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Workshop Report

Dealing with Spoilers in Peace Processes

International Workshop

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The German Development Institute (DIE), located in Bonn, is Germany's leading independent think-tank on international development. DIE combines research, consultancy and training and works within international research networks, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

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1. Preface

On 26 and 27 September 2006, the Working Group for Development and Peace (FriEnt) and the German Development Institute (DIE) jointly organised an international workshop on "Dealing with Spoilers in Peace Processes". The workshop aimed to find answers to questions regarding spoilers in peace processes and identify possible follow-up activities within the frame of FriEnt's new priority topic "spoilers".

Many international aid and peace building organisations work in post-conflict situations. Their principal strategic choice is to promote (local) peace actors, networks and alliances – i.e. actors who are already engaged in peace building. Spoilers – i.e. actors who oppose the peace process and seek various means to create uncertainty and turmoil within the peace environment – play a considerable role in these processes. However, they are rarely considered as a target group and few international organisations have developed strategies to deal with them constructively. But how can (potential) spoilers – such as armed groups, radical political parties, war veterans, traditional leaders or economic actors – be integrated into peaceful transformation processes? Which strategies exist? What experiences have been gained with inclusive approaches and what lessons can we learn from them?

In order to address these questions, an introductory session as well as two panels and three working groups were formed, examining a) constructive approaches to dealing with spoilers, b) lessons learnt: dealing with different types of actors, and c) instruments to analyse spoiler groups, strategies and risk management.

2. Introduction

2.1. What are Spoilers? Typology, Motives, Strategies

Günter Schönegg (FriEnt) opened the workshop with a brief introduction to the topic, focusing on different categories to identify spoilers and strategies to deal with them.

In today's world, spoilers or spoiling behaviour in peace processes are an increasingly relevant topic. Spoilers are actors who undermine peace processes on different levels by various means.

Spoiling groups may be identified as armed groups (rebels and non-state armed groups), political parties (opposition and government) or factions within the political parties, administration or security forces, religious or traditional chiefs, radical peoples' movements (for example, ethnic or religious minorities), economic actors, mass media, war veterans and many more.

Typologies

Several categories/typologies can assist in identifying and understanding spoiler groups and spoiling behaviour:

1. Spoiler groups can be identified by their origin. Most spoiler groups have their origin in the war preceding a peace process. Other groups emerge during and in reaction to a peace process.
2. Spoiler groups have different positions in peace processes. While some groups are outside the peace process (for example Hamas in Palestine), other spoiler groups can be inside or even major actors in the process (for example the President of the Ivory Coast)
3. Stephen Stedman proposes a typology distinguishing the degree of commitment.

Degree of Commitment	Characteristic
Limited	Ask for a limited share
Greedy	Ask for a limited share
Total	Ask for all or nothing

Stedman, Stephen J. (1997): "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes", in: International Security, Vol. 22 (2): 5-53

4. Spoiler groups have different motives. The following categories can be identified: a. political motives (power sharing issues), b. economic motives (access to economic resources), c. cultural motives constituting social identities (including ethnic and religious) and d. the need for security and security guarantees. In many cases, different types of motives overlap each other.

Major strategies of spoilers inside a peace process are stealth (intransparent manoeuvres), manipulation, non-cooperation and inactivity, while spoilers outside the process more frequently resort to confrontation and violence (such as the assassination of moderates), the manipulation of public opinion and non-cooperation.

Strategies to Deal with spoilers

A first step in dealing with spoilers must be a comprehensive analysis of the respective spoiler, especially of its members, composition and leadership, its positions, interests and motives, the resources available to the group (financial, human and allies), its strategies and its perception of the other actors and the process. Such an analysis may provide specific strategies of how to deal with spoiling behaviour. Stedman suggests inducement ("give them what they want") for spoilers with a limited degree of commitment, socialisation ("set norms, reward and punish") for those being greedy, and coercion for those taking an "all or nothing approach".

Generally, exclusive strategies aim at weakening and defeating spoilers, while inclusive approaches aim to integrate spoilers into the peace process. Combining these strategies may be appropriate in some cases and different (external) actors playing different roles on different levels may allow the spoiling behaviour to be overcome.

Inclusive approaches comprise dialogue and listening programmes, confidence building, negotiation and mediation on specific questions (for example on humanitarian standards), leadership capacity building programmes, monitoring mechanisms, risk management systems, the development and negotiation of step-by-step plans as well as inclusive community development strategies. Offering development benefits in exchange for constructive participation in a peace process may thus be successful.

National and international actors developing an inclusive approach to spoilers may be prone to physical threats; they risk legitimising spoilers or being manipulated by them ("hidden agenda"). They may lose their reputation, and last but not least, face the risk of failure.

2.2. Non-State Armed Groups – A Challenge for International Cooperation

Jörn Grävingholt (German Development Institute) began his presentation by defining non-state armed groups, or NSAGs, as groups whose actions challenge the state's monopoly of force. While such a broad definition encompasses such diverse phenomena as guerrilla fighters, rebel groups, liberation armies, warlords, terrorists, organised crime, mercenaries, private security companies and others, it moves beyond a traditional understanding that attempts to distinguish *a priori* between groups according to several different criteria. Rather, NSAGs are considered to be dynamic entities that are typically incoherent and unstable over time regarding their goals, means and motives. Most NSAGs, for example, do not necessarily pursue political or economic agendas alone or resort to only one type of violence.

External actors engaged in development cooperation and peace building efforts are increasingly faced with the existence and activities of NSAGs. In considering engagement with these groups, external actors should try to avoid some typical, but often misleading assumptions. One of them is the idea that groups with political agendas are better "partners" for interaction than groups that are predominantly motivated by material incentives. In fact, NSAGs are rarely monolithic. Their motives and agendas are fluid, change over time and often differ over space. In many cases, political agendas get lost. In others, they may never have been more than a fig leaf.

Another typical assumption is that certain NSAGs, such as terrorists or groups that exert excessive violence, are "simply beyond the pale". While there are good

moral reasons for such a position of exclusion, it is also true that often, external actors do not necessarily have a choice with whom to engage (other than total disengagement). In addition, labels such as "terrorists" are of little use as they are widely employed by governments to discredit certain opponents but are difficult to make practical sense of when both state and non-state parties use indiscriminate violence.

More useful assumptions consider, for example, that by their very existence, NSAGs pose a threat to human security and that external actors feel the consequences at different levels: in their aid programmes (requiring access to target groups); for their aid workers (security concerns); in peace processes, where engagement with all parties to a conflict is necessary; and in humanitarian efforts to establish the same standards of conflict behaviour (*ius in bello*) among NSAGs that apply to state actors.

Additionally, it is useful to assume that in some cases a sitting government may be no less of a problem to human security than an opposing NSAG. In other cases, NSAGs may be the only providers of security or other basic services in specific regions far and wide. Thus, while the ultimate goal of international cooperation should be a legitimate state capable of providing security and basic services to its citizens, NSAGs may – for the time being – be legitimate actors to engage with for the sake of human security.

Engaging with NSAGs, however, involves many challenges. Legally, the problem is that engaging with NSAGs is usually forbidden by local standards and may even be prohibited internationally through terror lists or warrants of arrest issued by international tribunals. Morally, external actors run the risk of sending out the wrong signals and appearing cynical when approaching (or *not* approaching) either side in a conflict since both a NSAG and a government may be notorious for their human rights abuses. In political terms, external actors need to keep in mind that engaging with a NSAG almost by definition changes the relationship with the official government. Moreover, foreign governments have to consider general political implications of engagement with a NSAG beyond the case at hand. In any case, there is a risk of conveying legitimacy, contributing resources and thus fuelling, rather than ending, the conflict. Finally, there is a major analytical challenge. Cross-effects and unintended consequences of activities on the different levels of external engagement (i.e. access, safety, peace process, and humanitarian concerns) need to be considered early on. While policies may be selective and concentrate on one issue only, prior analysis must be complex. Careful interaction requires good knowledge of internal structures of NSAGs – a scarce resource since lack of transparency is an inherent feature of most NSAGs.

However, interaction with NSAGs must not be an end in itself. Instead, clear and realistic (i.e. modest) goals need to be defined and processes and effects of engagement constantly monitored. In order to make maximum use of the opportunities and minimise the risks of engagement with NSAGs, external actors need to invest in analysis, evaluation and learning from experience. Other important features of an external actor engaging with NSAGs include the ability to react fast to changing circumstances and to coordinate with other external actors in order to increase leverage.

2.3. Discussion Highlights

After both presentations, discussions arose focusing on the following topics:

Be Cautious with Definitions and Typologies

Analytical categories are useful and necessary to develop strategies. However, categorising and defining different groups/conflict parties as "spoilers" may not only result in a static (mis)understanding, but also in an inappropriate labelling of those actors. Because terminology and definitions shape perceptions, they have political and practical implications and should be applied with caution. In order to avoid a static understanding and labelling, participants suggested that reference should be made to "spoiling behaviour" instead of "spoilers". Within this context, typologies must be considered as flexible analytical tools, adapted to the context and constantly revised.

Political Perspectives, Norms and Power Matter

Peace negotiations and peace processes are characterised by conflicting positions, interests and needs of the parties and social groups involved. They are often accompanied by various attempts by those parties, including international actors, to de-legitimise interests and needs of opponents/opposition groups. One means to do so is labelling them a "spoiler". In order to avoid "black-listing" or arbitrary labelling of one party/group, international actors have to acknowledge those conflicting interests, and try to distinguish between legitimate and non-legitimate claims of the respective parties, i.e. distinguish between actors who resort to "spoiling behaviour" because their demands/needs are being ignored and those who undermine a process based on (personal) greed or the struggle over power and resources. Obviously, this distinction is neither neutral nor objective. In fact, it always depends on political perspectives, norms and the power to define "legitimate" and "non-legitimate" claims. Because international actors (state and non-state) not only have the power to define but also set norms, often based on the "liberal peace concept" (constitutional reforms, democratisation, human rights, market economy), specific parties and groups (e.g. Islamic parties/movements such as the Islamic Court Movement, Hamas, and Hezbollah, traditional chiefs, veterans) are labelled or even black-listed and excluded from negotiations and the broader process of reconstruction and peace building. Since exclusion often leads to the reinforcement of ethnic or religious identities and radicalisation, labelling is extremely dangerous, because it may create spoilers, particularly in modernisation processes (e.g. Afghanistan).

Pragmatic Approaches and Inclusive Strategies are Needed

As a matter of principle, all parties to the conflict should be included in peace processes. However, participants noted that pragmatic decisions are needed and one should take a retrospective as well as prospective approach to negotiations/agreements and peace processes: because ending the fighting is essential, those possessing power, position and resources to undermine and obstruct the process must be included in negotiations (retrospective approach), whereas civil society and marginalised groups such as women, women fighters, veterans and youth, as well as traditional and religious actors, must be included in a broader peace building process (prospective approach). Within this context, it was observed that non-state armed groups with a political agenda are probably

easier to engage than those who lack such an agenda, because sticks and carrots can be used.

3. Constructive Approaches to Deal with Spoilers?

3.1. Systemic Conflict Transformation in Sri Lanka

Kanaka Abeygunawardana, from the Berghof Foundation for Peace Support (Sri Lanka), presented the systemic approach developed and applied by Berghof in Sri Lanka as well as some major lessons learned. At the invitation of one ruling party, in 2001, the Berghof Foundation started to build up the Network for Conflict Studies and Transformation (RNCST). Based on a systemic conflict transformation approach, the network provides conflict monitoring and assessment, a platform for dialogue and problem solving as well as institutional capacity building.

Country Background

The Sri Lankan conflict has often been classified as a two party conflict between the Singhalese Government and the Tamil minority. This classification is too simplistic, as - first of all - two Singhalese political parties, the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), have struggled for and alternated in power since the country's independence in 1948. While the Tamil minority claimed more rights (language, education) for quite some time, the issue of separation has emerged more recently and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have only become relevant since 1993. In 2004, the LTTE split and a new armed group emerged (Karuna). Additionally, other opposition parties as well as the Muslim minority and the Indian rooted Tamil minority are parts of the conflict system, i.e. build sub-systems with conflicting actors, issues and dynamics. Those actors and sub-systems must be taken into account and must be included in the negotiation process in order to support sustainable and inclusive peace in Sri Lanka.

Understanding Spoiling Behaviour

There is no formalised negotiation process but rather changing scenarios of negotiations in Sri Lanka. While the LTTE and the government are parties in such scenarios, all other actors outside the process are labelled as spoilers. But not everyone outside the negotiations should be seen as spoilers. Instead, Stedman's distinction between spoilers inside peace negotiations/processes and spoilers outside peace negotiations/processes might be useful. The history of the negotiation processes in Sri Lanka shows that changing positions of parties causes new spoiling behaviour by those finding themselves in opposition. Therefore, analysis and strategies should not focus on defining and labelling spoiler groups but understanding and countering spoiling behaviour.

Spoiling behaviour in Sri Lanka is driven by insecurity, fear and the need for power and recognition, resulting in changing roles of the respective parties and different levels of needs. Therefore, any party, group or individual can resort to spoiling behaviour at any given time. Spoiling behaviour can be part and parcel of the very existence of a group or a party.

Systemic Conflict Transformation

Systemic Conflict Transformation (SCT) helps promote an understanding of the complexities, systems and sub-systems of a conflict as well as the respective systems' boundaries. It is a combination of best practice in conflict transformation and systemic models of social interaction that draws on methodologies from various disciplines. Because of its holistic nature, SCT facilitates the development of hypotheses about the most effective and efficient interventions within the conflict system. SCT focuses on change processes, resources and change agents within the system.

SCT in Sri Lanka was instrumental in analysing and monitoring the conflict, planning systemic interventions, engaging with key stakeholders, mobilising agents of peaceful change and developing creative alternatives for a peaceful future. Amongst others, SCT supported the Muslim community to build capacities and become part of a negotiation process. An awareness of the "side conflicts" such as the power struggle between the two major Singhalese parties is crucial, and Berghof is currently discussing if and how this issue can be addressed.

Lessons Learnt

In conclusion, three lessons learned can be identified:

- Focus on understanding spoiling behaviour, not on labelling groups.
- Each sub-system can have a major impact on other sub-systems and the system as a whole.
- Sub-systems, such as the tensions between the Tamil and the Muslim minority, can provide entry points for conflict transformation.

3.2. Dialogue and Trust Building between Political Parties in Macedonia

Nicole Töpperwien, Member of the Swiss Expert Pool, has been working with the Macedonian Deputy Prime Minister's Cabinet for three years. Her presentation focused on dialogue and trust building measures supported by the Political Division IV of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Country Background

The Republic of Macedonia gained independence from Yugoslavia with a referendum in September 1991 and adopted a new Constitution shortly afterwards. In the Constitution of 1991, Macedonia was established as the national state of the Macedonian (ethno-) people.

The identity of the Macedonian (ethno-) people and the Macedonian state was and is challenged by most of its neighbours. Additionally, the definition of the state as the nation-state of one ethnicity was in conflict with the multiethnic composition of the population. Slightly more than 35% of the population belong to non-majority groups, and about 25% of the population are ethnic Albanians. Thus, the major challenge to the Macedonian state came from within and turned into violent conflict between the state security forces and the National Liberation Army (the Macedonian equivalent to the Kosovo Liberation Army, UÇK) in 2001. While the then leaders of the National Liberation Army, who today form the party leadership of the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), repeatedly argued that they took up arms to end discrimination and obtain equal rights, others claimed

that the motivation was either the partition of the country along ethnic lines or power struggles among Albanian groups.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement in August 2001 put an end to the hostilities, established Macedonia as a multiethnic unitary state, and was signed by all major political parties of that time. Based on the Framework Agreement, which stipulates constitutional amendments and mechanisms for inclusive decision-making (e.g. equitable representation, decentralisation, special procedures). a redefinition of the Macedonian state took place. The NLA turned into a political party (DUI) and became part of the ruling coalition from 2002 to 2006.

Interethnic Coalitions in Fragmented Societies

Interethnic coalitions are confronted with many challenges; these are aggravated by limited trust between coalition partners and can translate into difficulties at the strategic, political and technical level. In deeply fragmented societies with divided electorates and political parties who represent supposedly conflicting "ethnic" or "national" interests, it is difficult for interethnic coalitions to achieve joint political successes. Outcomes that are regarded as success for one of the partners might be taken as defeat by the other – who allegedly gave in to the other's demands and interests. Each political actor sees the other actor as a potential spoiler – even the coalition partner.

Almost inevitably, politics are dominated by intra-coalition negotiations. Since it is already difficult to achieve an agreement within the government coalition, other parties and minorities are often excluded from the process. The opposition is regarded as a potential additional spoiler questioning the negotiated agreements of the coalition.

In this context, broad dialogue and trust building are crucial to further inclusive and consensus-driven decision-making in which nobody feels like a perennial loser or winner. They limit the risk that someone will adopt spoiling behaviour and are a prerequisite for sustainable peace.

The Promotion of Dialogue and Trust Building by International Actors – the Swiss Approach

Though the role of the international community in this process remains partly ambiguous, international actors can play an important role in encouraging inclusive decision-making, dialogue and trust building. Activities of the Political Division IV of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs comprise a multi-level approach focused on trust building through dialogue at the highest political level (the Mavrovo Process), on technical assistance for decision-makers so as to further informed dialogue (general technical support and topic-related technical support, e.g. secondment of an advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister) as well as various trust building measures on lower levels (developed and managed by Peace Building Advisors).

The Mavrovo Process aims to promote dialogue and trust within the ruling coalition and among all parties represented in parliament. This high-level political process with international participation brings together members of the party leadership. It does not aim to produce concrete results but rather offers a chance (and sometimes the only chance) to meet in a semi-formal setting in a relaxed atmosphere. Though there is no pressure on participants to make decisions or to reach agreement, such dialogue can break deadlocks and has already occasionally led to solutions to specific problems later on.

As a supporting measure for such dialogue, capacity building for all sides can prove helpful in moving from categorical politics to informed dialogue. General technical support, for instance to the Deputy Prime Minister, but also very targeted topic-related assistance were provided based on demands voiced during the Mavrovo Process. Openness for capacity building and technical assistance at middle and lower levels of the administration proved more limited than at high state level. The challenge which remains is how to reach the middle and lower levels of the administration. Another challenge is how to convince the supposedly stronger or more mature side that they also have to change their attitude.

Potentials and Lessons Learnt

The Mavrovo Process created a platform for dialogue and trust building in a relatively simple way. To be successful, the initiating international actor needs sufficient persuasion and credibility to bring all parties to the table. Additionally, the process should be clearly designed for the parties and not for the internationals – party representatives talk while others listen. The international actor has to accept that the success of such a process cannot necessarily be measured by deadlocks broken and decisions taken as the absence of political pressure is one prerequisite for success. If the process is fully successful, the need for international facilitation will be short-lived and the process can continue without international assistance.

General technical support at a high level in the form of a secondment is only possible based on trust between the Macedonian partner and the seconded person. Such a trustful relationship may require limited reporting duties to the home country and a low level of visibility of the seconded person – the partner should be the one to decide on the visibility.

The international actor must be willing to support projects which are difficult to measure and to have limited visibility as well as limited control over activities and outcomes. Such cooperation can strengthen trust between the two countries, in this case Macedonia and Switzerland – or in the worst case the contrary. It promises to improve access to the highest state level, to help fine-tune other activities and to promote a better understanding of the political process.

3.3. Safe and Effective Development in Conflict – The Case of GTZ/DFID in Nepal

Jochen Kenneweg (German Development Institute), former Head of Department South Asia/Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, was asked by the organisers during the panel session to give a brief input on the “Safe and Effective Development” approach of GTZ/DFID in Nepal.

Background

In 2002, GTZ and DFID set up a joint Risk Management Office to enable DFID and GTZ programmes to work safely and effectively without exacerbating the conflict. The office became instrumental in developing the “Save and Effective Development in Conflict” approach, and it was helpful in bringing about what became to be known as “Basic Operational Guidelines”, which are used by ten donors in Nepal in securing development aid activities under conflict conditions.

Risk Management Office

The Risk Management Office has developed the "Save and Effective Development" approach by merging good development practice, risk management, and do no harm. The aim was to create and procure space for development through practical advice and guidance for programme personnel.

The office collects information and provides regular analysis and risk evaluation, involving both expert as well as local aid personnel. It reports to the country directors of DFID and GTZ, offers training to field staff and coordinates the crises management in case of serious risk-related incidents. In 2005, a guidebook "Save and Effective Development in Conflict" was published. Other donors and aid organisation have benefited indirectly from the analysis; some of them used the services of the office to prepare own guidelines, similar to those of the GTZ/DFID programme.

Basic Operational Guidelines

The Basic Operational Guidelines were developed and adopted by ten bilateral donors in Nepal in 2002-2003. They were acknowledged in different ways officially by the Government and by the Maoists, particularly in 2005. The guidelines define common goals and approaches/methods of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in Nepal. Amongst others, the agencies declare not to tolerate violence against their staff, internationals as well as locals. They do not pay extortion money within the scope of the programme and they do not tolerate theft, diversion or misuse of their supplies. Finally, they regularly publish reports on their activities proving impartiality and transparency. Thus, the basic operation guidelines have contributed to a coherent approach of the donors towards the warring parties and provided local communities for arguments to implement and protect concrete projects.

The following factors are important for the success of the project:

- Close cooperation between GTZ, DFID and other organisations.
- Very experienced personnel with good relations/contacts to relevant actors.
- General readiness of the conflict parties to accept and respect development activities for the benefit of the population in need of basic services.
- Sufficient amount of goal-oriented pragmatism.

3.4. Discussion Highlights

Four major issues were discussed after the presentations:

Providing Space for Trust Building and Dialogue is Essential

Participants agreed that trust building is an essential element of inclusive approaches. The Macedonian experience highlighted the importance of providing space for dialogue and trust building between all major parties and within newly formed coalitions after official peace agreements have been signed. Moreover, it exemplified the significance of a step-by-step approach in trust building, starting with less conflicting issues. The discussion underscored the need for long-term

approaches to trust building as it faces many challenges and even supposedly "minor" issues can disrupt a process.

Moving Beyond Personal Relations to Institutional Arrangements Within a Changing Context is a Challenging Endeavour

Working in an environment of mistrust and deep political as well as ethnic and/or religious fragmentation, relations are first of all built between key persons (change agents). As seen in Sri Lanka and Macedonia, those processes of dialogue and trust building are very fragile, because conflict settings are changing, e.g. through elections or government re-shuffling, the secession of parties/opposition movements or the evolution of new armed groups. Therefore, processes are disrupted; former government actors finding themselves in opposition may now display spoiling behaviours, entry points for international actors are suddenly closed, relations with new actors have to be built and previously given mandates, e.g. invitation of a governmental party to facilitate dialogue, may cease to exist. Thus, the discussion stressed the challenge of moving beyond personal relations to institutional arrangements, particularly in the context of ethno-political conflict. Even though positive steps can be made on the level of the political elite, lower levels of the administration are hard to reach and usually civil servants represent a "bottleneck" to surmounting spoiling behaviour. In order to address this "bottleneck", participants emphasized the importance of capacity building programmes for middle rank civil servants as well as of supporting the establishment of communication and consultation mechanisms within an institution.

Low Profile, Transparency, Credibility and the Ability to Reflect Roles are Crucial for External Actors

External actors can play a crucial role as facilitators and mediators, providing space for dialogue, capacity building and knowledge sharing on different levels of the society. According to participants, this requires transparency, credibility and the ability to regularly reflect on their perception of, as well as their role in the conflict. The longer external actors are part of a process, the greater the likelihood that they will become actors in the conflict setting, i.e. that their own interests and perceptions, whether consciously or not, influence the process. In the worst case, as participants said, they even become spoilers themselves, without being aware of it. During the discussion it was recommended that external actors should exert much more modesty and restraint when proposing "solutions", since it is the local population and not the international community which is affected by the decisions made. Thus, keeping a low profile is generally recommended, even though a distinctive public stand/position (e.g. on the necessity for inclusive processes, human rights abuses, etc.) can be very supportive in certain circumstances.

Analysis Does not Substitute Understanding and Knowledge

The discussion underscored the importance of not only analysing but also understanding spoiler groups and spoiling behaviour. Scientific analysis can only be a first step towards developing a deeper understanding of the context. It often tends to neglect "local" knowledge, which is crucial to develop adequate strategies.

4. Lessons Learned: Dealing with Different Types of Actors

4.1. Engaging Armed Groups in Peace Processes

Guus Meijer, Programme Associate of Conciliation Resources (London), presented several lessons learned from the "Engaging Armed Groups" project of CR. The project started in 2004, and engaged different stakeholders, including representatives of armed groups from various countries and donors, in joint learning processes over the course of two years.

Looking at the Whole Conflict – The Peace Trajectory

A peace process (or post-conflict/post-agreement situation) is not disconnected from the armed conflict but rather a continuation under new conditions. While dealing with spoilers in a post-conflict context, it is therefore necessary to consider the whole trajectory of the conflict and peace process, not just the period after the peace agreement.

Labels Matter, as do Definitions

As discussed before, labels and definitions matter. Internationally sponsored peace processes based on the liberal peace concept set norms which suggest that anyone refusing those international norms is a "spoiler". Yet parties, groups or individuals may have very strong and even valid and legitimate reasons for doing so.

Focus on Spoiling Actions Rather than on Spoilers

In order to get armed groups engaged, third parties must think about how armed groups make the choice to engage and what role they can play in affecting that choice. Thus, focusing on spoiling action rather than on spoilers, i.e. disincentivising spoiling actions, becomes crucial.

More Sophisticated Analysis and Understanding of Armed Groups

Current approaches and policy responses to armed groups are often based on poor knowledge and understanding of history and dynamics, ideology and motivation, leadership and constituency, economic foundations, and tendencies towards fragmentation. Moreover, the asymmetry between governments and non-state armed groups is often not limited to status and power in the state-centred international system, but might include elements of flexibility in decision-making, accountability, continuity and consistency, and importance of arms and violence. Therefore, more sophisticated analysis and understanding of armed groups is needed in order to develop adequate inclusive strategies.

Engagement can Take Many Forms and be Done by a Variety of Actors

Engagement can take many forms, from simple contact to substantive negotiations, involving a myriad of possible third parties. Engagement can imply being a conduit for messages, providing logistical or training support, jointly elaborating options and strategies, etc. Engagement on humanitarian issues can

create opportunities for trust and confidence building; they can also be manipulated to score political points or influence the balance of power.

Indirect Approach

Little mention has been made of the way armed groups can be contacted in the first stages by potential intermediaries, especially external ones. In practice, this may often happen indirectly or in a two-step approach, through political groups or parties linked to the armed group, sympathetic but independent groups or individuals who have access, or representatives/spokespeople based abroad. Additionally, organising and conducting training seminars with participants from different countries and various backgrounds is an effective way of initially engaging armed groups in an unthreatening way.

Analytical Empathy

Analytical empathy is essential for not only dealing with armed groups, but for dealing with all parties to the conflict. It implies understanding the positions and needs of those parties and at the same time challenging their positions and strategies

Dealing with Internal Dynamics of Armed Groups

There is a general tendency for armed groups to split into factions, and many violent conflicts see a proliferation of armed groups. But the fear and danger of internal fragmentation, and - consequently - spoiling behaviour/action is especially acute when an armed group considers entering into political dialogue or a peace process. Thus, avoiding splits, i.e. managing the risk of fragmentation and spoiling behaviour, is a major challenge when trying to engage armed groups.

4.2. Dealing with Traditional Chiefs in Afghanistan

Susanne Schmeidl (swisspeace) worked for four years as country representative of swisspeace in Afghanistan, supporting - amongst others - to set up the Tribal Liaison Office. In her presentation, she focused on swisspeace's approach to engage with traditional chiefs and some major lessons learnt.

Country Background

Afghanistan has endured over twenty years of war and various regime changes. Of the estimated 25 Million Afghans, the largest group are the Pashtuns, followed by the Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Turkmen and other smaller groups – thus making the country multi-ethnic. While Afghans do believe in a centralized country and do not have secessionist tendencies, the warlord factions managed to ethnicize the war during the 1990s. This problem continuous in the country today and combined with uneven development and humanitarian assistance has created almost a polarization between the highly insecure Pashtun tribal belt and other parts of Afghanistan (often seen as roughly a North-South divide) It is essentially the territory that borders Pakistan, given that the Pashtun belt exists on both sides of the borders.

Traditional Structures in Afghanistan

This obviously has led to a growing frustration among tribal structures in the Pashtun belt, who rightfully so feel isolated and alienated from the peace/state-building and reconstruction process taking place in the country. Cobbled with the fact that the Taliban movement was largely Pashtun, it goes without saying that spoiler image has been haunting the Pashtuns ever since.

Part of the problem, however, is not that the traditional leaders want to be spoilers, as that they simply want to find a role and place in the future of their countries. Unfortunately, modern peace and state-building often comes with a modernization agenda that tends to work with urban elites side-lining traditional structures in rural areas. This however, ignores a great part of the population and the importance traditional structures still play for them. During its work in Afghanistan, swisspeace tried to find ways to engage tribal structures in the South-eastern part of Afghanistan into the peace and state-building process. These provinces are still very much embedded in tribal traditions and relationships between and among the tribes are highly formalized and institutionalized. The Pashtun tribes are strongly focused on their own communal laws – the pashtunwali, a shared code of honour and customs. It is the most important governance mechanisms for all Pashtuns that provides references on how to behave and how to settle disputes. The importance of honour in life, action and decision-making is omnipresent and the focus rests on community rights and not individual ones.

Engaging with Traditional Structures – The swisspeace Approach

However, when choosing to engage with traditional structures, it is important to understand how these function, and how to gain access to their governing bodies (shuras, jirgas) in order to identify key individuals to work with. This makes the acquisition of knowledge through research an essential first step. Due to language and cultural barriers, working with local partners (or individuals with family linkages) who can provide entrée and trust is not only essential but indispensable for success. The engagement with local actors helped to identify the needs and desires of the traditional leaders. The deep knowledge of local structures and politics of the Afghan colleagues helped to put this into perspective and identify possible problem areas and pitfalls, but also entry points. Due to Afghanistan's history with multiple outside interventions, it is also important to enable the creation of a positive reputation of outside organisations.

Most fundamentally, however, of the swisspeace methodology was the fact that we did not shy away from collaborating with traditional structures, but made it the very foundation of our approach. We tried to solve the dilemma of working with undemocratic structures by trying to focus and utilize their beneficial elements, such as the fact that in a patron-client system the knowledge and information given to the elite can trickle down to rest of the population, and that elites hold power through service-delivery.

This already shows why research is so crucial for helping to understand the local context. It also helps to understand the grievances of traditional communities and what they themselves want out of the peace and state-building process. It further facilitates to tease out their willingness to participate in a modern democratic process and the necessary carrots (but also sticks) for such participation and cooperation with state and international actors. Rules of engagement (the roles of various actors) can also be identified through research.

Based on research and discussions with traditional actors, swisspeace helped create the Tribal Liaison (TLO) office in order to have a conduit through which to work with traditional structures. This office resulted out of a request made by two tribes to find ways of engaging them with international and central state actors. To achieve this task, TLO focused four work areas: a) research and advocacy, increasing knowledge and understanding of communities, as well as advocating reconstruction needs and priorities to international donors/implementing agencies, b) capacity building of traditional shuras in development work, community monitoring, governance capacity in conflict resolution, economic development and human and civil rights, c) coordination, promoting increased information sharing and coordination among international, national and local stakeholders, and d) facilitation, assisting international and local actors in the resolution of local conflicts and organizing projects about land and security.

Generally, when working with traditional structures, it is important to think complementary and inclusive, and to work through and with, not against traditional systems and work out a role for them in the current process (even if only temporary). Linking traditional mechanisms to modern ones (e.g. hold jirgas for political processes, have shuras interact with political actors) is essential here. A good example was the effort to work out the utility of traditional security mechanisms (e.g. tribal police) for providing security in the South-east. This was done quite successfully for election security and swisspeace and TLO have tried to expand this engagement/collaboration between traditional and modern governance structures. Of course, such engagement needs to be based on very clear and transparent agreements in order to make it work.

Risks

There are always risks to such an approach. The most important one most likely is that an engagement with traditional structures often may rise or fall with the delivery of a carrot – hence the ability to find integration with ongoing processes. Support for TLO essentially rests upon the approval of local elites in the South-east, who due to their position of power could take project ownership just as fast away as they gave it. Managing expectations of what could and could not be achieved is thus key. If this fails, the situation could be worse than before, as it would increase frustration and the feeling that working with central state structures and international actors leads to failure and hence is neither desirable nor practicable. In the end local individual may chose to become spoilers out of unmet expectations and non-delivery.

However, it is also possible that individuals may abuse the process and “real” spoilers try to misguide and manipulate the engagement. Through such work the office may also become the target of the “real” spoiler who prefers polarization rather than collaboration between various actors. The role of neighbouring countries here can never be underestimated. There is also a clear risk to local partners here that should never be underestimated. Individuals involved may risk loosing their “honour” and even life if engagement fails.

First Lessons Learnt

- Engagement is possible as well as pertinent (again, we need to think in inclusive terms).
- Working with the right local partners (who themselves are embedded into the context) is absolutely necessary and can never be overemphasised.

- Context understanding through research is crucial and needs to be ongoing.
- Finding a carrot is highly relevant as often it provides an incentive for engagement.
- Cooperation with government official is important when trying to link traditional structures to a peace process that involves state-building. This however can be difficult depending on the interest of urban elites.
- Time is of essence - long-term engagement is necessary (no quick fixes or quick impact projects usually work), we also need to be aware of windows of opportunities and when they begin to close.
- There is a clear role for external actors in supporting local actors through knowledge, but also through linkages to international resources. Furthermore, depending on the context and the nature of the external actor, one can play a neutral role in a society plagued with distrust through years of war. External actors need to show understanding of and respect for local culture and tradition in order to be able to play such a role.
- Monitoring ones work (fine-tuning and adapting to a changing environment) is as essential as initial research.
- Keep the overall context in mind, including an eye on neighbouring countries and other potential "real" spoilers. Depending on the situation, exit has to remain a viable option.
- "One size does not fit all" and one has to be very careful in copying programs one-to-one. There is a need to stay flexible and model ones approach around a local context and the needs of traditional communities.

4.3. Working with War Veterans in Serbia

Ursula Renner collaborated for four years with the Centre for Trauma (Novi Sad) within a Civil Peace Service Project of Ohne Rüstung Leben (Stuttgart). Her presentation focused on the situation of war veterans in Serbia and the experience gained in working with traumatised ex-combatants.

The Relevance of War Trauma in Serbia

The political and socio-economic situation in Serbia is characterised by political instability, the rise of radical parties, a stagnating economy, unemployment and poverty. Since there is a lack of political will amongst the political elite to initiate a process of truth seeking, justice and dealing with the violent past, including cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), a culture of silence and denial prevails on all levels of society.

Serbia has approximately eight million inhabitants, of whom more than 700 000 were mobilised between 1991 and 1999. Approximately 10 000 were organised in paramilitary units. An estimated 25 to 30 percent are traumatised. Including family members, approximately one million people live with war trauma. The status of former soldiers in Serbia remains a political taboo, because officially, Serbia only participated in the war in 1999. The status of soldiers who fought in the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia is unregulated, because they officially took part in "military practice manoeuvres".

Thus, former soldiers are a public taboo and are met with rejection by one part of the society because they lost the wars, and by another - especially peace and human rights groups - because they participated in wars and are perceived as war criminals. Consequently, former soldiers have become a large marginalised group in society, experiencing major difficulties in reintegrating.

Generally, traumatised veterans are isolated; they have lost trust in civil norms and values and have an extremely low frustration tolerance. They suffer from flashbacks and nightmares, often resulting in family violence and the loss of jobs, and in turn to abuse of alcohol and drugs. They are seeking fast and radical solutions in all aspects of life (private, social, political). Accordingly, the risk of returning to structures of violence (armed groups, organised crime, mercenary activities) is high. This turns them into potential "spoilers" in peace processes. But what can be done with these potential "spoilers"? Two options exist: to deny or ignore the problem, which often occurs, or work with them.

Denial and ignoring merely scale up the social and political problems, which can multiply horizontally within the society and vertically over time into the next generation. Additionally, social isolation and the demand for radical solutions are increasing. However, working with traumatised veterans provides new space for peaceful conflict transformation: those veterans who pose a high risk to security, stability and reconciliation within society can transform into agents of peace if their trauma is addressed and healed.

Working with War Veterans – The Approach of the Centre for Trauma

First of all, the Centre for Trauma works directly with traumatised veterans and their families. Counselling centres were established in southern Serbia and Vojvodina and therapeutic work with Serb as well as Albanian ex-combatants was done in a series of seminars. This work created solidarity among veterans and furthered the awareness that all sides of the war must deal with war trauma. Additionally, the Centre for Trauma provides guidance and support to create self-help groups, similar to those of Vietnam veterans. Thus, the first aim is to improve coping mechanisms for war trauma on an individual as well as social (group) level. The increased number of self-help groups established by veterans demonstrates the success of this approach.

Secondly, the Centre provides professional training for physicians, army and police officers in Serbia and the surrounding region. The counselling work is supervised by experts and supported by regular lectures. The aim is to sensitise and increase knowledge on war trauma and therapeutic measures. The establishment of a regional network of specially trained medical-therapeutic personnel including army and police will be instrumental in increasing veterans' access to treatment and support.

Thirdly, the public is increasingly informed about the perils of war trauma through media work, publications, lectures and conferences. The aim is to sensitise a broad public and relevant institutions in Serbia, confront the "culture of silence" and sensitise relevant international actors.

4.4. Discussion Highlights

The following discussion focused on three topics:

Working in a Context of Violence Means Being Confronted with Moral Dilemmas

Different positions were voiced regarding the level of engagement with (alleged) perpetrators. It became obvious, that working in war or post-war societies always gives rise to moral dilemmas. This is especially true for actors who develop inclusive strategies and choose to engage with (potential) spoilers such as veterans, traditional/religious leaders, radical parties or armed groups: On the one hand, systemic approaches and inclusive strategies are necessary to stop the fighting and support all sectors of the society to (re)build relationships, economic as well as participatory political structures, and a shared system of values; on the other hand, those (potential) spoiler groups are implicated in gross human rights violations, war crimes and – in the case of traditional clan structures - probably constituted or are still constituting structural causes of violence. Thus, including them into the process may (or in fact does) strengthen their power, legitimise their actions and undermine the peaceful transformation of society in the long run. Accordingly, it is very difficult to achieve peace and justice simultaneously, and external actors are faced with moral dilemmas, which can't be solved, but might be minimised through systemic approaches, analytical empathy, sensitive timing and sequencing and defining red lines with whom to engage and with whom not.

A Long-Term Approach to Transformation and Modernisation is Needed

Referring back to the already mentioned "liberal peace concept" and it's implications for peace processes, participants stressed the impact of the concept in traditional societies such as Afghanistan: It calls into question the very structures, cultural values and identities of those societies. Instead of pushing for quick social and political changes (e.g. early elections, gender equality), a culturally sensitive long-term approach to transformation and modernisation is needed, as participants argued. In this context, different aspects were discussed: Economic development and education are important elements of a process, and might gradually result in overcoming traditional structures. Moreover, respecting existing values and building trust can open space for dialogue, e.g. on gender equality and human rights. Offering psychological therapy for veterans within DDR processes is important to prevent a relapse into structures of violence and to assist reintegration into civil life; it can further a sense of regret, compensation and personal responsibility as well as willingness to actively support peace building initiatives. Last but not least, building parallel Western structures for reconstruction must be avoided, because it disconnects local communities from reconstruction processes and undermines ownership.

Be Clear about Own Capacities

Experiences of different peace processes, brought in by participants during the discussion suggested, that complementary approaches between state and civil society as well as development cooperation and diplomatic actors are important in order to follow up processes which for example grew out of civil society initiatives. It was recommended, that external actors should be well aware of

their organisational capacities, competences and their role and, if appropriate, try to mobilise other players to bring in competences, support specific activities or follow up processes.

5. Working Groups

Three working groups were set up to discuss (1) analytical instruments, (2) strategies, and (3) risk management and develop practical recommendations.

5.1. Instruments to Analyse Spoiler Groups

The working group first of all identified different stages of a process in which spoiling behaviour might occur, namely: (1) informal negotiations, (2) formal negotiations, (3) the signing of a peace agreement (just before and after), and (4) a post-peace agreement process (or peace implementation). Building on those stages, the group developed and applied a tool to analyse spoiling behaviour and response options:

WHEN	WHAT sort of spoiler behaviour?	WHO may resort to it?	WHY would they do it?	HOW do we address it?
Stage (1)				
Stage (2)				
Stage (3)				
Stage (4)				

Additionally, the working group discussed different tools to analyse conflicts as well as actors (e.g. Responding to Conflict, do-no-harm, PCIA). Finally, it was highlighted, that the process of gathering information and analysing spoiling behaviour might not be easy, as there is a lot of “hidden” information.

5.2. Strategies

The working group discussed (1) starting points to be considered when developing inclusive strategies, and (2) possible strategies of governmental as well as non-governmental external actors to deal with spoiling behaviour.

Starting Points

External actors should start with analysing the context and identifying needs and conflicting issues. Existing organisational capacities, competences, human resources, time (as a resource) as well as limitations/boundaries must be considered when developing inclusive strategies.

Strategies of Governmental and Non-Governmental Actors

The group concluded that the most encouraging and constructive strategies to avoid spoiling behaviour were positioned around the notions of inclusiveness, trust building and avoiding isolation/exclusion. Both, governmental as well as

non-governmental actors should develop inter-linkages ("network strategy") between different levels of the society in order to mutually reinforce each other. Governments can offer space for dialogue and develop a formal as well as informal strategy for dialogue. Additionally, it's important to link diplomatic efforts with development cooperation, which can provide long-term support for specific issues or open space for issue-based dialogues. Moreover, there is a need for process oriented elements to be included into peace agreements.

5.3. Risk Management

The working group identified risks in engaging with (potential) spoilers as well as possible responses to those risks. Generally, risks do not only emerge from the conflict context and changing conditions, but also from own mistakes; and external actors as well as local actors/partners are affected by those risks in different way.

Physical Security and Reputation

While local as well as external actors are confronted with security risks, local actors are far more vulnerable, because they might be confronted with "social" as well as physical security risks: they can lose honour and reputation, be accused as "collaborators" or "traitors", therefore be intimidated or humiliated and receive life threats.

Thus, those risks must be addressed from the start: external actors must be aware of the social and physical risks local partners might face and invest resources in risk management and mitigation (systemic analysis, regular monitoring, feedback and supervision, lessons learned, training of international and local staff members/partners, security plan and code of conduct, funds for compensation). Additionally, careful and informed decisions have to be taken about confidentiality and non-confidentiality.

Political Risks

Within a conflict context, hidden agendas, obscure strategies and social as well as political affiliations of conflicting parties/actors are not easy to detect. However, they are important elements in the struggle for power and resources, i.e. parts of spoiling behaviour/action. Third parties not only risk being instrumentalised by various groups (e.g. leaking and misusing information gained during dialogue processes, channelling resources through associated networks/groups); they also risk legitimising spoiler groups who resorted to or are still resorting to violence. Being aware of this risk, and fearing the loss of their reputation or being accused by the public in their respective countries, many external actors decide not to deal with (potential) spoiler groups at all.

Several response options exist to minimise risks in the conflict setting as well as in the respective home countries: comprehensive analysis, involving local partners and knowledge, monitoring and networking which allow cross-checking of information and perceptions, multiplying partners and donors, and sensitising the public to political challenges/risks related to peace building are amongst those options. Being aware of legal aspects is also important. Last but not least, external actors should clearly define their role and goals, capacities and limitations, and make sure, that the mandate given by one party is accepted by all main actors. Preparing in time for potential changes in government and developing an exit strategy are crucial.

Civil society organisations with specific capacities might build contacts with and offer "good services" to non-state armed groups more easily without formally legitimising them. A multi-level and multi-actor approach can assist in identifying ways to engage these groups. A clear distinction between political dialogue on the one hand, and providing resources, on the other, might diminish risk, even though in reality, this distinction cannot easily be made.

Risk of High Expectations

There is a risk of raising expectations which cannot be fulfilled when engaging with spoiling groups. While in the short term, generous promises might help get these groups engaged, these promises might reflect back onto the third party/external actor and result in a loss of credibility in the long term. They might create new grievances and spoiling behaviour in the process. Thus, it is advisable to be modest, not promise too much, and be transparent with regard to the mandate and resources.

6. Summary of Major Results

After the first day, Günter Schönegg (FriEnt) summarised some of the major insights of the presentations and discussions. Concluding the workshop on the second day, Jörn Grävingholt (German Development Institute) highlighted additional results. Both presentations are outlined below.

6.1. Conclusions

Labelling

Labelling is politically dangerous, as it can be misused to exclude specific groups from the negotiation and peace process. Thus, it was recommended to rather concentrate on analysing, understanding and encountering spoiling behaviour instead of identifying and labelling spoiler groups.

Possible Roles of External Actors

While ownership is crucial for inclusive processes, external actors can grantee a certain level of security and reliability, provide space for refection and dialogue and contribute additional resources, know-how, relations, and an external view. But there are limits: decisions have to be taken by the actors themselves, external interventions are always temporary. They should be designed as to reinforce and respect ownership.

Inclusiveness and Trust Building

Trust building is a major strategic element of all inclusive processes. It needs a long term vision and long term commitments. Capacity building measures, informal dialogue platforms and discussions on peace visions rather than on immediate political problems might help to create a framework for trust building. Credible commitments of external actors are crucial. Key people (individual change agents) in all parties might be entry points. Moving from informal dialogue to formalised processes/negotiations and from trust building between

key actors to institutionalised mechanisms is necessary, but at the same time poses challenges and thus needs a lot of attention and facilitation.

Analysis

The workshop underlined once more the importance of good quality analytical work before external actors set out to engage in a conflict. While this is not a new insight, the challenge is to organise a wide range of information in such a way that maximum benefit can be derived from it. Analytical tool boxes are full of useful instruments so that no new tools seem to be required. Rather, existing tools may need to be adapted to the purpose of addressing spoiling behaviour.

Any external actor's analysis should include a perspective on his/her own activities and the risks involved in them. Therefore, and given the dynamics of conflict, analysis must not be a one-off event but should constitute a continuous effort.

Analytical Empathy or Analysis vs. Knowledge?

The dichotomy of analysis (external cognitive effort) vs. knowledge (internal existing resource) may appear artificial in that all analysis requires prior knowledge. It may still be useful, however, as it reminds us that good analysis should always include "knowledge tapping" as an important subset of analytical work. Perceptions and perspectives of local actors need to be included if one is to understand, and possibly foresee, interests, hopes, frustrations and other reactions among those involved in a conflict. The concept of "analytical empathy", introduced by Guus Meijer, may point the way into the same direction.

Close Interrelationship Between Analysis, Strategy and Risk Management

The working groups' results demonstrate that a close interrelationship exists between analysis, strategy and risk management. While the link between analysis and strategy is hardly surprising (though often enough neglected), strategies should also include a clear risk management policy that is informed by both good international practice and thorough analysis of the concrete case at hand.

Strategies

Engagement with spoiling parties to a conflict can take many different forms and follow a wide range of strategies as the respective working group's results have shown. Each strategy has to be "tailor-made" for the specific conflict at hand and will necessarily include a multitude of elements that, ideally, form a complex overall strategy. However, external actors face the challenge to balance the need for a complex strategy with the risk of "strategic overstretch." The more complex a peace building strategy is, the greater the number of factors on which its success depends. Typically, many of these factors are outside the influence of external engagement (or even of any intentional human agency), thus amplifying the risk of failure. Prioritising and focussing on a clear set of objectives is therefore a critical task when devising strategies. As prioritising means sacrificing some important objectives – at least temporarily – for the sake of others (that are deemed even more important or faster attainable), such a task may not be easily reconcilable with a comprehensive "liberal peace" agenda. Women's rights in Afghanistan were a much-cited example during the workshop. Under such

circumstances, it is vital that strategies combine realism (or modesty) for the short term with a long-term "vision" for a sequence of goals to be achieved and processes to be initiated.

Bringing in Values

The former point is obviously closely linked to the issue of "values." There is no easy solution to the problem that external actors, in trying to support peace and solve some of the dilemmas that typically come with such an engagement, refer to their own priority of values that need not necessarily be shared by the society (or considerable parts of the society) concerned, at least as soon as the matter moves beyond the absence of major violence. Spoiling behaviour is in fact a strong reminder to outside "interveners" that local perceptions of a peace process are usually more important for its outcome than external expectations or foreign priorities of values.

Moral Aspects and Risks

Engaging with those who undermine peace is morally ambiguous and risky. In particular, if these groups are armed, a lot of moral questions are raised. These questions and risks seem to be major reasons for non-engagement with spoiler groups. Continues risk assessment and setting up a risk management system might help controlling and mitigating these risks and thus creating space for further engagement with spoiler groups.

Pragmatism

Against this background, many workshop participants argued for pragmatism rather than overregulation as a way of dealing with moral and other dilemmas. It is obvious, however, that such an approach transfers responsibility for moral standards and ethical norms to be applied in difficult situations from institutions to individuals (even if many institutions operate on the basis of – necessarily abstract – basic operating guidelines). Pragmatism, thus, is a highly demanding principle with respect to the experience and credibility of personnel. It requires a high level of training, awareness and reflection.

Monitoring Engagement and Effects

Given the risks involved for external actors in dealing with groups who display "spoiling behaviour" a constant and thorough monitoring of activities and their effects should be a top priority. Supervision for individuals who bear particular responsibility and a regular exchange with advisors from outside can be important elements of a monitoring strategy that addresses not only projects but also the people who implement them and whose experience and (inevitably idiosyncratic) views shape – and have to shape – engagement "on the ground."

The Risk of Failure

Discussing spoiling behaviour in peace processes implies an important change in perspective for external engagement. It alerts us that peace processes are inherently fragile and that there can be no such thing as a guaranteed success. In many cases, spoiling behaviour might serve as a reminder that the time has come to review, and possibly revise, a process that may have been agreed upon

at an earlier stage. In other cases, it may just represent a fact of life that one cannot do away with but will have to adapt one's own strategies to. In any case, it must not be ignored.

6.2. Discussion Highlights

The ensuing discussion highlighted two more aspects resulting from the workshop:

Complementarity

Different types of external actors have different comparative advantages in dealing with groups who threaten to spoil a peace process. A comprehensive approach to engaging with these groups should make use of these different advantages and seek complementarity in the division of labour between foreign governments, agencies, international organisations and NGOs.

Alarm Bell Procedure

Introducing "alarm bell procedures" within organisations that support a peace process or even as part of a peace process itself might be a useful way of addressing the problem of spoiling behaviour in a more institutionalised but still flexible way. While the sounding of an alarm would usually not result in a predefined material action, it could trigger procedures that allow an organisation, or the parties to the conflict, to review a process, discuss fundamentals or even renegotiate an agreement.

6.3. Possible Follow up Steps

According to participants, the workshop presented a good opportunity to discuss and learn from different experiences, approaches and programmes. They suggested following up the topic on different levels:

First of all, broader political discussions on the implications of the "liberal peace concept" as well as labelling alleged "spoilers" are needed to support inclusive processes and avoid political instrumentalisation of the term.

Secondly, further exchange of experiences and lessons learnt as well as research and deepening the knowledge would be useful.

Thirdly, practical tools and guidelines for implementing organisations as well as training and supervision are needed.

A workshop documentation could serve as a first step in order to follow up those topics.

Appendix

Appendix I: Programme

Tuesday, 26 September

10.30 – 11.00	Presentation of Participants, Workshop Approach and Programme (Facilitation: Günter Schönegg, FriEnt)
11.00 – 12.15	Introduction • What are Spoilers? Typology, Motives, Strategies (Günter Schönegg, FriEnt) • Non-State Armed Groups – A Challenge for International Cooperation (Jörn Grävingholt, DIE).
12.15 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.45	Constructive Approaches to Deal with Spoilers? (Facilitation: Natascha Zupan, FriEnt) • Systemic Conflict Transformation in Sri Lanka (Kanaka Abeygunawardana, Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, Sri Lanka) • Dialogue and Trust Building between Political Parties in Macedonia (Nicole Töpperwien, Swiss Expert Pool/Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs) • Safe and Effective Development in Conflict – The Case of GTZ/DFID in Nepal (Jochen Kenneweg, DIE)
15.45 – 16.15	Coffee break
16.15 – 18.00	Lessons Learnt: Dealing with Different Types of Actors (Facilitation: Jörn Grävingholt, DIE) • Engaging Armed Groups in Peace Processes (Guus Meijer, Conciliation Resources London) • Dealing with Traditional Chiefs in Afghanistan (Susanne Schmeidl, swisspeace Bern) • Working with War Veterans in Serbia-Montenegro (Ursula Renner, Consultant, Belgrade)
18.15	Dinner

Wednesday, 27 September

9.00 – 9.30	Introduction (Günter Schönegg)
9.30 – 11.30	Working Groups (Facilitation: Günter Schönegg) • Instruments to Analyse Spoiler Groups: Which instruments exist? What information do we need? (Facilitation: Jörn Grävingholt, DIE) • Strategies: Which strategic options exist? Which criteria do we have for these strategies, how can they be linked,

	and which role does development cooperation play? (Facilitation: Natascha Zupan, FriEnt) • Risk Management: With which type of risks do we deal if we engage with spoilers, which strategies do we have to minimise or control these risks? (Facilitation: Günter Schönegg, FriEnt)
11.30 – 11.45	Coffee break
11.45 – 12.45	Presentation and Discussion of the working groups' results
12.45 -13.15	Conclusion: Summary: Major results of the workshop (Jörn Grävingholt) Relevance for the work of the participants and proposals for further exchange and FriEnt contribution (Facilitation: Natascha Zupan)
13.15	Lunch

Appendix II: List of Participants

1.	Kanaka Abeygunawardana	Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, Sri Lanka
2.	Michael Ashkenazi	BICC, Bonn International Center for Conversion
3.	Jessie Bohr	EED, Church Development Service
4.	Julie Brethfeld	BICC, Bonn International Center for Conversion
5.	Diana Burghardt	BICC, Bonn International Center for Conversion
6.	Annette Chammas	BMZ, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
7.	Veronique Dudouet	Berghof Center for Constructive Conflict Transformation
8.	Jörn Grävingholt	DIE, German Development Institute
9.	Wolfgang Heinrich	EED, Church Development Service
10.	Claudia Hofmann	University of Cologne
11.	Jochen Kenneweg	DIE, German Development Institute
12.	Stephan Klingebiel	DIE, German Development Institute
13.	Daniela Link	BICC, Bonn International Center for Conversion
14.	Annette Lohmann	FES, Friedrich Ebert Foundation / FriEnt
15.	Guus Meijer	Conciliation Resources
16.	Anja Petz	Kurve Wustrow, Peacebuilding Coordinator
17.	Ursula Renner	Consultant, Belgrade
18.	Monika Schimmelpfennig	DED, German Development Service
19.	Susanne Schmeidl	Swisspeace
20.	Günter Schönegg	FriEnt, Working Group on Development and Peace
21.	Judy E. Smith-Höhn	German Institute of Global and Area Studies
22.	Günther E. Thie	Misereor
23.	Nicole Töpperwien	Swiss Expert Pool/Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs
24.	Natascha Zupan	FriEnt, Working Group on Development and Peace