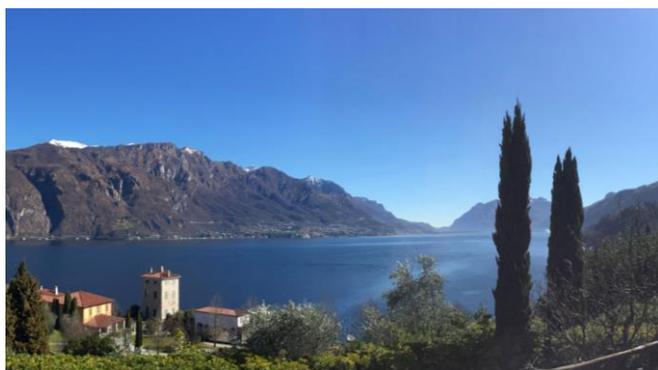


FORGING RESILIENT NATIONAL SOCIAL CONTRACTS: PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT AND SUSTAINING PEACE

REPORT OF BELLAGIO MEETING



Working Group Meeting 2:

Reflecting on Case Study Progress and Strategizing to Maximise Policy Impacts

Bellagio Conference Centre, Italy

February 27 – March 3, 2017

ABSTRACT:

‘Forging Resilient National Social Contracts’ is a twelve-country research and policy dialogue project that aims to revitalize the social contract concept in contexts affected by conflict and fragility, to advance policy and practice for preventing violent conflict and achieving and sustaining peace. The comparative findings aim to elucidate how the social contract manifests, adapts to, and is understood in different contexts. In 2016, the project became a proud recipient of a Bellagio Centre, Rockefeller Foundation award. From February 26-March 3, 2017 the Project Working Group met in Bellagio, Italy, to reflect upon research progress and challenges, research methodology, areas of convergence and specificity within and across cases, and strategies to maximize scholarly and policy impact. This report shares highlights from the event.

Project Summary

'Forging Resilient National Social Contracts' is a twelve-country research and policy dialogue project that aims to revitalize the social contract concept in contexts affected by conflict and fragility, to advance policy and practice for preventing violent conflict and achieving and sustaining peace. The comparative findings aim to elucidate how the social contract manifests, adapts to, and is understood in different contexts. The project is supported by an esteemed group of scholar and policy advisers, and authors from the countries examined: *Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Cyprus, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, South Africa, Tunisia, Yemen, Zimbabwe*. The project activities are underway in 2016-2018, which include a series of policy and scholar dialogues, and will culminate in a series of policy papers on cross-cutting critical themes emerging from the research, a scholarly book focused on the cases, and potentially a policy-oriented book on assessing and forging resilient national social contracts, to be launched in several settings internationally. The project gratefully receives support from *UNDP's Oslo Governance Centre (UNDP), the Julian J. Studley Fund of the Graduate Program of International Affairs at The New School, and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation (FES)*, in Berlin and New York.

INTRODUCTION

From February 26-March 3, 2017 the Project Working Group met in Bellagio, Italy, to reflect upon research progress and challenges, research methodology, areas of convergence and specificity within and across cases, and strategies to maximise scholarly and policy impact.

The workshop commenced with a presentation and discussion on the framing of the study. This was followed by case study authors presenting their progress, and in some cases, early findings, and discussion around these. Project Director, Dr Erin McCandless, outlined the project framing, including the key questions and propositions driving the inquiry.

Research Focus

The research is inspired by the question: What drives a resilient national social contract in countries affected by conflict and fragility? Such a contract – a dynamic agreement between state and society, and different groups in society, on how to live together – allows for mediation of different demands and conflicting interests over time (including sub-national, international and transnational) and in response to contextual factors (including shocks and stressors), through peaceful mechanisms, institutions and policies. As laid out in the research framework developed for this study, three postulated 'drivers', deeply rooted in evidence-based research, are considered as central in the forging of a resilient social contract and in advancing prospects for achieving and sustaining peace.

They are that:

1. Core conflict and fragility issues are being progressively addressed, over time, through the political settlement and related institutional mechanisms;
2. Institutions are becoming more effective over time, producing more inclusive results, and are able to perform key functions in ways that enhance state legitimacy; and,
3. That there is broadening and deepening social cohesion both horizontally (between individuals and groups in society) and vertically (between state and society).

The study explores the strength and interaction of these postulated drivers, reflecting on cross-cutting issues, i.e. of inclusion and exclusion, the role of international actors, and resilience capacities for peace¹. In total, these areas of focus are deemed to broadly encompass core values and mechanisms associated with the concept spanning time and geographical space, yet with attention to the dynamism and adaptability that societies in transition from conflict and fragility demand

The first discussion session delved into concepts and methods, as senior experts from around the world, working in different scholarly disciplines and practice traditions, deliberated and sought to achieve greater clarity and consensus. This included serious reflection on how, across cases, key concepts at the heart of the study would be employed, and how they should be understood in relation to each other. These concepts included: the social contract, the political settlement, sustaining peace, resilience, social cohesion, which the project has defined and hopes to refine as the research findings emerge. These can be viewed on the project website². The discussion revealed that there is a tremendous interest in the question of how to measure the social contract, which was discussed in detail on the third day (see below). Participants also shared a strong interest in the study's linking of the concepts of the social contract and resilience, and a desire for the study to contribute to policy and practice in relation to these linkages.

REFLECTING ON CASE FINDINGS

The authors reflected on their progress to date, and the emerging findings, where they were far enough along to do so. The feedback from participants during the discussions that ensued were lively and informative, as captured in the following summaries. The case studies were in some cases paired by region, and in others where there is some shared history and/or similar experience, in order to promote comparative reflection across cases.

¹ As defined in this study: resilience capacities for peace are endogenous capacities to address shocks and stressors (including drivers of conflict and fragility) in ways that minimally (adaptively) mitigate the effects of conflict and more maximally (transformatively) uproot these drivers and foster new or revitalised structures and systems that support peace.

² www.socialcontractsforpeace.org

SOUTH AFRICA AND ZIMBABWE

COUNTRY: SOUTH AFRICA

AUTHOR: MASANA NDINGA

In South Africa, competing narratives of identity co-exist, and are linked to issues around access to services and the perceived priorities of the state. While the ‘rainbow nation’ identity at the transitional moment of the ending of apartheid in 1994 was widely welcomed, there now exist identities around white alienation, neo-black consciousness, and a range of marginalised voices that illustrate disillusionment with the inclusive rainbow nation identity – an aspiration that has not delivered the core promises made by political leadership at the advent of democracy. Core conflict issues that South Africans are still struggling with, in this context, pertain to access to and improved quality of service delivery, and participation of stakeholder groups in the economy. Notably, black women workers continue to be excluded from the labour market, and relegated to the informal economy. The New Growth Plan, meant to be the realisation of the National Development Plan for the Ministry of Economic Development, remains centred on masculine experiences of the formal economy, and fails to be fully transformative due to its inability to be intersectional and consider the important role the informal economy plays in providing livelihoods to women and youth who may never work in the formal sector. There are also persistent issues related to corruption and lack of accountability. However, to mitigate against these challenges in state-society relations there is a strong culture of activism, where civil society is working to re-capture the principles of Ubuntu at the local level, and to harness its mobilizing capacity through the re-politicisation of collective rights to garner more urgent responses from state actors.

While the political settlement in South Africa in 1994 is considered a watershed moment for driving political change, the same cannot be said of economic and social change. Overall, access has significantly increased, but the quality of services manifest in ways that replicate the cleavages created by the apartheid system. These issues would have been more easily transformed in 1994 than now, with black elites entrenched in the replication of apartheid era structures. On the social front, only 11% of South Africans are reported to trust other groups and identities.³ While the social contract remains precarious, opportunities for strengthening it include a spirit of compromise and collaboration amongst people and across sectors, activism and a creative array of forms that it is taking, and, that the nature of identity is still mostly fluid and amenable to a unified post-apartheid South Africa.

COUNTRY: ZIMBABWE

AUTHORS: SHOWERS MAWOWA AND ERIN MCCANDLESS

In Zimbabwe, despite successive attempts at political settlement, it can be argued that the core conflict issues driving the country’s struggle for independence, have never been properly, or sustainably, addressed. Starting with the 1980 Lancaster House Agreement and even through the efforts to implement the 2009 Global Political Agreement (GPA), the core conflict issues around the ‘political question’ (the exercise and distribution of power) and the ‘land question’ (issues of ownership, acquisition, and value) – while they have adapted over time and in response to other internal and/or external issues – continue to drive divisions in the country. While the GPA offered much promise in

³ With ‘somewhat’, ‘just a little’ and ‘not at all’ making up the bulk of the responses. Sibusiso, N. (2016, June). South Africa’s social cohesion - inequality, interpersonal/institutional trust, identity and tolerance: Findings from Afrobarometers Round 6 surveys in South Africa. Presented at the DAC Nation Building and Social Cohesion Workshop, Cape Town.

moving Zimbabweans onto a new path, little has been implemented to date, notably with the ending of the power-sharing Government of National Unity and return to ZANU-PF one-party rule.

A key issue is that political settlements in Zimbabwe have always been elite-driven, and have never gained sufficient traction at different levels of society. Power dynamics, rather than respected and enforced agreements and rules, tend to drive politics and development. While post-colonial Zimbabwe inherited, in theory, a strong and capable state, institutions were only serving a minority, and in the post-colonial era, the demands of serving a majority were not possible due to the paucity of resources. The state has, to date, been unable to carry out its core developmental functions. Austerity and de-nationalization measures imposed by the international community have not helped. Over time, high levels of polarization and stereotyping between different groups has worsened, and social cohesion has generally failed to take root across all social groups, and between particular groups and the state. At the same time, Zimbabweans have a strong sense of national identity, which holds promise for strengthening the social contract. Nevertheless, there remains much work to be done in order to move Zimbabwe solidly in the direction of a resilient social contract that supports sustainable peace.

Discussion

The discussion focused on questions of why and how South Africa and Zimbabwe were, at some level resilient, in spite of the serious challenges they face. Bosnia and Herzegovina author Roberto Belloni compared his case country with Zimbabwe, in that it is assumed to be a state 'always about to collapse' and yet it does not. Asking *why not?* And, *does this not suggest the reality of a strong base of political power* – answers to these critical questions will provide insight into the nature of the social contract.

Showers Mawowa explained how these issues played out in the post-2000 Zimbabwean context through the reconfiguration of the political economy and state-society. The dismantling of white land ownership and redistribution to thousands of blacks created a new landed class which provides a social base for the ruling elite. The discovery of diamonds in 2006 has further fuelled new non-state actor forms of authority and legitimacy and the further expansion of patronage networks. By providing land and mining rights in gold and diamonds, and selectively applying laws, the government has been able to continue to create and maintain its social base. Control and utilization of the security apparatus has been key for maintenance of government power in the economic and political spheres, while the new patronage networks and access to diamonds have further helped sustain the military, police and youth militia.

The nature of violence during the transition phase was also a focus of attention for participants; specifically, how different forms of violence emerge and are legitimized by different groups, including the state, and how this changes over time throughout the transition process. The roles of social movements and civil society actors – particularly as they may move into positions of political power, were thought important to examine. There was also a desire to know more about the mechanisms of inclusion, and whether they are working, failing, and/or being renewed, and how. The role of social media in particular, is enabling different communities to engage in political debate in both countries, in ways that can shape the nature of - and buy-in to as well as rejection of - the emerging social contract.

TUNISIA AND YEMEN

COUNTRY: TUNISIA

AUTHORS: YOUSSEF MAHMOUD AND ANDREA Ó SÚILLEABHÁIN

Following its initiation of the Arab Spring revolutions in 2010, Tunisia remains in transition, engaged in processes to establish a resilient social contract. The transition, considered the most successful in the Arab Spring countries, has also been complex. Tunisia had seven transitional governments over four years, with the Islamist-led government pushing back on many democratic reforms and stalling progress in 2012 and 2013, until the National Dialogue Quartet crafted a roadmap and managed to scale down political tensions. While grievances remain, notably around the economy - with over 50% unemployment - the country has managed to maintain a relatively stable situation, even as terrorist attacks have sought to undermine this stability. This is mainly due to the existing reservoir of tolerance and to the forging of what can be seen as 'micro-social contracting processes' as part of the transitional process – or social contract-making processes – that are filling the institutional vacuum created by the revolution. These include the National Dialogue, the development of a new constitution, and the Higher Political Reform Commission. Acknowledging these positive steps, the research in this case still defines one of the core conflict issues as political fragmentation and polarization, alongside economic marginalization. Insecurity is also a concern, where 6,000 people have found their way to groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), and their return to the country presents numerous challenges.

This case study research has engaged five young Tunisian researchers to support an online survey, interviews and focus groups. Early findings of the research suggest that before the revolution there was a horizontal social contract between elites and those governing, while now a deeper, vertical social contract is being defined. There is a sense of urgency, and dissatisfaction with the pace of progress, especially among young people who wish to see things move more rapidly. Due to far-reaching consultations associated with the transition, Tunisians are more aware of their role in the public arena, and CSOs have taken on the role of watchdogs. The education of citizens through media and social media about the transition process has been crucial in this regard; all television channels for example, cover the ongoing debates. This increased awareness is also witnessed in the expansion of civil society organisations (CSOs), which are contributing to checks and balances in the process. There is hope that external investments will make a difference, but this relies on agreements being implemented. A positive outcome of these processes is the heightened commitment to participatory governance across government, which the authors feel is supporting the public involvement needed to lay a strong foundation for healthy state-society relations.

COUNTRY: YEMEN

AUTHOR: FATIMA ABO AL ASRAR (BY SKYPE)

Understanding the status of the social contract in Yemen is an extremely complex exercise. When the research team started its field work, there was some hope for a peaceful outcome of the conflict. However, with the military intervention led by Saudi Arabia, where the government in exile is residing, multiple informal structures are arising with new narratives relating to governance. This undermines the legitimacy of the formerly elected president and the exiled government, and challenges the ability of Yemenis to forge an agreed social contract. In this context, finding a peaceful solution is challenging, as the Houthi movement which has taken control of the government in the capital maintains a considerable support base and have the military means to resist intervention.

In this study, core conflict issues are being defined around the distribution and exercise of political power, the effectiveness and fairness of service delivery, and security. On the first issue, there was an attempt by leadership following the unification of the North and South to be inclusive. However, after the civil war of 1994, imbalances favoured the North, resulting in the marginalisation of the Southern region. Some poor areas with historical and political significance were also marginalised, such as the Northern region of Saada. This allowed informal systems of governance to take root, along with a local militia that resulted in protracted conflict and the toppling the state government. The political landscape continues to shift and formerly marginalised segments of the population are gaining more power. In general, people feel that the exiled leaders do not have political legitimacy, while local leaders do not have international recognition. In the context of a leadership vacuum, political, economic and security challenges are mounting, as fears of state-collapse grow. The area of service delivery involves multiple challenges related to unequal distribution of services and access to resources. Security is also a key issue, with government's lack of capacity (whichever administration) to achieve control and maintain autonomy in the context of the myriad external security interventions to address Islamic extremism. Attempts to address these core conflict issues in political settlements have to date not been successful, including the failure of the National Dialogue that took place after the Arab Spring in 2013.

Social cohesion is a cornerstone of a resilient social contract in Yemen. Because Yemen is divided by regionalism, tribalism and sectarianism, building a resilient social contract will require understanding the shared features of identity, and working with the population to acknowledge, support and promote these. Resilience for peace capacities exist and need to be drawn upon. Like in Tunisia, there is a culture of dialogue, and a long history of tribal conflict resolution mechanisms. There is also a culture of empathy in Yemen and a willingness to help others; for example, while the Houthis committed atrocities in the South, when the Saudis attacked the North, there were protest demonstrations in the South.

Discussion

These two country cases fostered much discussion, around questions of leadership and inclusion in transitional processes, as well as interest in questions around the role the economy. Facilitating the discussion, project adviser Mohamed Mahmoud Mohamedou pointed to the importance of understanding issues of leadership, architecture, management and the origins of the social contract. While there was considerable interest in the role of government both in the transitional period and in the longer-term management of institutions to deliver services, the expectations and participation of civil society featured prominently in the discussion. Tunisia's increasing engagement of civil society and the broader population, fostered through civic education processes during the transition, holds much promise as a tool in promoting a resilience social contract across thematic and sectoral areas of relevance. For example, the authors pointed to an increasing awareness about corruption across all levels of society, and growing demands for accountability.

There was much interest in the role of inclusion in transition processes in both cases, and its contribution towards achieving a political settlement and a more sustainable resilient social contract. Tunisia author Andrea Ó Súilleabháin spoke about the role of women in Tunisia, who played an instrumental role in producing the Arab world's most progressive constitution. The question remains how these rights translate into genuine participation. Women have played a key role in the political transition, as have youth due to their active engagement with social media. Despite the inclusive nature of Tunisia's transition, 80% of the population did not vote, revealing a widespread disengagement with national politics, as more and more Tunisians question whether the government can deliver the promises of the revolution. The authors of the Tunisia case are also examining the role of labour unions and the private sector, given the importance of expanding the economy in a manner that achieves inclusive results.

In the case of Yemen, author Fatima Al Asrar highlighted the important role of the National Dialogue which deliberately sought to be inclusive. At the same time, spoilers were left out and subsequently engaged in backdoor negotiations which contributed to the collapse of the dialogue. While women see themselves shackled by informal system, men feel the opposite - that they can strike deals and have more power outside of formalized mechanisms. Moreover, there is been an absence of women's inclusion in transitional and political discussions and agreements. While there may be a woman delegation, they are often do not have a voice in critical discussions; women's inclusion can still be viewed as in a 'box-ticking' exercise.

Concerning questions pertaining to the economy, Tunisia co-author Youssef Mahmoud pointed out the economic transformation following a conflict or crisis seldom succeed without some form of a 'Marshall plan'. There are concerns around whether and how liberal conditionalities can be avoided, given the demands on the state to ensure that services are delivered inclusively. There is a general feeling of frustration and excitement about increasing the participation of young entrepreneurs in the economy.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND CYPRUS

COUNTRY: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

AUTHORS: JASMIN RAMOVIC AND ROBERTO BELLONI

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country nearly half a century into a new political settlement, yet one where people still do not feel they have achieved a sustainable peace. While the Dayton Agreement established a formal cessation of hostilities, it gave primacy to ethnic rights, entrenching divisions along ethnic lines. State-society relations are further complicated by a consociational, ethnically based governance structure. This is one of the study's core conflict issues, while the other, which is related, is the existence of different conceptions of political community, and boundaries that define the political space by the three main ethnic groups. The Bosniaks/Muslims, the Croats and the Serbs have different ideas about boundaries within the political space. Bosniaks/Muslims are pluralistic and Croats and Serbs are separate. While the ethnic quota-based system maintains peace as conceptualised in the Dayton Agreement, it undermines policymaking processes, is conducive to clientelism, and perpetuates tensions and cleavages.

As viewed by the authors, there are two social contracts operating: an elite social contract, involving the main political (and also economic) elites of the country, and the everyday social contract, involving average citizens. The goal of the first is to maintain the status quo and manage (or mismanage) economic resources to serve the elites, utilizing nationalist, inflammatory rhetoric to ensure sufficient division to maintain the system. The everyday is primarily situated in the economic realm, where people cooperate to meet basic needs and rely on informal networks to access jobs and services. The elite social contract sets the parameters within which the everyday social contract functions, framing political and social life in nationalist terms, make it difficult for non-nationalist identities to emerge. The diaspora, powerful due to remittances, plays different roles in this context; although their tendency to support the notion of a multi-ethnic country could conceivably support a more national identity based, social cohesion. Despite the introduction of the neoliberal principles of free market and free trade, nationalist elites have gained control of state enterprises and have privatised them. The results is a context where ethnically based institutions are simply not adequately delivering services and there is no national development plan, nor national institutions to support service delivery, which also serve to undermine social cohesion.

COUNTRY: CYPRUS

AUTHOR: ALEXANDROS LORDOS

In Cyprus, a buffer zone continues to divide the Turkish Cypriot state and the Greek Cypriot state. While a Bi-communal Republic was established following independence from Britain, based on the principle of power-sharing, joint institutions ruptured in 1963, and between 1964-1988 mono-ethnic institutions were established. While Greek Cypriots would prefer a united state and Turkish Cypriots prefer two separate states, both communities would settle on a federalist system – a plausible shared vision that could underpin a national social contract. Since 1977, several attempts have been made by the United Nations to broker a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, but have failed. As peace talks continue however, each side self-governs its territory, while segments of society perceive the peace process as a threat to the status quo from which they benefit.

Core conflict issues as conceptualised in the study focus on governance and power-sharing, and security and guarantees of its implementation. In terms of the first issue, the focus of the peace process has been on identifying ethnic ratios, through exclusive processes, rather than clarifying how a federal system and institutions might work. In terms of the second issue, there has been a failure to define threats to security, and there is contestation around the nature of external security guarantees (i.e. Greece, Turkey, the international community?).

With respect to institutions, there are competing notions across sectors. In education for example, schools are segregated and history is taught in a way that reinforces non-inclusive ethnocentric narratives. In the health sector, Turkish Cypriots have been recently excluded from access to health services in Greek Cypriot hospitals. There is a widespread assumption that if enough representatives of each ethnic group participate in state institutions, the decision-making process will automatically be fair and inclusive, but this vision is not being realised. Both sides have elites affiliated with their communities who contribute to the corruption of the economy. The two social contracts operate so effectively, that a cross-national social cohesion is far from being a reality, although there is a more inclusive Cypriot identity amongst children, young people, women, and more educated people feel generally excluded from institutions, which tend to be dominated by those espousing more nationalist narratives. A gradual adoption of European values may pave the way for transformation towards a shared social contract, and new political movements may emerge to add substance to the currently shallow peace process.

Discussion

As Mahmoud, observed, the social contract is not necessarily a virtuous, unifying construct, especially if the role of outsiders is factored in. In Bosnia and Hercegovina, Belloni highlighted how the international community has contributed to consolidating an ethnicity-based government, and while the diaspora provides high levels of remittances, its roles in fostering a unified citizenship are not uncontroversial. Cyprus case author, Alexandros Lordos, suggested that a non-virtuous social contract cannot be dismantled but instead can be reformed. In Bosnia and Hercegovina, citizen protests might have the power to break up clientelistic networks, but will inevitably generate social costs (i.e. firing of public employees). The international community cannot push for radical reforms.

A wider discussion ensued about the nature of international actors, their role in relation to inclusion in peace processes, and towards the forging of inclusive, resilient social contracts. It was agreed that while citizens need to be well represented, concerns were expressed that inclusion is often highly politicized, and needs to be carefully defined. The questions around including spoilers are particularly challenging.

Closing the session, Zahar suggested that we need to understand what the social contract is delivering for whom. Understanding what is normatively acceptable to different groups is key.

SOUTH SUDAN AND SOMALIA

COUNTRY: SOUTH SUDAN

AUTHOR: LUKA BIONG DENG KUOL, SKYPE

With South Sudan's independence-induced euphoria (July 2011) has now been crushed with a return to war, the concept of a resilient social contract provides an important lens for understanding what went wrong, and how a lasting peace can be forged in the future. Reviewing the deficiencies in the political settlements that have ended the wars in South Sudan in which unfulfilled promises are apparent is a good starting point – in 1956, 1972, and also in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005, where changes were not embraced by leadership. In 2015 a new comprehensive agreement was mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and was highly inclusive. Government structures are comprehensively engaged in this agreement, and transitional justice institutions were established based on the African Union Commission of Inquiry in consultation with the government. This offers a new opportunity to get things right. It will be vital to address the need for a collective national identity narrative; the failure of the post-independence state, and the need to mitigate the retrenchment of tribal identities in the interest of peace.

The core conflict issues in South Sudan involve interwoven political, economic and social issues, and the South Sudan research involves a survey of regional views in order to unpack how these issues play out across the regions. The core conflict issues are being examined through different social contract making mechanisms, amongst which, the constitution is key. The role of institutions is also vital. It is clear that after independence, the state was not delivering basic services and economic benefits to the citizens, which seriously constrained peace consolidation. South Sudan illustrates the 'resource curse' thesis on account of its oil. An effective taxation system is not in place, and there are consequently insufficient demands for accountability. Institutions are not functioning, notably public service delivery in the areas of: security, food security, poverty alleviation, corruption and education. Furthermore, political and administrative structures at all levels have failed to engage, and have in fact alienated, the citizenry. Traditional institutions play important roles, and need to be examined for their resilience and their contributions. In general, however, transforming institutions is unlikely to be a sufficient to move from violence and fragility to justice, development and peace (the World Bank, 2011 World Development Report thesis). It is therefore important to gradually restore confidence and social cohesion – both vertically and, especially, horizontally, between South Sudan's ethnic groups. The 2015 CPA however, provides a mechanism to rebuild confidence, and has managed to involve civil society at different levels (political parties, traditional elites, women, civil society, etc.). This is an important prerequisite for forging a resilient social contract.

COUNTRY: SOMALIA

AUTHOR: DEQA HAGI YUSUF

Somalis have faced immense challenges in their efforts to forge a united, peaceful state. A civilian government at independence in 1960 survived less than a decade before a military coup led by Mohamed Siad Barre seized power. In 1991 a civil war ensued, and the power vacuum that emerged became the tinder for violent conflict as armed factions fought for power, particularly in the South. Somalia was named a 'failed state' during this period, due to the absence of a central government, while

customary and religious laws were relied upon by communities in order to continue functioning. Somaliland and Puntland emerged as autonomous administrations in the North, while the institutions of a federal administration only began to emerge with a Transitional National Government (TNG) in 2000, followed by the formation of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004. In 2006, with the assistance of Ethiopia, the TFG took control of most of the nation's southern conflict zones from the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). Sections of the ICU regrouped and formed Al-Shabaab, which currently controls large parts of Somalia despite the internationally supported and recognised federal government.

The Somalia case study will underline the different attempts to forge political settlements and social contracts, before 1969, then up until the civil war in 1991, and then in the current era – with attention to key spheres and mechanisms through which social contract making has occurred: the 2011 Roadmap, the constitution-making process, the 2013 Somali Compact and engagement with the New Deal process, and the 2016 elections. Drivers of resilience and the core conflict issues (the structure of government, clan identities, and the management of natural resources) through political settlements will be also be analysed. The roles that have been played by different actors – notably the international community and the diasporas – in these processes will also be analysed. Attention will be given to the notion of nested social contracts that exist at different levels, among religious, clan-based, political and administrative actors and institutions. Questions about the performance and inclusiveness of state institutions and questions about changes in relationships between different institutions over time, are both important for understanding the forging of a resilient social contract in the Somali context.

Discussion

The complexity of undertaking research on cases involving ongoing violent conflict was recognised, as were the opportunities present in transitional settings to get things right.

In both cases, there was an interest in unpacking the roles of international actors vis-à-vis the roles of internal actors, and notably, and as highlighted by Zahar, the need to explore how external issues and agendas create positive and/or negative conditions for forging a resilient social contract, and how they become instrumentalised by local elites. Questions of whether and how social contracts have lifespans, or transitional phases themselves were posited. The history of the state and the nature of leadership structures was underlined as particularly important in South Sudan, while author Luka Biang Deng Kuol highlighted the importance of political parties increasing their accountability to their citizens. He observed the challenges that South Sudan has in managing the transitions from war to peace in the context of weak or non-existent institutions and the curse of resources that are not effectively managed.

EARLY STAGE CASES: COLOMBIA, AFGHANISTAN, SIERRA LEONE

COUNTRY: COLOMBIA

AUTHOR: ANGELIKA RETTBERG, SKYPE

Colombia hosted the longest-running armed conflict in the Western hemisphere resulting in more than 200,000 deaths and over eight million victims (of forced displacement, disappearance, recruitment, and kidnappings, among other atrocities). The latest peace talks launched in 2012 resulted in a peace agreement in 2016 between the Colombian government and the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), the country's largest remaining guerrilla group, to end the armed conflict. Colombia has joined a new group of post-conflict countries facing dilemmas of building durable peace.

In recent decades Colombia has seen improvements in health and education coverage, an increase in state presence in several regions, and an increase in the fairness and effectiveness of institutions, especially at the central level. However, this progress is not reflected in the structure of land tenure and land use. Both have been at the core conflict issues of the armed conflict's initiation, transformation, and duration. Specifically, FARC was founded as a group representing peasant interests. Historically, demands to alter the Colombian land tenure system and introduce measures to make it more productive and less concentrated have met with resistance by land owners. Today, Colombia remains one of the most unequal countries in Latin America in terms of land distribution. Aside from land, another core conflict issue that requires attention is drugs. Illicit crops and markets will loom large over the implementation of peace agreement and its sustainability. Ever since the 1980s, illicit crops have fuelled competition between and the territorial expansion of numerous illegal armed groups in the country. Beyond an agreement with FARC, which included illicit crops and strategies to provide productive alternatives, the drug trade is a salient problem for the country's social, political, and economic institutions.

The discussion reflected upon the question of how transformative the agreement actually is and can potentially be. Several participants agreed that it is unlikely to foster deep, far reaching reform. On relation to the land issue, it addresses productivity, not ownership; elites linked to international markets participated in peace process discussions. As Rettberg suggested however, surveys reveal that while Colombians prefer negotiated solutions, many want 'peace for free' – no reconciliation processes and no addressing of the structural sources of conflict. President Santos has been able to sell security as a priority while state institutions atrophied during the armed conflict. Finding ways to broaden ownership of the agreement and to institutionalize it, while building social cohesion among the population will constitute a formidable challenge moving forward.

COUNTRY: AFGHANISTAN

AUTHOR: ORZALA ASHRAF NEMAT

Understanding the role and relationship of identity to statebuilding and peacebuilding (viewed as packages of support from external actors) in Afghanistan is crucial. Specifically, how groups define their identities in relation to and interact with each other, and in support of a national identity is fundamental, since ethnic identity and the military have been key in the statebuilding project, as well as in political settlements. Afghanistan currently experiences both fragility and violent conflict. A key area of focus for understanding the nature and status of the social contract is how citizens and institutions manage in contexts in which security and other public services are absent. The Afghan people have been asking themselves whether they want more of a state or less of a state. Their responses bear investigating not through distanced analysis but rather by understanding how Afghan citizens within their own contexts are seeking to forge systems, rules, structures and processes. Evidence from research on local service delivery indicates that locals do want more state, not less. But the 'state' would not be viewed as a centrally-led structure but rather a form of order focused on delivering services to the people in return with voting for offering their allegiance to the state.

Afghanistan has not yet secured a political settlement. There are ongoing peace talks – the Hizb-e-Islami-Hekmatyar Group (aka HIG) so-called 'peace deal' – though this is seen as simply a rebalancing of relations between power brokers in Kabul rather than a more wide-reaching peace deal. Questions also remain around transitional institutions and processes concerning the legitimacy of the parliament and related election processes, the independence of the judiciary, and the powers of the police. Finally, there are questions about the roles of local councils, and whether and how hybrid structures can effectively co-exist in ways that support a resilient and peace-promoting social contract. Presently, such local councils that are formed as a result of a mixed process of traditional consensus and modern elections. Rural and urban localities, are in many cases functioning effectively. However, while they are required by the

constitution to have elections facilitated by the Independent Election Commission, many have grown through locally facilitated elections, i.e. by non-governmental organisations, and thus their legitimacy can be questioned. Social cohesion is generally strong in long-standing communities, but is weak where ‘new comers’ or returnees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs) live among the locality’s original residents.

Facilitating the discussion, Marie-Joelle Zahar underscored how national, regional, and international levels of analysis change how we think about root causes, and the complexity involved where conflict drivers intersect and interact. This is compounded by ‘internationalized’ dynamics. The tensions and dynamics in the processes of statebuilding and the forging of a social contract, in particular in relation to the expectations of local communities and those of the international community were explored. Project Adviser Habib Ur Rehman Mayar pointed to the high portion (65%) of Afghanistan’s budget that comes from external aid, raising stark challenges for national ownership. In closing, Nemat underscored the need for this research to spotlight the un-programmed interventions of local actors and how these can be better understood and communicated, as they are central to building a nation and forging a resilient social contract in the current context. At the same time, while local processes and structures such as the local councils represent endogeneity, they also represent hybridity. This occurs where externally-funded and -led interventions contribute to formalising local power-sharing arrangements modelled on liberal democratic practices as well as to defining broader national political settlement arrangements.

COUNTRY: SIERRA LEONE

AUTHOR: DAVID FRANCIS, SKYPE

As elsewhere, discussion of the social contract today must be rooted in understanding the historical context. In the case of Sierra Leone this includes colonialism, civil war, and the generations of leadership that have sought to build a social contract, or led regimes that have undermined it. Key core conflict issues that have challenged the forging of a resilient social contract include the structural factors created by the entrenched British colonial rule and its legacies and the predatory neo-patrimonial nature of domestic politics and political culture. Both of these core issues influenced the development of a series of constitutions in ways that have fuelled extractive, predatory practices, maintaining the status quo and ensuring the dominance of political and economic elites.

The discussion focused on issues of accountability – both internally and internationally. In relation to the latter, the question of how international accountability can be achieved in the context of a political economy that fosters extractive industries was raised – which is a recurring challenge, albeit in different ways, in all of the cases. Internally, despite an anti-corruption commission now in place, Francis underscored how the endemic neo-patrimonial culture presents challenges that are beyond reform. Ultimately, he argued that progress towards a resilient social contract in Sierra Leone will require ending the subversion and manipulation of the constitution by the small, ruling elite, the development of inclusive, viable and accountable governance institutions, and an effective, transparent and strong leadership committed to the development of a democratic state, and a fundamental change in the political culture that prioritises the forging of a resilient social contract over the parochial self-interests of the ruling elites.

Keynote Talk: 'Islam and the Social Contract' Mohammed-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou

Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou, an expert in political violence and political transition, was asked to present on the keynote topic given its importance in and across the projects case studies. The following is a paraphrased summary of his presentation. Mohamedou premised his discussion by stating that a deep understanding of Islam and its history is central for analysing the social contract and Islam, and proceeded with the following key points:

Islamic scholarship has a long, rich history. Among the first scholars to discuss the social contract was Abu Nasr Mohamed Ibn Mohamed Al Farabi, a scholar from Central Asia whose writings include political philosophy, epistemology, metaphysics, science, mathematics, and other subjects. He both influenced and was influenced by Western philosophers. Al Farabi presented a philosophy of society that includes the following aspects: 1. ethical norms 2. a regime administration, and three. guidance for citizens – in short, social contract. Contrary to what is often asserted, Islam is not necessarily in need of urgent reform, nor is it in need of transformation. Indeed, Islam helped build Western secularism, through the influence of scholars such as Al Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicena) and Ibn Rusd (Averroes). Rather it was the advent of colonialism, imperialism and European nationalism that set the stage for the current evolution of Islam and the emergence of Arab nationalists and later on Islamists.

In the West, the social contract is about statehood. The current debate concerning the place of Islam in state and society is one that has been discussed throughout the history of Islam. In Arab countries, debates are focused on the question of whether primary allegiance is to the nation-state or to Islam. Arab states began as liberal regimes built on secularism, constitutions, civil society, human rights, labour unions, etc. However, beginning in the 1930s nationalist and military governments began taking over as a response to colonialism and imperialism which launched a period of repression, exclusion, and human rights violations, as they mimicked colonial and imperialist regimes. During the 1960s these began to fail and Arab states turned towards narratives of liberation and reformism, as exemplified by leaders such as Gamal Abdel Nasser; but these too soon became repressive and exclusive. These regimes were tolerated by Western countries, even though they had not delivered to their citizens. During this period, the state in the Arab world became the symbol of authoritarianism to its citizens.

Islamism expanded in the late 1950s and 1960s as a response to authoritarianism. The earliest politically-organised movements took place in Egypt throughout the 1970s and in Algeria in the 1980s. The events of September 11 saw the transformation of Islamism into a political and military project appropriated by multiple actors for their own purposes – within Arab countries as well as by the Western countries. After September 11, a 'securitised' paradigm has emerged. This has gradually further led to the transformation of Islam into a political project. The social base of this political project and the radicalisation of its programme is connected to the following elements:

- The current period of instability which is characterised by four unprecedented civil wars in the region (Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen);
- The increasingly important role played by non-state actors;

- The collapse of trust among and within communities and between state and society;
- The role of external actors and influences.

In conclusion, it is necessary to underline the fact that Islam in itself is a social contract, even though the richness of the Quran leaves room for interpretation. Moreover, there is no centralised religious authority in Islam. Indeed, in Islam the social contract is between the believer (al Muslim) and God (Allah). Yet it is difficult for Muslims to engage in reflective conversation at this time when external actors have had a negative impact on how Muslims view themselves and when Islam has been instrumentalised one way or another by all sides.

Questions for ongoing reflection include:

- How can Arab countries emerge from this period of chaos and achieve sustainable peace?
- How to address the lack of trust between the society and the state, when non-state actors are more ubiquitous and powerful than ever?
- Does democracy have to be liberal and secular?
- What would an Islamic democracy look like?

ANALYSING INTERSECTIONS & DRAWING POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Day three reflected on cross-cutting issues, assessing resilient social contracts and policy impacts.

REFLECTING ON CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Reflections on drivers

The sessions on cross-cutting themes kicked off with short interventions on the study's postulated 'drivers' of resilient national social contracts, drawing upon the presentations of the case studies.

POSTULATED THREE 'DRIVERS' OF RESILIENT SOCIAL CONTRACTS

1. Core issues around conflict and fragility are progressively addressed through an increasingly inclusive political settlement and requisite institutional spheres of 'social contract making.'
2. Increasingly effective, fair, and inclusive institutions (state, customary, other non-state, international) are performing key functions with broadly shared results;
3. There is broadening and deepening social cohesion – understood as the formal and informal ties that hold society together both horizontally (across citizens, between groups) and vertically (in the relations between citizens/groups and the state) – drawing on clear mechanisms and related commitments that value and build inclusivity.

Driver 1: Zahar reflected on the first driver, on which the authors have concentrated more to date, and shared the following insights:

- Driver 1 sets parameters for inclusion, and these parameters point to the opportunities and obstacles to inclusion or exclusion of certain groups.
- The research needs to think about how a political settlement is creating virtuous results for whom, what, and why; in some cases, the social contract reflects a Hobbesian lens.
- The notion of ‘nested’ social contracts that the study is cultivating and exploring is widely apparent across cases.
- In some cases, the political settlement involves international actors and national elites – i.e. the Dayton Agreement in Bosnia Hercegovina. Several cases are concerned with foreign intervention, and how this factors (negatively or positively) into an evolving social contract (i.e. Afghanistan and Yemen).
- The links with other drivers is a critical focus of this research, and also a complex endeavour: how does the political settlement and evolving social contract support efforts to achieve and sustain peace, particularly if the former is not designed in conducive ways?

Driver 2: Project adviser Alina Rocha Menocal shared reflections on driver 2

- The parameters for a transformational social contract should be analysed through the lens of institutions and the nature and dynamics of political power over time.
- Institutions can be seen as ‘hardware’ to carry forward the implementation of the political settlement.
- The establishment of formal institutions and mechanisms that enable citizens to engage are a foundational driver of a resilient social contract, i.e. the constitutional process in Colombia, the transition to democracy and peace agreement in South Africa, the Government of National Unity in Zimbabwe.
- Gaps in implementation of peace agreements, and the strength of state capacity also need to be considered.
- The cases are beginning to reveal how multiple layers of inclusion and exclusion (not only in terms of processes, but also in terms of outputs) shape state-society relations.
- Issues of identity and nation-building also need deep examination; identities are cross-cutting and can be ‘shared’ – an important issue to reflect upon in understanding what resilient social contracts are and how they can be forged.
- In general, cases will benefit by giving concerted attention to the role of power in politics, particularly in the processes of nation- and state-building – how power shapes not only ideas but also institutions, structures and social, political and economic processes.

Driver 3: Farah Choucair shared initial reflections on driver 3

- Measuring social cohesion is profoundly challenging due to the many ways it is understood.
- The study’s approach to framing social cohesion as having the potential to both reflect and be a driver of a peaceful and inclusive social contract is correct.
- Both horizontal and vertical dimensions are vital, though vertical is addressed in various ways, in Drivers 1 and 2.

- The concept of vertical cohesion is challenged in states where the state does not have legitimacy, or there is more than one government, i.e. Cyprus, and Yemen.
- A multi-level assessment of the domains of social cohesion is also important, as the study methodology lays out.

The plenary discussion, building upon small group reflections, revealed further insights about the cross-cutting aspects of the three drivers, including:

- History shapes the nature of the social contract, including particular events, i.e. ‘critical junctures’ can have; yet understanding the role and value of these factors challenges assessment.
- Institutions can also pose limitations for political settlements and social cohesion, i.e. the post-colonial relations between legislative and judiciary systems; this is illustrated by the strong pervasiveness across countries affected by conflict and fragility of horizontal inequality.
- There is need to think about the responsibility of citizens, and how this links to agency. The question was raised whether this issue is sufficiently captured in the three drivers (i.e. Driver 2 and 3) or whether there is a need a fourth driver? It is also a responsibility of institutions to foster and support citizens being informed and engaged – to foster and sustain their agency and assume their rights and responsibilities. Many states do not do this.
- While the study has selected three drivers that are deemed highly important, there are undoubtedly other key drivers of a resilient social contract, depending on the context. A resilient and sustainable economy is key, and in countries depending on external resources, it is important that investments support institution building and infrastructure development to maintain revenue generation.
- Looking at Driver 2, it is recognised that people often place greater trust in customary systems than in than other systems. This is an important reason for paying attention to different types of institutions (state, informal, customary), and the hybrid arrangements and relationships between them, in order to understand how social cohesion (and specifically the trust element) evolve and contribute to the resilience of the social contract. Another question relates to the importance of the legitimacy of the state in these relationships and processes?
- Capturing the dynamism between drivers is challenging, particularly given the interactions between the drivers. Poor progress on Driver 1 can fuel negative impacts in other drivers: in Cyprus, a shallow peace process has contributed to fragmentation within civil society.
- The resilience capacities for peace as a cross-cutting issue (across the drivers), is as important as the core conflict issues. In the case of Tunisia this lens is vital; identifying and strengthening what works, for example, the fact that Tunisians have withstood violence, lies at the core of understanding Tunisia’s ability to forge a resilient social contract, and to sustain peace from the bottom up.
- As illustrated through the discussion, there is no universality in defining concepts and benchmarks. However, it is needed to find some commonalities among the case studies. Qualitative inputs will provide different analyses compared to that of the quantitative data. There is a need to define clearly which quantitative data are used for what purpose, starting with the study’s Data Resource document.

Discussion of emerging, cross-cutting themes

In the plenary discussion, the participants reflected on common themes by first brainstorming about the facilitators and the obstacles that have arisen thus far from the cases, across the drivers, in forging resilient social contracts:

FACILITATORS	OBSTACLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of women • Traditional and customary institutions and processes • Access to information in order to help the definition of a shared social contract • Territorial integration or consolidation • Monopoly of legitimate force • Unifying diaspora • Shared vision for a peacebuilding strategy • Sense of a common threat • Civic mobilization and advocacy • Social media as an equalizer • Civic education to ensure accountability • Responsible, accountable leadership • Inclusive national identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of competing social contracts • Power relationship and imbalances between powers • Excessive focus on conflict drivers versus what unites • International community (dependency on) • National identity is not a common identity referent • Corruption • Fake news, where social media is used as an amplifier of negative voices • Fragmentation (politically, within and between institutions), and the international role in this • Legacy of colonialism and structures of path dependence • Language barriers

In the discussion about these facilitators and obstacles, it was observed that:

- Most of the facilitators can be obstacles, and vice-versa, depending on the context. The diaspora can support reconciliation and social cohesion, especially after the signing of the peace agreement, while it can also serve a divisive role, supporting only particular groups and political parties.
- Many of the facilitators can also be outcomes of the social contract.
- While a sense of common threat can support parties or groups coming together (i.e. South Sudan), research shows that common threats are effective in the short term only, as in the experience of many of the post-Arab Spring countries.
- Organisational mechanisms – be they formal or informal – can channel protests in an organised way to maximise impact.
- There are also facilitators of facilitators, i.e. education. In the case of Tunisia for example, civic education has sought to ensure the accountability of the state in the constitutional process. This has also contributed to the mobilization of citizens. Yet these associations cannot be assumed; we need to better understand the relationship, between educated/informed and mobilised / active citizens.

UNDERSTANDING AND ASSESSING PROGRESS

This session, facilitated by Zahar, involved small group reflection about how we measure and assess progress in achieving resilient social contracts. As an introduction, McCandless gave an overview of how these issues are conceived in the project’s design:

Study Approach and Envisaged Outcomes

- The study is pursuing a mixed-methods approach to the question of what drives a resilient social contract. This includes:
- Assessment of the roles and explanatory value of the study's three postulated 'drivers' – their strengths and weaknesses, their dynamics, and the power of the cross-cutting issues. Analysis of the nature and impact of their interactions – i.e. does driver 3 (social cohesion) appear to be improving in relation to, or in response to, achievements in driver 1 and 2?
- Assessment of the resilience of the social contract (rooted in the study conceptualisation), with an emphasis on whether and how it remains dynamic in the face of stressors and shocks, and adapts in ever more virtuous ways (that move the country in the direction of being able to prevent violent conflict and sustain peace).

The case studies are primarily qualitative (case study research including interviews and focus groups, and analysis of primary data), with suggested reflection on pre-selected, proposed indicators derived from major global indices and national surveys. The quantitative dimensions of the project will be further developed as part of the second phase of the project.

Study outputs and outcomes, beyond intended publications, include:

- Clarity around the value of these drivers in framing thinking about how to understand and assess the social contract, and the factors that 'drive the drivers', and/or undermine them.
- Rich and unique illustrations of what the social contract means for people in different settings, particularly how 'nested social' contracts might co-exist and interact with each other and with the national social contract in ways that serve or undermine sustainable peace.
- A deep, rich multi-case analysis of what quantitative and qualitative data and research can tell us, and the added value and limitations of each.
- The potential development of a social contract index.

A brief illustration of how to use the study's database resource was presented by researcher Rose Worden. Developed by the Director and the project researchers, with adviser support from Working Group advisers Lordos and Zahar, the database resource offers a priority list of indicators across the three drivers (twenty-two), drawn from global indices⁴ that cover the study's twelve countries. It offers detailed explanations of these, and comparative data across the countries on these indicators.

With extensive experience developing and running the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE)⁵ Lordos shared introductory insights into various research methods that might be useful to authors. Notably he pointed to system-mapping, a method that can be useful to authors in assessing the interactions of the three drivers – a way to allow the complex dynamics to emerge and be accounted for. System-mapping also allows for the collection and analysis of data from multiple sources which is critical for dealing with the complexity of social science research of this nature.

⁴ The Global Peace Index, the Positive Peace Index, the Fragile States Index, the Youth Development Index, the Gender Inequality Index, the Social Institutions and Gender Index.

⁵ The SCORE index is used as a survey-based instrument to assess. Its participatory approach enables a much deeper dive into the issues than simply technical measurement. In essence, data analysis is supported by national reflection groups, which leads to participatory policy development.

Measuring progress in the virtuous movement towards a resilient social contract

The small discussion groups reflected on 1) measuring progress in the virtuous movement towards a resilient social contract, and 2) the study's chosen pilot indicators on the three drivers, and the use and value of quantitative data, generally. The groups were also asked to bear in mind the recent advances of international policy on sustaining peace, i.e. vis-à-vis the SDGs and the agendas focused on preventing conflict and sustaining peace.

Key points that emerged from the discussion included:

On measuring resilience:

- The need to capture the dynamic nature of the social contract – vital in countries in transition. A resilient social contract is likely one that evolves and adapts, addressing the past and recognising and addressing evolving aspects of conflict and fragility, in inclusive ways and that build inclusive outcomes.
- Assessing resilience places the focus on processes and mechanisms, not only results.
- The notion of resilience needs to be considered vis-à-vis the three drivers, i.e. the resilience of the political settlement, of institutions, and of vertical and horizontal social cohesion in society.

On capturing vertical and horizontal aspects:

- How regions participate or engage in social contracts is also vital to understanding the quality and resilience of the social contract; if regions are excluded, a sense of marginalisation, or demands for secession, can result. How citizens relate to and trust government also lies at the heart of the social contract. In Somalia, with a new government, establishing strong vertical relationships is key to overcoming tensions between the regions and the state.

On the challenge of understanding change over time:

- Intimately linked to the concepts of *resilient social contract* and *sustaining peace*, the study is focused on seeking to understand whether and how the resilience of the social contract is strengthening in virtuous ways over time.
- The study's Driver 1 approach offers authors a tool for assessing how core conflict issues are addressed over time, through different spheres of social contract-making. Indicators provide a measurement of an indicator at a particular time, as well as over time, but necessitate critical assessment and unpacking. Monitoring the process across time must take into account the performance of drivers against internal and external shocks – against what a resilient social contract is meant to achieve, and the ability of the social contract to transform in ever more virtuous ways.
- Articulating baselines is particularly challenging but important for comparative purposes over time, though difficult to impose across cases given the diversity of contexts and the desire for a rich, qualitative examination of each case.

On assessing progress on drivers:

- **Driver 1 related:** Capturing the core conflict issues can be done through qualitative and quantitative means. Interviews, focus groups and surveys will help to shape understanding around them. Endogenous capacities and national ownership can be measured quantitatively, by whether there is external intervention (an indicator in the study's database resource), and qualitatively, by seeking to understand the level and quality of national actors' ownership of the peace process.
- **Driver 2 related:** Understanding institutions' effectiveness versus their biases, and inclusiveness towards different communities, is essential. The study asks authors to consider these in terms of the

results and the perceptions of the results, or trust, by citizens, disaggregated wherever possible. The resilience of institutions calls for reflecting on factors such as local ownership, effective delivery over time and within contexts of stress, and the existence of peaceful transfers of leadership.

- **Driver 3:** Understanding civic identity, which is non-exclusive, and co-exists with other identities, is key. How people relate to their government can be examined innovatively, i.e. how youth engage social media to fuel political discussions or how intergroup collective action unfolds. The most relevant indicators may not be 'common'.

On clarity around the relationships between concepts:

- The social contract is by turns considered a means to a functioning state and an end state. This project is reflecting on the dynamism and adaptability of a resilient social contract, and the roles of three drivers in particular, in the process of forging one. A resilient social contract is proposed in this study as lying at the heart of sustaining peace, the definition of which is complex and evolving in current policy and practice, as highlighted below.

On measuring 'sustaining peace':

- Sustaining peace is an ongoing process rather than a final outcome. Even within global policy agreements pertaining to the value of this concept, there remains a lack of clarity about its meaning and how to measure it.
- There is considerable agreement that a good indicator for measuring 'sustainability' is the ability of national actors to manage conflict peacefully, over time. A key question involves the types of conflicts and the conflict issues that are reflective of this ability. The study's focus on 'core conflict issues', and whether and how these are addressed through social contract making spheres, inclusively, over time, was agreed to be useful lens in thinking these issues through.
- 'Sustaining peace' needs to be assessed beyond negative peace, a goal of this project. Important in all countries emerging from conflict (i.e. as recognised by the UN's twin resolutions⁶), some of the study's cases are not experiencing violent conflict, and have not for decades (Zimbabwe, South Africa, Cyprus, Sierra Leone). But they are still considered by many of their own citizens and external observers as 'in crisis', or 'not out of the woods'. Thus, other issues require deeper investigation, which the study's three drivers aim to capture.
- Critically, the concept of 'sustaining peace' needs to be understood not just at the national level, but also how it is understood and functioning for people at the local level.

⁶ This study acknowledges the UN's twin resolutions and is in synch with the concept of sustaining peace as articulated within them, which emphasizes common vision, the nature of the process, and addressing root causes.

The Use of Indicators: Discussion Insights

- While quantitative and qualitative data and analysis is needed in this study, notably around the three drivers, given that the reality of country contexts greatly influences what kind of information is most feasible and valuable to attain.
- Quantitative approaches can at best capture only particular dimensions of a complex phenomenon. Understanding the type and quality of participation and path dependence, for example, require qualitative approaches. Quantitative data is valuable, but have limitations that need to be explained, with intellectual honesty.
- There is a need to elaborate indicators that can ‘travel’ across case studies, as well as some unique, context specific indicators. In Driver 1 for example, ‘common’ indicators can measure ‘negative peace.’ Assessing the specifics around the implementation of the political settlement in each country, given the variety of mechanisms in each the context, will likely require context specific indicators.
- While global datasets have utility, particularly for comparing across cases, national surveys and datasets, such as the barometers, can provide a more concrete and context-rich picture of how people perceive different institutions, as well as government and citizen expectations over time. Some of this data can be disaggregated by region over time.
- In reflecting, as the study driver 2 does, on how the fairness, effectiveness and inclusiveness of institutions impacts state legitimacy, various types of quantitative data can be helpful, i.e. with the Afrobarometers in Zimbabwe, there is data over time relating to perceptions about the fairness and effectiveness of service delivery on the one hand, and trust in institutions on the other. Disaggregated regional data can support regional comparative analyses, but is hard to access.
- Triangulation of data with different sources of research and with different methods is crucial.
- There is no need to ‘reinvent the wheel’; the scope and complexity of this study demands accessing the best research that is already ‘out there,’ assessing and synthesizing it, and building upon it with targeted data collection and rich analyses.

MAXIMISING POLICY IMPACT

Participants examined the ways in which the research project can maximise its impact on policy and practice. Facilitating the session, Youssef Mahmoud opened by emphasising the importance of understanding the political environment and targeting both international and national policy makers, and relevant institutions. McCandless shared the existing vision and plan, whereby the research project aims to disseminate its findings, analyses and recommendation at different levels, in different regions, and to different audiences. This will occur through different types of activities, including:

- policy dialogues to reflect on the findings (to start with in Norway and in New York later in the year);
- validation workshops at country levels wherever possible;
- launching events once the case studies and summary findings are complete (in several locations, one ideally in a g7+ country and/or targeting g7+ policy makers);
- thematic policy papers on cross-cutting key issues.

Two policy experts were invited to share thoughts on the topic followed by a plenary discussion.

From UNDP's perspective, as shared by Endre Stiansen, a senior adviser with UNDP, the social contract concept has tremendous policy relevance, as illustrated by the fact that the concept is at the heart of its organisational Strategic Plan. Specifically, UNDP places the consolidation of a strong and inclusive social contract, at both local and national levels, at the centre of this integrated approach to governance, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Stiansen suggested that the concept's value lies in the fact that it goes beyond the study of the political settlement and social cohesion and can be analysed from different perspectives according to context. For this reason, there is an increasing awareness about the dynamism and the importance of the social contract. To maximise policy impact, format is key:

- briefings need to be concise and digestible;
- the core issues should be presented without long introductions, highlighting the dynamics of issues;
- concrete 'options', rather than solutions, should be proposed – given the need for context sensitivity;
- it is important to build an ongoing relationship with policymakers, to enable learning and the cultivation of ideas in forms that suit practice.

Habib Ur Rehman Mayar, Deputy General Secretary of the g7+ also offered introductory remarks, emphasising the importance of the project in terms of its focus on the drivers of a resilient social contract, and how it can be fostered in practical terms. The project also provides value due to its focus on countries affected by conflict and fragility; it will be particularly useful to gain insight into why and how the concept has different policy implications for this set of countries as opposed to for others.

Chairing the session, Mahmoud highlighted the critical importance of understanding the policy environment – i.e. the government mechanisms and policy frameworks that could support efforts to forge more resilient social contracts - or undermine them. Understanding the international policy environment is also of paramount importance.

Other key points that were made included:

- The importance of translating the concept of social contract into the language of policymakers in context-appropriate and context-sensitive ways (different terms may be needed in different languages and different contexts).
- There is need to present to policy makers clear issues and priorities, entry points for engagement, guidance on the actors with whom to engage, and suggestions for interlocutors (prominent academics, policy makers, etc.) who can brief them and engage with them on the topic.
- The concept of social contract is not controversial for policy makers, i.e. it is equally acceptable in Muslim majority countries and Western countries. At the same time, care should be taken in how findings are presented, as rushed introductions are often counter-productive. For policy makers, understanding how the concept of the social contract concept can support the legitimacy of state institutions would be of interest.

Finally, there was some discussion around the value of engaging the new global development framework, Agenda 2030. While there are advantages to be gained by doing so, given that it is an agreed frame of reference for many policy and practice efforts, there was concern also that doing so would add a new level of complexity, to an already complex topic. A balance was ultimately struck that research should continue, with a focus on producing findings supporting the integrity of the agreed project framing, and then implications for Agenda 2030 and other key policy frameworks and processes can be examined. The workshop closed with a discussion of next steps, as highlighted above, amidst much excitement about the prospects for this research to have significant impacts on policy and practice.



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