices on how to lay the groundwork for consensus-building and political negotiation, and aims to strengthen the national capacity of each participating country in this respect.

UNDP Democratic Dialogue Project.[34] The Democratic Dialogue Project was established as a Guatemala-based office unit to promote and support civic dialogue efforts in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. The project provides UNDP partners with the best tools for multi-stakeholder consensus-building, which can be easily adapted for varying country situations and issues. It seeks to promote preventative, non-violent ways to resolve long-standing disputes among non-State actors and the government. Civic dialogue among a broad range of national actors can help bring about local solutions to complex problems. At the global level, the project seeks to provide access to world-class expertise, policy options and good practices for promoting dialogue, consensus-building and collective action in support of peace and democratic governance, as political and social leaders in the region increasingly see dialogue as an important tool for governance and for strengthening democracies.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In 1995, the ASEAN Heads of States and Government had reaffirmed that cooperative peace and shared prosperity should be the fundamental goals of the Association. The Association's dialogue system followed as an outgrowth of this reaffirmation: at the Second ASEAN Informal Summit held in Kuala Lumpur on 14 and 15 December 1997, the ASEAN Heads of Government agreed that the Association's economic relations with other countries or groups of countries needed to be expanded and intensified. On that occasion, the ASEAN Heads of Government met with the Prime Ministers of Australia, Japan and New Zealand, which marked the first time that they had held consultations as a group with the leaders of non-ASEAN countries. This was followed by the first post-ministerial Conference where gathered were ASEAN members and their dialogue partners (Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand and the United States of America). Every year since then, the foreign ministers of

dialogue countries have met at these post-ministerial conferences with their ASEAN counterparts. Between these conferences, dialogues are held at various levels and wide-ranging projects are undertaken. These relationships have become models for mutually beneficial relations between North and South as well as for South-South cooperation.

Division on Sustainable Development of the DESA of the United Nations Secretariat. One focus area of the DESA, namely, its work on sustainable development, provides further examples of the increasing use of participatory dialogue processes that are yielding some interesting developments.

For example, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, 1992), Member States agreed on a number of outcomes, among them Agenda 21 (United Nations, 1993, annex II), designed as a blueprint for sustainable development. Agenda 21 also contains a chapter on sustainable development planning and implementation at the local level, the Local Agenda 21 initiative, meant as a participatory process that involves all stakeholders in developing a vision and planning for the future, in their concrete immediate environment. Local Agenda 21 was subsequently supported by several Governments, such as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Reviews show that in many successful cases, active engagement and collaborative programmes occurred once local governments and stakeholders had entered into dialogue about the future of their communities.

Corporate stakeholder engagement. Processes of stakeholder engagement also feature prominently in the debate on corporate social responsibility and corporate governance (***see boxes 38 and 39***). Successful companies have always been those that also relate well to their stakeholders, that is to say, investors, regulators, customers and trade unions. In recent years, however, many companies have opened up further, entering into dialogue and building long-term relationships with groups besides their traditional stakeholders. They are engaging with environmental organizations, community groups, civil society networks, intergovernmental agencies and so on. The main reason is that economic success today is not only determined by effective investment, high-quality products and services, and legal compliance but also increasingly dependent on the ***social licence to operate***, or the approval of society at large, and its range of stakeholder groups, for what a company is doing and how.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan echoed this understanding when he launched the United Nations Global Compact at the World Economic Forum in 1999. In his press release SG/SM/6448 of 30 January 1998, he stated: “The United Nations once dealt only with Governments. By now we know that peace and prosperity cannot be achieved without partners involving Governments, international organizations, the business community and civil society. In today’s world, we depend on each other”.

Box 38

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME, DIVISION FOR TECHNOLOGY, INDUSTRY AND ECONOMICS

The United Nations Global Compact has not been the only United Nations entity supportive of engagement for the purpose of dialogue as well as for building partnerships for collaborative implementation. An example in point is the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics which recently commissioned a "Stakeholder Engagement Manual"[a] which outlines process options in great detail. It also looks at the different motivations for engagement that companies may possess. Reflecting broadly shared thinking in the business and sustainability communities, the Manual considers the three generations of corporate stakeholder engagement, a concept that implies development and improvement over time. They are described as follows:

First generation: Pressure-driven engagement for pain alleviation with localized benefits[b]

Second generation: Systematic engagement for risk management and increased understanding of stakeholders

Third generation: Integrated strategic engagement for sustainable competitiveness

These concepts are to an extent transferable to other entities engaging with stakeholders, for example, Governments. Furthermore, along with increasing its understanding of the need to systematically engage with stakeholders and to integrate such engagement in the overall organizational strategy, process design is becoming more sophisticated. People designing and facilitating stakeholder engagement are forming "knowledge networks" and "communities of practice" that are developing professional standards and certification.[c]

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[a] See AccountAbility/UNEP/Stakeholder Research Associates, Canada (2005).

[b] This means addressing issues at a local, immediate level when there is enough pressure from the outside. In a common example, environmental campaigns against a polluting company may cause the "pain" of shareholder concerns and the risk of reputational damage.

[c] Information available from the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) www.iaf-world.org.

Box 39

DEVELOPING A CORPORATE STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

In 2003, Bayer CropScience, a pesticides and seeds company, engaged in an internal and external stakeholder consultation process in order to develop its sustainable agriculture strategy.

A consultant with a NGO background helped to develop the first draft, which was then circulated among relevant people within the company, worldwide (internal stakeholder consultation).

A lively discussion ensued, focusing on the definition of sustainable agriculture, and on the case studies used to support the strategic suggestions. The draft went through several revisions and was then presented at a meeting with key internal stakeholders. This meeting also offered an opportunity to introduce the subsequent process of engaging external stakeholders in developing the strategy. Public affairs staff with relevant external networks, regional management, and consultants with a NGO background identified external stakeholders.

A workshop with about 40 internal and external stakeholders was held, at which the draft strategy was discussed and more concrete suggestions on the company's future policies were developed in mixed groups. It was made clear that suggestions were to be taken into the internal discussions, but no promises were made in terms of taking them up: external stakeholders were being consulted, not asked to sign off on the strategy. After the workshop, the draft strategy was revised and again became the subject of internal consultations. It was then presented to and agreed by the company board.[a]

[a] Further information is available from www.bayercropscience.com/bayer/cropscience/cscms.nsf/id/SustainAgriculture.

NOTES

[1] Policy statement by development ministers, aid agency heads and other senior officials responsible for development cooperation (OECD/DAC meeting on 5 and 6 May 1997).

[2] See the reports of the Secretary-General entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/52/871–S/1998/318); and "Prevention of armed conflict" (A/55/985–S/2001/574 and Corr. 1); and "Prevention of armed conflict: views of organs, organizations and bodies of the UN system" (A/57/588–S/2002/1269).

[3] See the report of the Secretary -General entitled "Prevention of armed conflict (A/55/985-S/2001/574 and Corr. 1) of 7 June 2001, executive summary.

[4] General Assembly resolution 57/337 also affirmed that the ethnic, cultural and religious identity of minorities must be protected and that persons belonging to such minorities should be treated equally and enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms without being subjected to discrimination of any kind.

[5] Retribalization refers to situations where different religious, ethnic, communal or nationalist groups desire to reassert their distinctive, separate identities in opposition to the homogenization of global culture and of the world economy.

[6] Clements (2005) notes the positive consequences of globalization as, being among others: a more open, complex, diverse, interconnected world order; widening public space with civic participation; and the global exchange of information, values, symbols and ideas.

[7] Relevant, in this regard, are: the series of United Nations conferences and summit on these matters, namely, the Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972); United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Jeneiro, 1992); and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002); a number of international conventions, namely, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822), the Convention on Biological Diversity (ibid, vol. 1760, No. 30619), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (ibid., vol. 1954, No. 33480); and more of the United Nations Environment Programme.

[8] See Van Tongeren and others, eds. (2005, introduction).

9 See Coleman, (2000). pp. 428-450.

[10] Burton (1987).

[11] Azar (1990).

[12] Pearce and Littlejohn (1997).

[13] See Staub (2000).

[14] See Joseph (2005), p. 1.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] See United Nations, DESA (2006), p. 9.

[18] See, for example, United Nations, DESA (2006); Schmitt (2002); and Easterly, Ritzen and Woolcock (2005).

[19] Building such institutions is particularly difficult in situations of social fragmentation and polarization—but also particularly important. See, for example, Easterly, Ritzen and Woolcock (2005); and Rodrik (1999).

[20] See Ängeby (2005, P. 3) explains further the role of dialogue in democracy:

In the spirit of continuing the tradition of the Frankfurt School of Social Research, Jurgen Habermas advocated an interdisciplinary approach to social science that combines philosophical theory with empirical social research. Habermas is probably the most influential thinker on the role of dialogue in democracy, developed in his theories of discursive democracy and communicative ethics. For Habermas "the dialogue" is an ideal condition; the completely unforced and equal dialogue between citizens would in this context be a norm that we can use to assess how fair relationships between people are; the more un-even and power-influenced the relations between people, the less democratic or fair. Habermas does not give a new definition of the word dialogue. Rather he presents a new theory on how a certain type of dialogue can be used to understand what we mean by "democracy" and "justice". His theory does not define what these concepts mean, but how they can be examined and commonly agreed to. Democracy and justice thus becomes a procedure in which not the results but the process of arriving at them is important.

[21] See United Nations, DESA, DSPD (2005 b), p. 2. It is important to note that consensus-building is necessary only when a group has to take decisions on whether or not actions are to be carried out. And even then, the need for consensus can be limited, as the group may agree that a simple majority is sufficient for taking decisions.

[22] Bloomfield and Ropers (2005), p. 4.

[23] Bloomfield and Ropers (2005).

[24] Sometimes it may be appropriate to "romanticize" these sanctuaries because people have lost hope, confidence or self-esteem, and enacting their traditions helps to restore threatened identity.

[25] One participant at the DESA Expert Group meeting (November 2005) noted that we are all blends of the traditional and the modern, and must balance the two, as if they were the wings of a butterfly.

[26] See LeResche (2005), p. 1.

[27] Ibid. p. 2.

[28] A quotation from Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a leader of the "Untouchables" in India, beautifully illustrates this point: "It is usual to hear all those who feel moved by the deplorable condition of the Untouchables unburden themselves by uttering the cry 'we must do something for the Untouchables'. One seldom hears any of the persons interested in the problem saying 'Let us do something to change the Touchable Hindus'" (see Sudershan, (2006).

[29] See Pearce and Blakey (2005); and Hemmati (2002).

[30] For further differentiation of consultation, hearing, debate, discussion, negotiation, engagement and participation, see Hemmati (2002), pp. 15-19.

[31] Exceptions may include dialogues in highly conflictual situations, where leaders engage with each other while parties are still fighting, and there is a danger that constituencies may not support a dialogic approach.

[32] Further information is available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/about_us.html; and http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/index.html.

[33] See the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted by the General Assembly by its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992 and annexed thereto.

[34] www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org.

Dialogue is an important emerging method and holds enormous promise as a versatile and successful communication process. It offers virtually unlimited possibilities for transforming how we communicate, share knowledge, build greater understanding, develop creative and innovative solutions and prepare to take decisions. It has the potential to resolve conflicts of interests between individuals, organizations and communities, while respecting and valuing diversity.

Various models of dialogue are in worldwide use—and, indeed, have been since time immemorial—and they are affecting the lives of people, workplaces and society. The Expert Group Meeting organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (November 2005) included a wide variety of approaches, for example, indigenous dialogue processes, social cohesion programmes, generative dialogue, public conversations, training and learning methods, and many more. Reviewing the current literature on dialogue reveals a multitude of practices, methods, and definitions with a range of characteristics, terms and models.[1] In light of this profusion of practices, techniques and definitions, it is not recommended to try to identify a "correct" approach. Rather, it is useful to appreciate the variety of views and choose the most appropriate one for the intended context and purpose.

Dialogue Processes and Procedures Checklist

Road Map for Planning, Implementation and Maintenance of Dialogue Processes in General and Specific Situations

Planning and preparing for a participatory dialogue process is highly complex work, and benefits from working in a team. A few key points to keep in mind when designing a participatory dialogue process are provided below (***see also box 40***).

A common mistake is failing to identify and include the important stakeholders who need to participate in a process. Hence, at the starting point of most participatory work, stakeholder analysis addresses the following fundamental questions: Who are the key stakeholders in this process being undertaken or proposed? What are the interests of these stakeholders? How will they be affected by the project? How influential are the different stakeholders and which stakeholders are most important for the success of the project?

Another common mistake is assuming that people at the top of an organization understand the depth and breadth of the issues at the level of detail needed to represent the interests of their respective departments, functions or business units effectively. In many cases, a better approach is to include a diagonal slice of an organization's participant population in the process, ensuring that all levels of stakeholder communities are represented, that is to say: "If you want to understand an issue, get information from a variety of vantage points".[2]

Diversity often implies a conflict of values, goals and interests that can lead to highly contentious debates, anger, frustration, mistrust and hostility. When dialogue is attempted in a conflict situation, the experience may be nega-

tive and may discourage people from further interaction. In some cases, it will therefore be advisable to work at first with the different groups separately, and/or a smaller subset of different groups, before bringing them all together.

In protracted conflicts, dialogues between groups tend to be not one-time events but a long series of interactions, over a period of many months or even years, where progress is interpreted as a gradual process of relationship-building, problem-solving and collective action.[3]

When conducting a dialogue process at the national level, it may be necessary to design a multilayered process in order to include a maximum number of people, while keeping meetings at a manageable size. For example, local-level community meetings can lead to regional-level meetings and national dialogue sessions.[4]

One difficult aspect of social integration entails trying to shift focus from the short term to the long term. Many conflicts, stereotypes and grievances are actually deep-rooted, often having been transmitted through generations. A framework with a long-term perspective can help participants to perceive their differences in a larger, more harmonious framework; it is then more likely that the participants will be able to release themselves from personal and group prejudices and see a future that is new and innovative, and the result of creative mutual dialogue.

However, stakeholders in conflict tend to focus on immediate issues or incidents that have recently occurred. While those issues or incidents appear to be the causes of conflict, they are often just the tip of the iceberg, and the largest share of the real causes lie beneath. Long-term differences and conflicts are, however, extremely difficult to resolve in short interventions, as they are less concrete, and often go unrecognized, even by the stakeholders themselves. It requires sustained efforts over months or even years to pin down and address those conflicts. Therefore, it may be useful to start with resolving more recent issues as a means of probing and getting closer to the underlying issues.

Finally, all planning, notwithstanding flexibility and a certain level of opportunism are still important in any dialogue process. In many conflict situations, grasping any opportunity for meaningful dialogue is essential, and often unconventional settings that actually serve to lift protagonists out of their immediate environment can help them to be more open.[5]

Box 40

A DIALOGUE AND PARTNERSHIP-BUILDING PROCESS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the "Implementation Conference: Stakeholder Action for Our Common Future" (IC) was to inspire stakeholders to collectively create clear-cut, measurable, ongoing action to deliver the sustainable development agreements The IC process and event were designed to support the coming together of citizens and organizations in multi-stakeholder processes or partnerships, at local, national and international levels. It built on existing networks and created new ones, aiming to contribute to harnessing this energy, creativity and courage, and thus delivering real change on the ground. The process and event poignantly highlighted the vital role of participation in generating commitment to action. Taking the lead from sustainable development agreements, stakeholders identified areas of future collaboration and agreed on action plans that they are pursuing in partnership initiatives.

Developed between June 2001 and August 2002, the process culminated in a three-day event (24-26 August 2002) immediately preceding the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa. This event represented just one step towards inspiring collective action for sustainable development. Preparations included several stages of consultations with a broad range of stakeholder organizations, Governments and international agencies, including:

- Consulting an International Advisory Board regarding which issues the IC process should focus on. This resulted in the inclusion of four issues (freshwater, energy, food security, and health), all to be addressed with a focus on the eradication of poverty, on good governance and on gender equity
- Establishing multi-stakeholder advisory groups for each issue, tasked with identifying potential areas for collaborative action and engagement of partner organizations. Dialogue within these groups led to a gradual refining of initially extensive lists of potential action areas identified for each issue
- Identifying small, multi-stakeholder action plan groups of interested parties and developing draft action plans. These groups entered into dialogue by e-mail and telephone conferencing well before the event
- Identifying "champions" for most of the action plan groups, that is to say, key stakeholder representatives who took an encouraging leadership role within their groups
- Inviting participants who were interested in a draft action plan, and motivated and-mandated to engage in a partnership agreement
- Establishing a core team of professional facilitators who identified a 25-strong gender-balanced team of facilitators from around the globe who had experience with multi-stakeholder settings and sustainable development issues. Individual facilitators were linked up with individual action plan groups
- Facilitating the development of focused, tailor-made agendas for each work group, in close consultation with potential participants

Over 400 stakeholders from 53 countries participated at the Implementation Conference itself. Supported by the facilitation team, 25 small multi-stakeholder action plan groups worked over three days, developing 25 concrete, agreed and owned collaborative actions plans focusing on specific aspects of existing and emerging policy agreements within one of the four issue areas.[a]

[a] More information is available from 222.earthsummit2002.org/ic.

Tools for designing a process The complex task of designing a participatory dialogue process is eased by using planning tools developed for participatory development programmes and assessments, organizational development and facilitation.[6]

Below is a checklist of questions to be considered when preparing a participatory dialogue process. It has been taken from a checklist for those who design multi-stakeholder processes, of which participant identification and actual dialogue sessions are an important part:[7] Not all questions will be relevant to all contexts and issues but it is important to consider all of them in the planning process.

Participant identification	**Yes**	**No**	**Partly**	**Uncertain**
1. Are stakeholder groups themselves selecting their representatives?				
2. Do you know how they do that? 3. (Aim to make this known to everybody.)				
4. Have you ensured that there is an equal number of participants from each stakeholder group?				
5. Do you want them to meet balance criteria within their delegations? (gender, region, age…)				
6. Have you ensured that representatives will remain the same persons over the course of the process?				
7. Do you have a briefing mechanism for newcomers?				
8. Are Governments or intergovernmental institutions involved? (If so, then make sure it is high-level.)				
Dialogue/meetings				
Communication channels				
9. Have you considered the various options of communication channels? (for example, face-to-face meetings, e-mail, phone, fax, letters, interactive websites)				
10. Has the group talked about this question?				
11. Have you decided which ones you want to use at which stage?				
12. Are they easily accessible for all participants?				

Participant identification	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Facilitating/chairing				
13. Have you decided if you want an outside professional or an insider?				
14. Have you involved the facilitator in the design process?				
15. Are your facilitators committed, flexible, responsive, balancing, inclusive, encouraging, respectful, neutral, problem-solving-oriented, disciplined, culturally sensitive, capable of metacommunication, and comfortable with their role?				
16. Have you decided which kind of facilitation techniques you want to use? (for example, flipcharts, meta-plan, brainstorming, scenario workshops, future labs, etc.)				
17. Have you talked with the coordinating group and the facilitator about which would be best and when?				
Rapporteuring				
18. Have you identified rapporteurs to take minutes?				
19. Have you identified who is to draft outcome documents?				
20. Are they acceptable to everybody?				
21. Are minutes and reporting done in a neutral fashion?				
22. Are they reflecting the breadth and depth of discussions?				
Decision-making				
23. Do you have agreement on what constitutes a good decision?				
24. Shall a decision be based on consensus?				
25. Does consensus mean unanimity?				
26. Does consensus mean compromise? ("being content with the whole package")				

Participant identification	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Decision-making (cont'd)				
27. Shall a decision be taken by majority vote?				
28. Are you recording minority voting?				
29. Do the decisions on your multi-stakeholder process (MSP) have consequences outside the space covered by participants?				
30. Are you involving those affected?				
31. Is it clear that everybody has the right to walk away or to say "no"?				
32. Are you taking enough time before making decisions?				
33. Could the group be more creative and integrating before making a decision? (How?)				
Closure				
34. Does the process have a clear, agreed cut-off point (for success or failure)?				

Facilitation

What is group facilitation? A short answer: Helping groups do better! [8]

Facilitators have a central role to play in dialogue processes. The simplest form of facilitation entails ensuring that all involved have a chance to speak and that the meeting starts and ends on time. Any group member can perform this function, especially if the group agrees to support him or her in this regard. It can be helpful to rotate the responsibility, giving all group members a turn. Participants rapidly come to appreciate what a creative challenge facilitation is: it is simple, but not necessarily easy. Everyone is then more respectful when his or her peers assume the role.

Alternatively, an experienced facilitator can be brought in. This is especially necessary during a one-time event, or with people who do not know each other, or with members of a group that have not had success in facilitating themselves. The facilitator's role can be held by one or a few group members who develop special skills in playing that role or even—in a mature, consensus-oriented group—shared by all group members equally all the time. In that case, no one is "the facilitator" but the functions of facilitation are carried out fluidly by any and all participants as the meeting proceeds.

Good facilitators always explain their approach and secure some agreement from the group as to what is going to happen. In a group that meets regularly, this may simply involve reaching agreement on the agenda. Some facilitators discuss broad dialogue guidelines with participants and persuade them to try applying them. Others bring some suggested "ground rules" for the group to talk about, possibly modify, and agree on; others make it a group exercise for the group itself to suggest, talk about and agree on guidelines for their conversations. Often, such guidelines are posted on a wall where they can be referred to during the dialogue.

The facilitator explains that he or she will try to shepherd the conversation along according to the guidelines described. Then the facilitator permits people to talk, giving them gentle reminders as necessary. Of course, to the extent that all participants are brief, and mindful of and curious about, what each has to say, little formal facilitation and few gimmicks are necessary to ensure healthy dialogue. Facilitation is often hard work—and works best when it "looks easy" and natural.

There are as many approaches to facilitation as there are facilitators, as personality and experience have an impact on the way a facilitator interacts with the group (***see box 41***).[9]

Box 41

THE EMPATHY CHALLENGE IN FACILITATION

Facilitating requires empathy, including for real or perceived perpetrators.

"Do not do this work", Fitzduff (2002) cautions, "if you believe that you could never maim or murder. If you believe that the divisions in the conflict are about good and bad people and not about the contexts of exclusion—(such as) identity fears and threats to meaning that can accrue and make conflicts almost inevitable" you should not engage in facilitation, because "it is only when you truly realize that given a particular context, you too could use a gun (or be tempted to), that you can successfully undertake this work".

The selection of facilitators plays a critical role in sustaining dialogue. Facilitators need to be selected from national actors/members of society who are influential, respected and trusted and can serve as conduits from the dialogue process to the larger society. It is important to consider securing someone of high standing to facilitate the process. Such a person lends credibility to the process and weight to the outcomes, and helps to disseminate the results and gain broad support from beyond the group of participants.[10]

A useful example of the close linkage between facilitation and leadership is provided by looking at the role of "brokers" who facilitate building multi-stakeholder partnerships:

> *Brokering requires constant awareness and regular adjustment, excellent communication and a high degree of self-reflection—all elements at the core of dialogic change. The partnership broker fosters communication, facilitates creativity and ensures the cultivation of relationships in alliance with service and performance orientation. It is an art of leading that maintains perspective in the face of crisis, uses conflict productively to access collective wisdom, and aims at bringing forth new possibilities.*[11]

Linking Strategies with Goals and Contexts (action research; form follows function)

Form follows function "Form follows function" is a basic principle of all living things. In the context of participatory dialogue, it means that while all such processes share certain characteristics and challenges, each of them serves a unique purpose. All participatory dialogue processes have unique overall goals, specific purposes, and desired outcomes. The best way of putting agreed principles and goals into practice will be different each time. Each process grows out of a different context, involves different groups and individuals, addresses specific issues, and takes place at a particular point in the history of a given issue. Participatory dialogue processes also differ as regards the opportunities and constraints the available resources present.

Designing a process so that its form actually follows its function means designing it so that ***it best serves its purpose***. In order to achieve this, flexibility as to which tools and mechanisms are used is key. For example, meeting formats, groupings, timings, consensus-building procedures, internal and external communication, etc. can be designed in a range of ways. Choosing the ones that people are most comfortable with is a prerequisite for success; otherwise, the process blocks the path towards achieving its purpose.

Local ownership The procedures included here are indicative (not exhaustive). Some of them have evolved over time at the grass-roots level and others have been professionally designed and tested. The examples provide a basis upon which interested stakeholders may build locally owned repertoires to ensure a comprehensive approach to social integration. If procedures are not rooted in the local culture or are too "alien" to experiment with, they are not likely to work. In order to address the challenges before them, participants need to feel safe and comfortable, and they need to feel empowered by their traditions and their (possibly new) learning.

> *Conversation is the cornerstone of civilization, the very essence of culture and community. Face-to-face is the way humans have always connected with each other, from the ceremonial fires of tribal villages and the salons of Paris to the book clubs, bowling leagues, streetcorner chats, and pillow talk of modern-day America. Good conversation is not only satisfying, it's the first step toward changing the world.*
>
> *— Jay Walljasper, 2002*

Action research[12] is used today to build capacities for self-help and peaceful change among many excluded groups such as:

- Isolated populations living in mountains, deserts and small islands
- People in underresourced inner cities and refugee settlements
- Workers unemployed owing to rapid technological/economic change
- People maladapted to the socio-economic (and physical environment)

The use of dialogue distinguishes action research from other kinds of social research (Park, 1993). The dialogue used in action research is ***co-generative*** (Elden and Levin, 1991). Action research builds capacity for self-help through cycles of research-action-research in which people identify their problems, systematically

document its impact on their lives with hard evidence, attend to truthful interpretations of the evidence gathered, and explore and negotiate solutions. Action research is usually facilitated by a trained researcher.[13]

Generic mainstream American peacemaking processes

LeResche (2005) has summarized characteristics of generic indigenous methods and generic mainstream American processes in the following table:[14]

Generic indigenous	Generic mainstream United States-American
Relationship-centred, build meaningful relationships first	Agreement-centred, get down to business quickly
Cooperation	Competition
Follow the old ways	New, change is best
Humility, anonymity	Win, announce it
Harmony	Mastery
Accommodating	Assertive
Share resources	Save resources for self
Time is always with us, no hurry	Time is limited, enforce deadlines
Win once, let others win, too	Win as often as possible
Everything is interrelated	Everything is separated, categorized
Success is measured through relationships and giving	Success is measured by power, material accumulation
Thinking based on wisdom	Logic based on strategy
Reasoning based on experience	Scientific explanations
Informal communication	Formal lectures and forums
Remember the past, look at present, future is primary	Present needs are primary, future is secondary
Relaxed atmosphere	Formal business atmosphere
Trust verbal agreements, generalized	Written documents, detailed
Respect based on age, experience, reputation	Respect based on status, education, social-economic level
Group consensus for decisions	Final decisions by individual, boss
Trust honesty of statements, expressions of feelings	Trust facts, evidence, details by witnesses

Generic indigenous	Generic mainstream United States-American
Decision based on effects on future generations and everyone	Decision based on immediate gains for own entity
Peacemaking is spiritual, healing, mending broken relationships	Conflict resolution is problem-solving
Consider and balance spiritual, physical, emotional, mind	Focus on one dimension at a time, especially the mind
Watch and listen	Read and listen
Speak carefully, deeply, patiently	Speak strongly, be certain to be heard
Respect differences, don't hurt others	Listen to differences, look out for self
Silence is comfortable	Silence is not comfortable
Spontaneous agenda emerges, circular discussions	Linear, sequential discussion of topics, efficient agenda
Ambiguity not a concern	Certainty and clarity important
Take time to see everyone understands and is comfortable	Goal and results orientation
Sit in circles to see each other, be inclusive	Sit in rectangles, rows facing head table
Host known to everyone, models and guides process	Facilitator a trained neutral, manages and controls process
Know, live your beliefs	Know, use requirements and laws
Word of mouth about gathering	Advertising the meeting
Common courtesies	Ground rules
Climate is calm, quiet	Climate is energetic, provocative
Connotation, symbolic meaning of words may be significant; words have feelings	Denotation. Possible other meanings of words may be overlooked; consequences of words may not be considered
Call upon one's Creator and inner strengths	Call upon authority, rules, leader
Do not confront directly; use metaphors, stories	Confrontation happens; unadorned, straight talk
Correct by teasing, shaming, ceremony	Correct by punishing, naming, exclusion, retribution
Take responsibility for actions	Blame, pass it to others first
Equality is balancing different parts to make a whole	Equality is being the same

Funding

Participatory dialogue processes require funding for capacity-building, facilitation and a range of operational aspects. If appropriate resources are not available, the process will be in danger of failing owing to, for example, lack of participation, facilitation, information dissemination and implementation options. It will also be in danger of being unbalanced or inequitable by virtue of putting better-resourced stakeholders in advantageous positions.

Participation requires the resources needed for people to prepare for and attend meetings, to consult within their constituencies, and to build their capacities so as to provide input effectively. Larger and/or long-term processes need a stable funding base for their operations, including organizational and secretariat services. Prospective participants should be consulted about their potential capacity development needs in advance, and investments should be made to ensure meaningful participation from all.

Transparency about resources of money and time that are available for a process is very important. Participants should be informed as to how big the budget for a process is, where the money is coming from, and how it is being spent. Fund-raising targets and strategies beyond initial start-up funding should ideally be discussed and agreed by the group; roles and responsibilities need to be clearly assigned. Participants should be fully informed about funding sources, budgets, etc.

A lack of resources will undermine the capacities, effectiveness and, possibly, the entire potential of a participatory dialogue process. The challenge is for society to find mechanisms that enable dialogues to be created around the priority issues that require urgent progress, and not just around those that are popular or enjoy the interest of resourceful parties. Keeping the process independent of individual funders is important; mixed funding sources are a way around potential problems with funder interests' influencing a dialogue process and thus possibly endangering its quality and credibility. Non-financial contributions, such as printing, mailing, gifts of space, facilitation services, etc., can add value and should also be sought. Another suggestion is to set up a ***trust fund*** to support the establishment of dialogue processes by providing financial resources and other assistance for stakeholder and public awareness and access to information. This could be carried out by intergovernmental bodies, Governments, foundations and others. The resources should, as a priority, be invested in the participation and empowerment of groups that are most disadvantaged and underrepresented.

In weighing the costs of funding a participatory dialogue process, Governments, business and other stakeholders should take into full account the high costs of operating current "business as usual" systems, as discussed above. In many cases, existing systems are not producing decisions, or are producing decisions that are not going to be implemented. Given the high stakes surrounding many of the issues relevant to social integration, it might be readily concluded that an investment in a dialogue process might prove to be most cost-effective, particularly considering that it offers the possibility of more creative options, and the virtual certainty of a strengthened network of stakeholders.

Categories of Dialogues

The present section offers, as introduction and for inspiration, a range of examples of processes that can be considered among participatory dialogue procedures. These are being used in different parts of the world. All have been developed by experienced practitioners, are based on sound theoretical models, and have been extensively field tested.[15] This section provides examples within four categories: promoting mutual understanding, promoting future views, promoting decision-making and capacity-building. There is by no means an attempt here to give an overview of all—or even most—views, intentions and suggested techniques.[16] In addition to the examples outlined here, annex II provides further information in a summary table format.

Promoting Understanding and Transforming Conflict

> *One of the intriguing aspects of being human is that each of us organizes our experience of life into a unique, personal set of perceptions, categories, assumptions, and meanings. In other words, subjective construction of reality is an inescapable feature of the human condition.*[17]

Many types of dialogue can lead to understanding. In fact, the largest number of identifiable methodologies and tools belong to this category. Choosing among types of dialogue depends upon the type of disagreement and the roots of the conflict, as well as the purpose of the conversation. For example, if participants have been in violent conflict or have been deeply divided for many decades, there are likely to be many psychological issues involved in their learning to respect each other and their working together. Often, it is necessary to promote understanding before engaging in joint actions; and at other times, joint actions provide the basis for developing understanding and trust.

The focus here is on building relationships, not on addressing or resolving the issues. In many instances, such relationship-building will be necessary before solutions can be sought or collaborative actions considered. Dialogue processes that promote understanding and help to transform conflict can serve as a precursor to other types of dialogue that aim at more concrete, action-oriented outcomes.

Among the key questions for organizers are: How can we ensure that people feel safe expressing their heart/spirit (what inspires and touches them)? What kinds of rituals will stimulate listening and sharing, without making people uncomfortable? How can the issue be framed so that all sides are brought to —and feel welcomed at—the table? What are people's needs relating to this issue, and how can divergent needs (healing, action, respect) be met effectively? If a conflict exists, how overt and volatile is it? How, if at all, will you transition people to “what's next”?

Reflective dialogue

Reflective dialogue is defined as thinking in ways that lead to the tolerance and understanding of diverse world views and interests. Reflective dialogue takes place over an extended period of time during which a stable group of participants can explore deeply their differences and commonalities. When participants share

perspectives over a long period of time, they can analyse the roots of their world views and interests and understand how each other's perspectives inform their lives and actions.

The most important element in a reflective dialogue process is safety. Participants need to feel that they will be listened to and respected for whatever they share; if this need is met, they will be able to reveal more and more of their authentic views. This process becomes a self-conscious revealing of their inner values and beliefs. Practitioners of reflective dialogue create an immense and solid interpersonal space, in order to encourage honesty as well as comfort. Over time, the participants develop a manner of questioning each other and themselves in order to understand fully their various world views, and to determine the similarities and commonalities among them. Practitioners of the reflective dialogue process use questions and procedures that ease into difficult issues, and to slowly peel back the layers of meaning as the participants come to understand each other.

Appreciative inquiry

Appreciative inquiry is a dialogue method that involves exploring a topic by asking more and more questions to create a full understanding of the topic. Used in the arena of promoting social integration, appreciative inquiry promotes intensive discussion of issues over an extended period of time. Like reflective dialogue, appreciative inquiry requires an environment that the participants consider safe and welcoming.

The technique of appreciative inquiry involves viewing the topic as an object of inquiry and the participants as a team of questioners. Each contributes questions that lead the group further into the topic. This process attempts to: (a) create a teamwork framework for the inquiry with all the participants cooperating; and (b) diffuse the ownership of the specific viewpoints so that the team can examine the issues more objectively. This guided discussion becomes a team-building exercise, involving sharing perspectives and building trust in each other's analytical abilities and willingness to cooperate in thinking holistically about a topic. Ultimately, understanding is built from a common base as participants suspend judgements and seek a more complete joint understanding.

Appreciative inquiry identifies what worked best in the past in order to apply insights to building the future: its four-step process includes: (a) discovery of past achievements through bottom-up interviews; (b) envisioning desired futures; (c) dialogue through which to share discoveries and possible futures; and (d) destiny or the construction of the future through innovation and action that is grounded in past realities and hence in confidence that change can occur.[18]

The Talanoa interactive dialogue

The Talanoa Interactive Dialogue is similar to the reflective and appreciative inquiry discussions. There is relatively less formality and more following of intuition; the participants build on comments presented by each other. The advantage of this style of dialogue is that participants relinguish fixed positions and build and rebuild their own perspectives through mixing their views with the

views of others. This style of dialogue emphasizes mutual and reciprocal participation, along with the identification of commonalities and the promotion of a spiritual understanding of shared meaning.[19]

Public conversations

Public conversations, developed by the Public Conversations Project (PCP),[20] aim to foster a more inclusive, empathic and collaborative society by promoting constructive conversations and relationships between those with different positions on divisive public issues. Public conversations establish a space for sharing without feeling pressured to take decisions. The purpose of public conversations is not mediation, problem-solving, decision-making, or solution-finding, but rather learning. Dialogue allows people to speak with respect, to listen and be listened to, to reflect on their own traditions and values, and to develop and deepen human connections with those they see as adversaries. This paves a pathway towards transformed relations.

Public conversations are intended to develop or deepen connections between people and allow mutual respect to evolve. In this type of dialogue, no participant has to give up anything or change his or her position. Participants can learn about each other's positions without pressure. This dialogue can be used in protracted, stubborn conflict in which there are firmly held positions, but where parties nonetheless have an interest in "getting to know" and appreciating others as persons. This process can lead to establishing interpersonal relationships that have the potential to facilitate formal negotiations at a later time.

Somewhat contrary to their name, some "public conversations" have evolved out of public view in order to create a more comfortable and non-judgmental environment. Eventually, however, "invisible dialogues" need to be followed by public dialogue if legal and public policy change is desired.

A cardinal value for the Public Conversations Projects is collaboration, or co-creating with stakeholders the conversational structures that will be used to support the dialogue experience. Several mutual agreements typically develop in accordance with which participation is voluntary and one can choose to pass at any time; confidentiality is honoured upon request; speaking for oneself is preferred to representing a group outside the room; allowing others to finish their statements and not interrupting is expected; and sharing "air time" is practised.

These agreements contribute to the creation of a setting in which all voices are heard rather than just the loudest, the most articulate or the most persistent. They may also address power imbalances and foster work towards equalizing stakeholders' power. When these "rules of dialogue engagement" are emphasized, the conversation moves from the usual to the unusual. When people participate in these unusual dialogues based on equality and respect, their relationships with each other change, ultimately facilitating transformation of society into one that is more integrated, peaceful and respectful.

World Café

World Café is both a vision and a method of dialogue. The World Café evolved out of the conversations and experimentation that arose one evening at the home of consultants Juanita Brown and David Isaacs. World Café conversations consti-

tute a means to intentionally create a living network of conversation around questions that matter. A Café conversation is a creative process for leading collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes. In a World Café, participants sit four to a table and have a series of conversational rounds lasting from 20 to 45 minutes on a question that is personally meaningful to them. At the end of the round, one person remains as the host and the other three participants travel to separate tables The host of the table welcomes the travellers and shares the essence of the previous conversation; the travellers also relate any conversational threads that they are carrying and the conversation deepens as the round progresses. At the end of this round, participants may return to their original table or go to another table, depending on the design of the Café. Likewise, they may engage with a new question or go deeper into the original one. After several rounds, each table reports to the whole group its themes, insights and learnings, which are captured on flip charts or through other means for making them visible, thereby allowing everyone to reflect on what is emerging in the room. At this point, the Café may end or it may begin another round of conversational exploration and enquiry.[21]

Healing groups and meetings

Healing groups and meetings are necessary when protracted conflicts have resulted in multigenerational stereotyping, resentment and suspicion, underscoring a need to incorporate some ritual process of healing the rifts and wounds of the conflict. Many traditional societies have mechanisms, variously named council gatherings, group conferencing, peacemaking circles, peacemaker court, council of elders, peoples justice programme, faithkeepers, Ho'oponopono, whanau, or Gacaca. These processes involve a heavy presence of the community and often of elements of spirituality. Rather than focus only on the mechanics or substance of issues, these traditional community practices usually invoke some fundamental values and principles to guide the discussion.[22]

Co-counselling, for example, is a process through which people in pairs take turns listening to each other's distress. This helps them release trapped emotional energy, so that they become freer to see clearly how to deal with their life and recover their natural joy and resilience. Co-counselling, started by Harvey Jackins in the 1950s, uses this technique in extensive grass-roots communities of co-counsellors for the purpose of dealing, particularly, with how injustice has degraded the humanity of both oppressed and privileged people.[23]

Psycho-political dialogue

Psycho-political dialogue is a task-oriented analytical approach to inter-group communications with the goals of: improving participants' understanding of group psychological bases for their large group conflicts; removing psychological barriers (resistances) to adaptive coexistence; and creating a willingness to cooperate between members of the groups. The process of exploring psychological issues that cause resistance to solving real world dilemmas will help the participants reach a point where concrete issues can be discussed and action plans formed. The process of psycho-political dialogue strengthens each group's identity, rehumanizes the other group and establishes empathy, which leads to an understanding of each group's psychological hidden agendas.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are processes that use direction and greater formality in a dialogue, so as to avoid confusion and dissension. In focus groups, a facilitator leads the participants through a guided series of questions, and probes for more detailed responses. In the case of focus groups, there is more control over the emerging perspectives but less spontaneity in the content of the discussion. There is a trade-off between orderly discussion and richness in the quality of discussion. In very tense conflicts, the greater control of behaviour in focus group sessions may prove beneficial.[24]

Open Space Technology

Open Space Technology was created in the mid-1980s. Open Space conferences have no keynote speakers, no pre-announced schedules of workshops, no panel discussions, and no organizational booths. Instead, anyone who wants to initiate a discussion or activity writes its name down on a large sheet of paper in big letters and then stands up and announces his or her proposal to the group. After selecting one of the many pre-established times and places, the person concerned posts information on his or her proposed workshop on a wall. When everyone who wants to has announced and posted his or her initial offerings, it is time for "the village marketplace": participants mill about in the vicinity of the wall, putting together their personal schedules for the remainder of the conference. The first meetings begin immediately.[25]

Reconciliation and truth-telling

Relationship-building approaches of mediation and reconciliation are found in all societies; these include indigenous people's restorative justice; ***Sulh*** and ***Musalaha*** in the Islamic tradition; Confucian-based mediation in East Asia; ***Baraza*** in East Africa and ***Kgotla*** in Botswana; and some contemporary Western-based procedures. ***Native American*** approaches, for example, are numerous. The degree to which individuals and communities are traditionalists, bicultural or urban and assimilated into other populations varies greatly, yet some general peacemaking tendencies (in response to serious disagreements among them) can be identified. These tendencies include peacemaking that is at its core "inherently spiritual: it speaks to the connectedness of all things; it focuses on unity, on harmony, on balancing the spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical dimensions of a community of people .... It is relationship-centred, not agreement-centred. Its goal is to sustain community health".[26] Many tribes today are actively revitalizing their traditional peacemaking forums and customary laws and in the process are "learning again how to disagree without being disagreeable".

An ***Arab-Islamic*** approach is contrasted with a dominant (or generic) Western approach by Irani and Funk (1998), based on their research in the Lebanon area. They point out that (a) in the dominant Western approach, the third-party facilitator relies on a secular idiom, guidelines from a specialized field and personal experience, while the Arab-Islamic process depends on explicit references to religious ideals, sacred texts, stories and moral exemplars, as well as to local history and custom; (b) the goals of the Western process are pragmatic, and are directed towards the possibility of a "win-win" scenario that will enable disputants to forget the past and move on, while, in contrast, the goals of the

Arab-Islamic process manifest concern for preserving and cultivating the established "wisdom" of the community, that is to say, it is continuity-oriented: history is regarded as a source of stability and guidance that provides lessons for shaping a common future; and (c) the Western process encourages direct, step-by-step problem-solving by disputants who ideally "separate the person from the problem", while, in contrast, the Arab-Islamic process prioritizes relational issues, such as re-establishing harmony and solidarity and restoring the dignity and prestige of individuals and groups, and is completed with a powerful ritual that helps to seal a settlement and reconciliation.

Some countries, notably South Africa, have made extensive and public use of "truth-telling" mechanisms to promote social healing. In these formal mechanisms (often a national commission that receives testimony at a specified time and place, with a great deal of publicity), people are offered space within which to say what they have done or what has been done to them, to offer their perspective on the actions, to express their emotions concerning the actions, and to ask for comments and often evaluations from the community. Such proceedings include formal justice elements, while others do not. While there is an element of formality in these types of commissions, the healing process is largely intended to be informal, social and psychological. It may be described as a process of "community justice with a large dose of mutual understanding", especially considering that both perpetrators and victims have suffered from intense conflict situations that need to be relegated to the past. It is important to note that in order for a truth-telling process to be successful, there must be clarity on what happens afterwards to those that participated, regardless of what this may be.

Arts, sports and other integrating and appreciative activities

Dialogue procedures established to cultivate cohesive social relations permeate ordinary daily life and also materialize in the arts, media, and educational and sports sectors. The procedures help to create cohesive social relations, as well as to discover or disclose already existing commonalities, shared meanings and shared values. In the creative arts, dialogue procedures often employ metaphor, humour and storytelling to explore peace and conflict in ways not always possible through rational analysis and decision-making.[27]

The experiences in Jamaica illustrate the disastrous consequences of eliminating support for youth sports clubs, which benefit social cohesion among youth.[28] In addition to decreasing attention to youth clubs, there was a policy change adopted in 2002 that limited the mandate of the national institution, which had serviced the needs of all youth, in terms of sport and recreation, to servicing only schools and national organizations, resulted in the cutting off of community sport activities from State assistance. This created a vacuum in respect of the monitoring and guidance provided by the youth officers needed by many youth groups for their sport, cultural and project activities.

Enabling people to participate in the creative process (for example, in writing ***radio dramas*** on the taxi wars in South Africa) can be a laborious undertaking, yet if the process is successful, the benefits to be reaped may include: (a) giving voice to the marginalized; (b) engaging important stakeholders including financial institutions; and (c) opening space for ongoing collaboration between

academic and artistic practitioners and researchers. The Theatre of the Oppressed is a well-developed procedure that helps the distressed and oppressed to "rehearse" new ways of being and relating by engaging them in different theatre formats.[29]

Stories and storytelling help to explore connectors/dividers and alternative ways of being, differentiate between the group and the individual, and detect and point out patterns of dominance (***see box 42***).

Others

These include:

a. ***Non-violent communication***, also known as "compassionate communication", which supports empathic listening and honest expression, building on its four core features of observations, feelings, needs and requests;[30]

b. ***Conflict-free conflict-resolution,*** which refutes the popular notion that human beings and groups are inherently conflict-oriented and that their interests are fundamentally competitive. It prioritizes education and supports the emergence of a culture of unity (used by Education for Peace International);[31]

c. ***TRANSCEND***, which is a broad network for peace and development using methods that help stakeholders achieve a new world vision in which new possibilities for peace can be explored.[32]

Box 42

THE POWER OF METAPHORS

The following story conveys how metaphors can convey fresh insights instantaneously:[a]

The metaphor was created by a Russian dialogue participant who equated Russia to a friendly elephant-big and strong, but not aggressive. This prompted an Estonian to equate his country with a rabbit that could never relax in the elephant's presence for fear of being stepped on, even if intentions were friendly. Furthermore, Russian-speakers living in Estonia were likened to elephant's eggs in a rabbit's nest—at any moment likely to hatch and destroy the rabbit and his home, or be visited by the mother elephant if she thought her offspring were in danger.[b]

[a] Conversely, however, tacit long-standing metaphors can constrain and control thought unless they are spelled out and made conscious. See Barrett and Cooperrider (1990); and Donelan (2005).

[b] See Aronson (2005).

Promoting Future Views

Several dialogue techniques move beyond mutual understanding of perspectives to the more practical notion of envisioning the future, and specifically trying to imagine a "joint future" in which social cohesion is prominently valued and expressed. These dialogue techniques go beyond the informality and psychological dimensions of the small group and seek to develop a pattern of activities or "exercises" in a formal workshop-type format that focuses on imagining the future.

Scenario workshops

Developed in Europe, scenario workshops allow communities and government agencies to look at alternative ways to solve a problem. Detailed scenarios are developed that include information on who does what and how it gets done. Then a participatory group of citizens and stakeholders provide a critical analysis of each scenario including what the barriers are to success, how these barriers might be overcome, and how the scenario fits in with the goals of the community. They can also ask questions and suggest combining pieces of one scenario with pieces of others so as to meet the community's goals. This technique assumes that the community already has stated goals for its future (***see box 43***).[33]

An interesting variation of scenario-building includes a component of "remembering the future": once participants have arrived at their images of desired futures, they are asked to remember what happened over the years following this very workshop that had led to their chosen future, with particular attention to what they did following the present-time workshop to bring about their chosen future. The "remembering" is of course going on in the imagination of participants. Afterwards, participants form action-plan groups around chosen futures and develop plans to do the things needed to bring about those futures.

Box 43

SCENARIO BUILDING

A collaborative exercise in scenario-building in Indonesia in 1998 drew on stakeholders' analytic powers to identify 12 critical driving forces[a] and on their imaginative powers to design a matrix of probabilities leading to four national scenarios for the year 2010.

The stakeholders described these scenarios in terms of the following local metaphors: (a) a ship shattered in a storm; (b) a leaky boat; (c) a Tanjung tree with withered blooms, falling leaves and brittle twigs and branches; or (d) a teak tree that sprouts slowly but grows steadily through all changes of weather.[b]

[a] The 12 driving forces were political system, law, economic policy orientatin, public attidues towards pluralism, balance of power between centre and regions, role of military in non-military affairs, orientation to education system, gender ideology, public response to globalization, government's attitude to religion, community involvement in democracy, and people's bargaining position with government.

[b] See Scheper (2005).

Generative dialogue

It is not entirely appropriate to confine generative dialogue to one of the categories of dialogue presented here, as it is a form of dialogue that—in the best of cases—takes place within any given participatory dialogue process. However, it is included in the "promoting future views" category as it is especially important in this area: generative dialogue "generates" new perspectives and new learning and hence is particularly apt for developing new and enriched outlooks for a common future.

Generative dialogue can be described as a conversation that brings forth creative energy and collective intelligence out of a personal sense of connection to the whole. It specifically seeks to generate new ideas by building on old ideas. This type of dialogue emphasizes social learning, especially learning perspectives

and skills that can lead to social change. Conceptually, the generative dialogue contains at least two conversations: (a) one in which the participants focus on a problem, situation or issue in the community; and (b) one in which the participants learn new methods of approaching the issue that can be applied to problems in the future. At its best, generative dialogue points to "third- order change" in which participants lead themselves to question fundamental assumptions and roles and move on to a new paradigm for interaction and future dialogue.[34]

Generative dialogue can operate on all levels: personal, local, regional, national and global. Drawing from the anthropologist's perspective of participant-observer, the person engaged in generative dialogue is involved in the process while also observing the process. When the process leads to small, intermediate or even substantial success, the person can self-consciously examine the process, extract its principles and apply those principles to another situation. When many persons involved in the dialogue are led to appreciate the new method of discussion, the third-order change of transformation can take place. Sometimes, although people engaged in generative dialogue may be able to see the three orders of change, it may take a facilitator to guide the process of undergoing the alteration in methods.

Future search

Future search[35] refers to large group planning meetings that bring a "whole system" into the room to work on a task-focused agenda. In a future search, people have a chance to take ownership of their past, present and future, confirm their mutual values and commit to action plans grounded in reality.

"Whole system" usually means a cross-section of people concerned with the activities of the organization or community undertaking the search. About one third of them come from outside the system. For example, if a local community is doing the future search, then the outsiders might include officials and citizens from nearby cities, State and county officials, and representatives of national organizations or businesses involved in the community—key people who do not normally work together.

Once the diverse stakeholders are gathered together, they begin exploring their ***shared past,*** asking What are the patterns of the last several decades? What are the stories? What does it all mean? Diverse participants often reveal clashing perspectives. In future search, differences like these are simply understood and acknowledged, not "worked through". Like a meditator who brings her wandering attention back to her rhythmic breathing, future-search participants continually redirect their attention to their common ground—in this case, the shared milestones in their history.

Moving to the ***present***, participants explore the trends at work in their lives. Together, they create a detailed "mind map" of these trends on a giant sheet of paper. They discuss concerns, prioritize the trends they have identified and explore common ways of viewing the "mess" they have charted together. They tell each other what they are proud of and what they are sorry about. Often, their perspectives on themselves and each other shift dramatically during these exercises.

Diverse stakeholders then gather in subgroups to imagine themselves 5, 10 and 20 years into the ***future***. They generate concrete images and examples of what is going on in their chosen future, and the barriers they imagine they have had to overcome to get there. After coming together to share this information, participants develop lists of common futures (what they agree they want), potential projects (how to get there) and unresolved differences. After some reflection and second thoughts, each participant decides on what he or she personally want to work on. They then join with others having a similar passion to plan a course of action.

Simply by changing the conditions under which people interact, future-search procedures enable participants to bridge barriers of culture, class, age, gender, ethnicity, power, status and hierarchy in order to work together as peers on tasks of mutual concern. Unlike many community organizers and organizational consultants, future-search facilitators offer no diagnosis of problems, no prescriptions for fixing things, and no preconceived issues, frames of reference or action ideologies. Not knowing what issues and obstacles will arise, facilitators simply set a workable process in motion and let the system come up with its own information, meanings and motivation. In short, they help participants self-organize.

Informed Contemplative Dialogue

Informed Contemplative Dialogue[36] is a method of engaging stakeholders in not only talking about an issue, but also learning new perspectives and sharing information with others outside the forum itself. Unlike most group gatherings whose goal is to support cohesive group effort, the goal of a policy forum using Informed Contemplative Dialogue is to provide participants with what they need in order to think about an issue and to take action within their own sphere of influence, including:

a. ***The knowledge base (Informed):*** timely choice of emerging public policy issues; clear and balanced researched issue brief offering original policy analysis and bibliographic resources; invited speakers representing national and local perspectives; and participants from executive and legislative branches of government and the private sector;

b. ***The range of possibilities (Contemplative):*** away from the demands of the office, an off-the record discussion so that "what ifs" and "maybes" can be aired; and policy implications included in the issue brief;

c. ***Opportunities to build alliances (Dialogue):*** ground rules that ask people to listen, consider and explore a topic; social time before and after the formal session; list of participants and contact information; and a range of invited stakeholders interested in the issue.

Informed Contemplative Dialogue adapts the fundamental principles of dialogue to the realities of public policy on a State level. This form of dialogue, among and across public and private sectors and at all levels of governance, provides a primary tool with which to open discussion and forge new collaborations. Informed Contemplative Dialogue uses a conference setting, with these core principles:

a. ***The honest broker:*** The convening entity for a forum must have integrity and be neutral about policy issues. The organization cannot be—or be perceived as being—an advocate for a political party, industry group or specific policy approach;

b. ***The safe harbour:*** Forums provide a neutral meeting place for off-the-record, objective dialogue, intended to promote candour and honest exchange;

c. ***Balanced, non-partisan information:*** Effective forums depend on informed participation, provided by national and State subject experts, dialogue with a representative cross section of professional colleagues, and written materials, such as issue briefs.

This model has been most successful in tackling emerging issues facing States, for example, health care in the United States of America, and, in other cases, has enabled private sector organizations to converse effectively with customers, employees and stockholders so as to build alliances and resolve differences.

Wisdom councils

A wisdom council[37] is a one-time, randomly selected group of stakeholders who, through special facilitation, produce a consensus statement that is made available to the larger population for further dialogue and action.

Wisdom councils are most powerful when they are conducted periodically (for example, for a week or twice a year, each time with a different membership) as a function of ongoing community dialogue. Each wisdom council generates a quantum leap in shared insight which, when fed back into the community dialogue, raises the quality of subsequent collective reflection. Then, after a period of broad dialogue in which everyone's understanding matures further, another random handful of people are selected to participate in another wisdom council, thus generating another boost of community wisdom, and so on.

The fact that a wisdom council is facilitated towards consensus makes it especially powerful, because it helps non-participants vicariously work through issues that they may not be able to work through in personal dialogues because they lack skilled facilitation. On the other hand, the wisdom council's findings must be digested and modified by the community in widespread dialogue before those findings qualify as usable collective wisdom. The more dialogue the larger group undertakes before and after the wisdom council's deliberations, the more powerful the resulting collective wisdom will be.

Promoting Strategic Planning and Decision-making for Joint Action

One main difference between the categories of "promoting mutual understanding and transforming conflict" and "promoting future views", discussed above and the category of participatory dialogue processes dealing with "strategic planning and decision-making for joint action" is that the latter includes building consensus (or majority consensus) that can indeed be the basis for joint decisions and actions. In processes designed to further mutual understanding or develop options for the future, an exchange of views and learning about each other are

sufficient. Disagreements can be recorded as they are. Once we want to move to joint action, however, we need to achieve a consensus (or majority) on the appropriate path of action. While we do not have to agree on each and every point, we need to reach a stage where everybody can live with the "whole package" (agreement, compromise). The challenge is not only to compromise but to create integrative, innovative solutions that were not at first perceived by anyone—in other words, to ***generate*** something new.

In this context, it is helpful to consider the following set of guidelines produced by dialogue practitioner A. Paul Hare (1982) on the basis of Quaker and Gandhian principles and experiments that had demonstrated the advantages of consensus over majority votes. In accordance with these guidelines:

1. Participants are urged to seek a solution that incorporates all viewpoints.
2. Participants must argue on a logical basis, giving their own opinion while seeking out differences.
3. Participants are asked to address the group as a whole, while showing concern for each point of view, rather than confront and criticize individuals.
4. A group coordinator is useful in helping to formulate consensus.
5. It is essential not to press for agreement, but to hold more meetings if necessary and to share responsibility in the group for the implementation of the consensus.

The last point is of particular importance, as an agreement reached merely to avoid conflict will not last, and initial or early agreements should be treated as premature.

Sustained Dialogue

Sustained Dialogue[39] is not simply a methodology but a process for transforming and building the relationships that are essential to democratic political and economic practice. It differs from most other processes of interactive conflict resolution in two ways.

First, Sustained Dialogue focuses on relationships—relationships that may have torn a community apart, relationships that may be dysfunctional because of the way they have evolved over time and/or relationships that may appear calm on the surface but are undergirded by destructive interactions for a variety of reasons. Sustained Dialogue therefore works according to a dual agenda, that is to say: (a) it focuses on the practical problems and issues of concern to all participants, which are the factors that cause people to come together; and (b) it simultaneously and explicitly focuses on the relationships that create and block the resolution of those problems.

Second, in contradiction to other approaches, Sustained Dialogue, in its effort to transform these destructive relationships, constitutes a continuous process that unfolds through a series of recognizable phases. Process implies a flow of meetings, each one building on the preceding meetings, and what happens between meetings may be as important as what happens in them.

Designed as a process, Sustained Dialogue provides a sense of purpose, direction and destination for participants willing to come together time after time in an open-ended process. This process creates: (a) a cumulative agenda, with the questions raised at the end of one meeting providing the agenda for the next; (b) a common body of knowledge, including understanding of each side's experiences, concerns and interests; (c) new ways of talking and relating that enable participants to work together; and (d) opportunities to work together that could not have been foreseen at the beginning of the process. The process must remain open-ended: requiring overly precise definition of objectives at the outset can prematurely close doors.

As a process that develops over time through a sequence of meetings, Sustained Dialogue seems to pass through five recognizable stages, reflecting the progression of experiences through which relationships evolve. The stages are neither rigid, unidirectional or linear. One may enter the process at different points depending on the relationships and experience that already exist, but the work of each of the five stages must be accomplished. They are presented as guideposts for the work that needs to be done and may be labelled as follows:

- Stage one: Deciding to engage
- Stage two: Mapping relationships and naming problems
- Stage three: Probing problems and relationships
- Stage four: Scenario-building
- Stage five: Acting together: participants devise ways to put that scenario into the hands of those who can act on it

This work requires substantial deliberation on the part of participants before they proceed. They will need to consider whether the situation is safe and ready for such a course of action, whether the necessary capacities are available in the community and, if not, what might be done to create those capacities. They may have to consider whether they will endanger themselves or others by proceeding.

This process, of course, contains elements that appear in other processes as well. What gives it distinctive identity is to underscore the point, its focus on groups whose relationships make productive collaboration impossible at a particular moment. It recognizes the need to deal with relational issues both in the dialogue room and outside, whether participants recognize that need explicitly or not, before other work can be carried out. This process does not end with the signing of a peace agreement. It continues into the post-conflict peacebuilding phase where it deals with the complicated task of reconciliation among communities and economic development for all involved.

Recursive process management

Recursive process management (RPM) is a method for creating preconditions for learning and self-organization through dialogue in networks of teams. It helps by utilizing the complexity of larger organizations or communities, including widespread ones, rather than by reducing complexity. RPM involves all levels of participating organizations, including that of top decision-makers (by definition), and

other levels as required. RPM is usually a one-year programme and requires an outside facilitator who remains engaged over the whole project period. Project preparations include visioning exercises, and jointly defining objectives, as well as identifying ground rules of communication, self-management and evaluation. Small-scale pilot projects are used to test ideas and team structures, before actions are rolled out for consideration among all participants. Thus, evaluation is a regularly occurring part of RPM, allowing for feedback and adjustments.

Consensus organizing

In consensus organizing, community organizers learn all they can about the "downtown interests" (the local power-holders) and about the community and its grass-roots leaders. The downtown interests and grass-roots community leaders often oppose each other and tell themselves and their associates stereotyped stories in which their opponent plays an ineffective or malevolent role. Consensus organizers try to identify a project, such as a job training programme, that is of interest to both the community leaders and the downtown interests. They then engage the parties in dialogue about that programme only, which leads to productive collaborations and new relationships. Later, those relationships can be used to make real progress on other community issues, because the stereotyped "us-versus-them" stories have been replaced with a belief in the possibility of shared exploration and shared benefits.[40]

Civic dialogue

Civic dialogue is dialogue in which people participate in public discussion about civic issues, policies or decisions of consequence to their lives, communities and society. Organizers have a sense of what difference they hope to make through civic dialogue, and participants are informed about why the dialogue is taking place and what may result therefrom. The focus of civic dialogue is not the process of dialogue itself, nor is its intent solely therapeutic or directed at nurturing personal growth. Rather, civic dialogue addresses a matter of civic importance to the dialogue participants. Civic dialogue works towards common understanding in an open-ended discussion. It engages multiple perspectives on an issue, including potentially conflicting and unpopular ones, instead of than promoting a single point of view.[41]

Building Social Capacities/Capital and Community Empowerment

Essentially, all participatory dialogue processes build social capacities and social capital. They build people's skills in expressing themselves and listening, envisioning the future and planning strategically, understanding the diversity of their communities and their wider environment, and so on. Engaging in dialogue processes also builds the "bonding social capital" among participants, weaving a web of more positive, mutually respectful and possibly even mutually supportive relations within society. The few examples given below may highlight processes and process initiatives that put particular emphasis on capacity-building.

Quality of life indicators

Communities around the world have developed local statistics to measure their collective well-being. Starting in the 1970s, more and more communities realized that so-called economic indicators, like gross domestic product, employment statistics, average family income, etc., could be high or rising, while the quality of life experienced by people was quite low. Even seemingly affluent communities realized they were saddled with problems like drug abuse, environmental decay, a frantic pace of life, alienation, mounting health problems, and so on. In response, they decided to create quality-of-life indicators of their own that would more accurately reflect their perceptions of their community's health and well-being. As alternatives to ***quality of life***, many communities choose indicators related to ***sustainability*** or ***healthy communities***.

All statistics provide informational feedback to be reflected upon by the organization, community or society gathering the statistics and are therefore an important resource for collective intelligence. The more these statistics reflect the true needs and aspirations of the community and the harmonious relationships between the community and the world around it, the more they further social cohesion and sustainability.

Community asset inventories

Community asset inventories[43] represent a tool with which to assess what assets a community possesses by asking questions such as, How many organizations, businesses, public institutions, religious institutions, schools exist? How much of the land is owned by community members and how much is owned by outsiders? What are the revered spaces in the community—that local corner store or barbershop where people hang out and talk while they are getting their coffee or their hair trimmed, or the park with the gym set and basketball court that is used at least 12 hours a day? Developing an inventory of the community's assets in a participatory process will help participants to understand the diversity of their community and what people consider important to life in the community. There are simple ways to obtain this information and a number of guides that offer help.[44] The best thing about this process is that everyday citizens can engage in it themselves and get to know their neighbours at the same time.

Community mapping[45]

A community mapping project involves developing with a wide range of community members, picture maps of the community that show: toxic emissions in relation to homes, schools and day-care facilities; natural resource treasures such as green spaces, creeks and wooded areas; environmental health problems such as diabetes, asthma and cancer; or local businesses and the number of jobs generated. Creating these maps can be as simple as putting coloured dots on a paper map or it could involve using sophisticated computer software. They are also a good tool to use with school classes and students.

Participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting was launched in 1989 in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil, by engaging local neighbourhood associations, non-governmental organizations and labour unions in city budgeting. Once tangible benefits had become evident, the number of participants (initially 1,500) swelled to over 45,000 residents who now participate yearly. In Pôrto Alegre, 100 per cent of the budget is regarded as participatory and other towns in Brazil have adopted some form of participatory budgeting. Success criteria are: (a) a real and sustained commitment by city management to transparency and new ways of doing things; and (b) continuous publicity and education of citizens who are being asked to participate.[46]

Gender and other participatory budget initiatives have also been instrumental elsewhere in terms of recording government spending with a view to addressing ignored issues and populations. Examples include the work led by Idasa (South Africa) and the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) in Ghana.[47] Such initiatives also build the capacity of civil society organizations to analyse and participate at the policy level.[48]

Study circles

Study circles are voluntary self-organizing adult education groups of 5-20 people who meet three to six times to explore a subject, often a critical social issue. Each meeting commonly lasts from two to three hours and is directed by a moderator whose role is to foster a lively but focused dialogue. Between meetings, participants read materials that they were given at the end of the last meeting. These materials are used as springboards for dialogue, not as authoritative conclusions. The materials are usually compiled by the sponsor or organizer of the particular study circle, but groups who want to form a study circle on a particular topic can create their own materials or obtain ready-to-use packs from organizations like the Study Circle Resource Center.

By encouraging people to formulate their own ideas about issues and to share them with others, the study circle process helps people deal with their lack of information and overcome feelings of inadequacy in the face of complex problems.

Study circles, being small, democratic and non-expert, can be adapted to virtually any use. Civic organizations, activists, businesses, unions, churches, discussion groups and Governments can all sponsor (and have sponsored) study circles to educate and activate people on social issues.[49]

> *By participating in dialogues: Citizens gain "ownership" of the issues, discover a connection between personal experiences and public policies, and gain a deeper understanding of their own and others' perspectives and concerns. They discover common ground and a greater desire and ability to work collaboratively to solve local problems—as individuals, as members of small groups, and as members of large organizations in the community. Community-wide study circle programmes foster new connections among community members that lead to new levels of community action.*[50]

Global Action Networks

Global Action Networks (GANs) are multi-stakeholder networks or projects that address global challenges.[51] Global Action Networks are distinguished from traditional NGOs and intergovernmental and business organizations in that they are formed by diverse stakeholders who are interested in a common issue, and who agree to work together to achieve results. The key characteristics of Global Action Networks are reflected by the fact that they are global; are focused on issues for the public good; are system-building and foster linkages among diverse organizations and projects that share common goals; cross boundaries between stakeholder groups, regions and economic status; and represent structures through which multiple stakeholders promote fundamental changes and innovations in society. The Global Action Networks benefit from dialogue, particularly generative dialogue, and they often use it as one of the key mechanisms, nested within a broad range of other activities, for building multi-stakeholder initiatives.

Methods of Monitoring Participatory Dialogue [52]

Instruments of Measurement and How to Develop and Use Them

No matter which category of dialogue is being considered, the key question in this context is, How do we know that participatory dialogue is working? It is argued that participatory dialogue processes, instead of suggesting ready-made tools for monitoring and evaluation, or applying predetermined objectives, indicators and techniques, should include facilitating the development of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) questions, measures and methods.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation emphasizes the inclusion of a wider sphere of stakeholders. Stakeholders who are involved in development planning and implementation should also be involved in monitoring changes and determining indicators for "success". The fundamental values of such a participatory approach are trust, ownership and empowerment. Key elements include the active involvement of key stakeholders in decision-making and the use of multiple and varied approaches to collecting and codifying data. Ideally, the monitoring and evaluation process will take an action research approach.

Collective evaluative processes (for example, participatory stakeholder surveys and focus groups) can be created in order to assess long-term impact and structural changes, such as policy shifts, institutional changes, priority changes, ideas generated, skills learned, attitudes changed and/or group dynamics changed (***see box 44***). Evaluation should be conducted at the level that corresponds to that at which dialogue and policies and programmes are aimed. Participatory evaluation should be pursued to the extent possible, so that participants can develop their capacities in measuring the progress and impact of dialogue based on their own criteria. However, bringing in external perspectives and/or inviting an external expert to conduct an evaluation in collaboration with the participants of the process can also enhance evaluation.

Box 44

PRINCIPLES FOR MEASURING COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE[a]

During a December 2004 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Eastern and Southern Africa meeting on HIV/AIDS communication, the Communication for Social Change (CFSC) Consortium, in collaboration with an advisory committee of practitioners, was tasked with producing a manual for monitoring and assessing CFSC progress. This working group agreed upon the following principles for measuring communication for social change:

- CFSC measurement tools must be community-based and participatory
- The tools/methods must be SUM: simple, understandable and measurable
- The tools/methods must be developed with input from people from developing countries
- Monitoring and evaluation must be closely linked to development of the communication plans in each trial country
- Assessment of CFSC impact should look at impact in the short, intermediate and long terms
- Ultimate users want a menu of tools—not just one set of methods with no other options
- This monitoring and evaluation work must build upon work done to date. The process of determining the monitoring and evaluation tools for CFSC must be inclusive and participatory
- The common language of CFSC will be used whenever possible or sensible when describing the communication approach
- Tools developed must be easy to use by groups with very few resources in resource-strapped communities
- The methods/tools/indicators developed must be immediately useful for HIV/AIDS programmes but must also be transferable to any issue requiring communication for social change
- Measures and evaluation need to be clear about how we assess the communication and the role of communication in helping people create self-renewing societies. Previous work seems to have focused more on assessing social change
- Recommended monitoring and evaluation approaches must be accessible to people "on the ground" and training on how to use such approaches must be detailed, yet simple to apply

[a] See Parks and others (2005).

A typical course of action for implementing a participatory monitoring and evaluation component of a dialogue process encompasses several steps, including: explicitly deciding to use it, assembling a core team responsible for this component of the process, planning the monitoring and evaluation measures, collecting data, synthesizing, analyzing and verifying the data, and, finally, using the results and

developing action plans for the future. These steps are no different from those of conventional monitoring and evaluation but the key success factors include having a maximum range of stakeholders actively participating in each step.

Monitoring and evaluation approaches and indicator frameworks that are useful in this context include: Most Significant Change Technique, Monitoring and Evaluating Networks, Measuring Community Capacity Domain, and Measuring Community Participation, among others.[53]

NOTES

[1] A Google search on "what is dialogue: 9 June 2006, returned nearly 200 million references; "dialogue practices" returned 38 million. A Google Scholar search on "what is dialogue" returned over 500,000 references and "dialogue practices" returned over 170,000.

[2] See Bracken (2005), p. 63.

[3] See Bloomfield and Ropers (2005).

[4] See, for example, Bombande (2005), describing an expanding and deepening dialogue process in northern Ghana, which has been ongoing for a number of years.

[5] See Porter (2005).

[6] See, for example, the many websites devoted to facilitation, process design and knowledge management listed in annex IV.

[7] See Hemmati (2002), Chap. 8. Note that Hemmati's list originally had two columns, one headed Yes and the other headed No. Spies (2006) expanded the format to include the categories "partly" and "uncertain", a very useful addition which supports reflection and decision-making about the process. See annex I for the complete checklist.

[8] See Schuman (2005), p. xi.

[9] Various handbooks and collections have been published, for example, *Facilitators Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* by Sam Kaner (Gabriola Island, Canada, New Society, 1996). Relevant organizations include the International Association of Facilitators (IAF): http://www.iaf-world.org; and the Institute for Cultural Affairs (ICA): http://www.icaworld.org/. See also www.co-intelligence.org, from whose presentations this brief overview was adapted.

[10] See Aronson (2005).

[11] See Küenkel (2005), pp. 2-3.

[12] Previously known as participatory action research within political liberation movements of the 1960s when it was applied among small underprivileged communities in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

[13] While action research is usually undertaken at the microlevel, the War-torn Society Project adapted the method to span the micro-macro levels in post-conflict reconstruction (Johannsen, 2001). Its many uses are outlined in Reason and Bradbury (2000).

[14] LeResche (2005, p. 6), states: "The caveat is that these (characteristics) are generic, not valid for each individual in any group, nor necessarily any particular group. They are a starting place."

[15] While the word "dialogue" is used for all the procedures shown, some of them do not use speech (but rather silent listening and healing ritual, for example) but these nonetheless satisfy the original meaning of the word in the original Greek: dia-logus for via-logic/meaning.

[16] The interested reader may refer to a number of printed publications and websites listed in annex IV.

[17] See Kaner (2005), p. 115.

[18] See also Appreciate Inquiry Commons at http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/ and http://www.thataway.org/resources/understand/models/ai.html.

[19] See Hassall (2005).

[20] See www.publicconversations.org.

[21] See www.theworldcafe.com.

[22] See also LeResche (2005) for a summary of the generic characteristics of indigenous peacemaking processes.

[23] See www.rc.org.

[24] See, for example, www.uwm.edu/Dept/CUTS/focus.htm.

[25] See http://www.thataway.org/resources/understand/glossary.html.

[26]See LeResche, guest ed. (1993).

[27] See Kayser (1999).

[28] See Levy (2005).

[29] See Barnes (2002); Shank (2004), cited in Donelan (2005); and www.theatreoftheoppressed.org.

[30] See www.cnvc.org.

[31] See www.efpinternational.org.

[32] See www.transcend.org.

[33] See Pellerano and Montague (2002).

[34] The three levels of change assumed here are single-, double- and third order changes: the difference is between "single-loop" learning in which a solution is created for a problem, "double-loop" learning in which stakeholders learn how to solve problems, and "third-order" change in which underlying assumptions and stakeholder roles are examined and often changed fundamentally. In this third-order change exists the possibility of a creative transformation that while impossible individually may be imagined on the group level. Generative dialogue emerges as a conversation that brings forth creative energy and collective intelligence from a sense of personal connection to the whole.

[35] See www.futuresearch.net.

[36] See http://www.thataway.org/resources/understand/models/forums.html. The method was developed by the Forums Institute for Public Policy www.forumsinstitute.org.

[37] See www.co-intelligence.org/P-wisdomcouncil.html; and ("Society's Breakthrough!" by Jim Rough, who developed Wisdom Councils) www.societysbreakthrough.com.

[38] Also see also Seibold (1999).

[39] See www.thataway.org/resources/understand/models/sustained.html.

[40] See www.consensusorganizing.com.

[41] See http://www.thataway.org/resources/understand/glossary.html.

[42] See www.rprogress.org; and Susan Strong, *The GDP Myth: How It Harms Our Quality of Life and What Communities are Doing About It.* (Mountain View, California, Center for Economic Conversion, n.d.).

[43] See Pellerano and Montague (2002).

[44] See, for example, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993).

[45] See Pellerano and Montague (2002).

[46] See UN-Habitat, Best Practices Database in Improving the Living Environment, ww.bestpractices.org.

[47] See www.idasa.org.za; www.isodec.org.gh/.

[48] See Sadasivam 2006.

[49] See http://www.studycircles.org.

[50] Study Circles Resource Center, as cited by the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation http://www.thataway.org/resources/understand/whymatter.html.

[51] See Waddell (2005); and also www.gan-net.net.

[52] Aspects of measuring social integration have been discussed in chap. I, sect. C, and many of them apply to monitoring and evaluating participatory dialogue processes.

[53] See Parks and others (2005) for a more detailed discussion of these and other approaches and tools for preparing and conducting data collection and use. See also Estrella and Gaventa (1998); and Estrella, ed. (2000).

Chapter 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The World Summit for Social Development forged the concept of people-centred development, which aims at improving the quality of life at individual, family, community and societal levels. The Summit chose "social integration" as an essential element for achieving this goal, complementing the other two: poverty eradication and productive employment.

The Summit viewed social integration processes as crucial to achieving "a society for all" in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play—in participating in, contributing to and benefiting from economic, social, cultural and political development. Such an inclusive society is based on the fundamental values of equity, equality, social justice, and human dignity and rights and freedoms, as well as on the principles of embracing diversity and using participatory processes that involve all stakeholders in the decision-making that affects their lives. These values and principles not only are conducive to enhancing social cohesion, but also contribute to reducing or eliminating many root causes of social conflicts.[1]

Inclusive societies, benefiting from the sustained engagement of diverse citizens towards creating a common future, are more resilient with respect to social tensions and disintegration, and possess the capacities to manage conflicts non-violently through developing a culture of dialogue that is indicative of a healthy democratic system. Socially integrated societies build the stability necessary for productive economies and sustained economic growth. In contrast, a lack of investment in social integration processes implies risks and missed opportunities for maximizing the potential benefits of development efforts and building political stability and security. As is widely recognized: conflict implies economic disruptions and the cost of rebuilding; social exclusion implies the underusage of the capacities of excluded groups; and a lack of civic engagement increases the need for public expenditure.

What makes certain societies more resilient, while others are more vulnerable to social tension/disintegration? Are they structured differently? To answer these questions, it is important to understand the mechanisms or main ingredients for socially cohesive societies—inclusion, participation and justice—and the types of policies, institutional mechanisms and interventions that are necessary to build/maintain such societies.

Three processes, ***inclusion, participation*** and ***justice***, are considered to play an important role in building socially integrated societies. While justice can be defined as an objective or as an ultimate goal, a broader interpretation of justice as a continuing process of achieving a shared sense of fairness is also emerging. Inclusion refers to policies and institutional arrangements designed to include people, and is an action taken by policymakers. Participation refers to the active and constructive engagement of people, and is an action taken by citizens. It is a process that enhances the quality, credibility and ownership of decisions.

The processes of inclusion and participation help to make manifest a shared sense of justice in everyday practice and contribute towards reaching the goals to whose achievement individuals and communities aspire.

A useful tool for assessing the extent of social integration in a society is to examine the health of its social relations. Social relations are characterized by the quality of interactions among people within a society. Social relations may be categorized according to the stages of ***fragmentation, exclusion, polarization, coexistence, collaboration*** and ***cohesion*** that may exist in parallel in any given society. Each stage describes the quality of social relations and prescribes a potential set of interventions that may serve as the impetus for elevating social relations to a more advanced stage. Such developments will always play a role in societies, as stages are not linear and new challenges can affect social relations.

Participatory dialogue is an integral part of social integration processes and, within them, serves to address contentious issues as well as to build social capital and positively change social relations. As such, dialogue serves as a catalytic mechanism in conflict prevention, reconciliation, rehabilitation, peacebuilding and the creation of democratic, integrated and cohesive societies. For example, the space, knowledge, skills and capacities created by dialogue can serve peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts, through, for example, the creation of early warning mechanisms, analysis of emerging political, social and security threats to the peace process and the designing of alternative options, or the articulating of potential policy choices for meeting future threats.

Dialogue is the process of coming together to build mutual understanding and shared meaning, to build trust across differences and to create positive outcomes through conversation. Dialogue is an everyday skill and experience that occurs in the family, among friends, in effective work teams, and in live democracies, as well as in practically all venues in which people interact.

People enjoy good dialogue because it offers a space where they can share their stories and learning, express their needs and interests, be appreciated and respected, and learn from each other as they avail themselves of the chance to build their common future. In other words, the fact that dialogue is relationship-focused and people-centred promotes engagement by all parts of society. In this regard, even societies that achieve a certain degree of cohesiveness can benefit, as well as those in a state of fragmentation.

Hence, there is a growing recognition among policymakers and practitioners that dialogue is an important tool for facilitating change in social relations. One may even say that there is a movement promoting and practising dialogue—a “dialogue movement”, or “multi-stakeholder movement” or “partnership movement”—noticeable at the local, national and international levels.

Accordingly, a range of dialogue procedures exist—traditional, modern, and hybrid—and more are being developed. They can be utilized in societies to promote mutual understanding, transform conflict, envision the future, support strategic planning, decision-making and collaborative action, and build the capacity of all stakeholders to take part and to lead an emerging culture of dialogue.

As has been demonstrated, participatory/multi-stakeholder dialogue is an integral instrument for promoting justice, peace and democracy, and represents one important intervention within a range of interventions directed towards social integration. Dialogue should be part of a comprehensive strategy to further the social integration process, this depending on the stages of social relations in a given society. Such a strategy should be part and parcel of all development efforts—social, economic and political—and should be developed in a participatory manner.

Participatory dialogue processes require continuous monitoring and evaluation. The benefits of such assessment are manifold: a participatory monitoring and evaluation process instils a sense of accountability and ownership with regard to the overall process among stakeholders so that they all assume responsibility for the outcomes. In addition, the joint process of developing the monitoring and evaluation system breeds a sense of group cohesion, and thus both supports and contributes to social integration and dialogue processes.

Recommendations

In order for dialogue to be utilized more widely, all actors and stakeholders should invest in the following four categories of activities:

- Improving our understanding of participatory dialogue, including through research, exchange of lessons learned, building support networks, and making knowledge available to everybody.
- Promoting participatory dialogue as a key catalytic mechanism, through activities such as awareness raising, capacity building, education and training.
- Supporting participatory dialogue, by creating an enabling environment and providing the necessary resources for dialogic processes.
- Actively engaging in dialogue processes, through initiating, convening, facilitating and contributing as participants.

These four categories encompass the following recommendations which are differentiated by the groups of actors and stakeholders to whom they are addressed and who have a role to play in creating more cohesive societies through participatory dialogue processes.

United Nations entities

In order to further the understanding of dialogue and enhance the capacity of the United Nations in this emerging field, the United Nations should invest in further research and learning activities such as:

- Engaging in internal dialogue of departments and agencies of the United Nations system with a view to their sharing information on their activities and experiences relating to dialogue, sharing expertise and seeking opportunities for collaboration, including:
  - Creating an inter-agency task force or network on dialogue whose deliberations should also relate dialogue to efforts at conflict prevention, peacebuilding and leadership development, and identifying how the United Nations can utilize dialogue as it engages in these processes

  - Making connections between the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council, the United Nations Global Compact, and the Division for Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat and its work on partnerships

- Engaging with the wider community of civil society and business actors, for example, through hosting an international forum on dialogue in the social integration process.
- Organizing regional expert group meetings and facilitating networking at the regional or subregional level, possibly in collaboration with United Nations regional commissions.
- Establishing a global learning network through which to reach out to other sectors working on these issues, creating an e-community of practice networks and developing databases of lessons learned. It is important to note that such networking and facilitating not only serve the exchange among participants and keep the United Nations continuously informed, but also help to create ownership of an agenda shared between the United Nations and experts and practitioners, and ultimately, their wider networks.

Investing in further research will also help to satisfy the need for more specific recommendations for dialogue-related activities to be undertaken by United Nations entities, Governments, donors and stakeholders. Action research efforts that also mobilize the knowledge and networks of experts, could include:

- Conducting action research and compiling case studies, including applying a "social integration lens" and to case studies in people-centred peacebuilding, for the purpose of extracting lessons learned minimally, for tracing social transformation in terms of social relations/stakeholder roles, and identifying dialogue procedures used as well as guiding principles employed. From such case studies, new narratives may emerge to inspire people to engage more consciously and deliberately in building positive peace.
- Examining what types of specific relationships are important between government and its polity, including identifying the actors and the components of the polity with whom the government could have relationships and what types of inter-group relationships are more desirable.
- Analyzing how dialogue affects relationships between government and the polity, and how dialogue can make these relationships more frank, respectful, creative and conducive to social integration (joint learning leads to recognizing diversity as an asset).
- Conversely, examining how the nature and strength of relationships influence the effectiveness of dialogue, as the nature of relationships is identified as a key element in measuring the effectiveness of dialogue as well as the depth of a social integration process.

- Defining levels of public participation in government policy formulation and implementation processes, in terms of how this is done, who it involves, and what type and what depth of participation create the conditions conducive for social integration.
- Fleshing out dialogue procedures attached to each stage of social integration or each stage of conflict (for example, pre-conflict, conflict, post-conflict) and testing the relevance of dialogue, and what different types of dialogue are most effective at each stage.
- Assessing the prospects for, and limitations of utilizing dialogue processes in situations with asymmetrical power relationships: do they help? how should they be carried out or how could they be carried out differently? do other actions need to be taken first or concurrently with dialogue? One area to be explored could be that of the implementation of the human rights conventions, which many Member States have ratified. In addition to utilizing dialogue, supporting Governments in the implementation of recommendations may be effective where power relationships are asymmetrical. Research should examine power imbalances and strategies for engaging multiple stakeholders, including stakeholders who are visible and those who are invisible, stakeholders in terms of different levels and kinds of power, and stakeholders who are not part of the dialogue process.
- Understanding dialogue in its many forms and how it aims to change relationships. This could be tied to the question how dialogue not only can move a society from a so-called negative or less healthy state of integration (for example, polarization, exclusion, fragmentation) to a moderately functional (or zero) state (that is to say, coexistence), but also can help a society rise above a 0-state, that is to say, to an optimum level (cohesion). Efforts in this regard could also encompass determining what basic procedures or initiatives local and national stakeholders can launch at the beginning phases of post-conflict societies.
- Conducting a survey to determine how often dialogue is used, and in what circumstances, in order to identify what factors contribute to or detract from the success of dialogue.

In the context of research and learning, it is recommended there be active reaching out to disciplines whose work is in this area—for example, psychology, social psychology, sociology—with a view to benefiting from their expertise in measuring social relations and individual and social attitudes, with a particular focus on the linkage of individual dimensions (values, attitudes, behaviour) and social dimensions.

In order to inform policymaking in more detail, research and joint learning activities should also address questions such as:

- What are the limitations of the social integration concept? For example, what ways exist to include high-power stakeholders or spoilers who are unwilling to participate in dialogue? What aspects of social integration help to work past this and other limitations?

- How can the concept of "dialogue in the social integration process" be used to integrate ex-refugees and internally displaced persons after emergency operations are complete?
- Can the concept of social integration help in responding to human security challenges in the short and the long term?
- How can "dialogue in the social integration process" complement various ongoing activities in the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention?
- What value is added from incorporating the social integration concept into the work of the needs assessment missions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat?
- What mechanisms need to be in place in order for social integration to be integrated into the design of national and local policies?

Consideration should be given to developing a social integration index, which could serve as an important tool with which to further our understanding of social integration and the role of dialogic procedures in the social integration process, and could also promote investment in social integration and the use of dialogue.

Questions to ask include: How do we measure social integration? How does the level of integration affect the dialogue process? How do we assess the impact of social integration? What types of indicators/proxy indicators or, alternatively elements, additional or complementary to existing indicators should be examined?

Indicators should be developed that define the nature, as well as measure the strength and health of these relationships, in order to demonstrate that strong and more integrated relationships are "conducive" to and participation of the polity in government is "necessary" for social transformation. This in turn will help to measure and demonstrate what we mean by harmonious relations and what level of dialogue and participation is effective, and help to determine whether any change occurs that improves or weakens these.

By focusing on the use of participatory methodologies to develop such an index, the process itself would exemplify the value of dialogic multi-stakeholder participation.

In order to promote dialogue, United Nations entities should:

- Widely disseminate information about dialogue, its concept and practices, as well as experiences and networks relating to dialogue. This should include consolidating information and building on a common knowledge base, including good practices and lessons learned, and linking with existing networks of researchers and practitioners to create synergy in direction and activities.

- Bring the topic of dialogue processes for social integration/transformation to the attention of the General Assembly/Economic and Social Council/functional commissions, and into the work of other departments, divisions, funds and programmes through panels of expert and other informational activities, as well as through incorporating new language into United Nations documents to facilitate understanding of these concepts.
- Draw attention to the rich repertoire of dialogue procedures used to address needs in different domains and to foster international exchange so as to moderate Western predominance in terms of methods used.
- In relation to peacebuilding, promote more attention to ***positive*** peace (to building capacities and institutions for coexisting, collaborative and cohesive social relations) in addition to securing ***negative*** peace or the prevention of conflict.
- In relation to development, promote approaches that are attentive to the potential for conflict, including conflict that may surface as a consequence of development work itself.
- In relation to peacebuilding and development, draw attention to the psycho-cultural domain (***hearts and minds***).
- Capitalize on the credibility of the United Nations with a view to convening a United Nations-led forum that takes these issues forward, ensuring a good regional balance in terms of speakers, topics and experiences, and inviting country experience, such as experience with national dialogue platforms, to be shared by Member States. One opportunity could entail holding an international forum back to back with the annual Department of Public Information conference in order to include a number of international initiatives and actors such as the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, development agencies and civil society organizations. The forum should be designed and facilitated in a manner that serves as an example of dialogue and demonstrates the various tools and forms of dialogic procedures.
- In partnership with regional commissions, Governments and the education community, develop curricula on how to facilitate dialogue for third-tier training (beyond grade school), including courses at the high school, undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as distance education, through institutions such as United Nation's University, the University for Peace, and the University of the South Pacific (Fiji).

In order to support the more widespread utilization of dialogue processes, United Nations entities should:

- Consider establishing social integration as a global public good - as part and parcel of social development. Once social integration is viewed as a global public good, further efforts should be made to increase the level of resources available through international development cooperation and private foundations.

- Strengthen the capability of relevant United Nations bodies, within their respective mandates, to promote measures for social integration in their post-conflict management strategies and activities, including in their research, analyses, training and operational activities, so as to better address trauma recovery, rehabilitation, reconciliation and reconstruction in post-conflict situations, inter alia, by promoting participatory development initiatives.
- Introduce dialogue processes into discussions on corporate social responsibility strategies, for example, in the context of developing a set of international standards for private sector social responsibility that is universally acceptable yet flexible enough to take into account local conditions and circumstances.
- Support civil society organizations in order to enhance joint knowledge-building and to maximize civil society's contribution to social integration. This could include:
  - Mobilizing civil society representatives by engaging them in collaborative and empowerment mechanisms such as working groups, joint implementation bodies, planning teams, steering groups, and joint government/stakeholder workshops that can nurture partnership initiatives between the public and private sectors and civil society groups, organizations, cooperatives and associations, or broader groups such as chambers of commerce or professional associations
  - Developing information-sharing strategies using participatory approaches to ensure that the members of civil society have access to information and are able to create two-way communication systems that are relevant to their capacity development and engaging in capacity-building for civic engagement so as to create political space and help citizens play an informed role in policy decisions
  - Supporting the internal capacity-building efforts of civil society organizations relating to dialogic skills and active participation in decision-making and implementation
  - Promoting the contribution that voluntarism can make to the creation of caring societies as an additional mechanism for the promotion of social integration

Finally, United Nations entities should aim to include more developing countries in all efforts relating to social integration and the use of dialogue processes, and further the exchange and collaboration between developing and developed countries as well as among developing countries (South-South cooperation).

Member States

In order to further understanding and support joint learning in relation to participatory dialogue, Member States could:

- Invite United Nations entities to work with them on investigating how dialogue processes could help to overcome obstacles that impede the implementation of the United Nations development agenda, to make development more conflict sensitive, and to build ownership and a sense of belonging in stressed communities.
- Support United Nations activities in this area and actively participate in such efforts, including by providing experts and inputs regarding traditional dialogic methods, success stories and accounts of failed attempts at dialogue.
- Build or strengthen national capacity in this area through formulating training programmes and/or providing support to national and local institutions that facilitate dialogue processes.

In order to promote dialogue processes, Member States could:

- Consider whether national, regional or local dialogue processes may be a useful adjunct in strengthening their development work, including in facilitating the social integration process in their countries.
- Explore how development programmes can be used to strengthen dialogue in communities by consciously introducing and strengthening dialogic components of any participatory development programmes.
- Create or support networks of dialogue "experts" and facilitators at the national level so that stakeholders and communities interested in dialogue and/or seeking process support could identify and gain access to their expertise.
- Consider how to use dialogue processes in their educational curricula as a tool with which to promulgate concepts of social cohesion, tolerance and coexistence among their populace, especially their youth.
- Build on traditional practices in their countries in order to continue to enhance national ownership of and responsibility for development policies and programmes, and recognize the contribution of indigenous people to society, in particular their rich traditions of participatory dialogue, and seek to increase their use in the wider society.
- Promote the effective participation and contribution of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons when drawing up legislation and programmes for social integration.
- Pay particular attention to enabling the active engagement of marginalized groups in dialogic processes, while remaining mindful of the need to enhance their participation as part of everybody's participation so as

to avoid isolating these groups from the social whole to which they belong. Groups whose participation should be specifically targeted include, inter alia, women, youth, older persons, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, internally displaced persons, ex-combatants, former refugees, migrants and migrant workers. Member States should make every effort to reach out to those groups and bring their expertise, perspective and social bonding capital into the development process.

South-South cooperation should play an important role in this respect by promoting mutual learning among developing countries that have moved through various stages of social relations. Governments should actively seek out opportunities and actively participate in South-South exchange and cooperation relating to participatory dialogue.

In respect of supporting dialogue in the social integration process, they should:

- Incorporate participatory dialogue processes into their development strategies. This does not necessarily imply creating another process or mechanism, but rather utilizing opportunities to mainstream dialogue into existing programmes (for example, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers). Relevant questions include, What can be done using participatory dialogue? When can dialogic procedures be added to the development process, complementing existing mechanisms? In which cases can they replace current methods?
- Create inclusive policies and mechanisms that allow meaningful participation and active engagement of all stakeholders. This would also serve as a positive model for the private and civil society sectors in respect of their integrating participatory dialogue procedures into their own strategic and operational practices.
- Support participation in the formulation and implementation of policies by civil society, labour, the private sector and other stakeholders. These practices are critical aspects of good governance and democratic structures and are processes that should be fostered by international organizations.
- Strengthen mechanisms for the participation of all people, and promote cooperation and dialogue among all levels of government and civil society as contributions to social integration.
- Apply the understanding of social relations and their stages in the social integration process as a prospective planning tool for national Governments, municipal councils and local governments with which to build capacity and institutional mechanisms for dialogue, specifically with the aim of supporting the emergence of a community of practice equipped with a repertoire of procedures for continuous learning in social integration.
- Consider convening and initiating dialogue processes and partnerships with stakeholders that create spaces for dialogue and collaborative action.

- Build partnerships with civil society and create an enabling environment for those non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations that are facilitating dialogue with local communities and local government.
- Strengthen support for civil society, including community organizations working with groups with special needs, and accelerate implementation of United Nations instruments relating to those groups by encouraging sustained investment in social institutions and social capital and enhancing social networks, particularly with respect to people living in poverty and other marginalized groups.
- Further strengthen the effectiveness of organizations and mechanisms working to prevent and peacefully resolve conflicts and to address their social roots and consequences.
- Establish a supportive and enabling environment for private sector social responsibility with a particular focus on corporations entering into dialogue with their stakeholders.
- Invest in assessing the impact of participatory dialogue, in joint efforts with all government departments and all stakeholders, and create platforms for reflection on the impacts of dialogue processes on democratic structures. Governments should, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, establish transparent mechanisms to manage conflicts of interest and to maintain democratic accountability. The important legal aspect of close or informal relations between the public and private sectors in terms of public regulation must be borne in mind.
- Ensure that education at all levels promotes all human rights and fundamental freedoms, tolerance, peace, and understanding of and respect for cultural diversity and solidarity in a globally interdependent world, as expressed in the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (General Assembly resolutions 53/243 A and B of 13 September 1999), as well as in the context of the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations (2001), the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) and the Third Decade to Combat Racism, and Racial Discrimination.

Multi- and bilateral donors, private foundations and philanthropists

Actors in international cooperation and support should:

- Invest as much in advancing thinking on cooperation for social development as they have been investing in addressing international economic cooperation.
- Use participatory dialogue processes when making policy.
- Develop mechanisms that include promoting dialogue and its use.
- Increase significantly their support for understanding, promoting and practising participatory dialogue processes.

- Develop more effective, targeted strategies and financial packages to assist countries that face catastrophic events and shocks such as wars, financial crises, natural disasters and epidemics, including HIV/AIDS. However, long-term investment in social integration applies to all countries: it is not a measure useful solely for post-conflict societies or for conflict prevention in fragmented societies.
- Invest in social integration strategies that take into account longer-term development needs, within the local context, and should create conditions for poverty eradication and sustainable social development in a democratic context. Multilateral organizations and other donors should specifically support dialogic procedures to develop social integration strategies.
- Couple their investments in social development with support for participatory assessments of the impacts of dialogic processes, which are sensitive to tangible and intangible outcomes.

International financial institutions should:

- Strengthen efforts to ensure that concern for increased social cohesion is incorporated into their policies and into the national policies they support.
- Review the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper process currently under way in many countries, as it appears to have the potential to contribute to the social development agenda, including the social integration-related aspects of inclusion, participation and justice. A revisiting of the Strategy Paper process is warranted, with a view to integrating and mainstreaming the dialogic approach. A broader platform is necessary to place the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers within a wider context of social integration. Such revisiting should expand the formulation and implementation of the Strategy Papers beyond their current scope.

Stakeholders (civil society, private sector, labour, women, youth, older persons, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, migrants, and other social groups, etc.)

All stakeholders in all societies should:

- Meet their responsibility to participate—or, at the least, seriously consider participating actively—in policymaking and implementation, as they all have significant contributions to make to the understanding of current social relations, to developing shared visions of a common future, and to building that same common future.
- Coordinate and collaborate among themselves and with Governments and international agencies towards the implementation of development programmes, taking into account the importance of coherence and complementarity; as dialogue is a key mechanism in achieving the goal of increased collaboration, this should also include a sharing of experiences of engaging in dialogue.
- Engage with and support programmes of Governments and international agencies that are designed to increase our understanding of dialogue processes and/or promote them and their widespread use.

Specific stakeholder responsibilities and opportunities;

- The private sector should contribute positively to social development through constructive engagement in the community and society, seeking business opportunities that increase inclusion, participation and justice, and improve the quality of life for all.
- As social partners, especially employers and trade unions, are crucial in achieving national consensus on how employment policies are designed and implemented, participatory dialogue should be the cornerstone of employment strategy formulation. There is a need, and a great opportunity, to build on the established dialogic processes and partnerships created between labour and employers.
- Civil society plays an ever-increasing role in the social integration process, including in increasing the role of participatory decision-making and implementation. The creation of focal point bodies such as economic and social councils and the increasing participation of non-governmental organizations, in partnership with the private sector and foundations in other consultative bodies, can also contribute to participatory policymaking in social integration.
- The media, including the Internet and other forms of information technology, should be encouraged to contribute to the promotion of social integration by adopting inclusive and participatory approaches in the production, dissemination and use of information, including through its accessibility to disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

NOTES

[1] See the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2005/6) entitled "Review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly".

Checklist for Designers of Multi-stakeholder Processes (MSPs) [a]

Set out below is a checklist of key points that need addressing when designing multi-stakeholder processes. The term "addressing" does not imply that all processes have to include all components—in fact, this will hardly ever be the case—but only that it may be found useful to consider them.

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
1. Are you prepared to learn and change? (Ask yourself why/why not.)				
2. Are you in danger of imposing your ideas—for example, agenda, time lines, issues, participants, goals?				
3. Could others perceive you as imposing? 4. With whom should you communicate, and how, to address that?				
5. Are you sure you're keeping records of all that you're doing, including how the process was developed?				
6. Are you making sure that all procedures are designed to ensure the core principles of MSPs?				
Context				
Process Design				
7. Have you found all the best people to design the process together?				
8. Do you have a core coordinating group of representatives of all relevant stakeholders? 9. (Reflect on the criteria you're using.)				
10. Are those you're working with formally representatives of their groups, and are they well connected within their groups?				
11. Have you consulted with stakeholders on who else should be involved?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Context (cont'd)				
Process Design				
12. Is the coordinating group developing suggestions regarding issues, objectives, scope, time lines, procedures of preparation, dialogue, decision-making, rapporteuring, documentation, relating to the wider public, fund-raising?				
13. Have you dealt with issues around confidentiality?				
14. Is there conflict over the issue you have in mind or is it likely to develop in the process?				
15. Do you know how to resolve possible conflict?				
16. Have you considered abandoning the MSP idea for the time being due to too much conflict?				
17. Have you considered developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Terms of Reference for the MSP?				
18. Have you decided on the language(s) of your process?				
19. Have you considered translation services?				
20. Are you keeping the process flexible?				
Linkage To Official Decision-making				
21. Is your process linked with any official decision-making?				
22. IF YES, have you established continuous communication links with officials?				
23. Has the institution issued a document that clearly states the purpose, the expected outcomes, deadlines, and status of the outcome in the official process?				
24. Do you have an MOU with the institution? (If not, consider suggesting it.)				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Linkage To Official Decision-making (cont'd)				
25. Have you considered suggesting more than an "informant" role for your process? (for example, implementation; monitoring; reporting back)?				
26. IF NOT, do you know how officials will perceive your process??				
27. Have you made a decision whether or not to include officials?				
Issue Identification				
28. Are you making decisions on issues and the agenda in a coordinating group of stakeholder representatives?				
29. Are you deciding upon issues in a transparent manner?				
30. Are you conducting the process of issue identification to an agreed timetable?				
31. Are you sure that those you talk to are consulting within their groups?				
32. Is there support available for stakeholders to engage in the process of issue identification?				
33. Are you scoping the area of interest carefully?				
34. Have you come across information gaps? If yes, how can you fill them?				
35. At the end of issue identification, have you developed a clear agenda and precise definitions of the issues?				
36. Are the agenda and issues understood and agreed by everybody?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Information base				
37. Have you established mechanisms for sharing information and a basis for a common knowledge base within the process?				
38. Do all participants have equitable access to it?				
Stakeholder Identification				
39. Have you issued an open call for participation?				
40. Are you dealing creatively with problems of numbers and diversity?				
41. Have you identified all high-impact groups? (Scoping the issue area and consulting with stakeholders will tell you. Think outside the box.)				
42. Are all those who have a stake in the issues involved? (If substantial parts of a sector don't want to participate, reconsider your MSP idea.)				
43. Do you know how to approach them?				
44. Do you think all participants need to be "experts"?				
45. Have you assembled a diverse group?				
46. Are you keeping the group open in case the need arises for other stakeholders to be involved?				
47. Do stakeholders need support to be able to participate effectively?				
48. Do suggested goals, timelines, preparations, communication channels, etc., meet their needs and interests?				
49. Could people feel coerced into participation?				
50. Does your process require government action? (If so, involve officials.)				
51. Have you made decisions through consultation?				

GENERAL POINTS	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Participant Identification				
52. Are stakeholder groups themselves selecting their representatives?				
53. Do you know how they do that? 54. (Aim to make this known to everybody.)				
55. Have you ensured that there is an equal number of participants from each stakeholder group?				
56. Do you want them to meet balance criteria within their delegations? 57. (gender, region, age …)				
58. Have you ensured that representatives will remain the same persons over the course of the process?				
59. Do you have a briefing mechanism for newcomers?				
60. Are Governments or intergovernmental institutions involved?(If so, then make sure it is high-level.)				
Facilitation/Organisational Back-Up				
61. Is it clear who is providing organizational backup, and is that acceptable to all participants? (for example a United Nations agency; a multi-stakeholder organization)				
62. Do you need to create a facilitating body?				
63. If yes, have you considered by-laws and other legal requirements? Have you considered the necessary timelines and funding?				
64. Are logistics and infrastructure agreed and funded?				
Funding				
65. Have you developed a realistic budget for the process?				
66. Have you included external communications, translations, capacity-building, and follow-up activities?				
67. Have you agreed to fund-raising targets and strategies within the coordinating group?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Funding (cont'd)				
68. Have you informed all participants about the funding situation, sources, etc.?				
69. Is the process independent, for example, through mixed funding and donors who won't try to influence the process?				
FRAMING				
Group Composition				
70. Is your group diverse enough?				
71. Are all the "high impact categories" involved?				
72. Are all groups equally represented?				
73. Do you have at least two representatives from each group?				
74. Do you expect anybody to represent more than one stakeholder group?				
Goal Setting				
76. Is the goal of your process clear? Is it: a frank exchange of views; agreeing upon disagreements; exploring common ground; achieving consensus; making decisions; joint action; joint monitoring and evaluating; influencing official decision-making?				
77. Are your goals understandable and achievable?				
78. Does everybody agree with them?				
79. Have you made sure that the first goal and issue in the agenda will be for participants to clarify their respective understandings of the issue(s)?				
Agenda Setting				
80. Have you developed a concrete agenda?				
81. Have you ensured that participants agree upon the logistic and substantive aspects of the process?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Setting the Timetable				
82. Have you developed a precise timetable for your process?				
83. Does it meet the needs of all participants?				
INPUTS				
Stakeholder Preparations				
84. How shall stakeholders prepare for the process/meetings?				
85. Have you considered the various options within the coordinating group? For example, initial position papers; developing a common vision first; preparing strategy papers based on a common vision, etc.?				
86. Have you ensured that preparatory papers are disseminated well in advance?				
87. Have you considered analysing them to point out commonalities and differences, and disseminating that as well?				
88. Have you ensured that all have equitable access to all information?				
89. Does everybody agree with the preparatory process?				
90. How will participants relate to the stakeholder groups they represent (if they are not there in their individual capacity)?				
91. Do they have enough time for consultations within their constituencies during preparations?				
92. Are you providing support for such consultations?				
93. Are participants informing each other on how they consult within their constituencies?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Communication Ground Rules				
94. Have you agreed on a set of ground rules for communication?				
95. Do these rules foster dialogue?				
96. Do they encourage people to listen, learn, be open, honest and considerate?				
97. Have you agreed upon a facilitator (or several facilitators)?				
98. Does she/he enjoy the trust of all participants?				
99. Will she/he be competent in enhancing the creativity of the group, dealing with potential conflict, avoiding premature decision-making?				
100. Do you know what to do when people don't play by the rules?				
101. Have you agreed that this will be brought to the group through the facilitator and in a constructive manner?				
Power Gaps				
102. Are there any power gaps within the group?				
103. Do you know how you want to deal with them?				
104. Has the group talked about power gaps?				
105. Have they talked about what constitutes power in this setting? (for example, money; decision-making; moral ground)				
Capacity-building for Participation				
106. Have you identified the capacities, skills and knowledge that are necessary to effectively participate in your process?				
107. Do all participants have them?				
108. Has the group talked about capacity-building?				
109. Have potential capacity-building measures been designed by those receiving and those offering them?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Dialogue/Meeting				
Communication Channels				
110. Have you considered the various options of communication channels? (for example, face-to-face meetings, e-mail, phone, fax, letters, interactive websites)				
111. Has the group talked about this question?				
112. Have you decided which ones you want to use at which stage?				
113. Are they easily accessible for all participants?				
Facilitating/Chairing				
114. Have you decided if you want an outside professional or an insider?				
115. Have you involved the facilitator in the design process?				
116. Are your facilitators committed, flexible, responsive, balancing, inclusive, encouraging, respectful, neutral, problem-solving-oriented, disciplined, culturally sensitive, capable of metacommunication, and comfortable with their role?				
117. Have you decided which kind of facilitation techniques you want to use? (for example, flipcharts, meta-plan, brainstorming, scenario workshops, future labs, etc.)				
118. Have you talked with the coordinating group and the facilitator about which would be best and when?				
Rapporteuring				
119. Have you identified rapporteurs to take minutes?				
120. Have you identified who is to draft outcome documents?				
121. Are they acceptable to everybody?				
122. Are minutes-taking and reporting done in a neutral fashion?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Rapporteuring (cont'd)				
123. Are they reflecting the breadth and depth of discussions?				
Decision-making				
124. Do you have agreement on what constitutes a good decision?				
125. Shall a decision be based on consensus?				
126. Does consensus mean unanimity?				
127. Does consensus mean compromise? ("being content with the whole package")				
128. Shall a decision be taken by majority vote?				
129. Are you recording minority voting?				
130. Do the decisions on your MSP have consequences outside the space covered by participants?				
131. Are you involving those affected?				
132. Is it clear that everybody has the right to walk away or to say "no"?				
133. Are you taking enough time before making decisions?				
134. Could the group be more creative and integrative before making a decision? (How?)				
Closure				
135. Does the process have a clear, agreed cut-off point (for success or failure)?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
OUTPUTS				
Documentation				
136. Are you putting draft minutes and reports to the group for review?				
137. Have you built time for reviewing into your schedule?				
138. Have you clarified the status of your documents: minutes by rapporteurs; facilitators' summaries; endorsed consensus documents? (They require different consultation procedures and time frames.)				
139. Are you disseminating the outcome documents to other stakeholder groups and the public?				
Action Plan/Implementation				
140. Have you agreed on a precise, concrete action plan: who will do what, when, and with whom?				
141. Have you considered how to monitor implementation and how to deal with non-compliance?				
142 .You planned a dialogue, and now they want to continue and explore possible joint action: is the group engaging in an MSP design process, agreeing on objectives, scope, structures, timelines, funding, etc.?				
143. Are you managing such a transition carefully?				
THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS				
Mechanisms of Metacommunication 144. Do participants have space to reflect upon the process?				
145. Do you have regular feedback mechanisms so that everybody can raise concerns and suggestions?				
146. Is the facilitator bringing this up?				

General Points	Yes	No	Partly	Uncertain
Relating to Non-participating Stakeholders				
147. Have you kept the process open for input from non-participating stakeholders?				
148. Are you sure the arrangements for that will work?				
149. Have you made clear how any input from the outside will be used?				
150. In case of opposition to the process from the outside, are you addressing this in the MSP group as a whole?				
Relating to the General Public				
151. Does the public know about your process?				
152. Are you effectively communicating its objectives and outcomes? Have you found the right language and media?				
153. Are you releasing information throughout the process?				
154. Should members of the general public be able to contribute? (How?)				
155. Are you using professionals to relate to the public? (Why/why not?)				
156. Are you relying solely on the Internet? If yes, can you do more?				
157. Have you discussed these questions in the MSP group?				

[a] See Hemmati (2002), chap.8. Note that Hemmati's list had originally had two columns, headed Yes and No. The format was expanded by Spies (2006) to include the categories Partly and Uncertain. This expansion is very useful for purposes of relfection in a dialogue process planning and facilitation group.

Participatory Dialogue Methodologies and Tools

The following tables provide summary information about a range of dialogue methodologies and tools.

NCDD Engagement Streams and Process Distinctions[a]

Dialogue and deliberation (D&D) streams

Primary Intention/ Purpose	Name of engagement stream	Key features	Important when . . .
To encourage people and groups to learn more about themselves, their community, or an issue, and possibly discover innovative solutions	**Exploration**	Suspending assumptions, creating a space that encourages a different kind of conversation, using ritual and symbolism to encourage openness, emphasis on listening	A group or community seems stuck or muddled and needs to reflect on their circumstance in depth and gain collective insight
To resolve conflicts, to foster personal healing and growth, and to improve relations among groups	**Conflict transformation**	Creating a safe space, hearing from everyone, building trust, sharing personal stories and views	Relationships among participants are poor or not yet established and need to be. Issue can be resolved only when people change their behavior or attitude, expand their perspective, or take time to reflect and heal.
To influence public decisions and public policy and improve public knowledge	**Deliberation and decision-making**	Naming and framing, weighing all options, considering different positions (deliberation), revealing public values, brainstorming solutions	The issue is within government's (or any single entity's) sphere of influence
To empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution	**Collaborative action**	Using D&D to generate ideas for community action, developing and implementing action plans collaboratively	The issue/dispute requires intervention across multiple public and private entities, and anytime that community action is important

[a] National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2005 (www.ncdd.org).

Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Strengthening democracy, understanding a community of practice, planning for the future	To invite wisdom into the room by hearing from both the heart and the mind	Bohmian Dialogue, World Café, Conversation Café, Intergroup Dialogue in the classroom, Wisdom Circles, Open Space	How can we ensure that people feel safe expressing their heart/spirit (what inspires and touches them)? What kind of rituals will stimulate listening and sharing, without making people uncomfortable?
Political polarization, Jewish-Muslim relations, race relations, value-based conflicts, healing after crises or trauma	To create a safe space within which people with different views may talk about their personal experiences and feel heard. Often, to set the groundwork for deliberation and action	Sustained Dialogue, Intergroup Dialogue in communities, Victim-Offender Mediation, Public Conversations Project, Web Lab's Small Group Dialogue	How can the issue be framed so that all sides are brought to—and feel welcomed at—the table? What are people's needs relating to this issue, and how can divergent needs (healing, action, respect) be met effectively? If a conflict exists, how overt and volatile is it? How, if at all, will you transition people to "what's next"?
Budgeting, land use, health care, social security	To involve a representative group of citizens in t horough conversations about complicated policy issues. Ideally, the group is empowered by governance	National Issues Forums, Citizens Juries, Deliberative Polling, 21st Century Town Meeting, Citizen Choicework, Consensus Conference	How can we best represent the public (random selection, active recruitment, involving large numbers of people)? Should/can public officials participate in the process side by side with citizens? What kinds of materials need to be developed or obtained? How can we ensure that this process influences policy?
Regional sprawl, institutional racism, youth violence, responding to crises	To encourage integrated efforts among diverse stakeholders, sectors, organizations, etc. involved in the problem	Study Circles, Future Search, Appreciative Inquiry	Who needs to be at the table? What kind of power dynamics exist already? What group/leader/institution is most resistant to change? What group tends not to be at the table, although its members are affected?

Characteristics of well-known dialogue and deliberation processes

Process	Focuses significantly on **Exploration**	Focuses significantly on **Conflict transformation**	Focuses significantly on **deliberation and decision-making**
AmericaSpeaks 21st Century Town Meeting			X
Appreciative Inquiry	X		
Bohmian Dialogue	X		X
Citizen Choicework			X
Citizen Juries			X
Consensus Conference			X
Conversation Café	X	X	
Deliberative Polling			X
Future Search		X	X
Intergroup Dialogue	X	X	
National Issues Forums			X
Open Space Technology	X		
Public Conversations Project Dialogue		X	

Focuses significantly on **collaborative action**	**Size of group**	**Type of session** (Excluding preparatory sessions)	**Participant selection**
	Hundreds to thousands in one room at small tables	All-day meeting	Open, recruit for representativeness
X	From 20 to 2,000	Four-to-six-day summit	Internal and external stakeholders
	Small group	No set length or number of meetings	Open or invitation
	Multiple small groups	One session ranging from two hours to all day	Open, recruit for representativeness
	Small group	Five-day meeting	Random selection
	Large group	Two weekends for participants to prepare, two-to-four day conference	Random selection
	Single or multiple small groups	One 90-minute session	Open; publicize for representativeness
	Up to several hundred people in small groups in one room	Weekend-long meeting	Random selection
X	60-80 people	Three days	All-inclusive (attempts to bring in all involved)
	Single or multiple small groups	Regular weekly meetings of from two to three hours	Open; recruit for representativeness
	Up to hundreds in one room at small tables	One two-hour meeting	Open; recruit for representativeness
X	Up to hundreds in one room, then break up in interest groups multiple times	Three days	Varies
	Small group	Multiple two-hour sessions	Involves all sides of an existing conflict

Process	Focuses significantly on **Exploration**	Focuses significantly on **Conflict transformation**	Focuses significantly on **deliberation and decision-making**
Study Circles	X	X	X
Sustained Dialogue		X	X
Victim Offender Mediation		X	
Web Lab's Small Group Dialogue	X	X	
Wisdom Circle	X		
World Café	X		

Focuses significantly on **collaborative action**	**Size of group**	(Excluding preparatory sessions) **Type of session**	**Participant selection**
X	Up to hundreds meeting in separate small groups; come together later for Action Forum	From four–to six–hour sessions	Open; recruit for representativeness
X	Small group	Numerous two–to three–hour sessions	Open; recruit for representativeness among conflicting groups
	Small group	Multiple two–to three–hour sessions	All-inclusive (attempts to bring in all involved)
	Up to hundreds working in small groups online	Participants can post and read postings any time during set duration (such as three weeks) for each group	Open
	Small group (3-12 people)	One or more sessions lasting from one to three hours; ongoing monthly sessions are ideal	Usually used with an existing group
	Up to hundreds in one room at tables of four	Single event ranging from 90 minutes to three days	Often held at conferences, involving all attendees; otherwise, invitations boost representativeness

Process descriptions

Process	Mini-description	Sources for Further Information
AmericaSpeaks 21st Century Town Meeting	21st Century Town Meetings enable the general public to give those in leadership positions direct, substantive feedback on key issues. Each meeting engages hundreds or thousands of general-interest citizens at a time, utilizing innovative technology to effectively and quickly summarize citizen input	http://www.americaspeaks.org/
Appreciative Inquiry (AI)	Appreciative Inquiry is a change method that encourages stakeholders to explore the best of the past and present in their organizations and communities. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate and heighten positive potential	http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/
Bohmian Dialogue	Created by late physicist David Bohm, Bohmian Dialogue focuses on attending to and discussing individual internal dynamics: assumptions, beliefs, motivations, etc. The idea is not to eliminate their emergence, but to invoke them in the conversation in such a way as to further the dialogue	http://www.infed.org/archives/e-texts/bohm_dialogue.htm
Citizen Choicework	Public Agenda's Citizen Choicework helps citizens confront tough choices in productive ways. Participants work through values conflicts and practical trade-offs, and develop a sense of priorities and direction. Key principles include non-partisan local leadership, inclusive participation, and unbiased discussion materials that "start where the public starts"	http://www.publicagenda.org/pubengage/pe_citizen_choicework.cfm
Citizens Juries	The Citizens Juries process is a method for gathering a microcosm of the public, having them attend five days of hearings, deliberate among themselves and then issue findings and recommendations on the issue they have discussed	http://www.jefferson-center.org/
Consensus Conference	Consensus Conferences, developed in Denmark, are used in a variety of settings and typically involve a group of citizens with varied backgrounds who meet to discuss issues of a scientific or technical nature. The conference has two stages: the first involves small group meetings with experts to discuss the issues and work towards consensus. At the second stage the conference's main observations and conclusions are presented for consideration by assembled experts, the public and the media	http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/Default.aspx?ID=675

Process	Mini-description	Sources for Further Information
Conversation Café	Conversation Cafés are hosted conversations that are usually held in a public setting like a coffee shop or bookstore, where anyone is welcome to join. A simple format helps people feel at ease and gives everyone who wishes to speak the chance to do so	http://www.conversationcafe.org/
Deliberative Polling	Deliberative Polling combines deliberation in small group discussions with scientific random sampling to foster public consultation for public policy and for electoral issues. Members of a random sample are polled, and then some members are invited to gather at a single place to discuss the issues after they have examined balanced briefing materials. Participants engage in dialogue with competing experts and political leaders based on questions they develop in small group discussions with trained moderators	http://cdd.stanford.edu/polls/docs/summary/
Future Search	Future Search is an interactive planning process that helps a group of people discover a set of shared values or themes (common ground) and agree on a plan of action for implementing them	http://www.futuresearch.net/
Intergroup Dialogue	Intergroup Dialogues are face-to-face meetings of people from at least two different social identity groups. They are designed to offer an open and inclusive space where participants can foster a deeper understanding of diversity and justice issues through participation in experiential activities, individual and small-group reflections, and dialogues	http://depts.washington.edu/sswweb/idea/main.html
National Issues Forums	National Issues Forums offer citizens the opportunity to join together to deliberate, to make choices with others about ways to approach difficult issues and to work towards creating reasoned public judgement	http://nifi.org/index.aspx
Open Space Technology	Open Space Technology is a self-organizing practice that invites people to take responsibility for what they care about. In Open Space, a market-place of enquiry is created where people present topics they are passionate about and reflect and learn from one another. It is an innovative approach to creating whole-systems change and inspiring creativity and leadership among participants	http://www.openspaceworld.org/

Process	Mini-description	Sources for Further Information
Public Conversations Project dialogue	The Public Conversations Project helps people with fundamental disagreements over divisive issues develop the mutual understanding and trust essential for achieving strong communities and positive action. Their dialogue model is characterized by a careful preparatory phase in which all stakeholders/sides are interviewed and prepared for the dialogue process	http://www.publicconversations.org/pcp/index.asp
Study Circles	Study Circles enable communities to strengthen their own ability to solve problems by bringing large numbers of people together in dialogue across divides of race, income, age and political viewpoints. Study Circles combine dialogue, deliberation and community organizing techniques, enabling public talk to build understanding, explore a range of solutions, and serve as a catalyst for social, political and policy change	http://www.studycircles.org/en/index.aspx
Sustained Dialogue (SD)	Sustained Dialogue is a process for transforming and building the relationships that are essential to democratic, political and economic practice. SD is not a problem-solving workshop: it is a sustained interaction to transform and build relationships among members of deeply conflicted groups so that they may effectively deal with practical problems. As a process that develops over time through a sequence of meetings, SD seems to move through a series of recognizable phases including a deliberative "scenario-building" stage and an "acting together" stage	http://www.sustaineddialogue.org/
Victim-Offender Mediation	Victim-Offender Mediation is a restorative justice process that allows the victim of a crime and the person who committed that crime to talk to each other about what happened, the effects of the crime on their lives, and their feelings about it. They may choose to create a mutually agreeable plan to repair any damages that occurred as a result of the crime. In some practices, the victim and the offender are joined by family and community members or others	http://www.voma.org
Web Lab's Small Group Dialogue (SGD)	SGD is a unique discussion tool that fosters intimate, high-quality online exchanges. By limiting group size and lifespan, each member's value is visible, encouraging a sense of belonging and an investment in frequent visits. Web Lab's SGD process stands apart from most conventional tools for online dialogue, by offering participants the opportunity to genuinely connect with one another. Participants are therefore not a collection of people with no sense of accountability who leave a series of drive-by postings	http://www.weblab.org/home.html

Process	Mini-description	Sources for Further Information
Wisdom Circle	A Wisdom Circle is a small group dialogue designed to encourage people to listen and speak from the heart in a spirit of enquiry. By opening and closing the circle with a simple ritual of the group's choosing, using a talking object, and inviting silence when entering the circle, a safe space is created where participants can be trusting, authentic, caring, and open to change. Also referred to as a Council process and a Listening Circle	http://www.wisdomcircle.org/
World Café	World Cafés enable groups of people to participate together in evolving rounds of dialogue with three or four others while at the same time remaining part of a single, larger connected conversation. Small, intimate conversations link and build on each other as people move between groups, cross-pollinate ideas, and discover new insights into questions or issues that really matter in their life, work or community	http://www.theworldcafe.com/

Needs/intentions in different societal domains and suitable dialogue procedures

Donelan (2005) developed the following tables that summarize dialogue procedures in relation to the needs and intentions in different societal domains:

Dialogue procedures: needs in three domains:

Psycho-cultural needs	Socio-economic needs	Socio-political needs
Procedures re **cohesion** Arts: narrative/metaphor Media: discussion/mirroring Education: thought/mindfulness Religion: meaning/ethics Science: enquiry/testing Sports: outreach/celebration	*Procedures re* **collaboration** Community meetings Focus groups Participatory budgeting Community scorecards Citizen report cards	*Procedures re* **coexistence** Civic dialogue in old/new spaces: Peace forums Web-based networking Street gatherings Civil society associations
Procedures re **fragmentation** Emotional "first aid" Crisis counselling Anxiety management Problem-solving Public information	*Procedures re* **exclusion** Action research Mapping Transection	*Procedures re* **polarization** Mediation Reconciliation

Socio-political needs: dialogue procedures

Social relations	Needs/intention	Dialogue procedures
Polarized social relations	To resolve conflict and harmonize relations	Mediation Reconciliation
Coexisting social relations	To advance tolerance of diversity by means of civic dialogue	Civic dialogue in new spaces: peace forums, web-based networks, street gatherings, and civil society associations

Socio-economic needs: dialogue procedures

Social relations	Needs/intention	Dialogue procedures
Excluded social relations	To build self-help skills for mapping issues and options. To retool for work	Action research Mapping Transection
Collaborating social relations	To strengthen socio-economic justice through collaborative planning and action	Community meetings Focus groups Participatory budgeting Community scorecards Citizen report cards

Psycho-cultural needs: dialogue procedures

Social relations	Needs/intention	Dialogue procedures
Fragmented social relations	To heal trauma	Emotional "first aid" Crisis counselling Anxiety management Problem-solving Public information
Cohesive social relations	To strengthen peace culture	Arts: narrative/metaphor Media: discussion/mirroring Education: thought/mindfulness Religion: meaning/ethics Science: enquiry/testing Sports: outreach/celebration

Glossary of Terms

Accountability: An organization can be considered accountable when it reports to its stakeholders regarding material issues (transparency), responds to stakeholders regarding these issues (responsiveness) on an ongoing basis, complies with standards to which it is voluntarily committed, and adopts and adheres to rules and regulations that it must comply with for statutory reasons (compliance).[a]

Brokering partnerships means facilitating the development of concrete collaborations between different organizations, often from various stakeholder groups. In the context of sustainable development, partnerships have been hailed as an important tool for implementing international agreements on environmental and development issues. Brokering partnerships is increasingly recognized as a crucial skill, and is often described as an "art" as much as a "science".

Civic engagement is involvement in public life and activities, from voting to community service. Engaging in deliberative dialogue in order to recommend policy changes to decision makers or cause policy changes is a form of civic engagement.[b]

Civil society is a term that is debated as much as it is used. It can be defined as: (a) a state of society characterized by openness and by diversity of expression encompassing a spectrum from the small and individualized to the large and aggregated, based on the concept of responsible freedom of individuals; or (b) a space in (or part of) society where a range of groups, associations, clubs, guilds, syndicates, federations, unions and parties come together, providing a buffer between State and citizen.

Consultation is a process that facilitates the receipt of feedback and input on an issue. There are two key roles in any consultation: the role of those requesting the input (the host) and the role of those providing the input (the participant). The key elements of consultation are the following: (a) it is a process, not an outcome; (b) it has an impact on a decision through influence, rather than through power; and (c) it is about input into decision-making, not joint decision-making or decision-making by referendum. [c]

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), or corporate social and environmental responsibility (CSER), is a concept accordance to which companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders. Other terms, such as corporate citizenship and corporate responsibility, refer to the same or similar concepts.

Debate: A common English dictionary[d] defines ***debate*** as a contention by words or arguments; the formal discussion of a motion before a deliberative body according to the rules of parliamentary procedure; and the regulated discussion of a proposition between two matched sides. Debating includes examining a question by presenting and considering arguments on both sides. It is interesting to note that this implies ***two*** sides, rather than the ***multitude*** of perspectives that are common in social dialogue processes. This emphasis on dualism is supported by the increasing prevalence of an "argument culture", evidenced by adversarial forms of communication, confrontational exchange, use of military metaphors and pitching one side against the other. In the absence of interventions that stress diversity of interests and perspectives, debate has potentially negative consequences for democracy.[e]

Discussion: The term ***discussion*** can be used to describe a frank exchange of views, followed by mutual exploration of the benefits and shortcomings of those views. More than "dialogue", the term "discussion" recognizes the differences between views and people and is less focused on mutual understanding.[f]

Governance: The act of shaping the collective affairs and allocating the shared resources of an organization, community or society with a special focus on the process of decision-making. It includes the official activities of government, unofficial activities of the population and their various voluntary associations and, especially, the interactions between the government and those affected by its decisions.

Negotiating can be defined as arranging for or bringing about an agreed outcome through conference, discussion and compromise (as in negotiating a treaty).[g] Negotiation is "a process of communication and relationship-building undertaken with the objective of arriving at an agreed outcome."[h]

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are self-organized entities of people who care about certain issues and join forces to achieve desired changes. The Non-governmental organization sector is very heterogeneous in most societies. Non-governmental organizations vary in size (from a few people to several thousand); work on different issues (human rights, peace, environment, sustainable development, governance, women's rights, etc.), and at different levels (local, national, international). Non-governmental organizations focus on different areas of work such as research, policy, implementation and their combinations. Many Governments support their work and coordinate activities through and with Non-governmental organizations. Non-governmental organizations operate various models of financing: they are non-profit, and funded by grants, membership fees, deeds, trust funds or a combination of these. Many Non-governmental organizations have members ranging from a few individuals to millions of citizens. Membership may also comprise organizations. Equally varied are their governance structures, often involving several layers of executive and advisory bodies and groups.

Partnerships "are commonly defined as voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both State and non-State, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits."[i]

Procedural justice refers to a situation where the processes used are "considered to be the right ones by all the stakeholders involved in peacebuilding, peacemaking and sustaining dialogues. This encompasses the guiding principles, or spoken and unspoken customary rules and activities that people use when talking about issues, differences of opinion, and making decisions—those that they consider fair".[j] Justice here is viewed as the acceptable and appropriate rules for social behaviour and attitudes, according to the society of concern. A dialogue process is more likely to achieve a positive longterm impact if people consider the process fair and just.

Public-private partnerships essentially bring together stakeholder groups—such as Governments, development agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, private aid organizations, farmers and companies and their customers—to work in the most efficient way for every participant's mutual benefit. School-feeding programmes are long-standing examples of public-private partnerships. Usually, this type of partnership involves a government educational authority, anon-governmental organization, a milk supplier, a food processor and a processing/packaging company. In developing countries, there is often another, external aid agency involved which supplies the milk or the money to buy it.

Social capital refers to those stocks of social trust, norms and networks that people can draw upon to solve common problems. Networks of civic engagement, such as neighbourhood associations, sports clubs and cooperatives, are an essential form of social capital, and the denser these networks, the more likely the members of a community will cooperate for mutual benefit.

Stakeholders are those who have an interest in a particular decision, either as individuals or as representatives of a group, including people who influence a decision, or can influence it, as well as those affected by it.[k]

Stakeholder engagement refers to a variety of ways in which an organization can interact with its stakeholders. The term is mostly used to describe interaction with external stakeholders.

Sustainable development, as defined by the Brundtland Commission in the 1980s, means development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

A **tripartite**, or **trisector approach**, divides societies into three distinct sectors: government, business (private sector) and civil society. The concept is often used in debates on participation in decision-making. Drawbacks include the fact that the heterogeneity of civil society is "squeezed" into one "sector", which makes it difficult to represent the diversity of interests. In addition, business is implicitly labelled "non-civil".

NOTES

[a] Adapted, to a limited extent, from Account Ability, (UNEP) and Stakeholder Research Associates Canada (2005), p.135.

[b] For discussions of definitions of civic engagement, see, for example, http:"www.actionforcharge.org/dialogues/civic-engagement.html; and http://www.apa.org/ed/slce/civic-engagement.html.

[c] See www.dialoguecircles.com.

[d] See Merriam-Webster online dictionary and thesaurus (www.m-2.com).

[e] See Tannen (1998), p.27. There is also "English Debate", in which, in a traditional, structured setting, two sides of an argument are pitted against each other. The very name of this concept also highlights the roots of its dualistic approach in the Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition.

[f] See Hemmati (2002), p.18.

[g] See Merriam-Webster online dictionary and thesaurus (www.m-2.com).

[h] See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, "Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups: A Manual and Guidelines for Practitioners" (http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitariannegotiations/Chapter1-1.htm) sect. 1.1, second para.

[i] See report of the Secretary-General (A/54/2000) on "Towards global partnerships"; and see also the Bali Guiding Principles on partnerships for sustainable development (2002), available from http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/bali_guiding_principles.htm.

[j] LeResche (2005), p.1.

[k] See Hemmati (2002), p.4.

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Building Neighbourhoods (based on the work of Christopher Alexander entitled The Nature of Order): http://www.livingneighborhoods.org/ht-2/home.htm

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