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Walking the Line

Strategic Approaches to Peacebuilding in Lebanon

Contents

List of Acronyms

ACRLI	Arab Center for the Development of the Rule of Law and Integrity
AFESD	Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development
ALEF	Lebanese Association for Education and Training
ASDEAM	Swiss Association for Euro-Arabo-Muslim Dialogue
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CCER	Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform
CESMO	Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies
CPS	Civil Peace Service
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DED	German Development Service
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
forumZFD	Forum Civil Peace Service
FriEnt	Working Group on Development and Peace
GTZ	GTZ – German Technical Cooperation
hbs	Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung
ICG	International Crisis Group
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice
ifa / zivik	Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen / Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
ISF	Internal Security Forces
LACR	Lebanese Association for Civil Rights
LCPS	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OMSAR	Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform
PCA	Peace and Conflict Assessment
PPM	Permanent Peace Movement
PSA	Participatory Systems Analysis

SSR	Security Sector Reform
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNIIC	International Independent Investigation Commission
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USJ	Université Saint-Joseph / Saint Joseph University Beirut – Lebanon

Executive Summary

After the 2006 war in Lebanon and the ensuing political deadlock and escalation throughout 2007, FriEnt member organisations expressed the need for a more thorough understanding of the conflict and peacebuilding context and for reflection on options for peacebuilding by German development and peace organisations. As a result, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (hbs), the German Development Service (DED), the Forum Civil Peace Service (forumZFD) and the Working Group on Development and Peace (FriEnt) jointly commissioned a study whose objective is twofold:

1. To identify relevant fields of activity for peacebuilding by German development and peace organisations;

2. To identify potentials, deficits and needs of existing approaches and give recommendations for coordination with Lebanese and international actors in order to strengthen coherence and relevance of peacebuilding activities.

The concept and methodology of this study stem from state-of-the-art tools for conflict analysis and the Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) approach. Starting from a *systemic* conflict analysis, the study looks into structural challenges, core problems and escalating factors and evaluates their relevance by analysing how their varying reciprocal impacts may foster and enable conflict and the use of violence in Lebanon. Based on this analysis, the study identifies strategical entry points and discusses main challenges, stakeholders, and peacebuilding needs in selected fields of activity. Existing approaches by Lebanese and international actors are assessed and gaps and opportunities to foster peacebuilding identified.

A Country without a State?

Structural Challenges and Conflicts in Lebanon

Notwithstanding the current dynamics, this study sets out from the premise that the current conflict cannot be seen in isolation and reduced to the immediate political questions. It rather posits that these are but the latest manifestations of deeper *structural challenges* rooted in the make-up of the Lebanese state and society. This study particularly identifies *five* structural challenges as most relevant: (1) conflicting concepts of national identity, (2) the involvement in major regional and international conflicts, (3) the consociational political system, (4) an inequitable economic system, and (5) the patriarchal value system.

While Lebanon's structural challenges tend to be stable and changeable only over time, they manifest themselves in several clusters of *core problems* which lead to conflicts in Lebanese society and hamper its ability to peacefully manage contradictory interests. The study identifies eleven core problems leading to conflict which manifest themselves in variable degrees in the political, economical and societal sphere.

Politics – The Pitfalls of a Consociational Democracy

In order to alleviate fears of domination, the Lebanese political system provides for an intricate system of power-sharing ("consociational democracy") that distributes positions and executive competences among the major sectarian communities. A broad consensus is typically required, as major players have a multitude of options to stall the system. This limitation on the principle of majority decision-making

leads to a mostly *dysfunctional political system* that carries the permanent potential of a breakdown once conflicts arise for which no compromise seems possible.

As state resources are distributed according to sectarian and regional quotas represented by a narrow elite of political leaders, these leaders wield extensive control over such resources, sustaining a *system of clientelism*. These networks of dependence translate directly into electoral support. They also provide powerful motivation for loyalty that can be mobilised during times of conflict.

Partly as a result of extensive networks of clientelism, the Lebanese *state remains largely unable to extend the reach of its institutions* or enforce its own laws. For most of its history Lebanon has been governed by a tacit understanding that engagement in "classic" public sectors should be minimal. Instead, such prerogatives were largely taken over by the sectarian communities. In addition, the existence of powerfully armed non-state actors implies that the *state is unable to monopolise the use of force* both internally and externally.

Through its location at the fault-line of the Arab-Israeli conflict, its inability to exert effective state power and the tendency of its political leaders to seek foreign support, Lebanon invites *foreign intervention* and has been repeatedly turned into a theatre for proxy wars – both politically and militarily.

At the same time, sectarian leaders are actors with their own agenda of maximising their influence. However, only with substantial outside support can they reasonably hope to tilt the internal balance of power. Conflating *foreign policy choices* with sectarian identities for the purpose of political mobilisation, political patrons invest the struggle over such choices with the full weight of a history rife with violence and allow mobilisation to draw upon deep layers of emotion and vengeance. External military support to both sides and the proliferation of weapons outside the official security forces fuel a cycle of mutual fear perceptions and the build-up of proto-militias which can be converted into fully-fledged fighting forces at short notice and themselves serve as possible triggers for violence.

In addition to these challenges, Lebanon is host to more than 400,000 *Palestinian refugees*, half of which live in camps that have become a fertile ground for radical groups, in particular Sunni Islamists. Since the internal Palestinian conflict mirrors the internal Lebanese conflict, there is the potential that Palestinian groups may be dragged into the Lebanese conflict, resulting in Palestinian infighting that may spill over to involve Lebanese.

Society – Worlds Apart

Sectarian identifications are essential parameters by which Lebanese citizens orient and interpret behaviour, and political orientations are likewise largely a function of sectarian identities, whereas political parties lost most of their substance during the civil war. Consequently, and while sectarian sentiment can appear dormant and subdued during times of elite consensus, any serious political conflict will invariably be cast as a contest of power between sectarian communities, thus becoming infused with the full historical weight of conflict, violence and the resulting mutual fear perceptions.

In addition, the territorialisation of sectarian identities partly wrought by civil war displacement and "sectarian cleansing" leads to the identification of certain areas with individual sects, enabling scenarios and perceptions of "defence" of territory that serve as pretexts and rallying points for sectarian mobilisation and creating triggers for the eventual outbreak of violence. This *sectarian structuring of the public sphere* is to some extent a symptom of the conflict, but it has become an accelerator over time and now plays a significant role in the build-up of conflict in Lebanon.

The persistence of sectarianism in Lebanon is guaranteed by an education system that is strongly segregated, in particular for the lower income classes who largely rely on education provided by the sectarian communities, and clientelism, as well as a dysfunctional political system and the lack of a credible state monopoly that renders clientelist networks defined by sect the only recourse when support is needed. Yet sectarian attitudes do not themselves initiate conflict. Rather, such sentiment is mobilised and refreshed by sectarian leaders according to political expediency and framed as defence against the purported ambitions of other communities, drawing on past atrocities and current demographic fears.

Another aspect in this social construction of a "sectarian" reality is the fact that Lebanese citizens are confronted with the *continuous presence and prominence of leaders with a record of responsibility for wartime atrocities.* The occurrence of some instances of enforced accountability that are easily portrayed as politically motivated enforces "closing of the ranks" in defence of leaders implicated in atrocities.

Economy – The Continuation of Clientelistic Politics

The Lebanese economy is dominated by a small number of powerful players who sometimes wield *virtual monopolies*, stifling competition and driving prices significantly above regional standards. Combined with the ongoing *economic stagnation*, a growing part of the *lower middle classes is facing increasing economic difficulties*, which enhances the power of clientelist support systems. In addition, a long tradition of neglect of peripheral areas that continued in the reconstruction phase of the 1990s has created pronounced patterns of *uneven development.* These inequalities have resulted in large populations of migrants in low-income areas of the capital where experience of real and *relative deprivation* is easily mustered into political and sectarian resentment.

Relative deprivation and economic stagnation produce a large reservoir of resentful and/or unemployed youth with ample time and motivation to wreak havoc and/or join proto-militias. The identification of state support, social advancement and welfare with sectarian belonging also invests social conflict and the struggle over economic strategies with a strong sectarian dimension.

Controversial steps towards reform pushed through by the government may be among the triggers for loyalty conflicts, evolving into larger protests and, potentially, clashes. More likely, however, social and economic grievances and grudges will be instrumentalised by political players to score political points and deliver political messages, or genuine social protest may be hijacked for the same purpose. The most likely scenario appears to be mass mobilisation, ostensibly for the sake of social issues but charged with strong sectarian undertones, which, due to the territorialisation of sectarian identities, will solicit violent reactions from adjacent communities and ignite sectarian clashes, in particular between Sunnis and Shiites in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

Foreign Aid in Lebanon

Foreign aid in post-war Lebanon moved from reconstruction (1992-1997) towards supporting financial stability and balance-of-payments equilibrium. In 2001 and 2002, two donor conferences (Paris I and II) addressed the growing public debt and lagging economy and came up with a Lebanese reform programme, averted a financial crisis and laid the foundations for economic recovery. This strategic shift helped to avoid financial and currency crises and maintain the necessary confidence of national and foreign investors to provide loans for public debt restructuring; however, it reduced the already faltering resources for reconstruction. It was not

until the end of 2004 that the 1992-97 plans for the physical and productive sectors were fulfilled, whereas in the social sectors only 50 % of the original expenditures were achieved.

After the July 2006 Israel-Lebanon war, the Stockholm conference promised a total of 980 million dollars for humanitarian assistance and post-war early recovery based on the National Plan for Early Reconstruction Needs. This conference was followed by the 2007 Paris III conference which raised around 7.6 billion dollars of pledges and focused on providing direct support for the post-war reconstruction plan, securing cash for debt service, and covering the budgetary deficit. The government proposed a renewed socio-economic reform programme including privatisation, tax increases, labour law reform, and reforms of the social security system. Until June 2008, 63 % of pledges made at the conference were signed into agreements, with donors focusing on power, security, water and wastewater, transportation, and social sectors as well as administrative reforms, privatisation, and private sector support. Among the main donors are the European Investment Bank (EIB), Saudi Arabia, the World Bank, the United States, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), France, the European Commission, Italy and Germany.

Although donors acknowledge existing political impediments to successful and sustainable reform, the amount of funds allocated to political reform programmes is comparatively low. Probably the most important actor with substantial political reform objectives is the European Union. The National Indicative Programme 2007-2010 with a total amount of €187 million allocates 11.8 % to judicial and prison reform and to political reform, with the latter supporting – among other things - electoral law reform, the National Action Plan on respect for human rights, and initiatives that promote social inclusion. However, the results have been mixed so far. Most initiatives have been greatly hampered by the political crisis and activities confined to administrative and technical issues instead of targeting the root causes of lacking state capacity and state accountability.

Aid coordination mechanisms set up after the war in 2006 were rather insufficient because of the political stalemate, competing donor agendas, as well as the fast influx of money – and humanitarian organisations. The opposing foreign policy orientations are reflected in different funding partners - with Western donors supporting the government and the Iranian Committee for the Reconstruction of Lebanon financing reconstruction efforts by Hizbullah – as well as parallel structures for the planning and implementation of projects established by the government (Council for Development and Reconstruction, Ministry of Finance) and Hizbullah (Jihad al-Bina'a, Wa'd) respectively. The politicisation of aid led to a real (or sometimes perceived) "territorialisation" of aid and created conflicts over available resources in local communities in the South.

Civil Society

Civil Society is a mirror of the social, political and confessional divide in Lebanon. Even though there was a significant growth of secular, general-interest-based CSOs during the civil war and throughout the 1990s, most organisations are identity-based and rooted in clan, sectarian or religious structures. While there is a good to high level of education and professional experience in carrying out training, advocacy and campaigning, there is still a lack of organisational sustainability and internal democratic practice, and few of the mostly Beirut-based CSOs reach out to rural areas.

There are some good examples of foreign actors supporting issue-based and advocacy CSOs with the aim of establishing networks of shared interest among citizens

based on social conditions rather than origin and sectarian communities. However, most international donors trying to strengthen civil society focus on general capacity-building of NGOs and to a lesser extent on fostering their watchdog function and independent role vis-à-vis the political system and sectarian groups. Moreover, electoral reform and election monitoring have been high on Western donor agendas since 2005, which has not only led to over-funding of this sector and a decline in voluntarism, but also to CSOs getting absorbed in technical issues rather than developing a political agenda.

Getting Engaged

Against the background of this analysis, four fields of activity for development and peacebuilding organisations were identified. Approaches to conflict transformation in these fields do not only allow to address core problems leading to conflict in Lebanon, but they also provide opportunities to foster the neutrality of public services and of existing structures and institutions which balance and coordinate conflicting interests in society as well as to strengthen an overall Lebanese identity at the expense of sectarian- and group-based orientations. Moreover, the forth field offers entry points to contribute to immediate violence prevention.

Education and Dialogue

In Lebanon, social and sectarian-based divisions within society are reinforced by the education system with its rather weak public and traditionally strong and growing private education sector. This dichotomy mirrors the overall weakness of state institutions dominated by the strong sectarian-based patronage system.

In order to restore credibility in the public education system and to facilitate the national reconciliation process after the civil war, the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with civil society organisations, launched various initiatives in the 1990s, albeit with mixed impact. There is little interest on the part of the richer section of the population and elite to engage in reform of the education system and the high percentage of private schools is not seen as an obstacle to the improvement of public schools and thus the improvement of a key citizens' right.

After the summer war in 2006, only 34.6% of schoolchildren were enrolled in state schools. Only a few international organisations like the *World Bank* have identified education as a priority issue and aim to promote a more inclusive system. However, ideas and experiences to improve quality already exist and the public infrastructure could attract double the number of students with minimal additional costs. Moreover, the Paris III process, although politically sensitive, has inbuilt aid conditional on reform mechanisms, which could be a vehicle to support reforms.

Non-formal education programmes on citizenship, democracy, and conflict resolution and different forms of dialogue activities are widespread in Lebanon. They are mainly funded by international donors and either target children and youth or multipliers within the society. A multitude of Lebanese CSOs and several universities are engaged in these programmes and there is a large pool of experienced trainers and practitioners. Compared to this, very few initiatives try to facilitate problem-solving dialogue processes between higher-level decision- makers (track 1.5).

Existing dialogue and education initiatives, however, are dominated by a "more people approach" on the grassroots level. They usually lack a strategy which links changes on the individual level with the broader socio-political context and the core problems leading to conflict in Lebanon. Dialogue projects are often not rooted in the space within which conflicts are taking place, and coordination, if existent, is mostly across horizontal lines. This lack of comprehensive strategies for institutionalisation and multiplication on the higher level ("key people") and the political and

sectarian polarisation within the broader context render their impact on core problems rather negligible.

Transitional Justice

Building peace in divided societies is a long-term process of re-establishing trust, justice and the rule of law. Over the course of time, different approaches have been developed – ranging from prosecution, lustration and reform of state institutions to truth commissions and reparation programmes. None of these so-called transitional justice mechanisms was applied to deal with the legacy of the civil war in Lebanon, and the prevailing culture of impunity is coupled with divided memories which are part of group identities, reinforcing social segregation. With the establishment of the International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) on the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri, calls for truth and justice were widespread in Beirut. Yet being an isolated mechanism instead of a comprehensive approach to transitional justice, the Commission was immediately drawn into the conflict between the two governmental blocs and became prone to political instrumentalisation and delegitimisation.

As in other post-conflict societies, where political conditions do not allow for a more comprehensive "dealing with the past" process, one can find several "islands" of transitional justice initiatives in Lebanon. Many of them are taken on by individuals, and some do have organisational structures and resources. In order to overcome the isolation of these initiatives, several organisations have started to build up a network and broaden their approach to transitional justice. Moreover, family associations have collected a great deal of information about the fates of the missing and human rights violations over the past two decades and lobby for their right to know.

Supporting transitional justice processes as external actors needs a multi-layered strategy as well as reflection on the political signals sent by supporting specific initiatives. This is especially true in Lebanon, where only one isolated and contested mechanism, the Hariri Tribunal, receives many resources from international donors, while broader justice concerns are neglected and a comprehensive approach is lacking. In general, few donors support civil society initiatives.

Justice and Rule of Law

In the context of Lebanon, a more independent justice system and the application of the rule of law could be a viable strategy to weaken the patronage that underpins the confessional system by making it less important for ordinary citizens. Moreover, it would also make clientelist influence-wielding outside the rule of law and the capture of state institutions by the political elites less easy and thus indirectly strengthen state institutions.

While a comprehensive framework for the reform of the judiciary in Lebanon was reviewed by the Ministry of Justice in 2002, its implementation is hindered and largely confined by the executive to technical reforms.

Whereas the overall activities of USAID, UNDP and the European Commission together cover most core elements of judicial reform, a comprehensive programme to strengthen the rule of law is not in place. Mainly due to the political deadlock, training and material support to the judiciary have become the leftovers of an otherwise frozen reform process. In addition, the support provided by the EU und the US to elements of the security sector gives an imbalanced support to law enforcement while the necessary legal control mechanisms are not yet functional enough.

Approaches to strengthen the rule of law should, first of all, develop a strategy to create the necessary support for reforms while carefully building up a reform coali-

tion that includes "allies" from both inside and outside the judiciary. Existing capacity-building activities could then be used as a key entry point to bring together like-minded actors and make stakeholders part of reform designs.

Violence Prevention and Security

The Lebanese security sector suffers the same ills caused by the sectarian-based patronage system which permeates all state institutions. Besides the Lebanese Army, there exist several security apparatuses and services, often with their own intelligence services. Most security institutions enjoy affiliations with one of the sectarian political leadership and the lack of central oversight not only leads to inefficiency but also allows these different structures to be played off against each other in the sectarian distribution game.

These deficiencies of the Lebanese state's monopoly on security are further underlined by the existence of the 12,500-strong United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) deployed in south Lebanon and the existence of several non-state actors: Hizbullah's armed wing and armed Palestinian and Islamic fundamentalist factions as well as growing numbers of private security companies with sectarian-political affiliations and (re-)emerging militias on both sides of the conflict.

While there seems to be a lack of an overarching approach to security system reform, most of the important activities by external actors concentrate on strengthening the security forces with equipment and training, often imbalanced and insensitive to their sectarian affiliations and their possible implication in the political crisis. There are a few, mostly non-governmental actors working to build national competence and networks on SSR in Lebanon as a means to create leverage for the discussion of the topic in the public and political sphere and the development of a long-term reform strategy.

The importance of the Lebanese security sector for crisis prevention and peacebuilding, though closely tied to the core problems of the political conflict, stems mainly from the high risk of conflict escalation into violent confrontation. Proliferation of arms, increasing acceptance of violence, and emerging "front lines" in divided public spaces accompany the increasing frequency of violent street clashes. Increasing economic difficulties facilitate recruitment into proto-militias from within areas of disadvantage and Palestinian refugee camps have become safe havens for outlaws and Islamic fundamentalist groups.

Recommendations

Contributing to peacebuilding in a highly polarised and volatile conflict context such as Lebanon poses many challenges to external actors:

- Aid is easily politically manipulated and becomes a source of conflicts.

- Relationships established with state or civil society actors not only strengthen/legitimise the respective partner's position, but are also prone to negative perceptions by "the others".

- More often than not, external actors are not "outsiders" but, rather, are part of the conflict setting. This is especially true in Lebanon, where regional and international actors have their own strategic interests.

- External resources are *not neutral*. They are changing the context and can have mitigating effects as well as an aggravating influence on conflicts.

Nonetheless, international actors can still play a supportive role in preventing violence and building peace in Lebanon by applying a well-sequenced *strategic ap-*

proach allowing a focus on core problems leading to conflict and *strengthening relevant local actors and structures*.

Enhance strategic approaches to peacebuilding in Lebanon

The peacebuilding relevance of programmes is not only defined by the *instruments* used but rather by the *extent* to which they address the central elements of the reproduction of the conflict system.

Core problems identified as having high relevance for the peacebuilding activities of development and peace organisations in Lebanon are:

- the dysfunctional political system and lack of participation,
- the sectarian-based patronage system/oligopolistic economy,
- the structuring of private and public spheres along sectarian-based political identities
- a culture of impunity,
- the lack of a state monopoly.

As foreign factors have been identified as key elements of the political conflict in Lebanon, the core problems *foreign intervention* and *opposing foreign policy orientations* are central for track 1-level initiatives and approaches.

Invest in conflict sensitivity, communication, and lessons learnt

Working in a highly complex conflict setting, more resources need to be invested in conflict-sensitive planning, communication and sector-specific coordination as well as exchanging experiences and drawing on lessons learnt:

- Conflict-sensitive programme management does not come for free: additional knowledge, time and finances should be taken into account right from the start in planning and budgeting.

- Selective communication runs the risk of being perceived as partisan and may compromise the impact of activities: programmes should invest more in establishing communication channels on all levels and to all relevant stakeholders in their sector.

- Mechanisms for the transparent allocation of funds are indispensable.

- Communication mechanisms help to improve coherence of activities and should be used as a network for developing and disseminating lessons learnt and good practices.

Reflect on own role in the conflict context

As external actors are part of the conflict setting, they need to (re-)assess their own role in the wider conflict context and the patterns by which it is perceived:

- Real or perceived bias can easily feed into existing social and political divisions and manifest rather than transform conflicts.

- The credibility of values promoted and supported by external actors becomes blurred if overall policy coherence and comprehensive approaches to peacebuilding are lacking - which is particularly true in the Middle East conflict context.

Support alternative avenues of political participation

As the Lebanese political system provides very limited space to gradually retrench clientelistic structures and improve accountability, long-term strategies to support alternative avenues of political participation are needed, including:

- Strengthening the independent role of CSOs and their interaction with the political system based on sector-specific assessments of potentials and limiting factors for engagement and a clear "theory of change" how inputs of external actors render CSOs able to assume a "watchdog" and advocacy function.

- Running civil society funds accompanied by sector-specific advice to and capacity-building on strategy development as well as the facilitation of periodic exchange of experience and lessons learnt.

- Exploring potentials of traditional community-based organisations which command an amount of legitimacy that initiatives for positive change in this region currently ignore.

- Identifying possibilities for systematic programmes to improve the capacities of municipalities and inter-municipality structures in order to build up a culture of participation and accountability on a level not necessarily affected by the problems plaguing the larger political system.

Education and Dialogue

- **Put more weight on formal education:** The prevailing discourse on fragile states and the development/security nexus emphasises security and justice (law enforcement) institutions. However, the peacebuilding relevance of other public sectors, in particular the *formal* education sector in Lebanon is high.

- **Explore potentials for sustained issue-specific dialogue processes on track 1.5:** With the return of Hizbullah to government, there might be some windows of opportunities for dialogue processes, in particular on issues of socio-economic development and reform. Such processes could build on existing initiatives and a general consensus between relevant actors about the need for reforms.

Transitional Justice

- **Develop a comprehensive approach to Transitional Justice:** There is a need for international actors to develop a comprehensive approach to transitional justice in Lebanon in order to address the justice concerns of *all* Lebanese citizens. Priority should be given to linking the Hariri Tribunal with a broader political and public discussion on transitional justice. German actors, being quite active in the field, should strengthen coordination and create synergies between their projects. Support for the generation of knowledge, networking, and advocacy would provide good entry points.

- **Build capacities on specific topics:** The implementation of individual transitional justice mechanisms needs specific expertise. For the time being, support should be given to: database management, exhumation and DNA analysis, exploration of legal avenues and possibly truth commissions.

Justice and Rule of Law

- **Think systemically and develop a comprehensive approach:** Rule of law is the interplay of different social goods. The analysis of the socio-political dynamics which hamper them in Lebanon should inform a strategy that approaches these elements in a coherent, correctly prioritised and timely fashion.

- **Identify "agents of change" and build a broad-based coalition for reforms:** As opposition looms large and partners and implementing organisations can themselves be part of it, support for the rule of law in Lebanon needs to carefully build up a reform coalition that includes "allies" from both inside and outside the judiciary.

- **Use capacity-building to build support and ownership for reform:** Capacity-building should not just become a mere leftover of an otherwise frozen approach due to the political deadlock, but should be used as an entry point to bring together like-minded actors.

Violence Prevention and Security

- **Avoid SSR initiatives without a parallel political reform agenda:** Politically sensitive and coherent policies and strategies are needed for the security sector, which avoid supporting one of the services without the other. Entry points are support for coordination mechanisms, possibly through the Central Security Council, and the reform of recruitment processes to support the deconfessionalisation of the security services.

- **Work in disadvantaged, violence-prone areas ("front lines") to prevent further escalation of violence:** Political dialogue is needed to encourage state institutions to take up responsibility in these areas and build trust between local communities and the security apparatus. Lebanese peace organisations should be supported in refocusing their work on "front lines" and become directly engaged with relevant actors (e.g. former combatants). As a long term-strategy, trust-building and preventive mechanisms need to be coupled with providing income generation and education initiatives for youth within these emerging front lines.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose of the Study

After the 2006 war in Lebanon and the ensuing political deadlock and escalation throughout 2007, FriEnt member organisations expressed the need for a more thorough understanding of the conflict context and for reflection on options for peacebuilding by German development and peace organisations.

As a result, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (hbs), the German Development Service (DED), the Forum Civil Peace Service (forumZFD) and the Working Group on Development and Peace (FriEnt) jointly commissioned a study on options to support peacebuilding activities in Lebanon. The study's objective is twofold:

1. To identify relevant fields of activity for peacebuilding approaches by German development and peace organisations;

2. To identify potentials, deficits and needs of existing approaches and give recommendations for coordination and cooperation with Lebanese and international actors in order to strengthen coherence and relevance of peacebuilding activities.

The study was carried out by three staff members from FriEnt and the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung respectively and an independent Lebanese consultant. Interviewing, data collection and on-site analysis were done during February and March 2008.

1.2 Concept and Methodology

The data collection for this study was done in a first step as a desk study of relevant analyses of the Lebanese socio-political context and also used documents from international and German organisations working in Lebanon. This was followed by an intensive interview phase with actors from the Lebanese administration, the parliament, political parties, religious and civil society organisations, research institutes and independent experts as well as with relevant Lebanese NGOs, international donors and INGOs working in Lebanon.

The concept and methodological approach used for data evaluation and analysis stems from state-of-the-art tools for conflict analysis and the Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) approach and is reflected in the structure of the report.

In a *first* step, the conflict analysis looks into structural challenges, core problems and escalating factors and shows how they foster and enable conflict and the use of violence in Lebanon. In order to weight the various core problems and evaluate relevant fields of activity for peacebuilding, Participatory Systems Analysis (PSA), a tool initially developed for rural development projects, was used. A systems analysis is more appropriate than a simple cause-effect analysis for this purpose, as it allows us to analyse the manifold interrelations and the degree of interaction between the core problems leading to conflicts. Core problems can then be evaluated with regard to their function and relevance in the conflict system which again helps to prioritise peacebuilding needs and assess the viability and leverage of peacebuilding approaches.

Based on the conflict analysis, the *second* part of the study looks into selected fields of activity while further analysing their relation to core problems, peacebuilding needs, main challenges and stakeholders. For each field, existing approaches by

Lebanese and international actors are presented and gaps to address and opportunities to support peacebuilding identified.

The *third* part of the study gives general recommendations for the development policy level, strategy development, conflict-sensitive programme management, and coordination. Sector-specific recommendations look at possibilities to foster the peacebuilding relevance of existing strategies and at how newly planned activities can share synergies in order to enhance coherence and complementarity.

2. A Country without a State?

2.1 Structural Challenges and Conflicts in Lebanon

Lebanon has been a flashpoint of conflict for decades, most notoriously during the protracted civil war (1975-90) that left a decisive imprint on the image of the country abroad as well as on the political consciousness of most of its citizens. Since 2005, the country has again been marred by a bitter confrontation that has paralysed the political system, spawned a string of sometimes devastating acts of terrorism and barely contained riots, and may carry a potential for larger violent conflict, of which the events in May 2008 gave a glimpse. The country was without a President between November 2007 and May 2008, and the legitimacy of the former government has been disputed since the collective resignation of all its Shiite members in November 2006. Since then, the speaker of parliament has refused to convene the assembly in the presence of what he and the opposition consider an "illegitimate" government, forcing the latter to manage rather than rule the country by ministerial decrees, with urgently needed reforms – on which much of future foreign assistance is conditioned – forestalled. Debate over the legal framework of the next parliamentary elections due in spring 2009 has already begun along the same lines of confrontation, making the indefinite postponement of these elections and hence a further unravelling of the political institutions appear a real possibility.

Like its predecessors, this confrontation is driven by competing political orientations and interests on several *internal* and *external* levels: Lebanon's position towards the various and overlapping configurations of regional conflicts (Arab-Israeli, US-Iran, Sunn-Shi'i), the relative weight of the different sectarian communities within the power-sharing system that has defined Lebanese politics since the establishment of the state, and the interest of powerful players within this system to maximise their own power base. Understanding the Lebanese conundrum and assessing the sources of conflict thus requires analysis across these interconnected levels. Some of these relate to events that occurred even before the state of Lebanon was established but are still present in the narratives of its composite parts, while others are connected to demographic fears and the specific problems of systems of institutionalised power-sharing ("consociational democracy"), and to regional and international events largely beyond the control of local actors.

Our analysis sets out from the premise that the current conflict cannot be seen in isolation and reduced to the immediate political questions fought over on the surface, such as Hizbullah's challenge to the Lebanese government and the struggle over shares of state power. Rather, it posits that these are but the latest manifestations of deeper *structural challenges* rooted in the make-up of the Lebanese state and society.

While these structural challenges tend to be stable and changeable only over time, they manifest themselves in several clusters of *core problems* that directly lead to

conflicts in the Lebanese society while at the same time hampering its ability to peacefully manage contradictory interests.

Unique Heterogeneity…

Most structural challenges for conflicts in Lebanon precede its establishment as an independent state and can be traced back to the French mandate period or even to the final decades of the Ottoman Empire. Attempts by various religious groups (Christian, Druze) to achieve emancipation from the Sunni-Muslim-dominated Empire were encouraged by European powers and led to *conflicting concepts of national identity* structured according to the local and regional demographic realities and the options they hold for Lebanon's major sects: While Christians (who are tiny minorities and sometimes second-class citizens in neighbouring countries) tend to emphasise a separate Lebanese identity centred on its allegedly unique heterogeneity, its cosmopolitan character and its non-Arab and non-Muslim components, Muslims tend to be oriented more towards the region and advocate an Arab/Islamic identity.

These differences are reinforced by Lebanon's involvement in *major regional and international conflicts*, first and foremost the Arab-Israeli conflict. Through its geographical location, Lebanon is of high strategic importance for regional and international actors with stakes in the conflict. Ever since the establishment of Israel in 1948, outside actors have attempted to influence Lebanon's position in this conflict by supporting individual Lebanese actors favourably disposed towards their own agenda. Such support has been political, financial and military, including non-state actors who launch guerrilla warfare from Lebanese territory and remain beyond the control of the state.

Originally conceived as an informal power-sharing system to alleviate fears of domination prevalent among all Lebanese sects, Lebanon's *consociational political system* quickly evolved into complex patterns of quota and power allocations between the major sects. While preventing authoritarian structures that appeared in other Arab states, the permanent need for achieving broad consensus makes the system vulnerable to paralysis and breakdowns in terms of heightened conflict over existential choices.

Since Lebanon was constituted as an alliance of sectarian leaders who were at the same time landholders, merchants and entrepreneurs, the role of the state has largely conformed to the interests of these groups. Thus, while control of the economy by a small number of oligopolies was often harnessed through the state apparatus, the state for most of its existence dispensed with an active developmental or service-providing role to improve the lot of marginalised areas and sectors of society. As a consequence, Lebanon is characterised by a highly *inequitable economic system*.

While the standing of strong and authoritarian leaders is a key characteristic of the political system and an economy built around monopolies and patronage, it is further enhanced and invested with charismatic qualities by a dominant *patriarchal value system*. Lebanese are socialised into a value system that prizes unquestioned subservience and deference to (mostly male) elders and discourages independence. These structures are abetted and reinforced through the education system and extend into professional hierarchies in both the private and the public sector.

...or Unmanageable Fragmentation?

While Lebanon's structural challenges tend to be stable and changeable only over time, they manifest themselves in several clusters of *core problems* which lead to conflicts in Lebanese society and hamper its ability to peacefully manage contradictory interests. The study identifies eleven core problems leading to conflict which manifest themselves in variable degrees in the political, economical and societal sphere.

Politics – The Pitfalls of a Consociational Democracy

In order to alleviate fears of domination, the Lebanese political system provides for an intricate system of power-sharing ("consociational democracy") that distributes positions and executive competences among the major sectarian communities. Hence, a broad consensus is typically required, as major players have a multitude of options to stall and sabotage the system to the point of paralysis, and majority decisions are practically impossible to take. Since the system is specifically designed to prevent domination of one or a coalition of sectarian communities over others, the problem is heightened when political and sectarian fault-lines coincide. Provisions for improved decision-making processes stipulated by the Taef peace accord were largely ignored during the period of Syrian tutelage over Lebanon (1990-2005) and not revisited in the aftermath due to heightened political divisions. Thus, the recent political crisis is not an aberration but rather the logical result of a *dysfunctional political system* which puts such a limitation on the principle of majority decision-making that it carries the permanent potential of a breakdown once conflicts arise over which no compromise seems possible.

Since much of day-to-day politics is limited to the struggle between the different sects over relative shares of power and state resources, the system strongly favours a certain type of leader, whose winning pitch is neither a vision for the greater good nor a political programme but the capacity to maximise the share of the sectarian community they claim to represent. As a result, there is also strong pressure towards internal cohesion and little regard for, and sometimes active hostility to, parties which adopt a strictly political agenda and attract a multi-sectarian following. Whereas Lebanon is one of the very few countries in the Middle East to hold competitive elections, elections offer little in the way of effective participation. The electoral system not only sets extremely high barriers for new contenders; in combination with the pervasive system of clientelism, gerrymandering, vote-buying, and the sectarian division of the public sphere, it rather tend to reproduce a political elite based on sectarian and parochial legitimacy. The majority first-past-the-post sys-

Core Problems Leading to Conflict in Lebanon
▪ Dysfunctional political system and lack of political participation
▪ Lack of a viable central government and state monopoly
▪ Sectarian-based patronage system and clientelism
▪ Oligopolistic economy
▪ Relative deprivation and uneven development
▪ Economic stagnation and demise of the middle class
▪ Private and public space and sphere structured along sectarian-based political identities
▪ Continuity of wartime elite and culture of impunity
▪ Large Palestinian refugee community
▪ Opposing foreign policy orientations
▪ Foreign intervention and proxy battleground

tem further enhances the power of such leaders. For most Lebanese, participation is thus restricted to seasonal expressions of unconditional allegiance to unaccountable leaders who rarely bother to develop electoral platforms.

As state resources are distributed according to sectarian and regional quotas represented by a narrow elite of political leaders, these leaders wield extensive control over such resources, sustaining a *system of clientelism* that pervades most sectors of society. Public sector appointments and promotions are especially subject to clientelist control and enable those in control of patronage networks to manipulate the functioning of public institutions for their own interest or the benefit of their clients. Thus, for the large majority of Lebanese, access to state services is directly tied to the good favours of such leaders. The networks of dependence thus created translate themselves directly into electoral support, rendering the clientelist system self-sustaining and largely precluding the emergence of alternative modes of leadership and representation. They also provide powerful motivation for loyalty that can be mobilised during times of conflict.[1]

Partly as a result of extensive networks of clientelism, the Lebanese *state remains largely unable to extend the reach of its institutions and to enforce its own regulations and laws*. Governmental efforts of any kind founder on clientelist influence-wielding, systematic diversion of funds, bureaucratic ineptitude and a pronounced credibility gap. Moreover, for most of its history Lebanon has been governed by a tacit understanding within the ruling elite that public engagement in sectors conventionally seen as state prerogatives should be minimal. Instead, such prerogatives were largely taken over by the sectarian communities and private sector actors (with the latter often being influential players in the former) or political organisations connected to constituencies defined by sect (such as Hizbullah). Furthermore, spiralling public debt and the continued draining of funds by inefficient public enterprises severely curtail the margin of manoeuvre for the government to assert the role of the state. Finally, the existence of powerfully armed non-state actors implies that the state is unable to monopolise the use of force both internally and externally, while the perceived confessionalisation of some security forces (in particular the Internal Security Forces (ISF)) makes it difficult to deploy them even in areas nominally under the control of the state.

Through its location at the fault-line of the Arab-Israeli and regional conflicts, its inability to exert effective state power and the tendency to seek foreign support present among major political players, Lebanon invites *foreign intervention* and has been repeatedly turned into a theatre for proxy wars – both politically and militarily. Currently, Western states such the US, the UK and France which promote an Arab-Israeli peace arrangement and an alignment of "moderate" Arab states against alleged Iranian ambitions are seeking to isolate Iran and Syria and pressure them into ending support for Hizbullah and the Palestinian Hamas. Iran and Syria, on the other hand, seek to pre-empt any attempt at curtailing their ability to threaten Israel from Lebanese soil at little cost and risk to themselves, an important strategic asset in potential confrontations with the Western powers.[2] While unanimously rejecting foreign interference in Lebanon, both groups of foreign actors continue to arm their Lebanese allies: Hizbullah on the one side, security services seen as loyal to the government on the other.

Political actors in Lebanon have traditionally adopted *opposing positions with regard to these conflicts* according to their opposing positions vis-à-vis the national identity. Actors who advocate a distinctive Lebanese identity - historically mainly Christians - typically seek to maintain "neutrality" in these conflicts and look for support and protection of this neutrality from Western and "moderate Arab" states. Actors who emphasise Lebanon's Arabic and Islamic identity - historically mainly Sunni Muslims – push for active involvement on the side of those regional forces that opt

for confrontation with Israel and perceived "Western interests". These parameters have shifted with the regional split into states which seek accommodation with the US and Israel (such as Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia) and others who still opt for confrontation (Syria, Iran). Since the end of Syrian control over Lebanon in 2005, the majority of Sunnis and Druze have been allied with the first and Shiites with the second camp.[3]

Within the political system, foreign intervention by actors with a stake in the regional conflict configurations emerges as one of the major driving forces of conflict in Lebanon. These actors provide their Lebanese allies with financial, political and military support to maximise their influence with the objective of safeguarding foreign policy choices of Lebanese leaders that are in accordance with their interests. This intervention is greatly facilitated by the dysfunctional political system and its inability to resolve existential conflicts internally.

At the same time, sectarian leaders such as Saad Hariri, Walid Jumblat and Samir Geagea in the government and Hassan Nasrallah, Nabih Berri and Michel Aoun in the opposition camp are actors in their own right, with their own agenda of maximising their own influence – which they present as standing up for the interest of the sectarian community they claim to represent - on the back of such foreign support.[4] While at least some leaders have a track record of obvious opportunism on this account, it should be noted that in the past such differences, although always present, only erupted into conflict when paired with heightened regional tensions (1958 and 1975-90) and were easily contained once a new regional power equation had been stabilised (1958-70, 1990-2002). Only with substantial outside support can Lebanese actors reasonably hope to tilt the internal balance of power by means of confrontation, while bargaining and compromise resume as soon as such support appears to be drying up.

This conflict and the political paralysis resulting from it are greatly escalated by a pattern of political mobilisation for or against certain foreign policy options and alliances that draw on sectarian sentiment, either by denouncing the positions of opponents as mere smokescreens for attempts to change the sectarian balance, or by raising the spectre of fundamental changes to the national identity that will occur as a result of one's opponent's foreign alliances and will lead to the marginalisation of one's own community and the value system it ostensibly stands for (Hizbullah accusing its opponents of working towards "Americanisation" and "neo-liberalism", the government warning against Hizbullah's intention to establish an "Islamic Republic" based on the Iranian model).

The resulting conflation of foreign policy choices with sectarian identities invests the struggle over such choices with the full weight of a history rife with violence, and allows mobilisation to draw upon deep layers of emotion and vengeance. External military support to both sides and the proliferation of weapons outside the official security forces fuel a cycle of mutual fear perceptions and the build-up of proto-militias which can be converted into fully-fledged fighting forces at short notice and themselves serve as possible triggers for violence. New terrorist attacks will further a general sense of insecurity while heightened regional tensions, in particular between Sunnis and Shiites, will increase the mutual distrust of the two communities that provides the demographic backbone of the two opposing camps and the foot soldiers for violent conflict.

In addition to these challenges, Lebanon is host to more than 400,000 *Palestinian refugees*, half of whom live in camps and in often destitute conditions. While still armed and in control of quasi-autonomous areas beyond the reach of the state, Palestinian groups today, in contrast to the civil war period, are no longer actors in their own right. Rather, it is the internal divisions and the weakness of the Palestinian leadership – partly a reflection of the confrontation in Palestine itself – together

with the lack of any credible perspective for return or even a modest improvement of their living conditions that render Palestinian refugees in Lebanon an explosive potential and turn the camps into a fertile ground for radical groups, in particular Sunni Islamists. Since the internal Palestinian conflict mirrors the internal Lebanese conflict,[5] there is potential that Palestinian groups may be dragged into the Lebanese conflict, resulting in Palestinian infighting that may spill over to involve Lebanese.

The complex conflict configuration within the political subsystem begets a multitude of possible scenarios, each with its own set of triggers that could set the situation ablaze. Local actors may decide to break the political stalemate by mobilisation en masse (as the opposition attempted in late 2006) and initiate uncontrollable clashes in the street, as has already occurred in early 2007. Encouraged or even pressured by its foreign allies and/or in response to actions taken from the side of Hizbullah (such as new attacks on Israel, conflicts with the UNIFIL troops, or attempts at arms smuggling), the government may move to curb Hizbullah's capability to act as a state within a state, leading to clashes between Hizbullah and government supporters (as in the recent fighting in May 2008) and/or the official security forces, and to a split in the latter along sectarian lines. A further unravelling of the political system may lead to conflicts over loyalty and the control of ministries located in areas dominated by either side which may evolve into armed confrontation. In general, any unilateral political step with a significant confrontational character – such as implementing the Hariri Tribunal despite an opposition veto or electing a new President with a simple majority – could set in motion conflicts over loyalty that may spin out of control.

Society – Worlds Apart

Sectarian identifications are essential parameters by which Lebanese citizens orient and interpret behaviour, in the private as well as in the public sphere. While explicit sectarianism is routinely denounced in public discourse and amounts to a social taboo, implicit or thinly veiled appeals to sectarian sentiment (in particular fear perceptions) are stock and staple of public discourse while private discourse often turns explicit once the sectarian identity of those present has been established. Likewise, political orientations are largely a function of sectarian identities, and political parties such as the Communists, the Syrian Nationalists or the Ba'ath lost most of their substance during the civil war. Sectarian leaders routinely identify their own political fortunes and leverage in inter-elite competition with the interest and position of the sect they purport to represent and mobilise accordingly and mostly successfully along these lines, while rivalries over the leadership within individual sects (as is the case today in the Christian and the Druze community) may lead to a split where various factions of the same sect come down on opposing sides of a given political conflict.

Consequently, while sectarian sentiment can appear dormant and subdued during times of relative stability and elite consensus, any serious political or inter-elite conflict will invariably be cast as a contest of power between sectarian communities and/or various sectarian factions, thus becoming infused with the full historical weight of conflict, violence and the resulting mutual fear perceptions. In addition, the territorialisation of sectarian identities partly wrought by civil war displacement and sectarian cleansing leads to the identification of certain areas with individual sects and thus enables scenarios and perceptions of "defence" of territory that serve as pretexts and rallying points for sectarian mobilisation and creates triggers for the eventual outbreak and swift spread of violence.

This overall *sectarian structuring of the public sphere* mediated through sectarian leaders is to some extent a symptom of the conflict, but has became an accelerator

over time and now plays a significant role in the generation and build-up of conflict in Lebanon. The persistence of sectarianism is guaranteed by an education system that is largely segregated, in particular for the lower income classes who mainly rely on education provided by the sectarian communities, clientelism, dysfunctional political system and the lack of a credible state monopoly that renders clientelist networks defined by sect the only recourse when support is needed.

Yet sectarian attitudes do not themselves initiate conflict. Nor is active antagonism against other communities considered an acceptable or even permissible form of social or political expression, as opposed to other situations of protracted conflict (e.g. Bosnia, Kosovo). Rather, such sentiment is mobilised and refreshed by sectarian leaders according to political expediency and framed as a response to or defence against the purported ambitions and hostile tendencies of other communities and their leaders, drawing on past atrocities and current demographic fears.[6] The conflation of economic and political issues with sectarian identities and fear perceptions carries the danger that conflicts which have started over political or economic issues may acquire a sectarian dimension that may then evolve into full-blown sectarian conflict with its own dynamics of atrocities and retribution. Repeatedly in the recent history of Lebanon, political actors have attempted to improve and consolidate their positions in political conflicts by targeted acts of violence designed to convert the confrontation into a sectarian one. Finally, since the most volatile sectarian divide in today's Lebanon is that between Shiites and Sunnis, sectarian violence occurring in other parts of the Arab world and in particular in Iraq is also an escalating factor in Lebanon.

Religious authorities could potentially behave as actors in their own right and alleviate sectarian tension. Yet, with some exceptions, most of them perform the opposite role, aligning themselves with one of the political leaders claiming to represent their sect and mobilising sectarian sentiment on demand. Formal religious dialogue, while a common practice, rarely gets beyond carefully staged empty exchanges of mutual good will and commonalities.

Another aspect in this social construction of a "sectarian" reality is the fact that Lebanese citizens are confronted with the *continuous presence and prominence of leaders with a record of responsibility for wartime atrocities* (currently, this is the case for all major sects except for the Sunnis). The peace accord signed in Taef in 1989 and its implementation, including a general amnesty for war-related crimes, paved the way for the integration of the wartime elite into the political system which was complemented by an amnesty law covering nearly all acts of violence related to civil strife between 1975 and 1990. Already existing fear perceptions, sectarian resentment and a general sense of distrust towards other communities are thus heightened, the standing of "strong" leaders amplified and the readiness to critically evaluate the behaviour of one's own group and leadership minimised. The occurrence of some instances of enforced accountability (conviction and imprisonment of the leader of the Lebanese Forces, Samir Geagea, the Hariri Tribunal, the imprisonment of four former heads of Lebanese security services without indictment or trial since August 2005) that are easily portrayed as selective and politically motivated further enforces such "closing of the ranks" in defence of leaders implicated in atrocities. The precedent of the amnesty and the inability (with very few exceptions) of the security and legal system to bring to justice perpetrators of politically motivated violence that occurred in the post-amnesty era further contribute to a *culture of impunity* where little if any deterrence to political violence exists.

Economy – The Continuation of Clientelistic Politics

The Lebanese economy is dominated by a small number of powerful players who sometimes wield *virtual monopolies* over individual sectors, stifling competition and driving prices significantly above regional standards. Many of these thrive on political favouritism - as a lot of influential politicians are at the same time powerful entrepreneurs - while others capitalise on their privileged market access by acquiring partnerships with international corporations reluctant to venture on their own into a difficult market with limited potential. In particular the import of goods has historically been regulated by state-protected monopolies, allowing traders to realise premium margins. High interest rates and the conspicuous absence of financing instruments[7] make it difficult to raise start-up capital locally. The small size of the local market with limited amounts of disposable income restricts the growth of medium-size enterprises into major competitors. Much of the proverbial Lebanese entrepreneurial acumen is thus driven abroad, e.g. the Gulf states and West Africa.

Most employment opportunities in the Lebanese economy are concentrated in sectors dependent on the influx of wealthy foreigners, in particular from the Arab economies (hospitality, retail). Conversely, the reconstruction strategy of most Lebanese governments in the post-civil war era neglected or even actively harmed other productive sectors, in particular by ratifying free-trade agreements, while extensive government borrowing drained liquidity out of the economy and pressing reforms were delayed. Thus, the dramatic down-turn of tourism due to the political crisis sends shockwaves throughout an economy that offers little alternatives. Unskilled employees in the service sector are hit especially hard, while employees in the public sector are suffering the consequences of the ballooning public debt (salaries have been frozen since 1996, with some estimates suggesting a loss of purchase power of up to 50 %). Due to political instability, foreign investment focuses even more than before on real estate which offers only limited benefit for the local economy - as most construction workers are still Syrians and most materials are imported - while contributing to a surge in housing cost.

Owing to this *economic stagnation*, a growing part of the *lower middle classes is facing increasing economic difficulties*, which enhances the power of clientelist support systems and facilitates recruitment into proto-militias, be it as a result of social resentment or simply through the attraction of a monthly paycheck (e.g. employment in the burgeoning private security sector).

In addition to this, a long tradition of neglect of peripheral areas – essentially any areas beyond the coastal strip – that continued in the reconstruction phase of the 1990s has created pronounced patterns of *uneven development*, with most gainful activities and infrastructural facilities concentrated on Beirut and its hinterland to the north-east. These inequalities have produced large populations of migrants in low-income areas of the capital where experience of real and *relative deprivation* (many of these areas are underserved but only a few metres away from blatantly affluent areas) are easily mustered into political and sectarian resentment. Since most rural and urban areas are known for their sectarian and/or political identity, differential treatment in the provision of infrastructure and services is almost invariably perceived and easily exploited in these terms.

Whereas clientelism greatly facilitates political and military recruitment by sectarian leaders and also voids the political sphere of genuinely political issues, thus contributing to the dysfunctional political system and the perpetuation of the sectarian structuring of the public sphere, relative deprivation and economic stagnation produce a large reservoir of resentful and/or unemployed youth with ample time and motivation to wreak havoc and/or join proto-militias. The identification of state support, social advancement and welfare with sectarian allegiance also invests so-

cial conflict and the struggle over economic strategies with a strong sectarian dimension.

Hizbullah blames the economic difficulties on economic strategies dating back to the late Prime Minister Rafik El-Hariri, to which the current government and Prime Minister Fuad Seniora – who served as Minister of Finance in all Hariri governments – remain committed, and which the Shiite party portrays as "neo-liberal" and "following the dictate of the World Bank and the IMF" and hence Western interests. By casting the government as ignoring the plight of the poor and serving the interests of local and regional finance capital, the party also caters to a centrepiece of Shiite religious identity, the partisanship for the marginalised and oppressed. The Christian part of the opposition – the Free Patriotic Movement of Michel Aoun - caters to the meritocratic orientations and the sectarian prejudices of its mainly middle-class Christian followers by focusing on cases of "corruption" that happen to be almost exclusively related to clientelist behaviour of the (Sunni) Hariri camp while sparing its Shiite allies with their long records of similar practices.

The current government on the other hand has constantly presented itself as a guarantor of stability and continued aid, and has touted the donor commitments at the Paris III conference in January 2007 to support this claim. It blames the current economic difficulties largely on Hizbullah and its "destabilising" behaviour leading in particular to the damage incurred by the 2006 war, the closure of downtown Beirut and the reluctance of investors to come to Lebanon under such circumstances. The more structural problems are blamed on a lack of crucial reform, due until 2005 to the resilience of Syrian-protected rackets and since then, again, the confrontational stance of the opposition and the closure of parliament.

Apart from a few and rather weak public appeals, the Lebanese business and economic elite has been surprisingly silent amidst the dramatic decline of the crucial tourism and retail sectors caused by the crisis.[8] The Lebanese trade unions, on the other hand, were largely subverted by political movements during the civil war, and possess little credibility and following among the working class. While trade unionists may attempt to regain credibility by mobilising for labour-related issues under the conditions of the economic crisis,[9] it appears unlikely that they will be able to mobilise large numbers without at least the implicit endorsement of either political camp, meaning that any such movement will inevitably be sucked into the larger conflict and slip from their control.

Tensions over economic issues have been escalated by a global rise in food prices, the devaluation of the dollar (to which the local currency is pegged), and the global rise in energy prices. Controversial reform measures pushed through by the government – such as selling off state assets, or slashing jobs – may be among the triggers for loyalty conflicts, evolving into larger protests and, potentially, clashes. More likely, however, social and economic grievances and grudges will be instrumentalised by the political players to score political points and deliver political messages,[10] or genuine social protest may be hijacked for the same purpose (as happened on 27 January and 7 May 2008). The most likely scenario appears to be mass mobilisation, ostensibly for the sake of social issues but charged with strong sectarian undertones, which, due to the territorialisation of sectarian identities, will solicit violent reactions – supposedly strictly for defensive purposes – from adjacent communities and ignite sectarian clashes, in particular between Sunnis and Shiites in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

2.2   Foreign Aid in Lebanon

Foreign aid in post-war Lebanon passed through two stages, with a first phase last-ing from 1992 to 1997 and mainly focusing on the provision of resources for post-war reconstruction projects. After 1997, there was a qualitative shift from using foreign aid to finance reconstruction needs towards financial stability and balance-of-payments equilibrium needs. While avoiding financial and currency crises and maintaining the necessary confidence of national and foreign investors to provide loans for public debt restructuring, this strategy reduced the already faltering for-eign loans and grants for reconstruction, and post-war reconstruction plans were further delayed. It was not until the end of 2004 that the 1992-97 plans for the physical and productive sectors were fulfilled, whereas in the social sectors only 50 % of the original expenditures for the period 1992-97 were achieved by the end of 2004.

The growing need for foreign financial support to address public debt and the lag-ging economy, the latter due to the inadequate reconstruction efforts as well as to macroeconomic policies, was approached with the convening of donor confer-ences.[11] The Paris I and II conferences in 2001 and 2002 came up with a Lebanese reform programme, averted a financial crisis and laid the foundations for economic recovery. However, the Lebanese government failed to make a lasting impact on the growing debt or implement the promised structural reforms. After the July 2006 Israel-Lebanon war, the Stockholm conference on 31 August 2006 promised a total of 980 million dollars for humanitarian assistance and post-war early recovery based on the National Plan for Early Reconstruction Needs. This conference was fol-lowed by the 2007 Paris III conference which raised around 7.6 billion dollars of pledges in soft loans and grants, including a good part of the contributions prom-ised during the Stockholm conference. The conference was seen as a sequel to the Paris II meetings. The political blame for the non-implementation of the promised reforms under Paris II was put on the President of the republic and on the pro-Syrian political parties. However, the international community more or less openly accused the whole political system in Lebanon of this failure. The Paris III confer-ence focused on providing direct support for the post-war reconstruction plan, se-curing cash for debt service, and covering the budgetary deficit. The government proposed a renewed socio-economic reform programme including privatisation, tax increases, labour law reform, and reforms of the social security system. However, these processes are mainly seen as targets in themselves and less as factors to en-hance development which should thus be part of a comprehensive national devel-opment strategy.

Directly after the war of summer 2006, humanitarian relief followed by assistance to help the reconstruction efforts in housing, roads, the water and wastewater sec-tors and power sector flooded the country. However, the main framework for the disbursement of foreign aid in Lebanon is now the Paris III reform programme. Un-til June 2008, 63 % of pledges made at the conference were signed into agree-ments, with donors focusing on power, security, water and wastewater, transporta-tion, and social sectors as well as administrative reforms, privatisation, and private sector support (e.g. private sector access to credit). Among the main donors are the European Investment Bank (EIB), Saudi Arabia, the World Bank, the United States, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), France, the European Commission, Italy and Germany.

Although donors acknowledge existing political impediments to successful and sus-tainable reform, the amount of funds allocated to political reform programmes is comparatively low. Most donors have concentrated their technical and financial as-sistance on improving socio-economic conditions and strengthening state institu-

tions, however, not on democracy promotion, rule of law, and human rights. Probably the most important actor with substantial political reform objectives is the European Union. Under the MEDA I and II Programme, the main financial instrument of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), only a very limited portion went to programmes related to political reform. By contrast, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), developed in 2004, introduced a more targeted approach to political reform in Lebanon.[12] The National Indicative Programme 2007-2010 allocates €10 million to judicial and prison reform and €12 million to political reform (11.8 % of the total amount of €187 million. There are two other pillars: "support for social and economic reform" and "support for reconstruction and recovery", the latter focusing on the damage of the 2006 war), with the latter concentrating on electoral law reform, supporting the preparation and implementation of the National Action Plan on respect for human rights, freedom of expression and independence of the media, women's participation, anti-corruption, and initiatives that promote national identity and social inclusion. However, the results have been mixed so far and most initiatives have been greatly hampered by the long-lasting political crisis. Furthermore, it is questionable whether the envisaged activities sufficiently target the key flaws in the political system and root causes of the lack of state capacity and state accountability, dealing instead with administrative and technical issues.

Donor coordination has become a key mechanism to facilitate the effective allocation and implementation of aid and is of vital importance in post-conflict settings. However, aid coordination mechanisms set up after the war in 2006 were rather insufficient because of the political stalemate, competing donor agendas, as well as the fast influx of money – and humanitarian organisations. While international actors interviewed noted the low level of coordination as well as joint assessments, the sharing of information and lessons learnt within the international community, existing coordination forums, information or studies seemed difficult to access for Lebanese actors, especially on the local level. According to the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group, institutional issues requiring cross-sectoral coordination have made little progress.[13]

The opposing foreign policy orientations are reflected in different funding partners - with Western donors supporting the government and the Iranian Committee for the Reconstruction of Lebanon financing reconstruction efforts of Hizbullah – as well as parallel structures for the planning and implementation of projects established by the government (Council for Development and Reconstruction, Ministry of Finance) and Hizbullah (Jihad al-Bina'a, Wa'd) respectively. The politicisation of aid led to a real (or sometimes perceived) "territorialisation" of aid and created conflicts over available resources in local communities in the South. Moreover, foreign donors increasingly turned to municipalities as conduits or beneficiaries of projects, to a large extent due to the inability of governmental bodies to implement programmes. However, these attempts not only struggle with the weaknesses of the municipalities themselves, not all of which are necessarily apparent to outsiders (e.g. mayors who bought their position rather than being elected, local feuds etc.); in the absence of a national consensus on the government's overall strategy for development as well as sector-specific reform programmes, projects may also run the risk of remaining isolated and unsustainable. They may also - unintentionally – contribute to furthering the government's negligence of the periphery, especially of the South, if they are not embedded in a strategy, which links micro-level approaches with the macro (national) level.

2.3   Civil Society

Lebanon has seen a significant growth of civil society activity and organisations during the civil war and throughout the 1990s, having a secular nature and focusing on general interest issues like environment, human rights, women, social justice etc. However, these organisations still do not represent the dominant model, which is traditionally identity-based and rooted in clan, sectarian or religious structures. Moreover, a number of new civil society organisations were founded by individual politicians over the past decade, such as the Hariri, Moawad, and Safadi Foundations. By providing basic services, such organisations play a major role in reinforcing the patron-client relationship and foster orientation along sectarian and political lines.

Around 5,000 NGOs are officially registered in Lebanon while a study carried out in 2000 indicated that approximately 700 of them are active on a regular and sustained basis. They often lack large memberships and have little influence in political life, mainly due to a missing link between civil society and its actors and the political system where almost no public debate occurs on important political issues.

Overall, longer-term partnership between national CSOs, NGOs and INGOs has decreased, as most funding to Lebanese NGOs since the 2006 war has shifted towards the provision of humanitarian aid. International donors trying to strengthen civil society focus primarily on general capacity-building of NGOs and other civil society organisations and to a lesser extent on fostering their watchdog function and independent role vis-à-vis the political system and sectarian groups. However, there are some good examples of foreign actors supporting issue-based and advocacy CSOs with the aim of establishing networks of shared interest among citizens based on social conditions rather than origin and sectarian communities and thus expanding the public sphere by creating alternative avenues of political participation. Some of these CSOs, like the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) or the "Lebanese Parliamentary Monitor" launched by the group Nahwa Al-Muwatiniyah/Towards Citizenship, also try to assume watchdog functions and are explicitly geared towards making the political system more accountable to citizens and voters. Moreover, substantial foreign support and funding have been pouring into building capacity for election monitoring and, since 2006, campaigning for electoral reform. For this end, a broad coalition of CSOs was formed under the umbrella of the Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform (CCER).

There is a good to high level of education and professional experience in the NGO sector. Especially in the field of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, good experience and capacities in carrying out training, advocacy and campaigning exist. However, there is still a lack of organisational sustainability. On one hand, personalisation and almost exclusively project-oriented funding hamper institutional development and networking. Inflexible hierarchies and a lack of internal democratic practice sometimes deter younger activists, leading to further fragmentation into a plethora of small and institutionally weak organisations. Since the most creative and productive members of the civil society sector which developed during the 1990s have by now entered absorbing professional careers, the failure to recruit and empower new activists also means that some CSOs and NGOs are suffering from processes of negative selection. Conversely, the dramatic increase in pro-democracy funding, in particular since 2005, has to some degree led to a decline of volunteerism, meaning that some organisations today are far better funded than in the past but perform less well than they did in the late 1990s. In other cases, organisations are clearly established with the main objective of providing employment for the activists themselves.

CSOs and NGOs are, furthermore, mainly founded and run by and for a narrowly circumscribed urban educated elite, focused on the capital and with little mass appeal, while local and community-based organisations - often related to religious institutions - are mostly shunned by international donors on the assumption that such organisations are undemocratic and geared towards the reproduction of traditional forms of association and authority. However, in what ways these traditional forms of association which usually command an amount of legitimacy and public support could be viable partners in selected fields (e.g. combating ethnic and sectarian tensions) merits further analysis.

3. Getting Engaged

Against the background of this analysis, four fields of activity for development and peacebuilding organisations were identified.[14] Approaches to and conflict transformation in these fields do not only allow to address core problems leading to conflict in Lebanon, but they also provide opportunities to foster the neutrality of public services and of existing structures and institutions which balance and coordinate conflicting interests in society as well as to strengthen an overall Lebanese identity at the expense of sectarian- and group-based orientations. Moreover, the forth field offers entry points to contribute to immediate violence prevention.

3.1 Education and Dialogue

In post-conflict situations, the education system is of crucial importance to initiate and sustain a long-term process of value-based socio-political change. This is especially true of societies divided by experience of inter-communal violence or civil war, mistrust and mutually exclusive ethnic or religious identities. However, educational reform processes geared towards strengthening national institutions, the inclusion of different social groups, trust-building and the development of a vision for a shared future are often contested and difficult to implement in these societies.

The same applies to Lebanon: On the one hand, social and sectarian-based divisions within the society are reinforced by the education system with its rather weak public education sector and traditionally strong and constantly growing private education sector; on the other hand, this striking dichotomy simply mirrors the overall weakness of state institutions dominated by the strong sectarian-based patronage system.

In order to restore credibility in the public education system and to facilitate the national reconciliation process after the civil war, several initiatives of the Ministry of Education in cooperation with civil society organisations emerged in the 1990s, including a revamping of the education system and providing training to all public sector school teachers. An "education on citizenship" curriculum was introduced in all state and private primary and secondary schools and is still taught today, and a common history book was developed, though it remains highly contested and was never introduced. Since 2000, the Ministry of Education, with $70 million in World Bank funding for eight years, focused on improving the quality of the public education sector. This included supporting interaction between students from different communities by investing in "magnet schools", i.e. central schools in mixed residential areas. Although this project is delayed by the increased political tensions within the government after Hariri's assassination and some resistance from influential private school associations, various activities have taken place, although their impact has yet to be assessed. Moreover, there is little interest among the richer part of the population and elite in engaging in reform of the education system, and

the high percentage of private schools is not seen as an obstacle to the improvement of state schools and thus the improvement of a key citizens' right. In fact, the private education sector continues to receive funding from church-based organisations and Saudi Arabian donors, to mention a few, as well as support from local NGOs and international NGOS in the delivery of education programmes or teacher training. Hence, after the war in summer 2006, only 34.6% of school children were enrolled in state schools, with the large majority now attending sectarian-based free private schools.[15]

In the aftermath of the war, a large number of bilateral donors and aid agencies provided short-term humanitarian aid for the (re-)construction of schools, purchasing of equipment and teacher training. However, only a few international organisations like the World Bank[16] have identified education as a priority issue and are engaged in the formal education system, and even fewer of them have developed comprehensive strategies which - besides technical support - aim at promoting a more inclusive education system based on shared social, cultural and political values. Considering the relevance of the sector in post-conflict societies, the value of education within the Lebanese society, the weakness of the public system and the high percentage of school drop-outs, it is possible to identify not only needs but also opportunities for peacebuilding: Ideas and experiences to improve quality already exist and the state education sector could attract double the number of students at minimal additional cost. Moreover, the Paris III process, although politically sensitive, offers inbuilt aid conditional on reform mechanisms, which could be a vehicle to support reforms.

While there is an obvious strategic gap with regard to educational reform processes and integrating peacebuilding approaches into the formal education system, non-formal education programmes and training on citizenship, democracy, human rights and non-violent conflict resolution as well as different forms of dialogue activities are widespread. They are mainly funded by international donors and target either (marginalised) children, youth and students or – based on the idea of multi-track diplomacy – so-called multipliers within society such as teachers, journalists, politicians, trade union members, religious leaders, NGO staff members and lawyers. Assuming that individual encounters will change attitudes and the identification of shared needs, interests and problems will reduce or even resolve conflicts and bridge the sectarian divide, most dialogue programmes combine encounters of peer groups with capacity-building or the development of activities on common interest issues (school twinning, sports, drugs, environment, professional or economic opportunities). A multitude of Lebanese CSOs and several universities are engaged in these programmes. Some organisations, like the Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR), the Permanent Peace Movement (PPM) or the USJ-based Christian-Islamic Dialogue Program, started their work many years ago, and there is a large pool of skilled and experienced trainers and practitioners in this field.

Very few initiatives, however, try to facilitate problem-solving dialogue processes between higher-level decision-makers (track 1.5), such as the dialogue among Lebanese parliamentarians run by the Swiss Association for Euro-Arabo-Muslim Dialogue (ASDEAM) or the dialogue between Lebanese ministers, members of parliament, academics and journalists on the one side and politicians and civil society actors from within the Palestinian community in Lebanon on the other, organised by Chatham House between 2002 and 2006.

The majority of the projects are - by nature - short-term activities. Some organisations try to or have already developed an institutionalised space for interaction (e.g. youth clubs, LACR's "House of Peace"); some aim at building up networks, like the EU-funded AFKAR project, which supports several organisations and is run by the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR).[17]

To use Mary Anderson's terminology[18], dialogue and education initiatives are dominated by a "more people approach" on the grassroots level. They lack a sound "theory of change", which links changes on the individual level with the broader socio-political context and changes in the core problems leading to conflict in Lebanon. Moreover, dialogue projects are not rooted in the space within which conflicts are taking place, and there are few coordination efforts among the different actors, especially in terms of linking systemic and higher-level processes with community-level efforts. When present, coordination is mostly at the level of implementation and across horizontal lines or organisations working at the community level. Thus, the lack of comprehensive strategies for institutionalisation and multiplication on the higher level ("key people") and the political and sectarian polarisation within the broader context render their impact and leverage on core problems leading to conflict rather negligible.

3.2   Transitional Justice

Building peace in divided societies is a complex and long-term process of re-establishing trust amongst people as well as between people and state institutions. The experiences of the past decades suggest that truth-seeking mechanisms as well as re-establishing justice and the rule of law by different means are important elements of this process. Over time, different approaches have been developed – ranging from prosecution, lustration and reform of state institutions (especially justice and security sector), to truth commissions and reparation programmes. More recently, these approaches are referred to as transitional justice mechanisms.[19]

None of these mechanisms, however, was applied to deal with the legacy of the civil war in Lebanon. In contrast to other peace agreements, Taef did not call for the prosecution of war crimes or a truth-seeking process, but brought those responsible for staging the war to power. An amnesty law was passed by the government in 1991 and with the demobilisation process evolving many of the approximately 30,000 permanent militia fighters were integrated either into the army or public administration. The continuity of wartime personnel on different levels within the system as well as the lack of political accountability have seriously hampered attempts to address past human rights abuses and undermine a broader process of value-based socio-political change. The prevailing culture of impunity and public silence about atrocities committed is coupled with divided memories and mutually exclusive "truth" about the war, which form part of the different groups' identities and reinforce social segregation.

In fact, it was only after the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri in February 2005 and the establishment of the International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) that calls for truth, justice and accountability became widespread in Beirut. However, the Commission was immediately drawn into the conflict between the two governmental blocs, and while these calls formed part of the March 14 Movement's campaign, pro-Syrian fractions denounced the Commission as well as plans to establish a Special Tribunal for Lebanon ("Hariri Tribunal") for being an instrument of Western interventionism. Even though international tribunals often run the risk of being perceived as selective and biased, they are much more prone to political instrumentalisation and delegitimisation[20] when they are set up as an isolated mechanism and no comprehensive approach to transitional justice is taken. As long as no additional efforts are being invested to address justice concerns of the past and *the present* - such as a future-oriented reform of the weak and politicised judiciary - the Hariri Tribunal is unlikely to be instrumental in ending the culture of impunity in Lebanon. For the time being, the isolated mechanism is pursuing more of a "justice for few" logic, strengthening the existing culture of charismatic leaders and feeding into the sectarian-based patronage system. In this,

the Tribunal parallels the General Amnesty Law, which excluded crimes against political leaders and was not embedded in a broader approach to transitional justice, e.g. truth-seeking and fact-finding mechanisms, vetting processes or reparation programmes for victims, and commemoration events.

As in other post-conflict societies, where political conditions do not allow for a more comprehensive "dealing with the past" process, several "islands" of transitional justice initiatives can be found in Lebanon. Many of them are taken on by individuals, such as artists, film makers, authors, journalists, or lawyers, and some do have organisational structures and resources, like the American University of Beirut, which offers a minor in transitional justice, or various victims' and human rights organisations. The latter focus on the identification of missing persons, documentation of human rights violations and fact-finding or advocacy for a national memorial day on 13 April, the day of the outbreak of the civil war. Besides this, initial discussions to establish a Truth Commission in Lebanon and some advocacy work on this topic have already taken place. In order to overcome the isolated nature of these initiatives, several organisations, among them Solida, Al-Karama and Umam, recently started to build up a network and broaden their approach to transitional justice. Initial attempts to profit from experiences of other dealing with the past processes have been made by Umam.

For the past two decades, family associations[21] in Lebanon have been lobbying for their right to know, but no serious efforts have been made so far to open mass graves and determine the fates of the thousands of disappeared.[22] Three different official commissions were set up between 2000 and 2005, investigating the different groups of missing persons in Lebanon: those abducted and – allegedly still – imprisoned in either Syria or Israel, and those who fell victim to Lebanese militias. However, these commissions were also prone to political manipulation. None of these commissions published a report and no follow-up actions - such as material or symbolic reparations - were taken, even though the first commission recommended compensation and social rehabilitation. Based on a law on missing persons[23], the first commission also recommended that persons who had been missing for at least four years be declared "dead", and this route was subsequently pursued by many, especially wealthier, families. The task of exhuming and identifying missing persons today requires sophisticated methods (DNA database and analysis) and is a highly sensitive issue as it concerns most of the current political elite, and there is also an obvious need to support relatives in their right to know. There are also some opportunities to be explored. Family associations have collected a great deal of information about the fates of the missing and human rights violations, which could be of use in further processes (e.g. truth commission, memorials, history teaching, prosecution), but they lack management capacities, not least in processing and archiving the information. The National Plan of Action for Human Rights calls for the opening of mass graves, which could be a point of reference for political dialogue as well as practical action. Additionally, the international legal doctrine of disappearance as "continuing crime" is not covered by the General Amnesty Law. Some lawsuits have been filed by relatives, albeit without success, but the legal avenue can create space to initiate a broader discussion on justice concerns. Finally, a study on victims' needs and expectations, jointly planned by LCPS, Solida, PPM and Alef (Lebanese Association for Education and Training), will give insights into victim groups' priorities as regards truth, justice and reconciliation.

Transitional justice and dealing with the past processes always take place in a highly charged political context. Supporting such processes as an external actor needs a detailed context analysis, a comprehensive understanding and a multi-layered strategy for transitional justice as well as reflection about one's own role in the context and the political signals sent by supporting specific mechanisms or initiatives.[24] This is especially true in Lebanon, where only one isolated and contested

transitional justice mechanism, the Hariri Tribunal, receives many resources from international donors, while broader justice concerns are neglected and a comprehensive approach to "justice for all" is lacking. In general, few donors, among them the Swiss and the Spanish embassies, support civil society initiatives. However, no other field of action sees a higher concentration of different German actors: The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the German Embassy and the ifa/zivik-programme are providing funds. Additionally, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) has set up an office in Beirut and is supporting organisations in furthering their strategic approach. The generation of knowledge, networking, and advocacy provides good entry points and there is a need to strengthen capacities and collaboration amongst different actors, especially on specific topics (e.g. database management, legal avenues).

3.3 Justice and Rule of Law

The accessibility of the justice system and its treatment of cases on an equal and impartial basis are fundamental to peacebuilding. Besides having intrinsic value in the context of Lebanon, fostering a more independent justice system and the application of rule of law could be a viable strategy to weaken the patronage that underpins the confessional system by making it less important for ordinary citizens in legal matters. Moreover, an independent and accountable judiciary would also make clientelist influence-wielding outside the rule of law and the domination of state institutions by the political elites less easy and thus indirectly strengthen state institutions.

Although Lebanon is a parliamentary democracy and separation of powers is granted by the constitution, the checks and balances in the political system are more often based on the sectarian balance of power than on the formal separation of the legislature, executive and judiciary. As the sectarian-based patronage system strongly shaped the process of state-building while blurring the line between public and private spheres, a strong executive's patronage of the legislature and judiciary developed and became structural and continues to have a substantial impact on the nature of the rule of law and the judiciary in Lebanon.[25]

According to the constitution, the Ministry of Justice has formal authority over the judicial system, but the Supreme Judicial Council exercises actual jurisdiction over the various courts.[26] After the civil war, a series of amendments were introduced that collectively aimed to strengthen the independence of the judiciary and judicial bodies and protect judges from interference and politically motivated transfers. However, sectarian balances and political reasons have led politicians to interfere in the Council's decisions. The Minister of Justice still has the final say in the appointment and transfer of judges through the control of the Supreme Judicial Council, whose seats must be confessionally divided and whose members are appointed by the executive.[27] Moreover, judges are still civil servants under administrative supervision and a principle of immovability of judges is not established.[28]

These structural weaknesses make the Lebanese judiciary highly vulnerable to outside interference while undermining its impartiality, effectiveness and finally its credibility. These consequences are exacerbated by corruption, abetted by low wages, and by inefficiency and the slowness of the system. The latter two factors mainly stem from overcomplicated procedures, a general shortage of judges and court staff (currently aggravated by severe delays in the appointment of new judges due to the political deadlock), a lack of material resources, and the appointment of staff and judges based on patronage rather than professional competence.

While there is a strong sense of self-censorship among judges and surveys show that lawyers fear repercussions if they express their personal views towards these issues publicly, public confidence in the judiciary and legal system as a whole is very low. However, sharp public criticisms of the judiciary and calls for immediate judicial reform have led to no more than fragmented reforms. While a comprehensive framework for the reform of the judiciary was reviewed and announced by the Ministry of Justice in 2002, its implementation is hindered and largely confined by the executive to technical issues. A prominent example in this regard is former President Lahoud's refusal to sign a new decree that would reform the judicial nominations process even after it had been unanimously approved by the Higher Judicial Council and ratified by the Minister of Justice in 2007. As a result, the Lebanese judicial system has mainly benefited from partial technical reforms, such as modern equipment and libraries installed in the Houses of Justice, newly computerised judicial offices, newly developed judicial institutes, and training courses for judges.

As in many conflict and post-conflict countries where the government itself is an important actor in the conflict, external support to strengthen the rule of law in Lebanon has difficulty in applying an integrated[29] approach to the issue. However, given the interconnected nature of the elements of a rule of law system, it is difficult to achieve sustainable change if these elements are not approached in a coherent fashion. Whereas the overall activities of USAID[30], UNDP and the European Commission[31] - the most important actors supporting judicial reform and rule of law in Lebanon – cover most of the relevant elements in one way or another, a comprehensive programme to strengthen the rule of law is not in place. All activities primarily focus on improving the effectiveness and transparency of the judiciary through capacity-building (human and material resources) and supporting a modernised functioning of the courts and internal organisation. However, their links to strengthening legislative processes on law-making, division of powers, parliament-civil society dialogue, penal reform, human rights, and law enforcement are non-existent or seem not to be well established. Additionally, due to the political deadlock of the last two years, training and material support to the judiciary have become the leftovers of an otherwise frozen reform process.

While the European Commission's approach of linking its support for the judicial system (judiciary, penal system, access to justice, legal protection) with the strengthening of the security sector and the rule of law (assistance and training to the ISF, customs, border management, criminal investigation, drug trafficking etc.) could be seen as inclusive, it focuses to a large extent on support for law enforcement despite the fact that the necessary legal control mechanisms do not yet function to an adequate extent. Furthermore, its substantial but selective support for some of the security services without any clear-cut and comprehensive strategy for SSR under way in Lebanon is counterproductive and its possible negative effects are exacerbated by the fact that the different security services have their own place in the overall conflict system (cf. also Section 3.4).

Like many programmes which attempt to strengthen the rule of law, external actors in Lebanon focus to a greater extent on deficiencies in institutional and formal legal structures than on initiating a strategy to approach the socio-political dynamics that prevent such structures from functioning. This, however, is especially important when working in conflict situations as opposition looms large and project partners and executing agencies can themselves be part of it.

Approaches for judicial reform and the rule of law in Lebanon should, first of all, develop a strategy to create the necessary support base for reforms. Such an approach must carefully build up a reform coalition that includes "allies" from both inside and outside the judiciary, such as judges, politicians, executive branch offi-

cials, and members of professional associations, NGOs, advocacy groups, universities or law schools, business groups, and the media.

In this regard, existing partnerships with civil society actors and organisations like the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) or the Arab Center for the Development of the Rule of Law and Integrity (ACRLI) should be strengthened and linked with a number of actors working on human rights issues and the National Plan of Action for Human Rights and with activities of the different Lebanese Bar Associations. Existing capacity-building activities can be used as a key entry point to bring together like-minded actors and make stakeholders part of the reform process. A coalition of these organisations could not only support a comprehensive reform through participation, public awareness, advocacy, monitoring and reporting; it could also counter opposition where official institutions such as the Ministry of Justice are not in a position to do so.

3.4   Violence Prevention and Security

The Lebanese security sector suffers the same ills caused by the sectarian-based patronage system which permeates all state institutions. Besides the Lebanese Army, three security apparatuses exist under the Ministry of the Interior: the Internal Security Forces (ISF), the General Directorate of General Security, and the General Directorate of State Security, the largest of which are the ISF. In addition, other security systems exist, with their own intelligence services, including the Presidential/Republican Guard, the Governmental Guard, which is in charge of the security of the Prime Minister, and the Airport Security Service. Each of the above enjoys affiliations with one of the sectarian political leaderships. The Central Security Council, which should act as an official coordination body, exists merely as a formality and the Defence and Interior Ministries do not exercise any institutionalised authority. This lack in central oversight and control over the various security apparatuses leads to inefficiency and poor coordination as well as overlap in jurisdiction, and allows these different structures to be played off against each other in the sectarian distribution game.

Although the army has reinstituted its authority over most of the Lebanese territory since the civil war, economic, political and strategic factors have prevented it from reaching sufficient operational readiness and taking on a formal role in national defence. However, at the same time, the Taef agreement and the post-civil war period reinforced the role of the army in internal security matters. So while the army did not allow space for a substantial police institution for a long time, since the withdrawal of the Syrian army in 2005, the ISF has undergone substantial capacity-building measures and is increasingly attracting foreign support.

These deficiencies in the Lebanese state's monopoly on security are further underlined by two factors: firstly, the existence of the 12,500-strong United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) deployed in south Lebanon to "monitor the cessation of hostilities; accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy throughout the south of Lebanon; and extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons"[32], and secondly, the existence of several non-state actors, mainly the Islamic resistance - Hizbullah's armed wing - and armed Palestinian and Islamic fundamentalist factions which are confined to the refugee camps and whose disarmament is at the core of UN Resolution 1701 and the current political crisis. In addition, there is an increase in private security companies, again with sectarian-political affiliations, with many (re-)emerging militias on both sides of the conflict being reinforced with training and arms.

Not surprisingly, then, none of the state-run forces is entirely trusted at the popular level, and this mistrust is reinforced by biased foreign support to one and not the other of the forces. The most striking is the support provided to the ISF by the US and French governments. Although the army remains probably the only unified state apparatus with a wide popular support base, it too is at risk of division as a result of obvious internal disputes. The lack of trust in the capacity or willingness of state actors to provide security is particularly relevant in relation to the army's role in south Lebanon and its perceived inability to protect the mostly Shiite residents of south Lebanon from a possible Israeli attack, and strengthens the argument against disarming Hizbullah.

In the current political situation, the importance of the security sector in terms of crisis prevention and peacebuilding, though closely tied to the core problems of the political conflict, stems mainly from the high risk of conflict escalation into violent confrontation in Lebanon. Besides political assassinations and the war with Israel in summer 2006, street confrontations between youths allied with opposing political camps are occurring almost bi-weekly. Proliferation of arms, increasing acceptance of violence, and emerging "front lines" in divided public spaces, especially in Beirut, accompany the violent clashes. Within these spaces, emerging neighbourhood defence committees and local coordination bodies established by political forces on the ground have been entrusted with the task of managing conflicts once they arise. As these actors carry out their task with more success than the ISF or the army, the state's control over these areas is further weakened.

Uneven development and increasing economic difficulties enhance the power of clientelistic support systems and facilitate recruitment into proto-militias from within areas of disadvantage, especially in north Lebanon and the Palestinian refugee camps. Because of the above reasons, as well as the particular political situation of the Palestinian refugee camps, the same areas have become safe havens and sanctuaries for outlaws and Islamic fundamentalist groups, and are gradually transforming into "spaces of exception", in the sense that they are beyond the control and reach of the army and security forces and are thus spaces where the security forces are "excepted" from restraint or respect for the rights of the residents if they are in confrontation with them. Prominent examples are the lack of respect for the rights of Palestinian residents of the Nahr el-Bared camp during the clashes with the Fateh al-Islam salafist group from May to September 2007 or in recent riot control by the army in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

Fully considering the various deficiencies of the Lebanese security institutions, it is, however, important to note that the ongoing turbulent security situation is political at core and stems more from the use of violence as a means of political communication than from the inability of security personnel in place to control risk. As such, the need in the short and medium term is to defuse the political crisis and create avenues for non-violent resolution of the conflict issues. In the longer term, and fundamental to tackle the patronage system, there is a need to strengthen central oversight and coordination among security services. Closely tied to this are the neutrality, independence, and professionalism of the security sector which need to be strengthened, including dealing with the sectarian appointment of heads of main security agencies as well as members. State control also needs to extend to non-state military actors, including armed political groups and private security firms, to allow the state to assert its monopoly in the security sphere. On a more technical level, the security forces also suffer from inadequate equipment and training, especially when it comes to riot control, and insufficient financial resources to allow for internal reform.

While there is a multiplicity of actors within the sector, the efforts for reform and violence prevention are quite limited in scope. Most investment goes to initiatives

to strengthen the security forces with equipment and training, provided by the governments of the US, UK, France, and the United Arab Emirates as well as the EU, mostly targeting the ISF. Some initiatives from the above governments have supported the Lebanese army which has been heavily involved in internal riot control, while the German government has supported a joint Army – ISF effort for improved control of the north Lebanon border and customs. Such efforts seem to lack an overarching approach to reform within these forces, especially as it relates to the problems of divisions between forces and political allegiances, and seem insensitive to the possible implication of such forces in the political crisis that risks turning into armed confrontation. On the contrary, such support only discredits these state institutions as they are increasingly perceived as vulnerable to foreign interference.

In terms of non-governmental actors, the Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (CESMO) stands out as one of the few actors working on security sector reform in Lebanon. CESMO's efforts seek to build regional and national competence and networks on SSR as a means to create leverage for the discussion of selected aspects in the public and political sphere and the development of a long-term reform strategy. Activities include the Observatory on Defence and Security established in 2006, which studies constitutional and legal solutions to reinforce parliamentary oversight, especially as far as defence budgeting and procurement are concerned. To aid the above, the Observatory is also compiling, in collaboration with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), all law texts related to defence and security in Lebanon.

At another level, there are various local civil society campaigns which are pushing for the de-escalation of the conflict to prevent its development into violent confrontation. The most comprehensive is probably the Khalass! campaign[33], which targets both politicians and the public. Other efforts are linked to either work on memories of the previous civil war (cf. 3.2 Transitional Justice) or with grassroots youth-targeted dialogue projects (cf. 3.1 Education and Dialogue). The latter, however, continue to be limited initiatives with very little power to affect the political process, recruitment into proto-militias, and the violent dynamics among young people on the ground.

4.   Recommendations

Contributing to conflict transformation and peacebuilding in an extremely polarised and volatile conflict context poses many challenges to external actors: social relationships are complex and often inscrutable for external actors because of a long history of mistrust and violence; aid is easily politically manipulated by internal and external actors and becomes a source of conflicts on the local as well as the national level; relationships established with state or civil society actors not only strengthen/legitimise the respective partner's position, but are also prone to negative perceptions by "the others", whether it be opposition parties, religious groups, etc.

Hence, even though external actors often assume that they are "outsiders" to the conflict, more often than not, they are part of the conflict setting. This is especially true in Lebanon, where regional and international actors have their own strategic interests. Moreover, external resources are *not neutral*. They are changing the context (relationships, economic, social and political power structures) and can have mitigating effects as well as an aggravating influence on conflicts.

Having said that, and being aware of the many socio-political and more technical challenges of designing and implementing programmes in the Lebanese context,

international actors can still play a supportive role in preventing violence and building peace by applying a well-sequenced *strategic approach* allowing a focus on core problems leading to conflict and *strengthening relevant local actors and structures*.

4.1 General Recommendations

Enhance strategic approaches to peacebuilding in Lebanon

The peacebuilding relevance of development and peace programmes is not solely defined by the *instruments* used (e.g. conflict management training) but rather by the degree to which they address the central elements and actors proven (a) to be core to the reproduction of the conflict system and (b) having enough leverage for change. In the Lebanese context, for instance, "classic" development activities in the education sector or in the field of municipal development are thus of high relevance for peacebuilding.

Core problems leading to conflict identified as having high relevance for peacebuilding activities by development and peace organisations in Lebanon are:

- the dysfunctional political system and lack of participation,

- the sectarian-based patronage system and clientelism

- the oligopolistic economy,

- the structuring of private and public spheres along sectarian-based political identities,

- the continuity of the wartime elite and a culture of impunity,

- the lack of a viable central government and state monopoly.

As foreign factors have been identified as key elements of the political conflict in Lebanon, the core problems *foreign intervention* and *opposing foreign policy orientations* are central for track 1 level initiatives and approaches.

In order to enhance strategic approaches to peacebuilding, programmes need a good understanding of how *core problems* leading to conflicts in Lebanon are linked to *actors* on all *levels* of society. The aim of the strategy should be to design a coherent link between the core problems, those actors and the positive role they can play in a peaceful transition process. By linking these three elements, programmes become more supportive of Lebanese actors and processes. Expected impacts (= impact hypotheses) should be underpinned by impact chains and a clear theory of change.

Strategies should try to link micro- and macro-level processes and institutions of sectors approached. Working around national governmental institutions due to the political deadlock or solely with civil society and local actors like municipalities will not create sustainable impacts.

Invest in conflict sensitivity, communication and lessons learnt

Working in a complex conflict setting, where communication and interaction between relevant actors on different levels of society is almost non-existent or characterised by mistrust, and where a vast number of external actors are engaged, often duplicating activities or inadvertently supporting the one and same organisation, more resources need to be invested in peace- and conflict-sensitive planning, communication and sector-specific coordination as well as exchanging experiences and drawing on lessons learnt.

Peace- and conflict-sensitive planning and piloting do not come for free. Although best implemented in standard procedures of project cycle management, the application of methods and tools needs additional knowledge, time and finances. These resources should be taken into account by any actor right from the start in planning and budgeting, in order to allow for active conflict-sensitive steering once a programme is under way.

Existing and newly planned approaches should invest more in establishing and maintaining communication channels on all levels and to all relevant stakeholders in their sector. As intra-group orientation is high and public institutions in Lebanon as well as civil society structures are often linked to sectarian or patronage networks with a clear position in the socio-political conflict, selective communication runs the risk not only of being perceived as partisan but also of compromising the leverage and sustainable impact of activities because only one "side" of the target group is participating. In this context, mechanisms for the transparent allocation of funds are indispensable.

Furthermore, there is a strong need to establish and institutionalise communication mechanisms, not only with the aim of improving complementarity and coherence of activities but also to create a network for developing and disseminating lessons learnt and good practices.

Civil Peace Service

CPS could be instrumental in assisting German actors as well as international agencies to develop peace- and conflict-sensitive approaches to specific sectors (project planning, management, impact monitoring), support and facilitate communication and the exchange of experience, and provide sector-specific expertise and lessons learnt. Moreover, CPS could play an active role in training and capacity-building for implementing partners on peace- and conflict-sensitive project management methods.

Reflect on own role in the conflict context

As external actors are part of the conflict setting, they need to reflect on and (re)assess their own role in the wider conflict context and the patterns by which it is perceived. Real or perceived bias in the selection of partners, beneficiaries, initiatives supported and funds allocated can easily feed into existing social and political divisions and manifest rather than transform conflicts. Moreover, the credibility of values and principles promoted by external actors and supported via policy dialogue, projects or programmes, such as respect for human rights, international law, the rule of law, tolerance and peace, becomes blurred if overall policy coherence and comprehensive approaches to conflict transformation and peacebuilding are lacking - which is particularly true in the Middle East conflict context.

While German organisations unanimously assume that they are perceived as neutral by Lebanese actors and tend to emphasise this as an asset for working in the current conflict setting, Lebanese organisations and individuals interviewed have been far more critical of Germany's stance on Lebanon and actors in the political conflict.

Support alternative avenues of political participation

The existing political system provides very limited space to gradually retrench clientelistic structures, improve accountability or formulate a reform agenda based on shared interests cutting across confessional lines. Hence, long-term strategies and partnerships to support alternative avenues of political participation are needed.

Strengthening the independent role of CSOs and their interaction with the political system is one way of doing so. Internal capacity-building, which is mostly and often solely supported by external actors, is, however, only one step in this regard. Support to civil society in Lebanon needs thorough, sector-specific assessments of potentials and limiting factors for engagement and more process thinking based on a clear "theory of change" that explains plausibly: (1) How inputs of external actors render CSOs able to assume a "watchdog" and advocacy function (institutional-goal); (2) how this function can become a viable strategy itself to support processes of political change (end-goal); (3) how a conducive context for these developments can be fostered. Moreover, civil society funds should be accompanied by sector-specific advice to and capacity-building on strategy development as well as the facilitation of periodic exchange of experience and lessons learnt. In this regard, German organisations should evaluate possible strategic cooperation, for instance between the GTZ-run environmental fund and activities and expertise of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung in this sector. Finally, more emphasis should be put on the function CSOs could play than on their *formal* structure. Approaches to strengthen the *function* of civil society in Lebanon should therefore further examine the mainly untapped potentials in traditional community-based organisations which command an amount of legitimacy and public support that initiatives for positive change in this region currently ignore.

Besides developing long-term strategies to support civil society, systematic and co-ordinated approaches to improve the capacities of municipalities and inter-municipality structures to effectively perform their role and authority could go a long way in building up a culture of participation and accountability on a level not necessarily affected by the problems plaguing the larger political system. This, however, requires municipal structures and decision-making processes to become standardised and transparent and municipal elections to be conducted properly. Involving or relying on the municipalities in an environment where these conditions are not in place and the integrity of the counterparts cannot be ascertained can potentially enhance parochial and clientelistic structures, or even create conflicts between factions of beneficiaries.

4.2   Sectors

Education and Dialogue

Do not neglect the peacebuilding relevance of the public sector

The importance of strengthening national state institutions in societies divided by inter-communal violence and war is widely acknowledged. However, the prevailing international discourse on fragile states and the development/security nexus emphasises security and justice (law enforcement) institutions, while the peacebuilding relevance of other sectors, in particular the *formal* education sector, is often neglected. As this is the case in Lebanon, international actors should develop a balanced approach and focus to a greater extent on formal education in their policy dialogue as well as programming.

Explore potentials for sustained issue-specific dialogue processes on track 1.5

Supporting a longer-term issue-specific dialogue on track 1.5 not only needs a clear mandate and time to build confidence between the third-party facilitator/mediator and the conflict actors, but also expertise, long-term experience, and a thorough assessment by the facilitator/mediator. This might be one reason why there were few sustained initiatives in Lebanon at present. With the return of Hizbullah to government, there might be some windows of opportunity for dialogue processes, in

particular with regard to socio-economic development and reform. Such processes could build on existing initiatives (UNDP, EU, Social Action Plan) and a general consensus between relevant actors about the need for reforms – and they need to be linked with local communities (municipalities) as well as civil society.

Furthermore, there is a need to assess and identify issues which have the potential to build trust between the conflict parties in government, to support communication and work procedures between the "enforced coalition partners" and respective ministries, and to address existing conflict issues in order to prevent a renewed crisis. The Berghof Foundation for Peace Support has undertaken an assessment in this regard.

Civil Peace Service

As there is a lack of civil society voices supporting value-oriented reform processes in the public education sector, CPS should assess possible entry points, capacities and interest of civil society organisations – as well as international actors - to coordinate efforts and jointly invest in reform again.

Because of the vast existing capacities for training and grassroots dialogue, the high number of international organisations already active in the field of informal education/dialogue and few proven impacts, CPS should generally abstain from exploring assignments in this field.

Whether synergies between Berghof's current track 1.5 assessment and CPS can be developed is also an issue which could be explored.

Transitional Justice

Develop a comprehensive approach to Transitional Justice

There is an obvious need for international actors to develop a comprehensive approach to transitional justice and dealing with the past in Lebanon in order to address the justice concerns of *all* Lebanese citizens. Hence, priority should be given to linking the Hariri Tribunal with a broader political and public discussion on transitional justice.

German actors (German Embassy, hbs, FES, to a certain extent ifa/zivik) are quite active in the field and able to coordinate and create synergies between their projects. They could thus initiate regular communication and dialogue *between* international actors, in order to exchange experiences and develop a comprehensive understanding of transitional justice in general as well as Lebanese needs and priorities in particular. Close cooperation with ICTJ in this regard is recommended.

Build capacities on specific topics

The development and implementation of individual transitional justice mechanisms need specific - sometimes very technical - expertise as well as detailed knowledge of the context, existing (legal) constraints and opportunities. For the time being, support should be given to the development of database management, exhumation and DNA analysis, the exploration of legal avenues (disappearance as "continuing crime", revision of Amnesty Law) and possibly truth commissions. In this context, supporting the exchange of experiences with other countries, especially divided societies, is recommended.

Civil Peace Service

Because of its long-term approach and the experience gained in this area, CPS can be instrumental in developing a comprehensive approach, supporting capacities (e.g. data processing and information management of missing persons' associations) and facilitating linkages between existing "islands" active in this field (e.g.

students taking the minor in transitional justice at the American University of Beirut, victims' and human rights organisations, parliamentarians, artists, etc.). Because of the political context and divisions between civil society organisations, a mission should carefully assess whether a CPS expert should support one organisation, work independently or be placed within an international organisation.

Justice and Rule of Law

Think systemically and develop a comprehensive approach

Rule of law is the interplay of different social goods with manifold recursive interlinkages. How the elements that should produce these social goods function and interact and what socio-political dynamics hamper them in Lebanon should be analysed with the aim of developing a strategy that approaches these elements in a coherent, correctly prioritised and timely fashion.

From this perspective, it is important to examine whether the European Union's project on border management in north Lebanon, which receives support from German actors, is well-balanced and coordinated with other approaches to strengthen the rule of law and its enforcement. Furthermore, the support given here to elements of the Lebanese security system should be analysed against standard conflict sensitivity criteria, and possible impacts on the overall conflict system identified.

Identify "agents of change" and build a broad-based coalition for reforms

As opposition looms large and partners and implementing organisations can themselves be part of it, approaches for the reform of the judicial system and the rule of law in Lebanon should start by developing a strategy to create the necessary support basis for reforms. Such an approach needs to carefully build up a reform coalition that includes "allies" from both inside and outside the judiciary, such as judges, politicians, executive branch officials, and members of professional associations, NGOs, advocacy groups, universities or law schools, business groups, and the media.

Use capacity-building to build support and ownership for reform

Capacity-building should not become a mere leftover of an otherwise frozen approach due to political deadlock but should be used as an entry point to bring together like-minded actors.

Training activities for judges should be used to create ownership by involving them in the process at an early stage and in the design of programmes, since they are the ones who best understand how the challenges to impartiality can be addressed.

Violence Prevention and Security

Avoid SSR initiatives without a parallel political reform agenda

Politically sensitive and coherent policies and strategies are needed for the security sector, which avoid supporting one of the services without the other, which could feed into the existing conflict. Preferable entry points are support for coordination mechanisms, possibly through the Central Security Council, and the reform of recruitment processes to support the deconfessionalisation of the security services.

Work in disadvantaged, violence-prone areas ("front lines") to prevent further escalation of violence.

As there is currently a significant risk of escalation in specific – mostly urban - marginalised areas, effort needs to be invested through political dialogue with the rele-

vant state institutions in order to encourage them to assume responsibility in those areas and build trust between local communities and the security apparatus.

Additionally, Lebanese peace organisations could be supported in refocusing their work on "front lines" and directly engaging with relevant actors (e.g. former combatants). Moreover, ways of involving these actors in systems geared to prevent the escalation of violence at "demarcation lines" and "hot spots" in Beirut and Tripoli should be assessed. However, access to these actors is difficult and cannot be achieved solely by a conventional mission to evaluate possible cooperation partners, since a longer process of confidence-building is needed here.

As a first exploratory step, opportunities to exchange experiences with former combatants' organisations, peacebuilding and development organisations from other countries, such as Intercomm (Northern Ireland), Centre for Nonviolent Action (Serbia), the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (South Africa) or ProPaZ (Mozambique) could be supported.

As a long term-strategy, trust-building and preventive mechanisms need to be coupled with income generation and education initiatives for young people within these emerging front lines.

Endnotes

1   While in evidence ever since the inception of the Lebanese state, clientelist behaviour and networks entrenched themselves further during the 1990s as former militia leaders and powerful entrepreneurs cooperated to merge wartime parallel structures and corporate power into clientelist fiefdoms within the state structures, while real or imputed closeness to the all-powerful Syrian secret services put political actors beyond the reach of any institutional or legal control mechanisms

2   They also value the potential of Hizbullah and Hamas to compromise the domestic legitimacy of rival Arab regimes whose populations tend to support a confrontational stance and reject the pro-Western orientation of their own leaders.

3   As before, regional sectarian demography plays a role in this new alignment since Sunnis are wary of the rising influence of Shiite Iran and the disenfranchisement of Syria's Sunni majority by a predominantly Alawi (and hence vaguely Shiite) regime, while Shiites are aware of their minority status in a largely Sunni region. Lebanon's Christians are divided between those who rely on Western support, view regional players like Saudi Arabia as sources of stability and prosperity and Hizbullah as dangerous Islamist radicals prone to involve Lebanon in future wars, and those who fear Sunni Islamism and the overwhelming economic power of Arab petrodollar potentates and view the West as an unreliable ally. The opposing foreign policy agendas create a particularly high potential for violent conflict as the confrontationist camp (and in particular Hizbullah) maintains military capabilities beyond the control of the government. While ostensibly directed exclusively against the "Zionist enemy", these weapons contribute to threat perceptions that are prompting other groups also to arm themselves.

4   The degree to which the decisions and strategies of these actors are driven by such local, personal and sectarian considerations and to what extent they defer to the wishes of their foreign sponsors is the subject of heated controversy.

5   Hamas and leftist groups as allies of Syria and Iran and bound on confrontation. Fatah as the ally of the West and urging reconciliation.

6   The pivotal role of the latter as actors who determine sectarian relations becomes apparent through the occurrence of sometimes radical changes in mutual sectarian attitudes in response to political realignments (such as the "instant reconciliation" between Christian and Druze in Mount Lebanon in 2002 following an alliance of Druze leader Walid Jumblat with Christian forces, without even the slightest attempt to address the egregious atrocities of the 1980s, or the sudden sympathy of the secular followers of Michel Aoun for the Shiite Hizbullah).

7   The "Beirut Stock Exchange" trades only 31 titles, with the downtown development company Solidere and a handful of major banks accounting for most of the traffic.

8   This may partly be due to the fact that much of their business interests lie outside Lebanon, and in particular in the Arab petrodollar economies, where ballooning oil prices have caused an unprecedented economic boom. Second, the main local interest of these actors lies in maintaining monetary stability and in particular the capability of the Lebanese state to service the spiralling public debt, in which they are deeply and profitably involved. Paradoxically, the political conflict may actually be a major factor in safeguarding this interest and helping to keep the state afloat: since a serious default on servicing the public debt will almost certainly lead to a cataclysmic chain reaction of collapses of major banks (which hold most of it) and the evaporation of savings on a scale that the current government could not possibly survive, the latter's foreign allies such as Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states are likely to prevent any such scenario through the injection of fresh money, with which they are awash for the time being.

9   In particular the demand to raise the minimum wage and the payscale of the public sector.

10 Most likely by Hizbullah, although the Hariri movement may also mobilise its own, equally if not more deprived masses to protest about the "destruction of the Lebanese economy" by the opposition.

11 "During the early 1990s, the reconstruction effort provided a strong boost to GDP growth. At the same time, the hoped-for spill-over effect on the private sector and foreign investment did not materialise due to economic as well as political factors, including the deeply damaging effect of the civil war on Lebanon's human capital, the impact of the 1989 political settlement on the size and economic effectiveness of the public sector, including the administration, and the progressive weakening of Lebanon's competitiveness." (cf. European Commission (2002), pp. 8). Moreover, the reconstruction effort focused mainly on physical reconstruction without developing a more encompassing strategy aiming at regenerating economic activity and forging domestic economic dynamics. Likewise, social development and concerns about inter-regional imbalances have mainly been left unattended (cf. UNDP (2008)).

12 The financial support for the European Neighbourhood Policy is provided through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), which replaced the former programmes of EU funding in Lebanon (such as MEDA).

13 Cf. Independent Evaluation Group (2007)

14   The selection of the four fields of activity was guided by the following criteria: (1) Existing potential to address the most relevant core problems leading to conflict in Lebanon. For the determination of the most relevant core problems see Section 1.2 and 4.1 General Recommendations; (2) Potential of and opportunities for German development and peace organisations to work in these fields; (3) Existing interfaces between German organisations as well as between German organisations and other national and international partners.

15   Ministry of Education, Center for Educational Research and Development, Statistical newsletter for academic year 2006 – 2007.

16   For further information, see the project's home page: http://tinyurl.com/2kkjdd

17   For further information and for examples of several such initiatives, see http://afkar.omsar.gov.lb/NR/exeres/0223CB0D-0CDB-4ECD-89F8-7E9F964D9583,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published

18   Mary Anderson's "Reflecting on Peace Practice" project distinguishes four different approaches: more people – key people, individual level – institutional level; cf. Anderson, Mary B. and Lara Olson (2003).

19   For further information, see International Center for Transitional Justice: http://www.ictj.org.

20   For the question of legitimacy of justice mechanisms, see Oomen, Barbara (2007).

21   Committee of the Parents of Kidnapped and Disappeared in Lebanon, Committee of Families of Lebanese Detainees in Syria/Solide, Follow-up Committee of Lebanese Detainees in Israeli Prisons / Khiam Rehabilitation Center.

22   2312 missing persons have been filed by the first Commission. According to a recently published Solida Report, the number might be double, as many families did not trust the Commission. Moreover, while the same commission counts 40 mass graves, the Solida Report arrives at the number of 400. Cf. Lebanese Center for Human Rights/Solida (2008).

23   A law defining the status of missing persons as "unknown" was passed as early as 1995. After five years, families had the choice to invoke the law and declare the missing person deceased.

24   For the specific challenges of programming, see Zupan, Natascha and Sylvia Servaes (2007.

25   This fact is acknowledged by leading politicians and religious leaders and by the judges themselves. Leading politicians, including the late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, have openly supported meddling and interference in judicial affairs as a legitimate practice.

26   The Supreme Judicial Council is the highest judicial authority that supervises the work of all courts and handles judicial appointments and promotions.

27   The same applies to the Constitutional Court.

28   Cf. ACRLI and IFES (2004).

29   Following the World Bank and others, such an approach should comprise the following end-goals: (1) a government bound by law (2) equality before the law (3) law and order (4) predictable and efficient rulings, (5) human rights.

30   In early 2008, USAID awarded a three-year $7 million project to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), a US-based NGO, to work with the Lebanese judicial system with the aim of enhancing Lebanese judicial independence by developing the capacity of the judicial training institute; cf. http://www.usaid.gov/lb/articles/pressrelease 204 .html

31   The National Indicative Programme 2007-2010 for Lebanon, the European Commission's assistance framework and part of the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI), allocates €10 million for these activities.

32   Cf. http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/index.html

33   The Khalass! campaign is an independent initiative led by Lebanese civil society in all its components: syndicates, associations, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector. For further information see http://www.khalass.net

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Annex

List of Interview Partners

Organisation	Name	Position
1. German Development Organisations and Experts in Germany		
BMZ	Astrid Denker	Desk officer Lebanon
GTZ	Christopher Weisbecker	Team leader MENA
KfW	Moritz Remé	Programme Coordinator Lebanon
DED	Martina Liebermann	Desk officer Regional Desk Middle East and Central Asia
DED	Matthias Ries	Head of Division Civil Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding
Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung	Bernd Asbach	Head of Middle East Department
forumZFD	Carsten Montag	Head of Division Programmes
Berghof Foundation for Peace Support	Oliver Wils	Executive Director
Weltfriedensdienst	Ulrike Lauerhass	Desk officer Lebanon
	Cordelia Koch	Expert on Lebanese constitutional law
2. German Decision-Makers and Development Organisations in Lebanon and Syria		
GTZ Office Damascus	Magdy Menshawy	Director
DED Office Damascus	Roland Lauckner	Director Syria and Lebanon Country Programme
German Embassy	Michael Ohnmacht	First Secretary Political Affairs
German Embassy	Andreas Fiedler	First Secretary Economic Cooperation
GTZ Office Syria/Beirut Branch	Hanna Nasser	Head of Beirut Branch
KfW	Daniel Neuwirth	Programme Coordinator
Heinrich Böll Foundation Middle East Office	Layla Al-Zubaidi	Director
Heinrich Böll Foundation Middle East Office	Dina Fakoussa	Programme Manager
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)	Samir Farah	Representative
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)	Ariela Gross	Research and Finance Assistant
3. International Donors, Development Organisations, and INGOs in Lebanon		
UNIFIL	Thomas von Buttlar	German Naval Office

UNIFIL Tripartite Secretariat	Roxaneh Bazergan	Political Affairs Officer
UNIFIL	Lillah Fearnley	Civil Affairs Officer
UN Economic and Social Council for Western Asia (ESCWA) - Emerging Crisis	Youssef Chaitani	Political Affairs Officer
UNDP Peace Building Project	Lana Ghandour	Communication Officer
European Commission	Michael Miller	Head of Section Politics, Economics, Trade, Press and Information
European Commission	Joseph Piazza d'Olmo	Programme Manager
ECHO	Alain Robyns	
Kuwaiti Fund	Mohamed El-Sadiqi	Country Director
UNDP	Issam Hashem	Area Manager / South Lebanon
USAID	Raouf Youssef	
Oxfam GB	Roula Abi Saad	Lebanon Programme Officer
International Crisis Group (ICG)	Patrick Haenni	Senior Analyst
International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)	Marieke Wierda	Senior Associate
International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)	Lynn Maalouf	Associate
4. Lebanese Authorities and Political Actors		
Ministry of Education & Higher Education – Education Development Project	Nada Mneimneh Hala Ballout	Project Manager Project Manager Assistant
Ministry of Finance	Kawthar Dara	Public Finance Coordinator
Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)	Ramzi Numan	Manager Social and Economic Planning Department
Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR)	Youmna Chacar Ghorayeb	Afkar Project Coordinator Technical Cooperation Unit
Tripoli Municipality	Rashid Jamali	Elected President
Bint Jbeil Municipality	Imad Abd Al-Raziq	Mayor
Lebanese Parliament	Ghassan Mukheiber	Member of Parliament
5. Civil Society Organisations and NGOs in Lebanon		
Permanent Peace Movement	Fadi Abi Allam	President
Lebanese Centre for Human Rights & SOLIDA	Wadih Al-Asmar Justine Di Mayo	Secretary General Programme Manager
Al Karama for Human Rights	Rashed Fakhri	
Ashkal Alwan, The Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts	Christine Tohmé	Director
René Mouad Foundation (RMF)	Micheline Koborssi	Coordinator for the Bab El-Tabbanne Center

	Toufic Aloush	Political Activist - North Lebanon
	Salim Aloush	Political Activist - North Lebanon
Nahr El-Bared Reconstruction commission	Fathi Rabih	Member of Commission
The Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut	Kamel Dallal, Ph.D.	Director of Education
Committee of Families of Kidnapped and Disappeared in Lebanon	Wadad Halawani	President
Middle East Council of Churches	Guirgis I. Saleh	General Secretary
Bar Association Beirut	Ramzi Joreige Majed Fayad Elisabeth Sioufi	President Elected member Director of the Human rights Institute
Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR)	Ogarit Younan Walid Slaybi	Director Director
Nahwa el-Mouwatinia / Khalas Campaign	Gilbert Doumit	Board Member
	Nizar Saghieh	Independent activist on issue of rule of law
Nabaa Development Action without Borders	Qassem Saad	Director
House in the South	Rabih Shibli	Director
	Mariam Balhas	Trainer, South Lebanon
UMAM - Documentation and Research	Monica Borgmann	Co-Director
6. Research Institutes and Experts in Lebanon		
The Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies (LCPS)	Oussam Safa	General Director
American University of Beirut – Minor in Transitional Justice	Sari Hanafi, Ph.D.	Associate Professor
Center for Strategic Studies for the Middle East (CESMO)	Mustapha Adib Flavia Adib	General Director Deputy Director
USJ – Dialogue program	Rita Ayoub	
Consultative Centre for Studies	Abdelhalim Fadlallah	Vice President
Jihad al-Binaa – Waad Project	Hassan Jashi	Director General
American University of Beirut (AUB) - Observatory for Reconstruction in the South	Jala Makhzoumi, Ph.D.	Associate Professor
Consultation and Research Institute (CRI)	Redha Hamdan	Senior Statistician