



IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPT

Conflict Transformation

Content	
Implementation concept	1
Conflict Transformation	1
1. Introduction	4
2. Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation – HEKS Point of View	6
2.1. HEKS History and Point of Origin	6
2.2. Defining our Concept of Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation	8
3. HEKS Profile and Spheres of Action	12
3.1. HEKS Strategy and Conflict Transformation	12
3.2. Spheres of action	15
3.2.1 Supporting Protection and Security	15
3.2.2 Creating Linkages and Dialogue	16
3.2.3 Challenging Accountability and Advocacy	17
3.2.4 Promoting Cohesion and Non-violence	18
3.2.5 Enhancing Inclusion and Participation	19
4. HEKS Reflective Approach – Materializing “Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation”	20
4.1. Requirements of HEKS reflective approach	20
4.2. Roles and Responsibilities	24
5. Annex – Tool Kit	27
6. Glossary	27

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Text: HEKS International Division, Lead: Rural Development Advisor

Photo editor: Ruedi Lüscher

Design: Toni Bernet

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Preamble

Peace has been a vision and hope held by manifold religious and secular societies. For some peace may only be the absence of physical violence, for others the focus is on questions of justice. All in all the pictures associated with peace often highlight an unreachable goal, a perfect final state, and neglect the ever changing social dynamics which are part and parcel of humanity. Obviously visions and hopes don't appear to materialize into reality. In many cases frustration about repeated attempts and processes to achieve peace even turned the term peace into a taboo word. In this sense peace is rather seen as a means of consoling and putting people off instead of ensuring equal rights. Accordingly the term peace is highly debated, questioned and contested. People who praise or disparage "the vision of peace" often disagree about what they praise or disparage. Even though various attempts have been made to define peace it remains difficult to come to a common understanding that could provide guidance for HEKS work in the field. Thus we would like to divide the ambiguous, big and unachievable into smaller graspable and attainable steps. As justice and thus equal rights can at least be seen a precondition for peace – if not its manifestation itself – the implementation concept aims to turn its focus to more definable terms. Accordingly equal rights as outlined in the Human Rights framework constitute the universal reference. This does not mean we want to abandon our vision for peace. The contrary is rather the case. We want to get better a hold on what we yearn for in order to improve on a focused and more determined approach towards a just peace.

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



1. Introduction

HEKS international division's development work strategy is comprised of two focal themes, Development of Rural Communities and Conflict Transformation as well as the Human Rights Based Approach as an overarching framework and cross-cutting issue. Thus alongside the Development of Rural Communities and Human Rights Based Approach implementation concept¹ this paper constitutes the core guiding elements of HEKS development work.

The aim of this paper is to consolidate and strengthen HEKS endeavours to transform conflicts and to foster equal rights for all. It will enhance a common understanding and provide guidelines while working towards justice and transforming conflicts.

A survey, which included interviews conducted with desk officers and country directors from all HEKS working areas, has been the starting point of this implementation concept. It revealed that the people of our concern are all affected by structural and cultural violence. In virtually every focus country they are also confronted with physical violence or threats.

The conflicts around this violence include disputes about access to resources of all kind (land, water, employment, etc.), or are triggered due to the ruthless extraction of natural resources by powerful international stakeholders and businesses. Weak and corrupt or even repressive

¹ HEKS Development of Rural Communities Implementation Concept Zurich 2010 and HEKS Human Rights Based Approach Implementation Concept, Zurich: June 2011

state institutions are unable or reluctant to establish the rule of law. Clientelism on one side and political exclusion on the other side, produce an environment where conflicts turn violent. Ethnic or religious tensions, due to political instrumentalization and mobilization, or historically anchored racism and discrimination against marginalized groups are also at the heart of various conflicts. Last but not least, a culture of violence, disrespect and mistrust after decades of war and crisis keeps conflicts alive.

The complexity of the project environments drives us to commit to a thorough and reflected approach in order to maximize the effectiveness and sustainability of our conflict transformation efforts.

The first chapter demonstrates HEKS' history and prospects in working towards equal rights and conflict transformation. Subsequently, our understanding of equal rights and conflict transformation is clarified. The third chapter illustrates HEKS strategy and our spheres of action. The following part sketches HEKS profile in transforming conflict and thus explains its reflective approach. The chapter concludes by outlining roles and responsibilities in implementing the concept. The Annex contains a tool box which provides ideas and guidance to put the reflective approach into practise.



2. Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation – HEKS Point of View

2.1. HEKS History and Point of Origin

Early roots

HEKS was founded after the Second World War as the Swiss Churches' response to violence and destruction in Europe. The war was over, but peace had not been established yet, hatred and mistrust prevailed. In collaboration with the World Council of Churches HEKS opened the Casa Locarno in order to enhance reconciliation between different central European communities. While being invited for holidays different groups were brought together and a respectful exchange was facilitated. Whereas inhabitants refused to speak to each other at the beginning of their stay it was possible for them to coordinate their daily routines together later on. Over many years it became possible to enhance intense dialogues which allowed the deconstruction of stereotypes and reconciliation between the Dutch and Germans as well as Hungarians and Romanians. From that time on HEKS has been involved in promoting peace and reconciliation around the globe.

Prospects and challenges in transforming conflicts

The path to transform conflicts peacefully is a long one on which HEKS as relatively small or-

ganization can only afford to make small but valuable contributions. The added value of HEKS is its strong rootedness in civil society structures. The trust which HEKS has gained through its long term commitment in the relevant societies in addition to its position as an “outsider” may make it a welcomed facilitator of a process which aims to bring different groups together in order to enhance joint analysis and motivate joint action to overcome hostilities. HEKS may directly build bridges between stakeholders by including partners belonging to different groups into joint action teams within country programs or indirectly motivate partner organisations to be the catalyst between adversary groups. HEKS is unlikely to settle or resolve conflicts but is well suited to creating the space for processes that bring all actors involved together. Solutions envisaged and decisions made remain with the different actors themselves. These processes become institutionalized and an inherent part of societal and political structures which respect, protect and fulfil the rights of all. In this way peace is built into the culture and structure of the society itself. As a result conflict transformation has to be understood as a non-violent inclusive process which fosters security, participation, mutual respect and understanding as well as equal rights.

Perspective as a faith-based organisation

As a faith-based organisation, HEKS has specific options when it comes to promoting equal rights and conflict transformation. Churches and faith-based organisations are part of an efficient international network and are often given a high credibility as an interlocutor. On the other hand as a Christian organisation, HEKS must have a critical and differentiated stance towards churches and religion in conflicts. Faith is used and misused by many conflict parties to mobilize constituencies and often becomes a factor which contributes to the escalation of conflicts. Here, religious institutions and leaders can play a very ambiguous and destructive role. Only fully aware of possible dangers will we be able to build upon the positive potential of churches in peace processes.

Since HEKS is implementing its projects with faith-based as well as with secular local partners the manifestation of HEKS’ peace building endeavours varies a great deal. Whereas in numerous projects HEKS faith-based background is not emphasized at all it may be of importance and valuable in others.

Studies² have shown that faith-based actors have played a key role in various peace and reconciliation processes around the world. They are active in advocacy endeavours to hold governments, military and business elites accountable for unjust and abusive actions. Moreover, faith-based actors repeatedly play an important role in preventing the outbreak of violence and have a bridge-building and stabilizing effect. They have the capacity to mobilize people as well as access to different population groups, from the most marginalized to influential poli-

² See Weingardt Markus, Religion macht Frieden. Das Friedenspotential von Religionen in politischen Gewaltkonflikten, Kohlhammer GmbH, Stuttgart, 2007.

ticians. In general, four assets are important in successful contributions of faith-based actors: they are qualified in what they are doing, have high credibility, are close to the people and have their trust.

2.2. Defining our Concept of Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation

Violence and Peace

HEKS has a broad understanding of violence which leans on Johann Galtung's triangle of violence³. Direct violence which includes physical and verbal attacks (e.g. the raids of rebels in DRC or the threats and killings committed by pistoleros or paramilitaries in Colombia and other Latin American countries) is the most obvious form of violence. In addition to direct violence, there are two forms of violence that are less visible.

Structural violence is hidden in structures which are segregative, repressive or exploitative. To comprehend structural violence one must look at the society as a whole. Social, political, and economic networks that form between individuals, communities, institutions and organizations are a particular focus. Structures manifest themselves in a variety of forms from the local to the international level. Social structures include sexism and racism, as well as class-based constructions. Structural violence asserts that individuals and states do not make decisions solely on the basis of rational choice. Rather, individuals are embedded in relational structures that shape their identities, interests and interactions. These structures regulate an avoidable disparity between the potential ability to fulfil basic needs of certain (identity) groups and their actual fulfilment. It is synonymous with social injustice and expresses itself in the unequal distribution of power and opportunities (e.g. inequality in the access to resources, the distribution of income, education opportunities, etc.).

Cultural violence is understood as those aspects of moral culture that are referred to in order to justify or legitimise the application of direct or structural violence. Parts of the Indian caste system or patriarchal societies can be given as examples for this.

This broad understanding of violence leads us to a broader understanding of peace. According to this concept the state in which fighting, killing and threats (direct violence) have ceased but structural and cultural violence persists is referred to as negative peace. If disparities are prevailing and 'the potential is higher than the actual it is by definition avoidable and when it is avoidable, then violence is present.'⁴ In contrast positive peace is only achieved if direct, structural and cultural violence are eliminated. Positive peace includes structures and values which enhance mutual respect and the unfolding of the full potential of all people. Since the

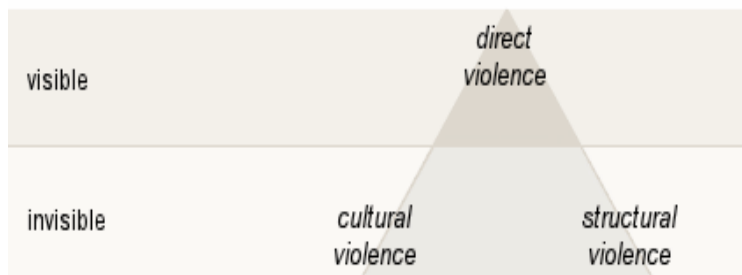
Violence is hidden in structures, beliefs and value systems and manifests itself in deeply rooted power asymmetries.

Peace is more than the absence of direct violence but includes just structures.

Without addressing the violence immanent in societal structures and value systems, real peace which enhances justice cannot be achieved.

3 Johan Galtung, *Violence, War, and Their Impact: On Visible and Invisible Effects of Violence*, (Polylog: Forum for Intercultural Philosophy 5, 2004). Also available online at <http://them.polylog.org/5/fgj-en.htm>.

4 Johan Galtung, *Violence, Peace, Peace Research* (1969) 6.3 *Journal of Peace Research*.



different forms of violence are connected in an interdependent cycle HEKS aims to address all forms in order to achieve positive peace which manifests itself in equal rights of all population groups.

Equality and Equal Rights

The terms “equality” implies a correspondence between different people or population groups that have the same qualities in at least one aspect, but may differ in others. Emphasis is placed upon the fact that equality includes the idea of equity of quality.

Equality is a core concept of Human Rights. Human rights proclaim that all human beings despite our societal diversity have the same dignity and rights. “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” is the first postulate of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Secondly it outlines that everyone is entitled to all of the rights and freedoms set forth in the declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, identity, ability, disability, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Article 7 proclaims “All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.” Furthermore the article outlines everybody’s entitlement to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the declaration.

Diverse peoples share the equity of quality – according to human rights: equal dignity and equal rights.

Discrimination is the expression of inequality. It is anchored in the prejudiced perception of individuals based on their membership in a certain group or category. It involves behaviours towards groups such as excluding or restricting members of one group from opportunities that are available to others. The roots of discrimination are perceived, unquestioned differences that are taken for granted. In most cases they are deeply rooted in societal structures and value systems. Such discriminatory structures and value systems are at the same time a sign of the unequal distribution of powers. Certain individuals and groups are interested in maintaining values which legitimize and enable inequality. These systemic causes of discrimination can be seen as synonymous with structural and cultural violence and place some populations at a greater risk of human rights violations than others. In this sense structural violence reveals the patterns of human rights violations, which manifest themselves in economic and social inequalities.⁵

Structural and cultural violence are at the very roots of human rights violations and impunity.

⁵ Kathleen Ho, Structural Violence as a Human Rights Violation, Essex Human Rights Review Vol. 4 No. 2 September 2007.

Rights-based approaches are aimed at the peaceful transformation of unjust structures.

Conflicts are not necessarily violent but can be constructive processes to overcome frictions.

Conflict can exist independently of the perceptions of the parties involved.

Generally it is subjective factors (identities and interests) as well as objective factors (structures) which enhance unequal access to resources. Thus strategies to transform conflict have to address both factors.

In this sense rights-based and conflict transformation approaches are increasingly merging with each other. Violations of rights can be seen as structural violence and may trigger violent conflict which includes direct violence. Vice versa direct violence very often subsequently results in further human rights violations (e.g. caused by displacement or repressive power holders). Ultimately it can be stated that Human Rights and conflict transformation share the same vision about the desired nature of society.⁶ Additionally both seek to support and facilitate peaceful processes of social change which lead towards justice⁷ – the fulfilment of equal rights for all.

Conflict and Conflict Transformation

Conflicts are an inevitable part of social life. It is important not to confuse conflict and violence. Conflicts can be seen as an opportunity for a constructive process to overcome dissatisfaction and injustices. Unfortunately conflicts can also become destructive and destroy social systems, livelihoods and lives. The problem is not the conflict but rather the way people deal with conflict. Violence is one way to deal with a conflict but not an inherent part of it.

Conflicts occur wherever different persons or parties (identity groups) have or think they have incompatible goals. This implies that goals may be subjectively perceived as incompatible, whereas from an objective point of view they could be compatible. Misinformation, cultural misunderstanding or misperceptions such as stereotypes, mistrust or emotional stress could be the reason why goals are seen as incompatible.

The differing perceptions and information of different identity groups may lead to conflict although the real objectives of the groups would be compatible.

Another implication asserts that inequalities and the denial of basic rights could be unrecognized because at least one of the parties involved fails to perceive their own dependence and unequal treatment by the other.⁸ In this case we would speak about hidden conflicts. It is exactly the rootedness in societal structures and values (structural and cultural violence) which blurs the inequality in rights. From this perspective the causes of conflict are not predominantly seen in perceived incompatibilities but in the social and political make-up and structure of society which produces different opportunities to access resources. On the other hand conflicts about unequal access to resources are hidden. In this case societal structures and the perceptions of the more powerful are dominating and silencing the disadvantaged.

As the current realities show it seems evident that most conflicts are best explained as dynamic processes involving a mixture of subjective features (such as identities, needs and interests)

6 GIZ & ZFD & DIMR, Michelle Parlevliet – Connecting Human Rights and Conflict Transformation Guidance for Development Practitioners. 2011

7 See definition of justice in the glossary, chapter 6.

8 Cordula Reimann, Assessing the State-of-the-Art in Conflict Transformation, In Berghof Handbook, 2004.

and – supposedly – objective, structural ones (such as the unequal distribution of resources). The strategies to transform conflicts depend on the analysis of these different causes and accordingly include a mixture of both. Whereas the subjectivity interpretation rather points to the clarification of attitudes, interests, needs and the deconstruction of stereotypes the structural one puts the focus on the enhancement of equal rights and equal access to resources through structural change.

Conflict transformation focuses on change, addressing two questions: “What do we need to stop?” and “What do we hope to build?” Since change always involves a movement from one thing to another, peace builders must look not only at the starting point, but also at the goal and the process of getting from one point to another. Different from conflict resolution which focuses on the de-escalation of conflict and diffusion of crises, conflict transformation allows for ebb and flow in conflict, and sees the presenting problem as a potential opportunity to transform the relationship and the systems in which the violence is embedded.⁹

Justice and equality are at the core of conflict transformation. The central question is not whether justice is achieved, but rather how one goes about doing it in ways that can also promote future harmonious and positive relationship between parties that have to live with each other whether they like it or not. Equal rights and dignity are a necessary but not sufficient condition for reconciliation. Conflict transformation takes the concern for equality and justice a step further and aims to rebuild a more liveable and psychologically healthy environment between former enemies where the vicious cycle of hate, deep suspicion, resentment and revenge does not continue to aggravate.

“The process of transformation begins with unmasking violence and uncovering hidden conflict in order to make their consequences visible to victims and communities. Conflict transformation aims to challenge adversaries to redirect their conflicting interests towards the common good.

It may have to disturb an artificial peace, expose structural violence or find ways to restore relationships without retribution.

The vocation of churches and religious communities is to accompany the victims of violence and be their advocates.¹⁰”

9 Refelctive Peacebuilding. A Planning, Monitoring and Learning Toolkit, Lederach,2007.

10 WCC, Ecumenical Call for Just Peace, Jaimica:2011, http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/EC-JustPeace_English.pdf



3. HEKS Profile and Spheres of Action

3.1. HEKS Strategy and Conflict Transformation

HEKS vision on instigating change

HEKS integrated approach towards structural change will enhance prosperous, secure and peaceful livelihoods for the people of our concern.

HEKS is striving to have an impact on the livelihood of vulnerable population groups in its focus countries in the South as well as in Eastern Europe. Equal rights, peace and prosperity for rural communities are the overarching goals of HEKS aspiration.

“By strengthening the structures of civil society, HEKS enables the pursuit of access to land and resources, the creation of sustainable value chains as well as peaceful coexistence. HEKS is thus making a contribution to greater equality and prosperity for rural communities.”¹¹

Knowledge and strategic linkages are measures to enhance change.

By empowering the most vulnerable and holding the powerful accountable HEKS aims to facilitate social change and people of our concern’s access to land and resources. The transfer of knowledge as well as creation of strategic connections are the means to enhance gainful agricultural production, processing and marketing of goods as well as the establishment of just and peaceful social structures.

¹¹ HEKS International Programme 2013-2017

HEKS is applying an integrated development approach which emphasizes the target oriented measures to overcome vulnerability and discrimination entailed in the Human Rights Based Approach¹².

This holistic working perspective allows HEKS to yield the synergies between its two focal themes “Development of Rural Communities”¹³ and “Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation”.

Synergies with HEKS’s focal and transversal themes

The two main focal themes of HEKS-EPER are strongly interdependent and interconnected. The development of rural communities plays a major role in preventing violence if done in a conflict-sensitive manner. Improved livelihoods shall include the reduction of inequalities and social injustice and thus eliminate conflict drivers. On the other hand, the development of rural communities is only possible and sustainable in an environment where conflicts are managed without violence. If the people of our concern’s security is threatened tasks of daily labour cannot be fulfilled – e.g. fields may not be ploughed in time – thus rural livelihoods will be at risk. The topic of access to resources in a particular country, which is widely accompanied with conflicts and direct, structural and cultural violence, is at the intersection between DevRC and Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation. Numerous activities which belong to the core tasks of the equal rights and conflict transformation concept are at the same time fundamental in developing rural communities. A great number of DevRC projects therefore have an explicit peace component and work towards strengthening local capacities for peace. The distinction between “DevRC with peace components” and “Conflict Transformation” projects lies mainly in the focus of the latter on the key driving factors of a conflict and the absolute aim to stop or prevent violent conflicts.

Endeavours towards developing rural communities and within the field of Humanitarian Aid can provide good entry points for conflict transformation programmes. People who are time and again affected by violence are often either fed up by initiatives with explicit and direct “peace goals” or do not consider them appropriate for their situation since their immediate needs have not yet been satisfied. Thus short-term incentives for rural development and humanitarian aid projects help to build up trust and establish a motivation for longer term goals in transforming violent conflict.

Violent conflicts threaten everyone’s security in particular ways. For example, women and girls are more often subject to domestic and sexual violence, rape, sexual slavery and human trafficking. Boys and young men, on the other hand, are more often exposed to forced recruitment. Particularly in times of war constructions of masculinity and womanhood are instrumentalized to keep conflict violent. Therefore, particular attention to the different situations, security needs, roles and requirements of women and men must be paid. Women’s voices and

The development of rural communities will decrease inequalities and thus prevent violent conflict.

Analysis of HEKS project environments revealed violent conflicts as significant threats to achieving development goals.

Access to resources is a core problem of rural development and a key driver of violent conflict.

HEKS strives to combine long-term and short-term goals in order to address direct needs and motivate the longer term goals towards equal rights.

12 HEKS Human Rights Based Approach Implementation Concept, Zurich: June 2011

13 HEKS Development of Rural Communities Implementation Concept, Zurich 2010

Thorough assessments shall ensure the inclusion of women's, men's, and girl's and boy's perspectives into conflict transformation.

HEKS equal rights and conflict transformation endeavours to promote and enable an environment for development work and contribute to the prevention and reduction of disaster risk.

HEKS stands for long term commitment and thus works in all conflict phases with respective appropriate means.

experiences are often ignored on both a national and a community level, because they are largely barred from the arenas in which decisions are taken. Experience shows that women can play a crucial role in transforming conflict. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security directs all parties and actors to involve women at all levels of peace processes and negotiations.

HEKS endeavours towards equal rights and conflict transformation are directed at our focus countries and ideally create an enabling environment for the development of rural communities. Since root causes and drivers of conflicts may not always be located within the rural area itself HEKS programmes may have to address regional, national or international levels although the organisation's focus is explicitly directed to vulnerable rural areas.

Last but not least, conflict prevention and transformation are central elements of Disaster Risk Management, which includes dealing with the causes and effects of natural disasters (floods, earthquakes etc.) and violent conflicts within or between societies. Disaster Risk Management aims to reduce the disaster risk (preventing violent conflicts) and mitigate the extent of disasters (stopping violent conflicts) and is therefore inherently interlinked with conflict prevention and peace building.

Responding to peace building needs

HEKS long term commitment and integrated working approach implies the necessity of identifying the peace building needs of the people of our concern. Thus HEKS works in all conflict phases and does not jump in and out wherever a conflict gets the attention of the media. Instead HEKS' profile lies in a thoroughly reflected approach¹⁴ which puts the main focus on the peace building needs of the people of our concern. As a consequence, we do not restrict ourselves to a particular sphere of action but go for the most relevant and effective one in the current situation. The range of activities thus varies significantly.

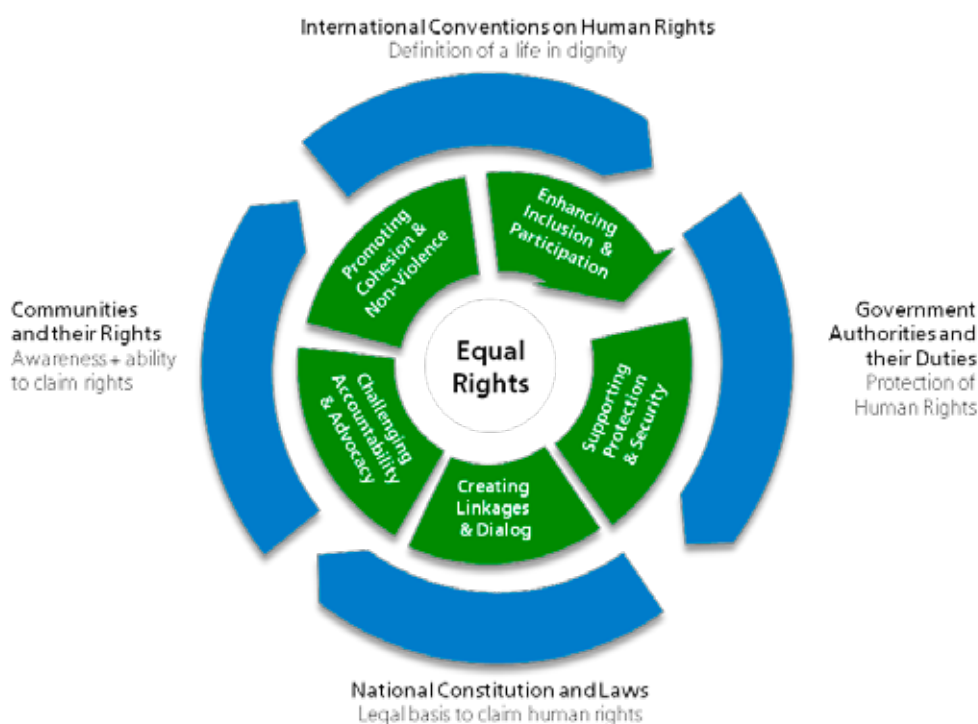
The analysis of HEKS project environments, as mentioned in the introduction, revealed four different deficits as main threats. Thus the focus on "peace building needs" in HEKS working practice is most likely to address

- Denied or unequal access to resources (in particular land and water),
- Weak governance structures in fragile states,
- Social exclusion of minorities and traditional groups,
- Culture of violence within societies.

¹⁴ See chapter 3.

3.2. Spheres of action

The explanation about what we do is structured in five different spheres of action (visualized in the green cycle below). The cycle starts with necessities at times when violence levels are at their peak and subsequently illustrates meaningful steps from the post-conflict to the prevention phases. Frequent context and conflict analysis will reveal that different spheres of action will be relevant at the same time and that the cycle is not only understood as a chronological sequence. It is rather the ideal complementation of the different spheres of action which may bring us closer to the desired impacts.



3.2.1 Supporting Protection and Security

When hostility and killings govern everyday life, support for and the protection of our people of concern and our partners is an essential task for HEKS.

External civil societies as well as national and international networks can play a crucial role in stopping direct violence and fulfilling basic needs.

Security is the basis for any work in the area and provides space for local civil society actors to

HEKS is committed to protecting the physical integrity of the people of our concern and partners through monitoring and advocacy endeavours.

continue their valuable work towards equal rights despite a hostile environment. In general, protection is particularly effective if it is combined with monitoring activities and advocacy campaigns. It needs to be part of a coherent strategy not only working on the effects but also the causes of Human Rights violations. An integrated media outreach and cooperation with national and international networks are central to that. According to a comparative study¹⁵, combined protection, monitoring and advocacy activities are some of the most relevant and effective functions of the civil society in building peace.

Apart from physical protection the term security may also include the immediate basic needs for survival which are covered within HEKS humanitarian aid activities.

Example from Honduras: Building a broad awareness of rights and networking with national and international organizations has proven to be a key factor for enhancing security and maintaining space for NGOs' rights-based work. In all probability, the local radio station run by young people in Zacate Grande (Honduras), which disseminated information on a threatened eviction of their communities in favour of the interests of a private investor, has led to a decrease in violent attacks from security groups. In addition, frequent observation from national and international stakeholders may have contributed to increased stability in the area.

3.2.2 Creating Linkages and Dialogue

Through our long-term commitment and close relationships with local communities HEKS has a particularly good understanding of the context and a certain level of trust from the affected people. We aim to make use of this added value by playing a role in creating linkages and facilitating dialogues between institutions as well as between antagonistic groups. Dialogue facilitation by local civil society actors is highly relevant in all phases of conflict.

HEKS is dedicated to facilitating dialogue between adversary groups and to creating linkages on a societal and international level in order to enhance information transfer, transparency and co-operation.

Local facilitation is performed at all times and does not necessarily need special attention or support. It might be between conflict parties and communities, between aid agencies and the conflict parties or between communities and returning refugees. The effectiveness of existing initiatives can be enhanced when targeted training is provided. Otherwise, people often do not know how to apply the acquired knowledge.

Furthermore, initial studies show that instead of pure dialogue, joint practical ventures based on the concept of dia-praxis are a promising approach to promoting understanding between conflicting parties.

¹⁵ Ibid, Paffenholz, 2009

Our experience has shown that an emphasis has to be put on fragmentation within the different competing groups and intra-group conflicts. It is often self-organisation within conflicting identity groups that may provide the first step to transforming the “bigger” conflicts without violence.

Example from DR Congo: On the basis of a conflict analysis the different actors involved in land conflicts are invited by a local mediation team. The majority of cases have successfully been handled through these facilitations. If this way fails linkages to the justice system and enforcement mechanisms are the means to overcome land struggles.

3.2.3 Challenging Accountability and Advocacy

With its Human Rights Based Approach Implementation Concept¹⁶ and the Advocacy Concept¹⁷ HEKS has acknowledged the need for and importance of advocating for the rights of the people of our concern in order to instigate social change.

The rights-based approach penetrates HEKS endeavours and advocacy is always relevant although one must find the right window of opportunity – which is not very likely during the conflict phase during times of intense fighting.

Holding the state and other duty bearers accountable and enabling responsible institutions is not only important for the realization of the citizens’ rights but also contributes towards preventing violent conflicts. In applying a Human Rights-based Approach and constantly addressing duty bearers we are strengthening the society’s capacity to deal with social conflicts in a constructive and non-violent way. We therefore rely on Human Rights and the respective agreements and treaties signed by the government and take the function of a watch dog over the state. The close interaction with people of our concern provides opportunities to systematically monitor the implementation of equal rights and possible violations. Target-oriented advocacy campaigns and engaging directly with state institutions are crucial in this.

These activities which also aim to transform fragile situations into stable governance structures from the bottom up are at the same time a means to establish trust within the societies. Trust and stability are crucial to enable sustainable development. It is of high relevance to make sure the processes of dialogue between civil society and state structures are institutionalised in order to make space for our partner’s action and enhance an enabling environment.

We stay impartial between conflict parties but if human rights are violated we take a firm stand in promoting a non-violent approach to overcome inequalities by mobilizing right holders, duty bearers and the public.

¹⁶ HEKS Human Rights Based Approach Implementation Concept, Zurich: June 2011.

¹⁷ HEKS, Advocacy in Development Cooperation, Zurich: 2011.

Example from Palestine: Extensive international and national networks of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) and media work prevented Israeli authorities from destroying a solar plant in a Palestinian village near Hebron. For the village's 390 residents, the solar panels are the only electricity supply; in particular, their school and small clinic depend on it. It was a combination of urgent action appeals to the EAPPI network and the organization of a delegation for journalists, with several articles being published in the international media which led the Israeli authorities to freeze the demolition order.

3.2.4 Promoting Cohesion and Non-violence

HEKS peace education aims to enhance a culture of mutual respect and non-violence by reflecting values and deconstructing stereotypes.

One central role of HEKS and its partners is the promotion of a constructive conflict culture which enhances mutual respect, non-discrimination and non-violence. This includes the reflection of values which guide everyday life and behaviour. The deconstruction of stereotypes of "the other" as well as the assessment of attitudes, positions, needs and interests of adversary groups are important additional issues at stake. In our efforts to transform conflicts a constructive approach in dealing with social conflicts shall be elaborated, practised and internalized.

These socialization endeavours are most effective in times of absence or a low level of violence. Radicalization and a high level of violence mean such initiatives have almost no impact as other needs like security are predominant for the local population.

Socialization efforts such as peace education and social cohesion endeavours are thus relevant means mainly in preventing social conflicts from becoming violent and in the aftermath of violent conflict. The promotion of a culture of respect and non-violence is also a long-term process and shall as much as possible be realized through pre-existing institutions such as schools or associations even if they are still reinforcing existing divides in the society.

Gaining the trust of people and creating space for dialogue has a higher likelihood of success if conflicting parties are engaged in practical activities with joint goals. Changing mindsets and behaviours cannot be controlled but needs the time and space which can be provided by rural development projects.

Moreover, long-term systematic initiatives are more effective than short-term sporadic events, especially when they focus on different conflict lines and also attempt to include groups which are hard to reach.

Example from South Caucasus: Young people have grown up in an environment of hostilities between neighbouring countries. Summer camps for teenagers from the different countries have enhanced respect for each other's cultures. In addition to sports and games interactive sessions on conflict transformation during and after the camps teach participants to better deal with conflict in real-life situations. This change of attitude contributes to the reduction of negative stereotypes held up by the political leadership fuelling violence in the region.

3.2.5 Enhancing Inclusion and Participation

Our experience has shown that growing disparities, which are often a particular problem of the new middle income countries, have often been a cause of (recurring) violent outbreaks. Thus in order to enhance the fulfilment of rights for the most vulnerable and to ensure stability it is of great importance to particularly consider minorities and other traditional groups which are excluded from economic and social processes. Although inclusion on one hand means to guarantee equal rights for everybody – and accordingly the same treatment for all – “positive discrimination” is often necessary to uplift the capacities¹⁸ of minority groups to enable equal participation. However sometimes in order not to reconstruct or sharpen stereotypes it may be of importance to address minorities as “the most vulnerable” – which may also include some deprived representatives of mainstream society - instead of naming certain minority groups. In addition entry points to incorporate the mainstream society in social inclusion processes have to be identified and used from the very beginning.

HEKS sees itself as the advocate for the most vulnerable and strives to integrate discriminated right holders into the structures of the mainstream society from the very beginning.

Example from Bangladesh: Our partner organisations in Bangladesh have established Human Rights Protection Committees which consist of government officials, teachers and other local power holders as well as representatives of the severely discriminated Dalit minority. They meet frequently and follow up on observing and improving the socio-economic status of Dalit communities in the region. As a result more children have been able to enter mainstream society schools, better basic services in the communities have been provided and direct violence against Dalit has decreased.

¹⁸ This may include education on rights as well as formal education since this means a starting point towards empowerment of discriminated groups.



4. HEKS Reflective Approach – Materializing “Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation”

The previous chapter described the general HEKS approach and the spheres of action. As outlined above HEKS conflict transformation approach is not bound to certain spheres of action but to a reflective approach which puts the focus on the peace building needs of people of our concern and thus repeated through analysis. The following chapter aims to provide guidance on the core requirements of the approach.

4.1. Requirements of HEKS reflective approach¹⁹

Identification phase - analyzing context and conflict

The starting point of a reflective approach is in-depth analysis. As the general practice has shown, in many programmes and projects the management themselves do have a good understanding about the conflict dynamics around them. However analysis is rarely documented and made explicit. A shared explicit analysis is a starting point for a joint examination, helps to make sure important things are not overlooked and is a precondition for measuring results.

We have to differentiate context analysis and conflict analysis. A context analysis examines the situation in a more general way looking at structures as well as actors with its interests.

¹⁹ The approach is partly based on the findings and lessons learned of the Reflecting on Peace Practice Project of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects. Download of the entire manual on: http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/manual/rpp_training_participant_manual_rev_20090104_Pdf.pdf

Effective programmes and projects in fragile contexts require good analysis and permanent reflection through all project phases

A conflict analysis has an additional focus on dynamics, particularly the key driving factors of conflict.

A context analysis²⁰ which identifies dividers and connectors between different sub-groups is a must for all HEKS projects and programmes. It is the basis for the “conflict sensitivity check” (do no harm) which is of great importance to avoid unintended negative side effects such as the aggravation of ongoing conflict.

A conflict analysis²¹ which examines key drivers of conflict in detail is a must for programmes or projects in which one of the goals is to mitigate conflicts. In any case it must be done in a participatory manner including all relevant interest groups in order to grasp different perspectives.

HEKS sees itself as the advocate for the most vulnerable and strives to integrate discriminated right holders into the structures of the main stream society from the very beginning.

Aspects of context and conflict analysis

Structures	Actors	Dynamics
Analysis of long term factors underlying conflict:	Analysis of conflict actors:	Analysis of:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political • Legal • Social • Cultural • Economic • Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests • Relations • Capacities • Peace agendas • Incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term trends of conflict • Triggers and drivers of violence • Capacities for managing conflict • Likely future conflict scenarios
	< Sources of tension / dividers >	
	< Capacities for peace / connectors >	

Examining the connection between programme/project and conflict context

First of all it is of importance to bear in mind: we are part of the system. Through our presence and work in societies affected by conflicts, we become a part not only of the society but also of the conflict system. We thus have to be aware of our role and impact. The question is the

Analysis shall be undertaken in an inclusive manner, meaning with the participation of all of the different interest groups.

²⁰ A tool kit on how to do a context analysis is currently being produced and will be added to the annex in the near future.

²¹ A tool kit on how to do a conflict analysis is currently being produced and will be added to the annex in the near future.

extent to which project activities and implicit messages may feed sources of tension (dividers) or capacities for peace (connectors).

As a task in conflict sensitivity this examination is compulsory for all projects and programs²².

The planning phase - adapting programs and projects to conflict context

The next step aims to ensure that the results of analysis are considered in programme and project reality. For existing programmes and projects, amendments might be necessary whereas new programmes and projects might suggest a wider range of measures which explicitly contribute towards conflict transformation. As a matter of course “Equal Rights and Conflict Transformation” projects are putting a greater emphasis on identifying the means to actively contribute towards non-violent conflict transformation through measures from defined spheres of action (see chapter 2.4.) whereas all other projects merely have to ensure they do not negatively impact the conflict.

Envision the goals of conflict transformation and theories of change

Projects and programmes with a clear focus on equal rights and conflict transformation will identify the peace building needs. The question on what has to be stopped is sometimes more relevant than the conflict’s root causes. Subsequently a clear, unambiguous and shared vision on what the situation should look like after the conflict has been transformed successfully must be documented. To materialise the vision societal, change which impacts on relationships, structures and culture is necessary. It is nevertheless important to distinguish firstly as described above the more general vision: what exactly are we aiming for? What is the society about and what does this vision of the future look like? And secondly, what exactly is the goal of our programme or project? Last not least we look at how the HEKS programme or project adds to the more general vision. We can only work effectively if we have a common understanding of what we want to achieve and a realistic view on what our contribution can be.

The following step is the development of a theory of change. A theory of change describes how certain events and activities are supposed to result in the desired changes. One project may include several theories of change, which may build upon each other. The programme’s or project’s theory of change includes all of the different small elements to achieve the vision defined above. However the project does not necessarily cover all the measures on its own but may ensure that important missing links (between the project goals and the general vision) are covered by network partners. Last not least it is important to test the theories of change by considering the above analysed sources of tension and spoilers (meaning the actors which have an interest in keeping the conflict violent).

In order to enhance conflict sensitivity the exploration of sources of tension and capacities for peace is a must for all projects.

We can only work effectively if we have a common understanding of what we want to achieve and a realistic view on what our contribution can be.

²² The tools to examine the interaction between projects and programmes and conflict context are outlined in the HEKS conflict sensitivity guidelines Zurich 2006, the HRBA implementation concept Zurich 2010 Tool N and are about to be revised next month.

The planning itself aims to identify the right activities to trigger the changes described in the theory of change.

At this stage indicators will be defined. Thinking about the desired change and asking right holders, duty bearers as well as project staff about how they expect to see and realize the proposed outcome or change discloses the signs for success. By referring back to the visioning process additional indicators may be identified. At this stage alignment with the “five criteria for effective peace building” shall be checked and are addressed.²³

Implementation phase – permanent action and reflection

As the theory of complexity as well as working practices in fragile contexts suggest permanent reflection and readjustment are necessary in order to proceed towards the defined vision. Although visions and goals may remain the same the path to achieve these may change. This reflection demands space, meaning time to stop, step out of the routine and think. This is the time when the initial context and conflict analysis is examined and changes are identified. In this way analysis is frequently updated and may show necessary amendments in the project procedure.

By doing the “most significant change” assessment project staff shall focus on equal rights and conflict dynamics as one determined field of observation. This methodology can be a good starting point for a reflection process not only to gather right holders’ point of view but for an exchange from project to programme level including duty bearers as well as project management and staff. These discussions will lead into a learning process which focuses on goal orientation instead of the fulfilment of planned activities.

Evaluation and completion phase – take advantage of the learning opportunity

The World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development suggests more inclusive and longer term thinking in order to achieve results. Project and programme progression are subject to successes as well as recurring backlashes. We shall consider backlashes as part and parcel of project and programme reality. Thus programmes shall envision longer periods and think beyond a 3 to 5 year project or programme logic. For example the OECD peace building dialogue: New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States suggests a time span of 20 to 40 years for basic governance transformation. Thinking this way the most important part of evaluation is the learning processes within organising entities (HEKS itself, partners, civil society groups, government and civil society networks). Thus it is advisable to tie the evaluation to the reflection process and most significant change assessments carried out during the

Make sure that the theories on how to achieve desired change are frequently tested during the project phase.

Evaluations are learning steps along a long term process to structural change.

²³ 1. The effort contributes to stopping a key driving factor of conflict. 2. The effort contributes to a momentum for peace by causing participants and communities to develop their own peace initiatives. 3. The effort results in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances. This criterion underlines the importance of moving beyond impacts at the individual or personal (attitudinal, material or emotional) level to the socio-political level. 4. The effort prompts people increasingly to resist violence and provocations to violence. 5. The effort results in an increase in people’s security and in their sense of security. See: *CDA Collaborative Learning Projects 2009; Reflecting on Peace Practice. Training for Consultants and Advisors Manual.*

implementation and monitoring phase. Apart from promoting commitment and inclusiveness it will support the absorption of the lessons learned and ensure they are understood by future implementers.

The evaluation will reveal the appropriateness of a theory of change and the adaptability to new situations and challenges. The above-mentioned “5 criteria for effective peace building” shall be used as indicators to check the effectiveness. Last but not least the wider impact on the surrounding environment is to be estimated. The reference to the conflict analysis and indicators gathered earlier pays off at this stage.

4.2. Roles and Responsibilities

HEKS is committed to building the capacity of staff and partners in order to enhance the effectiveness of conflict transformation programmes and projects.

The participative elaboration of an implementation concept is a crucial first step for the HEKS-EPER peace practice. The transfer of this concept into practice is even more important. In order to strengthen reflective and effective programming towards equal rights and conflict transformation HEKS is committed to promoting the capacity-building of staff and partners regarding the approach and methods outlined in this paper.

In this overall process the roles and responsibilities within HEKS are the following:

Country director, desk officers and partners:

- Prepare an explicit accurately documented context and actor analysis of the project area and update it regularly for all programmes and projects to ensure conflict sensitivity. Involve local partners and stakeholders in the analysis process.
- Programmes and projects with conflict transformation components are to conduct an explicit accurately documented conflict analysis and update it regularly. Include the different identity and interest groups as well as partners and experts in the analysis process.
- Assess the implications of the context and conflict analysis on the projects and programs and vice versa.
- Make sure insights from analysis are taken into account during project planning and implementation.
- Analyse the work done by others and existing networks (particularly with regard to peace promotion) in the working area.
- Programmes and projects with conflict transformation components are to elaborate a clear picture of how the desired change towards equal rights should look.

- Encourage and enable implementers to conduct explicit context or conflict analysis. Provide space and time to allow the stepping back from daily routine conflict in order to make a structured analysis and to reflect on their own role and impact.
- Enable and accompany implementers in analysis and reflective practice.
- Programmes and projects with conflict transformation components are to elaborate theories of change which are frequently tested against ongoing dynamics.
- Inform and include the respective thematic advisor from the very beginning in planning and evaluation processes of conflict transformation projects as well as rural development projects with a peace component.
- Refer back to the initial analysis to reflect dynamics, lessons learned and measure the impacts.

Thematic advisors:

- Assist the country director and desk officer in strengthening the partners' capacities in analysis and reflective practice.
- Support the country director and desk officer in the planning, implementation and evaluation of conflict transformation projects (i.e. plan/moderate training, backup support).
- Promote inter-linkages with rural development projects, humanitarian aid as well as gender equality in capacity-building and accompaniment efforts.
- Promote and strengthen the HRBA and effective conflict transformation strategies, policies and country programmes.
- Draw lessons learned and ensure capitalization of experience made in conflict transformation. Process and re-distribute the gained knowledge in a way that improves HEKS practices.
- Stay informed about further developments regarding the HRBA, conflict transformation and effective peace-building and assess their relevance for the HEKS work.
- Support the establishment of strategic links with international networks.
- Organize and evaluate innovative pilot projects.
- Improve processes to plan, monitor and evaluate conflict transformations endeavours by developing relevant practical tools.
- Accompany all measures to ensure conflict sensitivity and rights-based programming.

Head of Department, Head of International Division:

- Provide time and create space for analysis and reflective practice.
- Ensure the respect of HEKS values and core beliefs, HRBA principles, conflict sensitivity and the use of methods of reflective conflict transformation in HEKS' work.
- Promote and strengthen the HRBA and conflict transformation in strategies, policies and country programmes.
- Allocate the necessary resources to put the implementation concept into practice.

5. Annex – Tool Kit

Is about to be adjusted to the overall PCM process.

6. Glossary

Civil Society: Interest groups that stand between the private sphere and the sphere of state and government. A pluralistic civil society representing a variety of interests is seen as guaranteeing a culture of tolerance and compromise, mitigating political conflict and contributing to political consensus. Civil society is important to counterbalance the state, control the activities of government, prevent abuses of power by state institutions and hold the state accountable as a duty bearer. A precondition for this is that members of a society see themselves as citizens who take responsibility, engage and develop activity in local communities, associations or the public sphere. (Berghof Foundation)

Conflict: A relationship between two or more interdependent parties in which at least one of the parties perceives the relationship to be negative or detects and pursues opposing interests and needs. Both parties are convinced that they are in the right. Conflict is an essential ingredient of social change. What is important is that conflicts should be solved in a peaceful and constructive manner.

Conflict Analysis: Action-oriented analysis of the causes, effects, dynamics, driving factors and actors of a conflict and analysis of the starting points for peaceful management and overcoming the conflict. (Berghof Foundation)

Conflict Transformation: A generic, comprehensive term referring to actions and processes seeking to alter the various characteristics and manifestations of violent conflict by addressing the root causes of a particular conflict over the long term. It aims to transform negative destructive conflict into positive constructive conflict and deals with structural, behavioural and attitudinal aspects of conflict. The term refers to both the process and the completion of the process. (Berghof Foundation)

Do No Harm (DNH): Do No Harm is an analytical and practical framework to explore how developmental interventions and conflict interact. Based on this awareness, the framework also assists in developing programming options to systematically support capacities for peace that connect people across conflicting lines. Therefore, the purpose of applying the framework is to better understand how aid and conflict interact; to avoid negative, conflict-worsening effects

of an intervention; and to discover opportunities, in which people can be helped to disengage from violent conflict. (GTZ)

Justice: The preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares “the recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family (is) the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world...”

A simple definition for justice is “to each party his due;” this narrow definition however, does not necessarily lead to peace and resolution of conflicts. A broader, more democratic definition of justice includes parity, equity and equality. Such a concept extends beyond heads of state as it is a deeper process that emerges from the people involved in conflict themselves. As social justice the term is used within a society, particularly as it is exercised by and among the various social classes of that society. A socially just society is based on the principles of equality and solidarity, understands and values human rights, and recognizes the dignity of every human being.

Key Driving Factors: Factors which are key to the continuation and escalation of the conflict and which are therefore key in the efforts of stopping the violence and building a sustainable peace.

Peace: Within the Peace and Conflict research there is no standard definition. The theory of peace is caught up in the field of tension between processes of dealing with conflict through violence and structural imbalance on the one side, and on the other the objective of (relative) non-violence. Peace is, thus not a condition, but an approach towards an ideal or a regulative idea. Often the definition of a Positive Peace is applied that includes social justice (non-discrimination, equality, justice, access to resources, security for human beings) within nations as well as globally. (Definition of HEKS Policy 2006-2010; needs to be adapted/changed!)

Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA): The Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) is a planning and management tool that can assist development and humanitarian organisations in analysing situations of (potential) [and actual] conflict and identifying strategic opportunities for conflict prevention and peace-building. It can also be adapted for monitoring the impact of these activities. It thus provides an integrated approach to the main stages and levels of a development programme (Nyheim, Leonhardt & Gaigals, 2001).

Peacebuilding / Peace Promotion: Medium and long-term measures aimed at setting up mechanisms for peaceful conflict management, overcoming the structural causes of violent conflicts and thereby creating the general conditions in which peaceful and just development can take place. (Leonhardt / GTZ 2001)

Peace Compatibility: HEKS understands by this that all decisions have to be checked to ensure that all HEKS activities neither boost violence nor enforce oppressive conflicts. HEKS also undertakes all possible measures to contribute towards violence and conflict prevention

as well as peace-building in a broader sense. (Definition in HEKS Policy 2006-2010; needs to be adapted/changed?)

Track 1: Describes the field of official, high-level negotiations between the conflict parties. Generally implemented with the support of external state actors. Mainly seeks some form of conflict settlement. (Berghof Foundation)

Track 1.5: Denotes informal dialogue and problem-solving formats with high ranking politicians and decision-makers. Involves Track 1 participants, but employs Track 2 approaches. Also aims to bridge the gap between official government peace efforts and civil society. (Berghof Foundation)

Track 2: Unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities taking place in parallel with the formal, government processes of communication and negotiation. They do not normally involve the top leadership of the parties in conflict, but they often involve high-ranking, influential leaders and civil society actors who can interact more freely than the leaders of the conflict parties, but at the same time have influence in their own communities. It also refers to building cooperation and infrastructural connections between hostile parties so that they become more mutually dependent and cannot revert to war in the future. (Berghof Foundation)

Track 3: Normally focused at the grassroots level, these are activities directed towards conflict transformation and peace-building; e.g., institution and capacity building, training, peace education. It encourages interaction and understanding between hostile or formerly hostile local communities and involves awareness raising and empowerment within those communities. Development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, post-conflict rehabilitation, reconciliation and 'dealing with the past' can play an important role in Track 3 level. (Berghof Foundation)

Acronyms

ACT	Action of Churches Together
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CD	Country Director
CMS	Change Monitoring System
DNH	Do No Harm
DO	Desk Officer
ESCR	Economic Social and Cultural Rights
FFPG	Field Financial and Programmatic Guidelines
HHQ	HEKS Headquarters
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
ID	International Division
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSC	Most Significant Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PooC	People of our Concern
TA	Thematic Adviser
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations

HEKS
Geschäftsstelle
Seminarstrasse 28
Postfach
8042 Zürich
Tel. +41 44 360 88 00
Fax +41 44 360 88 01
info@heks.ch

EPER
Secrétariat romand
17bis, Boulevard de Grancy
Case postale 536
1001 Lausanne
Tel. +41 21 613 40 70
Fax +41 21 617 26 26
info@eper.ch

www.heks.ch
www.eper.ch