



Post-War and Post-Conflict Challenges for Development Cooperation

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Introduction¹

The immediate post-war/post-conflict period is a window of opportunity

Conflict and violence have become an important context for development cooperation during the last decade. Donors not only have to cope with the consequences of conflict in their day-to-day work on the ground, but also need to develop strategies in the fields of early warning and prevention, as well as instruments for conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive approaches for cooperation. At the same time, external actors have been important supporters for many peace processes aiming at the termination of armed conflicts and violence. When wars or armed conflicts end (or at least when violence on the ground decreases) the hope for sustainable peacebuilding grows. UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon pointed out the importance of the immediate post-conflict/post-war period in a report to the Security Council on June 11, 2009: "The immediate post-conflict period offers a window of opportunity to provide basic security, deliver peace dividends, shore up and build confidence in the political process, and strengthen core national capacity to lead peacebuilding efforts." This gives a first impression of the many challenges internal and external actors face; at the same time experiences on the ground show that liberal peacebuilding conceived as a profound transformation process is a difficult endeavour.

Post-war/post-conflict societies constitute a specific social space

The expectation that the promotion of democratisation and market economies will translate into the pacification of the societies or at least into the containment of violent behaviour has been disappointed either due to a high recurrence of armed conflict or due to the rise of other forms of violence. Different actors of the international community had to learn both that peacebuilding needs a long-term perspective and that a lot of influence is exercised by series of fractures, inconsistencies and contradictions. As a consequence, post-war societies constitute a specific social space where external influences have to cope and interact with the dynamics resulting from war and violence as well as from peacebuilding. Development in these spaces is not a linear process and thus does not allow for strategies of "one size fits all" or for just selective interventions.

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The following policy brief is divided into four sections addressing relevant issues for development cooperation in the immediate post-conflict or post-war period: The first section gives an overview on experiences and lessons learnt in post-war contexts during the last decade. The second section assesses how the donor community is trying to cope with the specific problems arising in these contexts. The third section analyses the basic dilemmas for development cooperation in these spaces, while the last section formulates some recommendations.

1 Lessons Learnt in Post-war Contexts

During the 1990s development cooperation after the termination of armed conflict and war seemed to be a resolvable task. Most wars – from Central America to Southern Africa and Southeast Asia – were perceived under the perspective of the Cold War, the end of which allowed for a termination of so-called proxy wars. Hence the international community promoted dialogue and negotiation processes between the parties in conflict, monitored elections and supported programs for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants. The peace processes in El Salvador, Mozambique and Cambodia constitute the success stories of those days.

Developments on the ground showed that these successes could not be replicated in other contexts and that even in these countries a series of fundamental problems for peacebuilding remained unresolved. Indicators are the high levels of post-war violence in El Salvador, in Guatemala and South Africa, as well as the deficits of democratisation (or its reduction to more or less regular elections) in Cambodia, Mozambique and other post-war societies. And last but not least, reforms towards liberal market economies, at least in the short term, do not seem to go hand in hand with substantial poverty reduction or progress in human development.

Thus academic as well as policy-oriented debates began to address issues relevant for the success of peace processes and peacebuilding such as the changing structures of violence and war, the transnationalisation of war and armed conflict and the ambiguous (in part even contradictory) effects of donor policies.

The debate on the structures of violence mainly focused on the differences between contemporary warfare and the classical interstate wars: asymmetric power relations between the warring parties, the denationalisation, privatisation and criminalisation of violence as well as the diffusion of violence are named as the main patterns of so

Fundamental problems of peacebuilding remain unresolved even in countries without a slide back into war

called “new wars”. This debate was an important input to enhance the understanding of the complexity of violence and warfare. The involvement in armed conflict of more than two actors and their broad spectrum of organisational forms (ranging from warlords to criminal gangs and to state actors) complicates not only the termination of violence but also the development of strategies in post-war and post-conflict contexts. Hence, development cooperation and the selection of partners must be based on a sound analysis of these contexts: Which social groups and institutions were involved in violence and war? Which actors are reform and peace-oriented, which might be spoilers of peacebuilding and social change?

Problems in post-war/post-conflict countries entangle and interact with others in a very specific way

At the same time in many wars and armed conflicts “systems of violence” or “markets of violence” might develop that cannot be reduced to the question of financing warfare or greed. The related structures do not vanish with the end of war, but influence the developments in politics, economy and society. The diffusion of criminal structures is a case in point, as well as the continuity and adaptation of existing power relations in spite of formally democratic procedures (e.g. through the election of members of paramilitary or warlord organisations into parliaments or local councils). This requires a profound actor analysis with a minimum critical stand towards any partners inside the state as well as in other institutions and organisations.

The transnationalisation of many conflicts is a second feature making intervention of development cooperation complicated. This is not entirely new, as many armed conflicts during the Cold War were internationalised. However, combined with the diffusion of non-state actors, this has political and economic consequences that have only lately come to the attention of academia and policy makers. The establishment of regional war economies and their embedment in the international shadow economy, as well as the fragility of state structures in whole regions, undermine or impede necessary processes leading out of war and armed conflict. Some instruments at work can be corruption and selective violence. These issues are rarely addressed in peace treaties, the Dayton agreement on Bosnia being one of the rare exceptions. Thus development cooperation has to find ways to combine its conflict-related instruments with those focusing on good governance in order to support the development of law-abiding institutions and structures. Transparency and accountability are not only important for governance but also essential for the establishment of as well as confidence-building in rule-based forms of conflict regulation.

Last but not least, the different and often conflicting priorities of external actors (international financial institutions and donors, among

others) influence and sometimes aggravate the fractures and conflicts in post-war and post-conflict contexts. Different goals of structural adjustment programs and peacebuilding have been discussed very early. During recent years the conflicts between liberalisation and democratisation on the one hand and stabilisation on the other has stood at the centre of the debate. While free and fair general elections have been a core element of peace processes (as well as an exit strategy for international peacekeeping missions), today a broad consensus exists that democratisation is a highly conflict-ridden process and that elections – at best – are a necessary first step. At the same time international actors (and donors) do not share a common understanding of the minimal criteria for the definition of a democratic political system and of the possibilities to promote these processes with the instruments of development cooperation, as well as the limitations of doing so.

In summary, this short survey on the debate shows that post-war and post-conflict contexts are characterised by a set of problems similar to those of other developing countries. At the same time these problems are entangled in very specific ways with the consequences of war and widespread violence. Thus these societies constitute a specific social space characterised by a high level of fragility and volatility in politics, economy and society. The transformation of these structures for the purpose of peacebuilding is a time-consuming process hindered by difficult structural conditions (e.g. a climate of fear and a lack of trust as a consequence of the experience of violence) as well as by a variety of different actors profiting from war, fragility and volatility. In the following section we will discuss some of the dilemmas which development cooperation has to confront due to these conditions.

2 Donor Strategies towards Post-war and Post-conflict Countries

Donors adapted their organisation and strategies to the work in conflict

Most donors have tried to adapt their operations as well as their strategies to the complexity of the post-conflict and post-war context.

During the 1990s, donors established special working units on conflict and prevention to help operations in the field and make their traditional approaches conflict-sensitive. During the last decade adjustments on the administrative level have followed, including the relocation of personnel as well as competences to the field to accelerate donor response. Furthermore various donors or agencies have established intermediary instruments to bridge the existing gaps between emergency strategies and classical development cooperation.

The stability instrument of the European Union is a case in point, as are the early recovery programs of UNDP and the development-oriented emergency assistance in Germany. Experiences on the ground still have to be monitored and evaluated. One of the basic problems is that these budget lines are limited in time (mostly 6 to 18 months) and that the transfer to regional or sectoral working lines is currently only beginning.

To enhance coordination at least at the national level of donors several states – e.g. Canada and Australia – have begun to develop “whole of government approaches” aiming to improve coordination and coherence of different sector policies towards post-conflict and post-war countries. However, first experiences seem to indicate that priorities are not made from a peacebuilding perspective but under the influence of the departments having most interest in and resources for cooperation with a specific country. At the international level the UN Peacebuilding Commission is a first attempt to coordinate donor policies towards a specific country. At the level of policy formulations and strategies the OECD/DAC has a central role. However, up to today there is no guideline on post-conflict countries. Experiences show that progress is much easier to obtain at the level of headquarters, while in the field it depends on the willingness and the capacity of the personnel and their belief that coordination is useful to gain synergies and not just a waste of time.

**Improving their tools
of analysis and im-
proving coordination
at different levels**

An organisational innovation having consequences with regard to content has been the combination of many conflict units with those working on fragile states (World Bank, OECD/DAC, DFID). On one side this reflects the fact that there is a huge overlap between fragile and post-conflict/post-war states. At the same time it is a symptom of a rather normative approach towards post-war states based on the perception that the western concept of a liberal state is the benchmark, other historical, cultural and religious traditions notwithstanding.

However, statebuilding in post-conflict contexts has other priorities and requirements than in non-violent environments. Fragility can have very different sources: it can be

- a cause of war and violence, e.g. when the state lacks the capacity to control and contain violence or when a monopoly of force is considered illegitimate or when different actors dispute the control and allocation of resources;
- a consequence of armed conflict when either a state’s security apparatus or institutions providing basic public goods are weak-

ened; the lack of a legitimacy of state institutions can be a source as well as a consequence of conflict;

- an (unintentional) result of the termination of armed conflict, when the transformation process (democratisation and economic adjustment) debilitates or changes existing structures without being able to provide functioning equivalents.

Strategies to strengthen and stabilise state structures and institutions must vary depending on the analysis of the causes of state fragility in post-conflict contexts. In most cases a reconstruction is not desirable. As these structures and institutions have not been able to prevent and contain violence in the past, why should they be able to do so in the future? Nevertheless, the recourse to existing institutions (e.g. at the local level) may contribute to short-term stabilisation. But short-time stabilisation should not undermine changes necessary for mid-term change. Ultimately, development cooperation supporting statebuilding in post-conflict contexts needs to address three issues:

Functionality: Efficiency and capacity-building are important but not the sole goals of statebuilding. At least as important is the question who has access to the delivery of public goods by the state. In many countries the access to public goods (social services as well as security) is organised through clientele networks controlling state institutions. Hence delivery and access depend on the political regime and its sources of legitimacy. At the same time core state functions need a minimum of internal financial resources and cannot be sustained merely by external revenues. The generation of internal revenues is always a conflictive process shaped and influenced by the existing relations of power.

Capacities are an issue at different levels in post-conflict contexts. The presence of state institutions in the territory matters, as do the technical capacities to fulfil certain functions. This is the core field of technical cooperation supporting improvements in health, education and social services. Although controversial, donor cooperation in the security sector has been a growth sector during the last decade. The problem is that this is a highly delicate and politicised process. When institutions providing security are dismantled due to their militarised or violent past security gaps cannot be avoided as new institutions need time until they can perform their functions. In post-conflict countries the resulting increase in violence (or its failure to decrease) fuels old fears, distrust and even terror due to the widespread experience of war-related violence undermining the transformation in favour of civil conflict regulation.

Priorities and requirements of statebuilding are different in post-war/post-conflict societies

Legitimacy is not universal in post-conflict societies, as mutually exclusive, partial or group-related forms of legitimacy dominate. At the same time the promotion of the liberal western state – based on procedural forms of legitimacy – makes a shift in legitimacy necessary. This can conflict with traditional forms of legitimacy based on religion, charisma or other sources. In this field the dilemma between external agendas and internal ownership is quite obvious when a government like the Afghan Karzai administration has external legitimacy but lacks a solid internal base. In the case of the Republic of Somaliland it is exactly the opposite case: while the regime has some internal legitimacy the international community has not recognised the government.

Due to this background, looking for functional equivalents to core state functions might be a good strategy at least for a transition period. These are mostly found at the local or communal level or through civil society organisations. But stabilisation through these strategies is only possible if these equivalents rest on non-exclusionary forms of legitimacy and are open for transformation and able to change. The central dilemma remains the compatibility with long-term goals of peace- and statebuilding.

Post-conflict statebuilding needs to be sensitive for the related conflicts, to prevent the escalation of conflicts and to address the state-related structural root causes in this process. This is a task that can neither be fulfilled in the short term nor be fulfilled solely by external actors. Thus development cooperation needs to develop integrated approaches that go beyond crisis management but include the establishment of the legitimate state institutions.

Many donors have begun to integrate their specific units for fragile and conflict contexts. The reasoning behind is that there are large overlaps between both groups and that there are similar dilemmas for development cooperation.

- **Patterns of engagement:** in a similar way to the work in fragile states, post-conflict and post-war contexts call for a specific engagement. While the issues in which development cooperation works might be rather context-specific, development cooperation needs to take into account the interactions mentioned between different processes in order to make a difference while only having limited resources, and in order to avoid unwanted side effects and risks. In other words: these contexts are highly politicised and the personnel working in them thus needs to be able to cope with rapidly changing environments.

Integrated approaches must take into account varying dynamics and time horizons of developments

- **The interface between peacebuilding and statebuilding:** There are many topics that are relevant for both contexts, although in the context of violent conflict they might politically be even more explosive. Examples concern interrelations und connectivity between functional and territorial equivalents to core state functions. The other important issue relates to the legitimacy of state structures. As most of the wars (old as well as so-called new) are somehow related to the development of states, their structure and/or the lack of capacities is a highly conflictive issue.
- **Priorities and sequencing:** due to the multitude of needs in both contexts the question of priorities and sequencing will always arise as to which sectors and needs development cooperation are to address first, and which second. The fundamental dilemma rests in the possible counter-productivity of short-term stabilisation for long-term development. Development cooperation needs to find solutions for pressing problems (e.g. in the realm of public security) that are functional for peacebuilding and the establishment of legitimate state structures. The current approach of security first, transformation later is dangerous because it might support repressive or authoritarian structures and thus lead to new (violent) conflicts. At the same time, this resembles rather paternalistic approaches to liberalisation, where external actors decide on the moment of ripeness for democracy in developing countries.

3 Dilemmas for Development Cooperation in Post-conflict Contexts

Dilemmas between short-term needs and long-term necessities

The high level of complexity and the volatility of developments on the ground confront donors and international development cooperation with some difficult decisions between:

- Short-term needs of stabilisation and long-term peacebuilding goals;
- local ownership and external agendas;
- peacebuilding agendas and other donor policies.

A series of urgent needs have to be answered by local and external actors in the immediate post-conflict and post-war period. Three issues are on top of the agenda: disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants (DDR), rehabilitation of the economic and social infrastructure, and the reconstruction of social relations (most of all psychological support for victims). Donor support and success

in these areas is not only dependent on financial resources but is also shaped and influenced by a series of conditions on the ground.

The implementation as well as the success of DDR programs is highly dependent on the military and political power relations in the field. Basic questions are: Who disarms and demobilises whom? Under what conditions are arms turned in? What are the perspectives for ex-combatants to gain their livelihoods without weapons? These issues have a high potential for conflict and impact the transformation process leading out of war. DDR processes mostly mirror the military power relations, and can thus become a cause (or at least a legitimization) for spoiler activities. Even where there are regulations for proportional participation, these rules only extend to the ex-parties of the armed conflict, excluding other (and mostly the non-armed) sectors of society. Recruitment for private or criminal actors is facilitated by the lack of perspectives in the non-military labour market for ex-combatants. Hence DDR programs are at best a first step in the transformation process. To make a contribution to long-term stabilisation and peacebuilding they have to be accompanied by the generation of possibilities in the civil labour market as well as opportunities for political participation. The existing experiences of development cooperation at the local level are manifold (positive as well as negative) but need systematic evaluation under a peacebuilding and transformation perspective beyond technical procedures.

Most donor resources go towards the rehabilitation of the physical infrastructure. The necessity to (re-)build e.g. roads, sewage systems, and schools is beyond controversy, but under a peacebuilding perspective speed and efficiency of these projects might not be a top priority beyond humanitarian emergencies. The modes of delivery and implementation are crucial. Approaches based on participation and integration can generate a direct surplus and peace dividend for those involved. The joint (re-)construction of a bridge or well destroyed during the war will not end hostility between two communities but can be an important incentive to work for a common goal and thus enable people on both sides to overcome their resentments bit by bit.

The reconstruction of social relations (or social capital) is another case in point. Here most donor attention and funds are directed towards the victims of violence. While this approach is comprehensible, it runs the risk of reproducing the divisions that caused the armed conflict in the first place or producing new cleavages. The handling of the intellectual and direct perpetrators of violence is highly dependent on power relations shaping the options for coping with past atrocities and gross human rights violations. As these relations change in time

it is necessary to develop procedures that are open for change and enable future generations to work on these problems. European history shows that one, two or more generations might be necessary to come to terms with a violent past.

The second dilemma – local ownership and external agendas – is caused by differing priorities as well as time horizons of local societies and external actors (including development cooperation). The current debate is centred on the opposition of heavy versus light footprint strategies of donor interventions. This is important but does not tackle the central problems. The success of long-term peacebuilding and transformation depends much more on the interaction between the local context and donor interventions than on their specific strategies. A look at the experiences in post-war societies where heavy footprint strategies were implemented confirms this. Under a peacebuilding perspective, cases where peacekeeping missions have performed core state functions (either through a protectorate or long-term comprehensive missions) have not performed better than those where interventions have been limited.

The existence of local partners for external actors and development cooperation that not only share an agenda for civil transformation beyond rhetoric but that have the political will as well as the necessary social basis to push the necessary reforms seem to be the main factor for success. Otherwise path-dependent developments dominate, leading to a superficial adjustment to donor demands and discourses while maintaining and modernizing existing traditional social practices. The democratic election of authoritarian or charismatic politicians (or ex-combatants) in many post-war countries is a case in point. Spoilers or adversaries of peacebuilding might be more important for local ownership than peace or reform constituencies without a solid social base and power.

External actors are confronted by the crux that cooperation and inclusion of these forces and their adjustment strategies are essential as well as necessary for short-term stability, while the promotion of rapid change is another source of conflict and instability. The dilemma of short-term and long-term needs and those of local and external agendas are closely linked, as peacebuilding is a non-linear process whose direction of development is open.

Last not least, the donors are confronted with the dilemma of differing goals and priorities not only between different donors but even between their sector policies. During the 1990s the problems of coherence of donor strategies were discussed mostly in relation to the economic adjustment demands of the international financial institutions and their effect on peacebuilding. Currently the debate centres on the

External agendas need to enhance local ownership for peacebuilding

Different donor policies need to reflect a clear priority for peacebuilding

different priorities and the interface between approaches from security and development policy.

However, the heterogeneity of donor strategies is not only a donor problem but also influences the post-war societies, undermining the search for a societal consensus on peace-building strategies and priorities. The UN Peacebuilding Commission was established to cope with this problem. Sierra Leone seems to be a positive example, showing that even in pre-election times, central pillars for peace-building can be agreed upon. The effects for peacebuilding should be closely scrutinised.

4 Recommendations

Post-war contexts are highly politicised

In order to cope with the complexity and the dilemmas mentioned, development cooperation needs to make serious efforts on different levels:

First of all, post-war and post-conflict situations are highly politicised. Hence development cooperation needs to position itself clearly in relation to goals, possibilities and limitations: social engineering and selective approaches do not suffice. Systemic strategies are required that take the overall developments into consideration even if they are only able to intervene in specific issues. Awareness is growing, e.g. in relation to the interrelation between demobilisation of ex-combatants and their reintegration into civil life with security sector reforms, which cannot prosper without reforms and modernisation of the justice sector. External presence in the form of peacekeeping forces can help to contain the arising security gap causing increasing levels of violence and/or criminality in many post-war societies. However, when international forces leave, local institutions need to have a minimum of capacities to secure public security. Otherwise the overall transformation process will be endangered. Another politically sensitive issue is related to the integration of ex-combatants and returning displaced and refugee populations. While support for ex-combatants is mostly part of peace agreements (from financial resources to training and employment) and thus formalised to a certain point, most civilian returnees have to cope on their own even when they might have lost everything. As justice and reparation are lacking, patterns of victimisation may be reproduced or new conflicts emerge.

A central implication for development cooperation is how different actors (e.g. headquarters of foreign ministries or local embassies and development cooperation ministries or implementing agencies) coop-

erate in the field. Whole of government approaches are a first step to enhance cooperation, at least on the side of official development cooperation. However, there is a great necessity for cooperation between state and non-state actors within development cooperation and relief too. Official development assistance is mostly directed towards the government of the partner countries, while NGOs cooperate with civil society organisations. As cooperation renders peace dividends, this tends to enhance existing conflicts, or to create new ones.

A second challenge lies in the extension and adaptation of analytical tools to the specific needs of post-conflict and post-war situations. A continuous survey of political developments is necessary besides early warning, conflict analysis and Peacebuilding Needs Assessments in order to understand constantly and rapidly changing contexts. Most external actors lack substantiated knowledge of dynamics on the ground which is essential for the development of sustainable strategies. The regular reports on contexts of the International Crisis Group are a possible model. These reports address essential issues related to conflict and peacebuilding based on a broad spectrum of actors on the ground as well as in the headquarters of central external players. At the same time the development and support of analytic capacities in the post-conflict and post-war countries can be an important step for local capacity-building and ownership. As peacebuilding is a process, advocacy and agenda setting on the ground are an important element for its success and sustainability.

Third, development cooperation needs a flexibilisation of its instruments and procedures for these contexts. There are a series of experiences with flexible funds or with the relocation of responsibilities to offices on the ground in multilateral as well as in German cooperation that have not been evaluated up to today. Different budget lines (e.g. between humanitarian or emergency aid and regular development cooperation) need to be interlinked to make sure that the support is sustainable. An example is the need to help returning refugees not just to survive but also to include them into peacebuilding strategies. Youths are another crucial target group in this respect, as they are seen as troublemakers in many post-conflict and post-war societies. As all donors face the same problems here, intensive cooperation and exchange is expedient inside DAC as well as between EU member states.

Experiences with the implementation of comprehensive peace accords show that many reforms need to gain momentum in the immediate post-conflict period or run the risk of being undermined or frustrated due to the organisation of resistance. Donors have to balance the need for rapid change (e.g. as long as international missions are

Analytical tools have to include and adapt to post-war/post-conflict problems

present) with the dangers of related conflicts. Assistance for post-war elections is a case in point, as they have served as an exit option for external actors in many societies. But while technical and financial assistance for election is quite easy (support of electoral register, organisation of the voting procedures, etc.) the pure act of voting might not automatically provide the winners with sufficient legitimacy, as most post-war societies are highly polarised even after fighting has ended. This can endanger medium-term and long-term processes of change, even if they are agreed upon in peace accords. When external actors leave post-war countries, internal power structures pass through a process of accommodation that does not necessarily favour peace and reform-oriented actors. In the absence of benchmarks and sanctions status quo-oriented actors just have to sit out external pressures.

Research and systematisation of lessons learned are a precondition for better strategies

Post-war social spaces are very complex and our knowledge on the dynamics in these contexts is rather limited. Hence research and policy makers face the challenge of systematising the experiences on the ground. Case studies are needed, but they should be done under a joint frame of analysis. While there are “no one size fits all” solutions, post-war contexts do share specific problems and patterns allowing for the development of medium range strategies. Systematisation should be organised in following areas in post-war/post-conflict societies:

- The societal basis: the degree of social differentiation, historical and cultural features, norms and values, and forms of social cohesion, among others.
- External influences: the patterns of integration into the world market, the regional environment, and modalities and level of foreign interventions in war and armed conflict, as well as in the process of war termination.
- The dynamics and consequences of war and violence: patterns in relation to geography and territory as well as in relation to specific social groups are important.
- Reform-oriented actors and peace alliances: their social basis, organisation and scope of action.

The interfaces and interactions between the different processes in which donors are engaged are heavily under-researched. Examples abound: how does promotion of rule of law affect processes of DDR and SSR? What effects does the reconstruction of social relations have on the rule of law, democratisation and civil conflict resolution? How do war economy structures in rural areas and migration patterns affect the development of the political system? Development coopera-

tion works on all these issues, but has systematised and evaluated the experiences on the ground only partially (e.g. in the Integrated Security Sector Reform Handbook by UNDP).

Without negating the pressing needs to address needs on the ground, research and evaluation of experiences are necessary to improve donor strategies in the immediate post-war and post-conflict settings. Otherwise development on the ground will resemble revolving doors, with a sequence of violent conflicts and peace agreements solving some problems while creating new ones. Hence the challenge is to find solutions that are open for future change and civil conflict resolution. Analysis that relates processes of social change with conflict and peace research should be able to give some hints for policies on the ground.



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Post-War and Post-Conflict Challenges for Development Cooperation

Conflict and violence have become an important context for development cooperation during the last decade. The termination of armed conflict is related to the hope for sustainable peacebuilding. While the immediate post-war/post-conflict period can be a window of opportunity for fundamental changes, experiences on the ground show highly complex and politicised specific social spaces where social change, the consequences of war and violence and peacebuilding converge.

The Policy Brief calls for an expanded and integrated approach. Even if development cooperation cannot address all relevant issues due to a lack of resources and possibilities to influence developments on the ground, it needs to support solutions that address current needs but remain open for future change.

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