

A supporting paper to the Institute for Economics and Peace and Club de Madrid Position Statement on Post-2015 Development Agenda

The Relationship between Peace and Shared Societies:

“Fearful or anxious environments facilitate behaviours where individuals may become ‘inattentive, unconcerned, or even enthusiasts for the erosion of basic freedoms, lacking sympathy towards others.’”

-Loader, I. Walker, N (2007) *Civilizing Security*

Peace, like the Club de Madrid’s concept of *shared societies* is composed of mutually reinforcing factors: the absence of violence and the presence of particular cultural, economic, and political structures and institutions. The Club de Madrid’s *Shared Societies* agenda offers a specific approach to achieving social cohesion based on mutual respect for the dignity of each individual in the society. Many of the institutions that support peace imply the same normative goals as the shared societies agenda of creating a society in which *“people hold an equal capacity to participate in, and benefit from, economic, political and social opportunities regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, language and other attributes, and where, as a consequence, relations between the groups are peaceful.”* This normative scheme implies there are a particular set of desirable formal and informal institutions in all societies and further, that they are a critical economic necessity in order to underpin the sustainability of society.

The distinction between negative and positive peace provides a framework to order how these different social needs can be prioritised. Negative peace is defined as the ‘absence of violence and absence of fear of violence’ and positive peace can be broadly understood as ‘the set of attitudes, institutions and structures that sustain peace.’ Steps towards positive peace or a shared society reinforce the potential to achieve negative peace and so that they are linked together in a virtuous cycle. In the sociological sense, the absence of violence is a ‘thick’ public good which is both the producer and product of forms of trust, which is a critical pre-requisite to democratic communities.¹ It is self-evident to many that societies composed of individuals living objectively and subjectively in a state of fear are not likely to make good citizens. Fearful or anxious environments facilitate behaviours where individuals may become ‘inattentive, unconcerned, or even enthusiasts for the erosion of basic freedoms, lacking sympathy towards others.’² This is one important dimension that underpins the importance of Peace to notions of Shared Societies.

Societies with lower discrimination and where citizens accept the rights of other ethnic groups tend to be more peaceful. Nations with better informed and active citizens tend to be more peaceful. High levels of trust within society are closely associated with Peace. Societies that guarantee gender equality tend to be more peaceful. That is, countries with lower levels of acceptance of the rights of others have tended to experience greater levels of deterioration in peacefulness relative to more accepting communities. Evidence appears to support this contention with research spanning 15 countries and over 19 thousand respondents finding that the chance of criminal victimisation was higher in less cohesive communities. That is, violent crime tends to occur more frequently in a community, which is less accepting of the rights of others. It is important to note, whilst this analysis does not conclusively prove the direction of causality it suggests that past measures of ‘interpersonal safety and trust’ and the ‘cohesion of minorities’ have some capacity to predict future changes in a nation’s level of peacefulness.

¹Loader, I. Walker, N (2007) *Civilizing Security*, Cambridge University Press London. Page 8

² *Ibid.*

³ The empirical evidence for this is supported in IEP research brief, Pillars of Peace URL: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp->

Furthermore, Peace and Shared Societies are similar conceptual forms in that they are multidimensional and cannot be represented or embodied in any 'one factor,' meaning that by nature, they have different cultural, economic, political and economic forms. Empirical evidence strongly suggests how the key indicators of negative peace or direct violence provide, in many ways, a 'roadmap' for the *Shared Societies* agenda, as in many instances, countries which are low in peace and vulnerable to conflict tend to have less social cohesion, less compliance with international human rights, greater inequality, less civic activism and poor governance. Conversely, countries with these factors present tend to be more peaceful (i.e. have less direct violence) and in turn appear to have the institutional capacity and resilience to deal with external social, political, economic and environmental shocks.³ Given the conceptual and data limitations to measure the *quality* of cohesion and to assess counterfactuals, the strong statistical association⁴ suggested by cross country data between peaceful environments and relatively more cohesive and inclusive environments suggests that it is important to collect more data.

Inclusion Leads to Cohesion

The Club de Madrid and IEP believe that an important aspect in addressing these concerns is to ensure that the society respects and includes all ethnic communities. Ethnic tensions often lead to conflict and violence, which often impacts most severely on marginalised identity groups. One cannot be satisfied with the quality of governance if, as often is the case, marginalised ethnic groups often are unable to participate. The potential contribution to the economy of ethnic groups is significant but they are often discriminated against in seeking employment or developing their own economic activities.

The way ethnic minorities are treated is an indicator of how the society is treating its members overall. Their status and situation is a bellwether for the overall wellbeing of the community – or a sign of its problems. As the High Level Panel said throughout its report, looking after the weakest is not only the right thing to do. It also makes sense. "Working together is not just a moral obligation to help those less fortunate but is an investment in the long-term prosperity of all."⁵

Shifting from Negative to Positive Approaches

"The absence of violence is not the same as sustainable peace. To create societies that are resilient to violent conflict over the long-term, the new framework must focus on addressing the most important drivers of conflict and insecurity – not only their symptoms. This often includes issues of relationships between state and society and between societal groups, alongside horizontal inequalities."

- Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding: Putting Peace and Safe Societies at the Heart of the Development Agenda: Priorities for Post-2015

IEP's Global Peace Index (GPI) is one of the first serious attempts to comprehensively and consistently measure the concept of negative peace which is defined as the absence of violence or fear of violence.⁶ The GPI covers 99% of the world's population. Negative peace is a comprehensive conceptual base for capturing both traditional typologies of violence and more recent frameworks developed under the human

³ The empirical evidence for this is supported in IEP research brief, Pillars of Peace URL: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Pillars-of-Peace-Report-IEP.pdf>

⁴ See Appendix B for list of correlations between measures of intergroup social cohesion, civic activism and gender equality with peace as measured by the Global Peace Index.

⁵ Page 10

⁶ The GPI has focused on measuring Johan Galtung concepts of negative and positive peace. Negative peace is the "absence of violence" and the "absence of the fear of violence". (1985, p. 141)

development and capabilities approach.⁷ Negative peace captures interpersonal violence of a direct physical, sexual, and psychological nature committed by family members, acquaintances and strangers, or collective violence driven by cultural, political, environmental or economic manifestations.

Measuring Positive Peace

The GPI provides an excellent platform for cross-country analysis of negative peace as it combines both the existing stock of data from a variety of intergovernmental and international research institutes while also filling data gaps with qualitative assessment data vetted by an expert panel process. Containing seven years of data, it provides a unique platform to empirically arrive at the attitudes, institutions and structures that create a peaceful society. Through performing statistical analysis on over 1,000 different indices, datasets and attitudinal surveys and then determining which items are statistically relevant, it has been possible to build a picture of the environments that are associated with peace.

From this body of work IEP has developed a conceptual framework for measuring positive peace. Defined as the 'Pillars of Peace' it identifies 'the set of attitudes, institutions and structures, which when strengthened, lead to a more peaceful society'.⁸ This particular approach stands in contrast to the extensive quantitative conflict literature that is predominately focused on understanding the causes for the outbreak of conflict or war.⁹ Despite the fact that Peace is studied across the social sciences, and is its own field of study within peace and conflict centres, much of the systematic research has been devoted to understanding the conditions that promote war, violence, and aggression. In contrast, the study of positive peace is a concerted attempt to identify positive states and processes, acknowledging that the drivers of lasting peace are not the same as the drivers of conflict.

The result of this approach means the priority is on analysing peaceful states as opposed to states in conflict. This is analogous to studies in psychology where there has been broad recognition of the limitations of studying problems and the need to broaden understanding of human behaviour; to quote Coleman¹⁰, '*...there is evidence from the study of attitudes that positive and negative evaluative processes often operate independently, and that positive and negative attributions function orthogonally as well.*' The implicit argument is that the same is true for Peace and for inclusive Shared Societies. This is an important concept that needs to be acknowledged in the post-2015 development agenda, as traditionally the focus has been on only understating the causes of conflict and the recovery process after conflict.

Positive peace is about building capacity rather than looking at short-term actions to stop violence or reduce exclusion. It is about identifying and measuring the factors that are assumed to cure the root causes of violence and exclusion.

Data Needs for Measuring Socially Cohesive Societies

The current availability of data varies dramatically from country to country with the more fragile countries generally having poorer data. This is especially true at the sub-national level and is borne out by many country-based studies. The data generation challenges which currently exist to monitor conflict and

⁷ Human Development Report (1994) *New Dimensions of Human Security*, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) New York, Oxford University Press

⁸ More can be read about how this was derived in the IEP working paper, available online, *The Structures of Peace*: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Structures-of-Peace-IEP-Research-Brief.pdf>

⁹ Mack, A. (2011), p.36

¹⁰ Coleman, P. (2012). *The Missing Piece in Sustainable Peace*. The Huffington Post New York.

security are significant on their own, let alone the greater challenge of measuring the broader set of attitudes, institutions and structures associated with positive peace.

Without better data it is difficult to improve our understanding of how different forms of interpersonal and collective violence interact or to improve our capacity to build theories, design responses to, and implement interventions to minimise conflict and social exclusion. Currently, it is difficult to understand the effectiveness of programming interventions, as Muggah highlights in *Researching the Urban Dilemma: Urbanization, Poverty and Violence*, “the paucity of time-series data and local analysis capacities in many low-income settings has also limited the ability of policy makers and practitioners to distinguish ‘successful’ outcomes from those that are not.”¹¹ Furthermore, the compartmentalisation of macro-level and micro-level research hinders our ability to effectively link local level context sensitive research to the macro level research and data typically needed by intergovernmental organisations and major donor countries. Thus the development of national statistical capacity is recommended to adequately address the measurement shortfall.

Specifically, it is important that data is collected so that it can be disaggregated for factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, language, geographical location and other attributes. This will provide evidence of the differential outcomes for different sections of society of policies introduce to meet the new targets for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Otherwise we will have no way to know if new development initiatives have reached all sections of society. We welcome acknowledgement of the importance of disaggregated data in the Report of the High Level Panel and believe it will be important that it is explicitly stated in the new Agenda.

The need for reliable data collection

“Policymakers must focus not only on the violent symptoms of conflict but also on the underlying factors that drive violence.” - OECD consultation paper¹²

The challenge of generating and collecting disaggregated, valid, reliable, harmonized, context specific and time-sensitive data is significant. The collecting of data at sub-national level is even more challenging.

The lack of data is especially acute in low-income, conflict prone contexts. For instance, comparable data on institutions associated with Peace could not be aggregated in a harmonized consistent way for most of Africa, and for several large South East Asian states. This included, in Africa: Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Somalia, Ethiopia, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Chad, Central African Republic and more. In South East Asia, data could not be aggregated for Myanmar, Vietnam, and Laos. Several other states including Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and Eastern European states such as Belarus and Romania also do not have full national level coverage of the required data.

A post-2015 initiative to prioritise the development of internal and external statistical capacity to guide the strategic direction and enable the effective monitoring and evaluation of the development agenda will be vital. This will also enable an evidence-based approach to understanding how societal and political transformations work. Quality, disaggregated data can deepen understanding of how social disruption in its multidimensional forms occurs, interacts with, and affects broader development patterns. A globally led initiative to collect both subjective and objective data that meets current UN criteria could be a significant part of resolving the current knowledge gap. Such an effort could significantly inform the monitoring and

¹¹Ibid. p xi.

¹² (2012). Think global, act global: Confronting global factors that influence conflict and fragility. For Consultation.OECD.

evaluation efforts of existing and future programmes in the fields of peacebuilding, conflict resolution, armed violence reduction, and conflict prevention.

Essentially, without a better stock of baseline data it will be difficult to correctly address practical and fundamental research and policy questions such as;

- What are the key risk factors in fragile and conflict affected states?
- How does urbanization, migration, poverty, historical legacies, ethnic and religious tensions and governance failures inter-relate and drive violence?
- How do institutional conditions facilitate the development of virtuous cycles that lead to decreasing violence and increasing positive peace?
- How much social cohesion is there in society? What are the drivers of social cohesion? How can it be boosted?
- What is the relationship of these factors to economic development? How much does the lack of inclusion and of peace impact GDPs?

In summary, there is a major opportunity to advance our collective knowledge on the impacts, drivers and preventers of social breakdowns. This approach is essential in understanding how to correctly target development assistance. Above all, it is essential in developing resilient, sustainable and peaceful states and Shared Societies.

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About IEP

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to shifting the world's focus to peace as a positive, achievable, and tangible measure of human well-being and progress. IEP achieves its goals by developing new conceptual frameworks to define peacefulness; providing metrics for measurement; uncovering the relationship between peace, business and prosperity, and by promoting a better understanding of the cultural, economic and political factors that drive peacefulness. IEP has offices in Sydney, New York, and Oxford. It works with a wide range of partners internationally and collaborates with intergovernmental organizations on measuring and communicating the economic value of peace.

About CdM

The Club de Madrid is an independent non-profit organization composed of over 90 democratic former Presidents and Prime Ministers from more than 60 different countries, constituting the world's largest forum of former Heads of State and Government, who have come together to respond to a growing demand for support among leaders in two key areas: democratic leadership and governance; and response to crisis and post-crisis situations. Both lines of work share the common goal of addressing the challenge of democratic governance and political conflict as well as that of building functional and inclusive societies, where the leadership experience of Members is most valuable. A major current programme is the Shared Societies Project which specifically explores the importance of building Shared Societies and the beneficially impact on economic, political, social and environmental well-being.