Center for Peacebuilding

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Events, Publications, Web tip
Positive Do no Harm experiences in the Horn of Africa

An event was held in mid-December at KOFF to present and discuss practical experiences with the „Do no Harm“ concept in project work. Moses Sika and Jacinta Makokha – two experienced Do no Harm trainers from Kenya – reported on a repatriation project in Sudan and a community development project in Kenya.

In both contexts, Do no Harm served effectively as a tool for contextual analysis. It proved itself to be a viable tool that is adaptable to local conditions, easy to understand and implement, and one that quickly starts yielding results. It was possible to identify undesirable spin-offs from the project and thus improve project planning. Challenges arose specifically with respect to training (adapting the teaching methods and translation into local languages), integration with Project Cycle Management and in dovetailing with other development cooperation tools such as the Participatory Rural Appraisal. Sika and Makokha see a particular challenge in keeping abreast of the new dynamics being generated by the use of Do no Harm, and leading to a changing perception of the conflict situation and of their own role in it. Both took the view that the mainstreaming of Do no Harm should continue in major international organizations and similar bodies in the North.

Moses Sika and Jacinta Makokha applied Do no Harm under the Local Capacities for Peace Project in various projects in the Horn of Africa and monitored relevance, benefits and flexibility in concrete project work.

Sri Lanka Roundtables on conflict-sensitive aid and the repercussions on the peace process following the tsunami disaster

Early in January KOFF called an extraordinary meeting of the Sri Lanka Roundtable to discuss the topic „How can conflict sensitivity be built into tsunami disaster relief?“. The occasion was a highly spirited one. The initial ideas on conflict-sensitive emergency aid formed the basis of discussions amongst the participants, who came from the civil service and a number of non-governmental organizations.

In the first part of the meeting, the attending entities presented their ongoing and planned activities. Whereas many organizations had initially concentrated on coordination and the speedy delivery of emergency aid, the central question was now how, in concrete terms, to go about providing conflict-sensitive assistance and rebuilding. The second part of the event was devoted to discussing the ideas on conflict-sensitive emergency aid: It is critically important, amongst other things, to set up sound coordination and control mechanisms to ensure transparency in aid giving and to prevent abuses. In addition, the distribution of aid supplies must be equitable and fair and based on the needs of those affected. Roundtable participants extensively discussed ways in which they could concretely incorporate particular ideas into their projects. This brought out clearly the extent to which the coordination and distribution of humanitarian aid was already becoming politici-
Swiss commitment and tsunami relief in Indonesia

More than 25 representatives from Swiss and international non-governmental organizations, government offices as well as universities participated in KOFF’s first Indonesia Roundtable. KOFF led off the session by reviewing the current situation in Indonesia and describing various types of conflict. Next, a representative of the Swiss Foreign Ministry (DFA) outlined the ongoing peace program and the human rights policies being pursued by the Swiss Embassy in Jakarta.

After the break KOFF outlined the present situation in Aceh and highlighted the need to proceed in a cautious, conflict-sensitive manner. In so doing it drew on an analysis of the chief conflict-aggravating or peace-building mechanisms in the conflict environment, from a Do no Harm perspective. This led into a discussion of how the experiences and skills of the attending organizations could be better used and shared. The discussion also took in the question of precisely how and when conflict-sensitive work could be done and the meaning, in this context, of transition from emergency assistance to reconstruction or development cooperation and peace-building.

All participants were very keen to stay abreast of the plans, experiences and activities of the other organizations, as appropriate. It was agreed that KOFF would put together and manage a list of the activities of all the organizations and would organize another roundtable.

KOFF 2005 annual plan

In programming its concrete activities for 2005, KOFF was again highly mindful of the stated needs of member organizations and government bodies. The priority area of conflict sensitivity will revolve around activities for the practical implementation and anchoring of this theme within organizations. Plans include reviewing and analyzing lessons learned from mainstreaming processes, and crea-
KOFF also intends to organize regular roundtable sessions on Angola, Israel/Palestine, Sri Lanka, Sudan and South Eastern Europe this year. Ad hoc activities pertaining to Guatemala and Indonesia will also be organized. Moreover, KOFF will be endeavoring to react to current events within the limits of its resources. Accordingly, discussions have already been held in January with Swiss organizations active in Sri Lanka and Indonesia about their activities in the wake of the tsunami disaster and special requirements in terms of conflict-sensitive work.

For the first time since its inception, KOFF will undergo external evaluation this year. The resulting insights will feed into strategy development for the future. A medium-term strategy for the coming 3-5 years is also to be drawn up in 2005. Information dissemination work will continue to give priority to the Newsletter that appears 10 times a year in three languages. One highpoint in the KOFF calendar is the annual meeting of its NGO member organizations, set for May 20, 2005 in Berne.
Swiss Foreign Ministry (DFA) after Thomas Greminger, Head of PD IV and Chair of KOFF SteeCom. Heidi Grau is a deputy head of section and is responsible for the topics of small arms and Afghanistan within PD IV. In addition to Heidi Grau and Thomas Greminger, the other representative of the Federal Administration on the KOFF SteeCom is Günther Bächler, Head of the Conflict Prevention and Transformation Section (COPRET) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Carmen Jud (cfd), Inge Remmert-Fontes (SOEF) and Geert van Dok (Caritas) are sitting representatives of non-governmental organizations. The seventh KOFF SteeCom member is swisspeace Director Heinz Krummenacher. 11.30.04

Focus

Interim assessment of the Do no Harm approach: Much used in project-practice, problematic to mainstream

Mary Anderson’s Collaborative Development Action (CDA) held its most recent Do no Harm consultation in Cambridge/Ma from November 29 to December 1, 2004, bringing together development cooperation and peacebuilding practitioners from around the world. Ten years on from the launch of the Do no Harm process, they were able to share experiences and formulate Lessons Learned, future challenges and possible ways forward. The Center for Peacebuilding also took part in the Conference.

The discussions showed that at project level, Do no Harm had proved it is worth and established itself. The following strongpoints were identified: the process is a widely accessible and constantly evolving one that reflects the experiences of many individuals and organizations. Thanks to Do no Harm, a project’s impacts quickly become apparent. The tool is easy to understand, can be rapidly applied, and dovetails with people’s own experiences. Do no Harm can be adapted to a range of situations. It is highly compatible with other Project Cycle Management tools and allows staff members from all levels of an organization to become involved.

Training often not applied in practice

But Do no Harm was also looked at critically: it puts a very strong focus on analysis, which could quickly mislead people into considering themselves experts. Experience shows that there are limits to applicability above project level – such as at program level or as the basis for strategic decision making. Moreover, the approach has still not yet become institutionalized. Lastly there is a disconnect between training and application, in that only a fraction of those who complete the training courses actually apply Do no Harm in their work and only one-half of the Do no Harm trainers trained have gone on to become trainers. As a corrective measure, a constant effort is being made to enhance the quality of training methods and means. The following criteria are recommended for selecting participants in courses for the training of trainers: candidates should be well qualified; they must work in an organization and must give an undertaking to become trainers afterwards. In addition, they must be guaranteed good networking and subsequent backstopping by mentors.
Difficulties of mainstreaming

Do no Harm is now on the threshold between consecration in practice and becoming institutionalized in organizations, and this confronts them with a major challenge. In the view of practitioners from the South in particular, one key prerequisite for working effectively with Do no Harm is making the concept into a mindset. This calls for changes both in day-to-day work and at the personal level. It is not always easy and people must be accompanied and supported in developing a change management strategy. Over and above commitment at the personal level, it is incumbent on an organization’s leadership as well to mainstream Do no Harm.

The Cambridge meeting recommended that stock should be taken of mainstreaming in organizations, and that the latter should in turn improve their networking for the purposes of mutual support. The meeting further noted that one possible way of doing this would be to create a system that makes for backstopping and access to other mainstreaming experiences.

Do no Harm and world political tensions

The world political situation has changed radically in recent years. The polarization between the West and the Islamic world for example, has taken on a new quality and carries with it the growing danger that development aid could become politicized and exploited for political ends. This new development poses challenges for Do no Harm as well, and must consequently be factored into the application, examination and further development of the approach. Moreover, the linkages between the micro-project level and the macro-policy level should be explored and clarified. The question was also raised at Cambridge as to whether some kind of „super-Do no Harm” was needed to look into the role of international cooperation in the new situation of tension.

Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) – an off-shoot of Do no Harm

While Do no Harm attempts to answer the question of how to avoid the negative impacts of aid giving on conflicts and instead strengthen the positive ones, the question underlying the CDA’s RPP project is how to conduct effective peacebuilding. Like the Do no Harm process, the RPP process also has an open, experience-oriented and participatory structure. Criteria were drawn up with which to gauge the effectiveness of peace-building. It emerged clearly in the process that not all that was considered effective peace-building really merited that description. Several RPP training courses have so far been held, local peace-building networks have been created and Lessons Learned and conclusions reached so far have been formulated. RPP is currently in the implementation phase. The Cambridge meeting noted that it was necessary to further elucidate and discuss the interrelationship, consistency or compatibility of RPP with Do no Harm, and that RPP could possibly be used in strategic decision making at program level, for which Do no Harm may be less suited.
Review and outlook for Caritas Peace-building Unit

After a two-year developmental phase and a protracted vacancy, the Caritas Peace-building Unit last year began systematically implementing the conflict-sensitive approach in its work. Together with an internal working group, the new incumbent Sonja Bachmann worked out an implementation concept called „Conflict Sensitivity at Work“ („konflikt sensibles Arbeiten“), which was approved in late 2004. It was instrumental in effecting a detailed breakdown of the operating principles of Caritas Switzerland, entitled „Alliances for peace“. This entailed the setting of standards for systematic conflict-sensitive work. In addition to this crosscutting theme, the Unit further laid out approaches and standards for direct peace-building work. It advised and built awareness among many staff members for the purposes of peace-building and conflict-sensitivity in their work. KOFF trained Sonja Bachmann and another Caritas staff member as Do no Harm Trainers in 2004, and they have already passed on what they learned to a first batch of work colleagues. The Unit’s priorities included a workshop in Rwanda on direct peace-building.

The main theme for the next year will be the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity at work. The standards approved in 2004 are to be systematically implemented. Continuing training courses in Do no Harm, as well as introductory courses in conflict-sensitive work will be provided covering the entire subject area. In addition, continuing training courses will be run at the Caritas offices in Kosovo, Bosnia and Kenya. As of 2005, the first country-specific programs should begin incorporating the conflict-sensitive approach.

PBI returning to Aceh

Peace Brigades International (PBI) wishes to return to Aceh with a protective accompaniment team in the hope of meeting the increased security needs of local human rights advocates by means of a suitable program. For almost five years now PBI has been offering protective accompaniment and peace education in Aceh Province, but had been forced to leave the region when martial law was declared in July 2003. Following the submarine earthquake, local partner organizations have asked PBI to come back to the province. PBI is keen to take up the request, as the current instability represents a heightened risk for human rights activists. At the same time, there is some concern over possible discrimination in the distribution of humanitarian aid supplies. In addition to protective accompaniment personnel, PBI is also dispatching a three-person trauma management team to Aceh.

Empowerment – cfd annual priority for 2004

The method and goal of the feminist peace policy work of the Christian Peace Service (cfd) is the empowerment of women as a process of enhancing both individual and collective power and of securing their rights. The cfd has made this topic its priority for the year 2004. In a joint endeavor with local women researchers and
A cross-sectional study was conducted on all CFD projects in the Mediterranean area (Kosovo, Bosnia, Morocco, Israel, Palestine) and the Wisdonna Center for Migrant Women in Switzerland. A series of events was held in late November 2004 at which studies, initial insights and open questions were presented to a broader public. CFD project partners and other women experts were able to examine the topic in depth at a specialized meeting. The CFD cross-sectional study “A transversal study on ‘empowerment’” (Anja Sieber, 2004) will become available in April.

**Meeting of Women for Peace, Switzerland**

Women for Peace, Switzerland held its budget and planning meeting in mid-January 2005 and laid out its goals for the Association’s next business year. Aside from the ongoing projects, these include implementing UN Resolution 1325, supporting the „1000 women for the Nobel Peace Prize” project, and creating a working party on the subject area of „weapons control, weapons trafficking and army”. In the afternoon session, Danielle Lalive d’Epinay from the Swiss Peace Foundation swisspeace gave a talk on „Business & Peace”, an area of work devoted to fostering greater conflict sensitivity in economic life.

**Pestalozzi Children’s Village workshop on children’s rights**

A workshop on „Implementing children’s rights” was held from November 28 to December 4, 2004 at the Pestalozzi Children’s Village in Trogen. It was attended by 30 partner organization representatives and Pestalozzi Children’s Village Foundation coordinators from Asia, East Africa, Central America and South Eastern Europe. They discussed the Foundation’s worldwide educational programs and the way they relate to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The workshop was designed to bolster the common commitment in favor of children’s rights to education and cultural diversity. Participants came to realize that various regions of the world were confronting similar problems and that many challenges still lay ahead with respect to children’s rights.

**Mexico: PROPAZ lobbying success**

One of the topics discussed by Swiss President Joseph Deiss and Mexican President Vicente Fox during the then Swiss President’s state visit to Mexico in November 2004 was the 2001 constitutional reform. Among the main causes of the stalemate in the dialogue between the Mexican Government and the Zapatista rebel movement is the insufficiency of the constitutional reform as regards the rights of the indigenous people. In the run-up to the state visit PROPAZ, the Swiss Program to promote the Peace Process in Southern Mexico, had written to President Fox...
urging him to honor, as expeditiously as possible, the Mexican Government’s promise to the UN to revive the discussion of the constitutional reform in the Congress. Mexican Foreign Minister Derbez wrote back informing PROPAZ that a Government Commission had been set up under the leadership of the National Commission for Indigenous Affairs and was currently preparing for the new congressional debate.  

01.04.05

**News from Swiss Government Agencies**

**COPRET prioritizes mainstreaming of violence prevention**

From this year on, the gender-sensitive mainstreaming of violence prevention is to be the main focus of the Conflict Prevention and Transformation Division (COPRET) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). COPRET’s annual plan for 2005 states that mainstreaming is to take place through Conflict Sensitive Program Management (KSPM), a procedure that was developed at the request of SDC. All SDC operational divisions should be conversant with KSPM by the end of year, and selected divisions should be able to apply it. The gender-sensitive mainstreaming of violence prevention is a top priority in COPRET’s work of providing advice and technical assistance to processes. Non-governmental organizations are being integrated into mainstreaming activities through the Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF).

A second priority will be to decide how the issue of „fragile statehood“ can be brought to bear transversally in the operations of all divisions of the SDC and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). COPRET sees prevention and peace-building on the one hand and governance and human rights on the other as closely intertwined issues in the countries concerned.

As pertains to migration and development, COPRET is to enter into a backstopping arrangement with a partner entity and devise an advisory plan for the SDC’s role in migration policy. The backstopping mandate emphasizes joint work with Political Division IV of the DFA, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (sec) and the Federal Office for Migration (BfM) on the concept of migration partnerships, as well as various consultancies.

Lastly, in the field of security and development, COPRET is keen to disseminate, for international cooperation purposes, the findings and recommendations of the report by the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change established by Kofi Annan. This should entail formulating an SDC response to the specific demands and fine-tuning it in the DFA.  

01.21.05

**Action Plan to ban anti-personnel mines**

The first review conference of the 143 signatories of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention took place from November 29 to December 3, 2004 in Nairobi. It identified
the major remaining challenges as universalization, mine clearance, assistance to victims and ensuring that there are no new ones. The conference issued a call for the requisite long-term financial and material resources to be made available and for the Convention to be observed by all players (including non-State ones). It further stated that if the Contracting States were to be free of anti-personnel mines within the envisaged ten-year period, mine clearance programs would have to become more efficient and financial support stepped up.

It is expected that the Action Plan 2005-2009 adopted by the conference will tackle the problems remaining in the second half of the timeframe set in the Convention. It contains measures for involving armed, non-State players that, unlike States, are still producing and using anti-personnel mines today. The Action Plan calls for an expanded future role in activity planning and implementation for both the countries concerned as well as mine victims.

The review conference decided that for the purposes of implementing the Convention the contracting States would meet annually until 2009, alternating between Geneva and a venue in a mine-affected country. The informal experts meetings of the „Standing Committee“ in Geneva will now cover five days each year. Switzerland obtained a place on the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance along with Afghanistan, the world’s most mine-affected country. Switzerland believes that the Nairobi Action Plan reflects its own strategies and goals for the next four years and can therefore fully endorse the final documents of Nairobi. It has maintained the same level of commitment with respect to mines, and this must now be implemented. 12.03.04

PD IV training on relevance of gender dimension

For the past year, gender mainstreaming has been one of the core tasks of Political Division IV (PD IV) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). PD IV staff members held a one-day workshop at the end of October 2004 to discuss experiences pertaining to the relevance of the gender dimension in their work. The Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF) designed and conducted the training course, which was an opportunity to examine the scope for and usefulness of increasing the emphasis on gender in PD IV programs.

No one disputed that the involvement of women in civil peace building projects had to be stepped up. Yet this ought not to be primarily a matter of empowering women, but about strengthening peace programs. Course participants agreed that the significance of the gender dimension could lie in a better understanding of the conflict. The gender-sensitive approach opens the way for including various players and hence a range of experiences and themes as well. It was underlined, however, that the involvement of women in PD IV programs could not be a binding requirement and that it would not automatically make them gender-sensitive. Local program partners could perceive such a requirement as paternalistic or culturally insensitive. At the very least, however, PD IV should explore the impacts of its peace programs on gender relations in the light of the Do no Harm principle.
The training exercise was a first step towards PD IV’s stated goal of anchoring the gender perspective more firmly in peace and human rights processes and integrating it into studies of conflicts and their impact, and into the design and execution of strategies. With KOFF’s support, PD IV intends to further institutionalize gender-related advice as part of project execution and analysis. Whenever possible, this should be done with reference to UN resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

10.30.04

International Partner Organizations

Berghof

New publications:


EPLO

Together with the Luxembourg EU-Presidency EPLO is organising a conference to promote dialogue amongst EU civil society and EU policy makers on March 23rd/24th 2005 in Brussels.

GTZ

- Uwe Kievelitz, Program Manager Crisis Prevention and Conflict Transformation, has prepared a paper entitled „The Conflict in Aceh and its Consequences for Implementation of International Emergency Aid and Reconstruction Measures: Background and Concrete Recommendations for Action“.
- The „Education and Conflict Transformation“ program has published a study on „Education and Conflict“.
- A qualifying course entitled „Grundlagen der Krisenprävention und Friedensentwicklung in der EZ“ is scheduled for 4-8 April at the „Vorbereitungsstätte für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit“ in Bad Honnef, Germany.

Plattform Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung

The Evangelische Academie Loccum will be holding its public annual conference on April 1-3. The theme will be: „Are we doing what we do right? Are we doing the right thing? Assessments in civil conflict transformation“.
Events

This section lists several events on the KOFF calendar and on those of KOFF member organizations. Other pointers are available through the KOFF-Infomark.

- The first Gender Roundtable for the new year will take place on February 3 at KOFF in Berne on the theme „Tsunamis & gender: what could gender-sensitive disaster relief and reconstruction look like?“.
- The Jean-Jaques Ruchti photo exhibition „Leben statt Überleben in Afghanistan“ (Living rather than surviving in Afghanistan) will be running from February 17 to March 5 at the Kornhaus Forum Berne.
- The Annual Meeting of KOFF member NGOs is set for May 20 Berne.

Publications


There is a rather elusive literature on gender/women and peace, non-violence and peacebuilding. Yet, a gender-sensitive critique of different third party approaches to conflict resolution of intra-state, violent conflicts has by and large sadly been missing. The paper offers a gender-sensitive critique of the „problem-solving workshop“ as one non-official and non-coercive third-party approach to intra-state conflicts. This will be done on two levels: On the one hand, it will make some of the „invisible“ spots and ideas of the problem-solving workshop „visible.“ On the other hand, it will introduce some gender-sensitive entry-points to the problem-solving workshop as theory and practice. The following analysis will focus on the third party, participants, and strategies taken as analytical guiding-lights.

swisspeace Working Paper 1/2005: Gender Awareness in Research on Small Arms and Light Weapons

This Working Paper reports on the preliminary findings of a collaborative project on „Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons“. Drawing on experiences and data from Africa, the Middle East, Asia, South America, the South Pacific, Europe and North America, the Working Paper identifies common themes, questions, challenges and recommendations that have so far emanated from the research project.

Annotated Bibliography on Human Security

The objective of this annotated bibliography is to provide a broad overview of literature on human security, be it from a conceptual or practical perspective, and to serve as a user-friendly instrument for interested readers to deepen their in-
sights into human security issues. It contains more than 360 references of reports, books, edited books, book sections, conference proceedings, journals, journal articles, magazine articles, newspaper articles and html-documents. The literature is sorted alphabetically and is supplemented, where available, with the appropriate internet link. Most publications can be directly accessed on the internet.

Web tip

Do no Harm web portal

The web portal provides access to information on the worldwide activities of the Local Capacities for Peace Project (LCPP) of the Collaborative for Development Action (CDA). It has been set up and is run by „Local Capacities for Peace in the Horn of Africa“. At the core is information on the theory and practice of Do no Harm. In addition to the well-known CDA basic documents, this portal provides, above all, space for reporting on practical Do no Harm experiences in Western and Southern Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. LCPP activities in the Horn of Africa are also particularly well documented. Also available through this gateway are training materials, case studies, information on activities, discussion forums, as well as a variety of background materials. Translations are to be provided in local languages, but that process is not yet complete. So far, the Do no Harm framework is available online in French, Arabic and Kiswahili. The website is an interesting source of information, though still under construction.