KOFF – swisspeace
- New KOFF Roundtable Series on Water and Land Management
- swisspeace Research Projects on Agribusiness and Conflicts
- NCCR: Towards Global Transformation
- KOFF Colombia Roundtable Relaunched

Focus
- Land Governance in Fragile States
- Water – From Conflict to Cooperation

News from Swiss NGOs
- Brücke · Le pont: Small Farming Families without Land and Water in Piauí
- Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund: Dealing with Land and Water Conflicts in Ceará
- Human Rights Violations in Santa Cruz Barillas in Guatemala
- ICP Summer Academy: The Arab Revolutions and the Role of Conflict Transformation

News from Swiss Government Agencies
- HSD: Business and Human Rights
- Transitional Justice and Displacement

Publications
- Literature on Conflict Sensitive Water and Land Management
- Positive Contributions of Businesses to Peacebuilding
- Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region
- New Brochure of the FDFA on Peace, Human Rights and Security

Web Tip
- Art in Kabul

International Partner Organizations, Events
Editorial

Pastures, wells, fields or rivers – how do water and land resources relate to conflict and peace? Examples from Brazil, Uganda and Ethiopia in this edition of the Newsletter show how conflicts can arise between various actors over the use of and access to water and land in various contexts. Projects and programs for water and land management therefore need to be implemented in a conflict sensitive way. As the Focus articles point out both sectors can contribute to peacebuilding, if efforts are undertaken to avoid aggravating tensions and to make better use of the cooperation potential related to water and land resources.

Lukas Krienbuehl
Editor

KOFF – swisspeace

New KOFF Roundtable Series on Water and Land Management

Competing and interrelated claims to land and water, oftentimes linked to inequitable access and distribution, have fuelled violent conflict in many developing countries. Equitable and effective land and water governance which takes the conflict context into consideration is therefore crucial for peacebuilding. Moreover, it comprises the potential for peaceful cooperation and economic development. Successful conflict sensitive water and land management strategies and projects need to integrate both perspectives. The Centre for Peacebuilding (KOFF) of swisspeace is launching a new roundtable series on the issue of conflict sensitive water and land management in fragile and conflict affected situations. Roundtables will deal with questions including how water and land management contributes to overcome broader political and social tensions. Key potential and challenges as well as the practical integration of conflict sensitivity into existing water and land management strategies and projects will also be addressed.

18.08.2012

swisspeace Research Projects on Agribusiness and Conflicts

The growing scarcity of fossil fuels, the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the industrialized nations, the goal of food security, population growth and the ever greater consumption of meat are leading to new forms of land distribution above all in developing and emerging countries. The new dimension is the extent of this land redistribution with significant participation by international investors. Land investment describes various processes by which transnational corporations, foreign governments or financial speculators acquire large areas in which to grow crops for the production of fuel, food and animal feed. One country that has been
largely affected by these processes is Ethiopia. According to the Oakland Institute 3.6 million hectares of land have been leased to investors, mainly for growing rice and crops. This kind of leasing has proven controversial. Those in favor argue that it promotes both economic growth and food security. Opponents on the other hand claim that the large areas leased out in Ethiopia reduce food security and threaten the country’s subsistence farming. Against this background a research project at the doctoral level at swisspeace and the University of Basel in collaboration with the NCCR North-South aims to contribute to a better understanding of the processes of large scale land investments. The research focuses on the socioeconomic impact, potential conflicts at the local and national level and conflict resolution mechanisms. Building on its success with the extractive industry, International Alert together with swisspeace is conducting an in-depth study into conflict sensitive agribusiness. The aim is to develop a detailed catalogue of conflict risks and challenges which agribusinesses face. This will include the mapping of existing initiatives and the development of guidelines for conflict sensitive agribusiness. The findings will be checked against and complemented by two case studies on South Sudan and Colombia. The first results will be published in Spring 2013.

NCCR: Towards Global Transformation

360 researchers and specialists from 40 countries, including several from swisspeace, attended the 3rd International Conference on Research for Development (ICRD) on 20-22 August in Bern. They focused on challenges arising from global changes, notably in relation to combating poverty, the scarcity of resources and climate change. According to the conference premise it will take a global transformation and a fundamental change in behavior to confront these challenges. The interface between the discussions on a wide range of topics was the role of science and research in this process.

Reducing regional, social and individual inequalities is another key issue. Under the title “Security breeds Security” the Director of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Pakistan presented a development paradigm for the future. He emphasized human security which is often neglected in favor of global security. The equitable distribution of resources will be of particular importance, since it contributes to global security. A new development paradigm nonetheless requires a shift of approach within the political leadership from both North and South.

One essential prerequisite for this global transformation is knowledge, specifically on suitable instruments and mechanisms for its implementation. The NCCR North-South with its 11 years of research activities can help to provide this knowledge, building on its longstanding partnerships with institutions of the South. After the completion of the present research program in the summer of 2013, swisspeace and its partners will remain committed to research with a view to global transformation.
KOFF Colombia Roundtable Relaunched

It is often said in Colombia that paramilitary organizations continue to be active under a different name. To what extent does this affirmation correspond to reality? Has the demobilization process failed and are bandas criminales, the so-called BACRIM, just a new name for the old problem? Enzo Nussio, researcher and lecturer at the National University in Bogotá brought up this question at the relaunched KOFF roundtable on Colombia. Many Swiss governmental and non-governmental actors participated in the ensuing discussions. The salient points from the debate will soon be published on the website of the Centre for Peacebuilding (KOFF) of swisspeace in the form of a Critical Reflection. The Colombia roundtable will continue to address current topics relevant to human rights and peacebuilding.

23.08.2012
Focus

Land Governance in Fragile States

In recent years the scramble for resources has become more pronounced, with different countries and multinationals vying for the opportunity to exploit natural resources such as oil, minerals or cultivatable land. In many, if not most circumstances deals are made and concessions granted without proper analysis or understanding of the risks in regard to violent conflict. It has therefore become even more pressing for governments, civil society, businesses and international organizations to address issues related to the rights and governance of land from a political economy and conflict perspective.

Land and Conflict in Africa

The 2008 worldwide spike in food prices caused widespread riots. The recent signs of possibly another global food crisis have again highlighted the urgency of establishing sustainable food systems especially in Africa. However, they can only be built if there are coherent and comprehensive approaches to land rights, land policy and natural resource governance. Issues related to land are often at the root of violent conflicts in Africa and thus have to be taken into consideration. The World Bank has acknowledged that “the deprivation of land rights as a feature of more generalized inequality in access to economic opportunities and low economic growth have caused seemingly minor social or political conflicts to escalate into large-scale conflicts”.

Inappropriate policies, legislations and institutions as well as low levels of implementation have continued to hamper adequate land governance in Africa. Low political will by African governments and their development partners as well as incoherent involvement of stakeholders at various levels in land policy formulation and implementation have led to this predicament.

Likelihood of Land Conflicts

In developing countries the rapid growth of population and the non-agricultural demand for land have increased the potential for conflicts over land. It is augmented by different factors. First, the prospect of losing land through the arbitrary pathways of conflict undermines the guarantees that encourage investment in land by users and outsiders, particularly for the most productive areas. Second, if people cannot trust the state to enforce their property rights or resolve conflicts over land, they will take measures to do so themselves, often in inefficient ways, drawing resources from more productive activities and perpetuating the vicious circle of violence. Third, gross inequity in land holding patterns and a large landless or land-poor population with limited livelihood opportunities increase the likelihood of violent conflict. Moreover, conflict tends to favor the powerful and wealthy. Finally, given that conflicts over access to land are frequently linked to issues of identity such as ethnicity, they can easily escalate into larger clashes with damaging and far-reaching political, social and economic consequences.

Links

- International Alert: Practice note on conflict sensitive land policy and land governance in Africa
- USAID: Toolkit on Land and Violent Conflict
- World Bank: A Practitioner’s Guide. Land Reform Policy section by K. Deininger
- Publications
Conflict Sensitive Land Policy

Attention to land policy and land governance therefore ought to be part of any development or peacebuilding effort in a fragile context. Resistance against land reform is inevitable in conflict affected regions. Policy makers thus have to take strategic decisions to prioritize and sequence the different aspects of the process in order to overcome the numerous challenges. It is also essential to take existing sensitivities and grievances into account. In Northern Uganda for example agribusiness investments in particular could harness the region’s fertile lands and improve local skills, infrastructure and offer employment opportunities as contribution to longer term peace and development. Yet, the risk of exacerbating longstanding anxiety and speculations among Northerners about land grabbing by Southerners and foreign investors, but also intra-community land tensions resulting from the armed conflict have to be addressed by consultations, conflict analysis and a conflict sensitive approach.

A variety of actors should be involved in land policy development and its implementation process. They have to make sure that projects or programs do not inadvertently increase the likelihood of violent conflict, but rather serve to prevent potential or reduce existing violent conflict. Land reform can at the same time play an important and constructive role within strategies aimed at consolidating peace in areas emerging from conflict by ensuring that lasting grievances are addressed, while helping to restore a sense of justice and rule of law. However, if policy makers ignore the conflict dimension and view land reform as a mere technical exercise, the risk of instability and land related violence increases significantly. Non-state actors and donors can encourage and support efforts to ensure that political economy and conflict analysis are taken into account in order to achieve long-term stability and development. All immediate and mid-term corrective, preventive and retentive measures related to land and property aimed at facilitating conflict transformation therefore need to adopt an overall conflict sensitive development vision and policy.

Water – From Conflict to Cooperation

Access to sufficient, good quality water is essential for human development. In many developing countries this is still not guaranteed. The water sector is therefore of central importance in conflict regions and fragile states. While international development cooperation increasingly emphasizes conflict sensitivity, the key role played by the water sector in preventing and resolving conflicts and promoting peace often remains overlooked. In light of the growing competition for this resource, specific approaches and tools for violence affected regions are becoming more important.

The communal use of water provides opportunities for human interaction: irrigation systems require cooperative management, while wells often form an important social meeting point. On the other hand, however, the use of water can trigger disputes, particularly in poor and drought ridden countries. In war zones the water supply can become a pawn in the hands of conflicting parties.
Understanding Water Conflicts

The causes of water related conflicts are manifold and usually involve a combination of factors. The availability of the resource itself, but also inequalities in terms of access and the importance of water for sustaining livelihoods are important features. Water conflicts often arise out of disputes between farmers and cattle breeders over access to land or among those actors and the tourism industry. A history of previous conflicts in the region in question and the nature of the relationships between the conflicting parties also play a role, as do the availability of conflict resolution mechanisms including governmental or informal mediation bodies. Ultimately, the origins of many water conflicts can be traced back to other conflict dynamics. Disputes over water for instance can serve as proxy for political, ethnical, religious or other tensions. All conflict situations have in common that they are rooted in a complex sociopolitical, economic and cultural environment.

To devise a conflict sensitive strategy for water management, a thorough analysis of these interconnecting circumstances is required. This implies the identification of structural causes of conflict, such as marginalization, and taking a conflict sensitive approach to designing and implementing water projects. The conflict and cooperation potential of private sector water services should also be examined in this context.

Implementing Water Projects in Conflict Regions

Development cooperation is in jeopardy if it fails to take inequalities in the population sufficiently into account particularly in conflict regions where the potential of worsening tensions is high. Aid projects for example, which ensure refugees have access to potable water without doing the same for the local population, aggravate existing conflict dynamics. Yet, water projects in conflict situations can also serve peacebuilding in the medium to long term, to the extent that they support cooperation across lines of conflict. Conflict sensitive design and implementation of infrastructure measures together with common rules and institutions for their operation and maintenance can help to ensure equal access to water and thus improve relations between different groups.

Conflict sensitive development cooperation can also help to resolve conflicts in the water sector, for example through mediation. Depending on the context and scope, not only can such interventions lead to greater efficiency and sustainability of water projects in conflict regions, they can also provide support for non-violent conflict transformation. Project examples, such as those of the NGO Saferworld, confirm that the peacebuilding potential extends well beyond the water sector.

Conflict Sensitive Water Project Design

Domestic and international actors in the water sector need to give more importance to conflict analysis and increased cooperation. The involvement of all relevant governmental, civil society and private sector actors on an equal footing has also proven to be fundamental. Finally, water projects in conflict contexts require special monitoring which reflects both intended and unintended effects as well as the improvement in cooperation.

Development programs in violence affected regions that limit themselves to the technical aspects of water supply and management risk not only failure but also the
worsening of existing conflict. Donors and project partners should systematically take into consideration the socio-political context and the local power structure. This is a precondition for development actors to make the best use of water, not only to prevent water related conflicts but also to promote cooperation. The latter can be strengthened both locally, within the state and in the relations between states. Water unites indeed.

16.08.2012

News from Swiss NGOs

Conflict over Water and Land Resources in Brazil

Agribusinesses in Brazil are taking over ever greater amounts of land and water resources to produce food and biofuel for the inhabitants of the country's megacities as well as the export. In this way they contribute to the impressive economic growth of the country. However this trend is causing massive deforestation in the Amazon region and is frequently to the detriment of the local population. Small farmers, their families and farm laborers end up displaced or with severely limited farming opportunities. Agribusinesses often prevent the rural population from having access to water. This situation leads to conflicts between big landowners and the rural population, but also between advocates of agricultural reform, environmentalists and industry representatives. The situation in the densely populated and arid northeastern part of Brazil home to 22 million people or about 12% of the entire population is particularly precarious for small farmers and their families.

Brücke ∙ Le pont: Small Farming Families without Land and Water in Piauí

In regions such as the federal state of Piauí conflicts over water distribution are particularly severe. The NGO Brücke ∙ Le pont supports the rural population in its struggle, trying to ensure that displaced and landless persons can obtain a parcel of land and access to water. The organization helps farm laborers to overcome their dependency on the land owners and to obtain redress for their grievances. Small farmers are also supported, so that they can have access to the social services guaranteed by law such as education and healthcare. This project is implemented by the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), which is organizing landless families in the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MTS), providing advice on how to act in situations of conflict and how to claim one’s rights with the authorities.

Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund: Dealing with Land and Water Conflicts in Ceará

In the federal state of Ceará basic foodstuffs like manioc and beans are mostly produced in smallholdings. However, the big export oriented agribusiness companies are increasingly driving out those small farmers. An unfair system of land ownership, difficult climatic conditions and major infrastructure projects including dams and irrigation systems that are of little or no benefit to the local population are an increasing source of conflict over land and water. The Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund therefore supports the efforts of the regional CPT to promote sustainable improvements and greater productivity for the benefit of small farmers with the
help of agroecology and permaculture. This approach is designed to enable small farmers and landless people to adapt to changing climate conditions, for example by foregoing the use of chemical additives, creating adequate gardens and village water tanks to collect rainwater. The CPT also provides support and advice to some 2800 families in Ceará who are attempting to defend their land and water rights.

The projects of Brücke - Le pont and the Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund underline the fact that the regional CPTs, whose activities are closely coordinated, are reliable and active partners when it comes to land and water questions. They are committed to the cause of agrarian reform, as enshrined in the constitution. The CPTs also make an inventory of the social, economic and environmental impact of dams and other mega projects, provide this information to the communities and organize public hearings of those concerned. Furthermore they intervene in conflicts that concern access to land and water, as well as human rights violations in relation to dam and mining projects.

Further information:
Brücke - Le pont
José Balmer
Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund
Claudia Fuhrer

Human Rights Violations in Santa Cruz Barillas in Guatemala

Peace Watch Switzerland (PWS) takes part in the Acompañamiento Internacional in Guatemala (ACOGUATE), an umbrella organization which includes 11 volunteering organizations from Europe and North America. ACOGUATE is currently observing the human rights situation and accompanying the social resistance movement in Santa Cruz Barillas in the Department of Huehuetenango, where the Spanish energy company Ecoener is planning the Hidro Santa Cruz hydropower station. The purpose of international human rights observation and accompaniment is to protect persons and organizations committed to the respect of human rights.

On 18 August ACOGUATE accompanied a demonstration against the Hidro Santa Cruz project and 17 other hydropower station projects planned in Huehuetenango. The aim of the movement is to strengthen peace efforts, notably after two Hidro Santa Cruz armed security guards attacked three prominent opponents of the company’s activities. The assault caused the death of one of the three, adding to the atmosphere of fear in the region.

The demonstrations by the inhabitants of Santa Cruz Barillas which followed these events prompted the Guatemala President to declare a state of emergency in the municipality, while increasing the military presence. Despite the fact that the state of emergency had not been ratified by parliament yet, 12 persons were arrested without warrant. Nine of these men are still in custody despite the lack of evidence against them. The government seems to prefer using the armed forces to defend economic interests and to suppress social resistance movements, rather than to combat organized crime. International human rights accompaniment therefore remains essential in Guatemala.
**ICP Summer Academy: The Arab Revolutions and the Role of Conflict Transformation**

The 5th Summer Academy of the Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (ICP) on the topic of the “Arab Revolutions from the Viewpoint of Conflict Transformation” took place in August in Caux near Montreux. The inputs of four experts from Morocco, Tunisia, Syria and Egypt contributed to a better understanding of the different situations in these countries in the aftermath of the Arab spring. Insight into the cultural, demographic, historic and religious particularities of these countries is key to the understanding of the current debates and challenges. In workshops aiming to develop scenarios for each of the countries the participants, working in development cooperation, diplomacy or academia, were encouraged to apply and refine their knowledge and relevant tools for conflict transformation.

12.08.2012

**News from Swiss Government Agencies**

**HSD: Business and Human Rights**

Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is above all aimed at governments it also places an obligation on society as a whole to recognize and promote human rights. Businesses are therefore equally responsible for the promotion of human rights. A number of multinationals have expanded operations in countries with weak or repressive governments, which in many cases are either unable or unwilling to prosecute or punish human rights violations.

The Human Security Division (HSD) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is engaged in various international initiatives to ensure that businesses respect human rights as well as environmental standards. The initiatives supported by Switzerland mainly call for self-regulation and voluntary mechanisms. The HSD has for example provided financial and human resources to the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative on Business and Human Rights. His new Guiding Principles on human rights responsibilities of states and businesses as well as improved access to compensation for victims were approved by the Human Rights Council in 2011. States should take the necessary measures in reference to this framework so that businesses headquartered on their territory do not become complicit in human rights abuses.

One of the key questions in coming years will be how governments can influence the global activities of their international companies through either legislation or a system of incentives. Peace and stability are important components of a sustainable economy, which also benefits Switzerland. For this reason the FDFA has adopted a number of measures. These include encouraging dialogue between business and civil society as well as political and academic actors, while financing relevant research projects. The annual conference of the HSD on 11 September is also expected to make a further contribution on this topic.

21.08.2012
Transitional Justice and Displacement

Forced displacement is intrinsically linked to the abuses that dealing with the past and transitional justice processes seek to address: crimes such as torture, rape and killings are forcing people to flee their homes. In some cases forced displacement constitutes a grave violation by itself. Moreover, displaced persons who left the protective environment of their homes, livelihoods and communities are particularly vulnerable to human rights violations. In this regard transitional justice is well placed to deal with the human rights abuses committed in relation with forced displacement. However, this link has only marginally been explored until now.

To bridge this gap the Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement and the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), supported by the Human Security Division (HSD) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), brought together researchers and practitioners to explore not only the links between forced displacement and transitional justice but also the ways in which particular transitional justice measures have responded to forced displacement.

The results have been gathered in the publication “Transitional Justice and Displacement” which was presented by the two authors, Roger Duthie (ICTJ) and Megan Bradley (Brookings Institution), at a KOFF Dealing with the Past roundtable in July in Berne. Their presentations were critically reflected and enriched by Mô Bleeker, head of the Task Force for Dealing with the Past at the HSD, as well as protection officer Denise Lüthi Crisan from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). During the discussion practitioners as well as academics working in the fields of transitional justice and migration emphasized the need for long-term approaches, the preventive role of transitional justice as well as the importance of restitution in case of forced displacement. The crucial role of humanitarian actors working with displaced persons in documenting and collecting relevant information for transitional justice processes was also stressed. Subsequently to the roundtable co-author Megan Bradley has compiled some Critical Reflections published by the Centre for Peacebuilding (KOFF) of swisspeace on “Forced Migration and Transitional Justice: Advancing the Research Agenda”. 03.08.2012
Publications

Literature on Conflict Sensitive Water and Land Management

The analyses of Kramer (2004) and Houdret et al. (2010) discuss origins of tensions over access to water as well as the opportunities to turn water management into a platform for cooperation in fragile contexts. In both studies the authors outline concrete programming options for development actors to cope with water related tensions. The report of Saferworld (2008) on conflict sensitive water management strategies in Uganda provides rich insights into context specific challenges for development actors. Uganda is a country where decentralization and a demand driven approach to water governance have fostered community based water management. AlertNet’s recent multimedia report entitled “The Battle for Water” finally informs on water conflicts, innovation and cooperation from volatile Kashmir to the Mekong basin and the scorched plains of Kenya.

One of the most authoritative analyses on conflict sensitive land management is the 2005 toolkit developed by USAID. It provides development actors with a thorough appraisal on land conflicts and presents the organization’s lessons learned as well as program options. A more academic yet no less insightful approach is taken by Deininger (2006), a leading economist of the World Bank, in his chapter on land policy reforms. The International Alert practice note written by Van der Zwan (2011) is much briefer and introduces the relevance of conflict sensitivity in land management policies in a rather condensed way. Furthermore, in their paper for the FAO De Wit et al. (2009) present experiences of land management in a number of African countries with the example of Sudan being very informative with respect to conflict sensitivity.

16.08.2012

Positive Contributions of Businesses to Peacebuilding

This working paper seeks to extend the understanding of the involvement of businesses in peacebuilding based on the perceptions of business actors themselves. The aim of this working paper is therefore to elaborate on a recent study’s findings in response to the questions of if and how Swiss companies are involved in peace processes. Focusing on a sample of Swiss companies, the findings rely on desk based research and semi-structured interviews, primarily with Corporate Social Responsibility Managers. The empirical findings demonstrate that peace and conflict issues are seldom conceptualized within a business perspective. Most importantly, companies remain unaware of the possibilities and ways in which to engage in peace processes, what their options are and what kind of role they could play. This working paper therefore recommends a continued dialogue between the business and the peacebuilding communities.

18.08.2012
Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region

The publication on “Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region” looks at the complex political situation in the two states one year after the secession of South Sudan, and the consequences of the breakup for both countries. In Sudan the state faces the difficulty of providing security in urban centers with diminished resources. The dangers facing Khartoum also stem from the periphery, where new and existing armed groups are joining together to oppose the central government. In contrast, developments in South Sudan hold out hope for an inclusive state building process that takes into consideration the heterogeneous nature of the population. The publication also tracks the transformation of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement from a rebel group to a political party.

The question of the use of the Nile will be essential for peace in the entire region from Central Africa all the way to Cairo. In recent years the demands of the riparian states upstream and the secession of South Sudan have increasingly called into question the Nile Waters Agreement of 1959 and the positions of Khartoum and Cairo. The volume does not limit itself however to an analysis of the situation, but provides the international community with concrete proposals for action. As far as the authors are concerned the solution lies more in pooling and coordinating the existing resources made available by the European Union and the United Nations than in increasing financial investments.

04.08.2012

New Brochure of the FDFA on Peace, Human Rights and Security

In its foreign policy, Switzerland is active on behalf of peace, respect for human rights and the protection of displaced persons and refugees. The new brochure explains how Switzerland pursues these policies, what priorities it sets, what contributions it makes and what challenges it is confronted with. This publication also presents people who are mediating in conflicts, observing elections and working on behalf of peace and compliance with human rights.

14.08.2012

Art in Kabul

There are many things about the artist Shamsia Hassani that are difficult to reconcile with prevalent views on Afghanistan. The last thing one expects in a country, where women often need their husbands’ permission to leave the home, is to find a woman who is a committed street artist and sprays graffiti on walls. For Hassani however this form of expression is the only way to reach the uneducated population. Like other street artists she is convinced that art can change the world. To achieve this objective they are prepared to accept considerable risks involved in street art. Interested readers will find many examples of street art in Kabul and related materials on the Internet.
The revival of Afghanistan’s rich cultural tradition is also the objective of Kuchi Films. Through films and photography the project aims to offer Afghans a ray of hope after decades of subversion and war. They also want to show the outside world that their nation has more to offer than the usual negative headlines in the media.

18.08.2012

International Partner Organizations

- Conciliation Resources published the latest issue of its Accord series on Reconciliation, Reform and Resilience – Peace for Lebanon. It includes more than 30 articles and interviews on peacebuilding experiences in Lebanon from diverse perspectives. The publication also proposes strategies to transform the precarious stability into durable peace.

- Conflict prevention is experiencing renewed momentum on the international political scene. The EPLO Conflict Prevention Newsletter also raises the question, how conflicts can be avoided. The publication shows that resilient, strong and locally rooted networks are needed in order to prevent problems in various sectors.

- FriEnt published a workshop report on the “Legacies of violence and working with new elites in post-conflict situations”. Former armed resistance fighters can end up with governmental responsibility as a result of a peace process. Among many aspects the report shows the challenges development and peace policy actors are confronted with in this regard.

- Internationl Alert’s publication “Mediation and Dialogue in the South Caucasus” takes a look at various conflict resolution initiatives in the South Caucasus since the mid-1990s. Western facilitators and local actors offer their perspectives and reflections on the successes and failures as well as the evolving nature of the peace processes.

- Interpeace coordinates under the Global Truce 2012 NGO Coalition the efforts of peacebuilding NGOs in preparation for the International Day of Peace on 21 September. The aim of the coalition is to promote non-violence and ceasefires worldwide as well as to make the public more aware of the International Day of Peace.

Events

- This year’s annual conference of the Human Security Division (HSD) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs on “Business, Human Rights and Peace” takes place on 11 September in the Kursaal in Bern. Registration.

- The Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation celebrates 30 years of its international programs. The anniversary event is taking place on 21 September at the Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation in Trogen. Registration.

- Peace Brigades International (PBI) is organizing an introductory training in international human rights accompaniment on 29-30 September in Solothurn.
The Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (ICP) provides in late September and early October training courses for mediators of the ICP Conflict Office on dealing with discrimination and racism in conflict transformation. The course is open to other interested people. Information and registration.

Peace Watch Switzerland (PWS) offers trainings in preparation for voluntary human rights accompaniment assignments in Latin America from 28 October to 3 November as well as for deployment in Palestine and Israel from 27-30 September as well as from 18-21 October.

Service Civil International (SCI) Switzerland in collaboration with Sandro Varisco is holding a seminar on integrative conflict transformation on 6 October in Zurich. This training course in action strategies is based on Johan Galtung’s TRANSCEND approach. Additional information and registration.

On 28-29 October the Peace Village in Broc in collaboration with various Swiss peace organizations including MIR Switzerland/IFOR, ASEpax, CENAC, the Swiss Peace Council and the Service Civil International hosts a meeting on “Peace Education in Switzerland: Challenges and Perspectives”. Registration until 15 September.

Ursula Keller, Barbara Brank and Rahel Fischer of the Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF) are conducting the first training course of the KOFF Training Series 2012-13 on the topic of “Women, Peace and Security – implementation of UN Resolution 1325” on 30 October to 1 November. Registration until 9 October.