



Effective Support for Local Peacebuilders Summary of Key Recommendations to the German Parliament 10 September 2019

Once a year peacebuilders from crisis regions meet at the Global Peacebuilders Summit (GPS) in Germany. Purpose of this retreat and advocacy event is to learn from each other about impactful strategies for peacebuilding on the ground; to regenerate from the stressful environments and personal threat; and to connect with European Partners.

This paper was drafted by a group of GPS-members, will be discussed and finalized at the summit itself and presented at the occasion of a joint session with the Subcommittee for Civil crisis prevention on September 10, following the three principal topics we agreed upon beforehand. The hope is that the esteemed members of the Subcommittee use their influence on the German government in the sense and spirit of our recommendations.

Recognising that the German Guidelines on Prevention Crisis, Resolving Conflicts and Building Peace called for prevention as a first priority and high lights the importance of context specific approaches and local Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and non-state actors as potential agents of change, we believe that:

I. In order to enable prevention and support survivors of war-related sexualized violence, we recommend the German Government:

- Recognize that sexualized violence occurs both in times of conflict and in times of peace as a continuum.
- Promote a transformative approach that aims at overcoming the underlying causes of sexualized and gender-based violence: discriminatory gender relations in patriarchal societies, (i.e. customary law). *Analyse each situation of conflict under the gender aspect*
- Prioritize gender equality and women rights, education, non-discriminatory laws and monitoring mechanism, programs for gender equality as stand alone, and mainstreaming gender in all programs (not checkbox, but with conditionalized accountability)
- Recognize children born out of rape as victims/survivors sexualized violence meriting programmatic support focused on their particular needs: registration, elimination of discrimination and stigmatization, acknowledgement of their legitimate identity, and psychosocial support
- Strengthen and protect women rights' defenders as driving forces for societal change and advocates for the rights of survivors.
- Support consistent prosecution of perpetrators, both internationally, such as in the International Criminal Court, as well as nationally. Support non-judicial measures of dealing with the past and promoting transitional justice for survivors.
- Provide political, technical and financial support to establish holistic, sustainable structures on the ground, including reforms in healthcare, justice, security and education sectors.
- Put economic and political pressure on governments and militaries / armed actors that condone or tolerate sexualized violence.
- Prioritize prevention so that sexualized violence can become a crime of the past. This should include guarantees of gender just education for all, security aspects (facilities in refugee camps as light, gender segregated bathrooms and toilets, female management, distance to water facilities, etc)
- Assure the meaningful participation of women in peace negotiations (grassroots women) and processes, as well as the incorporation of the rights of survivors into peace agreements, e.g., health system.

II. In order to *prevent violent extremism (PVE)*, we recommend the German Government:

- Link bilateral support to governments to commitments to remove political and financial impediments to civil society-led PVE actions.
- Give local peace builders space and freedom to operate, recognizing their efforts as complementary to the existing civil society led PVE actions.
- Alleviate financial obstacles to mobilization efforts of CSOs, by ensuring that international counterterrorism financing standards do not adversely impact the ability of CSOs to access funding.
- Recognizing that it is more efficient, provide direct funding of local CSOs working in the field of PVE, rather than just going through international NGOs or UN entities.
- Use its influence in the international community to address the Islamophobia and other stereotyping often associated with designation of who is a violent extremist
- Stop cooperation with government who do not respect human rights
- Support credible CSO-led programming to identify and address drivers of violent extremism by providing the necessary means.
- Engage PVE experts from recipient countries while designing PVE strategies and funding mechanisms.
- Utilize changed ex-extremists and fighters as credible messengers who can understand the language and methods to address and tackle the issue of PVE and recruitment processes.
- Consult with locals in development of comprehensive conflict analysis as the basis for strategy development.
- Prioritize youth prevention of VE, considering the fact that recruitment concerns mainly young fellows.
- Create an efficient early warning system regarding VE and create indicators to monitor.
- Tackle the roots causes of violent extremism such as: poverty, unemployment, injuries of the past, education, marginalisation, religious divides, hopelessness, judiciary system failure etc
- Create mechanisms to address hate speech and cyber related extremism.

III. In order to provide *more effective support for local peace builders*, we recommend the German government:

- Acknowledge the unique role that local peacebuilders play, their value as potential change agents, and that women hold a special role as peace builders;
- Continue the practice of consulting local peacebuilders prior to bilateral and multilateral dialogues.
- Support local peacebuilders in devising, leading and implementing their own initiatives, using funding instruments that allow them to remain responsive to local stakeholders, and adapt their approaches rapidly and independently when necessary;
- Provide support for programming aimed at preventing violence, recognizing that, amongst other things, the presence of violence negatively impacts the ability to build sustainable peace;
- Use flexible multi-year funding models, including core funding to allow local initiatives time to have a measurable impact;
- Simplify funding mechanism and grant management, with a stronger focus on mutual trust and collaboration; use of adaptive programming; lightening the compliance burden, including by adopting a greater tolerance of risk especially in difficult/conflict zones;
- Prioritize the support for local peacebuilders as compared to international NGOs and increase funding of local peacebuilding initiatives, to at least 50 percent of all peacebuilding funds
- Launch an initiative to provide rapid response and flexible support for local peacebuilders under political pressure and threat – such as the Martin Roth Initiative for artists.