Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

Coexistence International
“Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?”
Discussion Seminar

March 1, 2007
Brandeis House, New York City

Meeting Summary and Analysis

On March 1, 2007 Coexistence International at Brandeis University (CI) hosted a day-long discussion seminar, Coexistence and Democracy-Building: What is the Connection? This event, organized in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP-BCPR) and the Governance and Public Administration Branch of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), took place in New York City and 30 key individuals from United Nation (UN) agencies and international institutions convened to discuss practical ways to enhance the coexistence dimension of their democracy and governance agendas, particularly in societies divided by conflict.

The seminar's structure consisted of a plenary session and small group work. This report provides a thematic summary of the presentations and discussions that took place in the plenary session and includes the ideas generated and reported by break-out groups. The report does not follow a standard minutes format, but instead divides related points of discussion into themes that emerged through the day. The report also notes areas for further learning and action steps as identified by the meeting's participants and CI team.

The March 1 seminar provided an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between coexistence and democracy-building, to examine current practices in developing and implementing coexistence-sensitive democracy initiatives, and to assess current and future challenges. Participants at the seminar explored a number of issues, including:

- the critical role of leadership in divided and post-conflict societies and the competencies required to effectively manage and guide democratic transition processes
- recognition of the conflict-inducing potential of such democratic "essentials" as electoral processes, constitutional reforms, and political party formation
- the importance of creating inclusive and participatory political processes that are effective and sustainable at both the grassroots and the national level
- strategies for changing mindsets and building awareness of the added value of coexistence-sensitive policy and practice
- approaches for overcoming institutional obstacles to designing coexistence-sensitive policies and mainstreaming them into agency-wide programs
- lessons learned from coexistence, development, and gender fields about implementing coexistence-sensitive policies and programs
- the importance of continuing to share practices and learn from each other

I. Purpose and Expected Outcomes of March 1 Discussion Seminar

- To share experiences on current practices, challenges, opportunities, and lessons involved in developing and integrating coexistence-sensitive policy into the agendas and programs of institutions working on democratization and governance.
Coexistence International at Brandeis University  
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?  
Meeting Summary

• To build an active constituency that can serve as a knowledgeable source on this topic and provide opportunities for sharing best practice.

At the end of this meeting, participants will have discussed, shared opinions, and gained more clarity on the following questions:

1. In what ways can democracy-building efforts support coexistence and peacebuilding in principle and practice; alternately, how can coexistence and peacebuilding support democracy-building?
2. What are the lessons learned from other fields (e.g. development, gender) that can be applied to mainstreaming coexistence?
3. How do you measure the impact of this coexistence-sensitive democracy-building work?
4. What are possible action-steps to continue collective learning among institutions working in divided societies who are concerned with democracy and governance?

II. Relevant Background: CI’s Ongoing Research on Coexistence Policy

CI is committed to strengthening the effectiveness of policymakers, practitioners, researchers, advocates, organizations, and networks promoting coexistence at local, national, and international levels. It does this through conducting research on current and emerging practices, synthesizing lessons learned, sharing practical resources, and convening gatherings and learning opportunities for policymakers and practitioners.

The seminar built upon secondary and primary research undertaken by CI to explore the extent to which coexistence-sensitive programming (i.e. conflict management and peacebuilding processes) is incorporated into the policies and activities of organizations working on democracy and governance. The Survey of Coexistence Sensitivity in International Democratization & Governance Policies reviewed websites and publications of 40 international organizations. To supplement this secondary research report, CI interviewed policymakers and coexistence champions in six international agencies about the challenges and opportunities they face in developing and implementing coexistence-focused policies and programming. Interviews explored how coexistence work is understood within these organizations, how it is shaped into coherent organizational policy, and how—if at all—it is mainstreamed into national and international agendas. This report, full or rich primary research, is available on the CI website. CI plans to synthesize information learned from the March 1 seminar and the two above-mentioned reports to produce a brief overview paper aimed at practitioners and policymakers interested in exploring the intersection of coexistence and democracy-building and governance work.

To convene this important gathering of practitioners and experts, CI partnered with UNDP’s Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the Governance and Public Administration Branch of UNDESA. Both agencies were profiled in CI’s research on coexistence-sensitive approaches to democracy work in relation to their efforts to raise awareness and build capacity for coexistence work within their own institutions and among relevant stakeholders. They recognized this seminar as an opportunity to deepen the dialogue on coexistence and

---

1 CI defines coexistence through a vision of a world where diversity is embraced for its positive potential, interdependence between different groups is recognized, equality is actively pursued, and the use of weapons to address conflicts is increasingly obsolete.
2 The Survey can be accessed at: http://www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/pubs/demsurvey.html
3 Coexistence champions are practitioners who recognize the importance of the coexistence dimension for the success and sustainability of democracy and governance initiatives and work to integrate coexistence principles into policies and programmatic approaches.
4 UNDP/BCPR, UNDESA, International IDEA, OSCE, the OAS, and the World Bank.
Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

democracy and to include other constituencies at the UN and beyond who could benefit from, and contribute to, the collective learning.

Representatives of five agencies profiled in CI's research were present at the March 1 seminar and discussed challenges, opportunities, and effective strategies present in their work. Their comments are included in the thematic synthesis of the day’s discussions below.

The discussion seminar also provided an opportunity to deliberate about lessons learned from mainstreaming coexistence- and conflict-sensitive approaches into other fields, such as development and gender work, which have an established track record of this type of infused, or holistic, approach. During the small group work, participants collectively brainstormed strategies for overcoming fragmentation between disciplines, levels, and institutions; facilitating a more coherent, integrated complementary approach to coexistence work; and creating inclusive processes that have an impact.

II. Thematic Synthesis of Plenary and Small Group Discussions

Discussions highlighted a number of conceptual and concrete challenges practitioners and policymakers face when working on democracy-building, coexistence, and development. While considering the relationship between democracy and coexistence, the seminar participants pointed to a number of problematic areas in the current research and practice of democracy around the world. Participants raised important questions in regards to challenges within the institutional realm of effecting policy change:

- What will it take to more effectively mainstream coexistence into democracy and governance work?
- Does an emerging framework exist that can guide organizations working at the intersection of coexistence and democracy/governance?
- What are the key elements of this framework?

The content summary that follows is a reflection of the crosscutting themes and organizational and individual challenges that emerged from these discussions.

I. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

- The importance of passionate leadership in inclusive democracy work
  - Leadership is often transactional (i.e. in return for power, a leader promises to focus on the needs of a particularly favored group, rather than the needs of all groups). There is a critical need for crosscutting or transformational leaders who are genuinely able to transcend identity lines and cleavages to “serve all.”
  - Leaders need to do a better job of encouraging moderates to become politically active.

- The need to work effectively with leaders (to create opportunities for win-win situations)
  - The search for transformational leaders can prove futile as many leaders assess political risks to be great, so instead prefer to stick to “known” identity-based politics.
  - Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela were rare transformational leaders. They found a win-win transactional process on a broad basis. They were also, however, working with groups so marginalized they had very little to lose; their risks were lower. How do we help leaders lower the risks for themselves and their followers and help them recognize and then implement the bigger win-win?
  - We need to be able to engage leaders as they are and create incentives for them to participate in inclusive processes and democratic dialogue. We also need to clearly demonstrate, with concrete
examples, how the result will be better for them if they collaborate with their competitors. This can be accomplished by lowering the risks to achieve a neutral position and then providing incentives to move to a positive/coexistence position.

- It should not be assumed that extremists/fundamentalist cannot evolve or that they will understand our international language regarding coexistence and social inclusion.

- The need to determine key competencies and build capacity in leadership development
  - Leaders sometimes lack the aptitude and skills to navigate transitional processes and political dialogue. Determining core competencies required by civic and political leaders will result in more democratic and inclusive societies.
  - We need to create entry points to provide this important capacity–building.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

- Power as a critical part of democracy, governance, and conflict (conflict-inducing potential)
  - Democracy is a way of managing power and in theory should be the prime instrument for managing conflicts non-violently. Democracy is also about sharing power, which is highly volatile in divided societies. Democracy can often be conflict–inducing, as it calls for power–sharing, representation, and participation—which are infinitely more difficult in situations of conflict.
  - Democracy can deepen identity-based conflicts—it has the potential to consolidate identity–groups rather than integrate them across identity-lines. Elections often act as danger–points and warlords have used democratic processes to consolidate and hold power (e.g. Sierra Leone).
  - What do we want from democracy—good management of services or politics? Another tension in democracy is between people who see the value of multiple identities and those with fixed identities, or those who promote fixed identities. Thus, transformational leaders are often seen as traitors to the cause when embracing multilateral identities.
  - The current concept and practice of democracy is based on the existence of a state, but “state-ness” does not always exist. We must consider a variety of ways to do democracy through inclusive local processes, different ways of sharing power, writing constitutions and legislation around equality, and “good relations.”
  - Democracy flourishes in many contexts: Colombia and Sri Lanka are just two examples of countries that combine fundamental democratic processes and values with ongoing violent conflict and deep divisions. Conversely, there are societies with lots of inclusion yet no democracy. How do we correlate democracy and coexistence?

- Understand and address root causes of conflict
  - Programs and policies should address the root causes of conflicts.
  - Respect for diversity as a conflict prevention measure must increase: When identity is negated it can become elevated and fixed, turning into a future source of conflict. It is important to watch for these occurrences and work on inclusion and participation at all stages of the process. How do we approach integration without the ghettoization of identities or asking people to abandon their identities? A thin layer of overarching civic identities or multi-lateral identities must be created, but this takes a long time.
  - Our lessons are learned region by region (Latin America, Africa, etc.) and we need to take into account regional contexts.

- Emphasis on comprehensive conflict analysis process to avoid doing more harm
  - Conflict analysis must be done by local actors with a constant feedback loop between international and local groups. People engaging in this work often need political analysis training in order to understand
the context. The stage of the crisis (e.g. if crisis is imminent) is often determines whether political leadership strategies or longer-term development and grassroots initiatives are employed.

- Often there are many identities and minorities and it can be difficult to be totally inclusive. An inclusion process itself becomes an intervention and great care is needed to ensure the process is successful.
- Lessons from the development field: The Do No Harm paradigm demonstrates the importance of considering how resource transfers can reinforce local tensions.\(^5\)

**Cultural contexts**
- It is important to understand the cultural context of the region and know what we are going into before putting funds into a technocratic project (e.g. tax and fiscal reforms). Do these technocratic projects build social consensus so gradually that seem outdated sooner rather than later?

**Assessing types of interventions required and recognizing points of entry**
- We have learned from the development field that localized processes prove to be a better place to work on social cohesion. On a community level, people are more willing to cross group and identity lines.
- There are high-level, visible actions versus low profile actions happening below the radar. We have to decide which is best in each context: Do you stay under the radar or is high-level champion/action better?

**Determining which organizations/institutions to put forth as leaders: credibility, capacity, and their relationship with key stakeholders**
- Determining who to partner with on the ground is critical and impacts the democratization process. For example, in Fiji on the eve of elections there was risk of election-related violence. Government groups could not diffuse or manage the tensions and the one group with the appropriate mandate was not the strongest and was severely understaffed.

**III. CREATING INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY POLITICAL PROCESSES WITH EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES**

**Understand idento-cratic decision-making versus merit-based decision making and how this plays out**
- One practical challenge is helping societies move from idento-cratic to merit-based competition (in which you do not lose your identity, but decisions are made based on merit not identity). Many leaders prefer to stay with safer and more secure identity-based competition. No one, including the United States, deals with this issue completely, voting is often based on identity (red/blue state, religious, or other identities).
- Recognizing the contradiction between being inclusive and working with leaders sometimes means being exclusive. We must be clear about the double standards in our work. Inclusive processes take time, which we often do not have when trying to win over leaders and provide them with win-win transactional strategies quickly. Complications also arise in post-conflict justice processes in trying to ensure that conflict/war leaders pay the price for any human rights abuses.
- Examining the lessons learned from the development field: Linking peace to development issues (water, food, shelter) can transcend identities, but at higher institutional levels we encounter people under political pressure who choose the easier route of pushing their agendas via identity. How do we find effective ways to engage top political leaders in peace-building and development that encompass all groups?

---

\(^5\) For more on the Do No Harm paradigm, see the website of the Collaborative for Development Action: www.cdainc.com
Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

- **The human dynamic: trust and relational issues**
  - There is a lack of trust in divided societies due to experiences with previous regimes and political processes.
  - Lessons from the development field: Find common ground. Working on issues that transcend divided lines can build relationships and trust. For example, in Macedonia attempts to create dialogue between ethnic groups resulted in “no shows.” Dialogue infused into child development work resulted in success because many people across different lines cared about the issue and came to the table.
  - Our choice of strategies for building inclusive processes will depend on the extent of division in a society: If minimally divided, we can focus on the institutional level, but if divisions are deep, need to pay close attention to addressing and strengthening relationships.

- **Determine who the key stakeholders are in local and national democratic processes and how to involve them**
  - Inclusiveness and participation are important, but is this really happening and do people believe in it? Who are we bringing together in our work? How are we facilitating? How are we transmitting different messages about youth and gender to create true inclusiveness? It is a challenge to be inclusive. People have multiple identities. When we bring groups together, it ends up also being an intervention. Which identity is the person representing? What is being said and unsaid? What are the risks of including certain groups?
  - There are ethical implications to our decisions on who to involve in post-conflict democratic transitions and how to engage them: Is teaching paramilitaries about democracy the same as teaching militias how to win elections?
  - Additional ethical issues come up when defining boundaries on who to engage and work with from the existing political landscape and decisions to support new political parties. Many politicians are angry about new parties being created with foreign funds and see training programs as undercutting their power.
  - Transitional processes are often not inclusive of parties and actors who join later in the process. Also, spoilers/outsiders often have patrons on the inside; a good way to reach them is through these patrons.

- **Start with what people need and what has meaning for them**
  - At the core of democracy are people’s needs and their expectations of their governments.
  - What are the entry points to work on linkages between democracy and coexistence? We must look at what people care about, such as unemployment, and use these issues as entry points to work on social cohesion and coexistence.
  - We put significant emphasis on technocratic needs but not enough on relationships or other needs identified by societies emerging from conflict (crime, socioeconomic issues, and poverty). For example, the Sierra Leone Special Court cost $58 million, but the permanent office of the Ombudsman, which provides redress to citizens, operated on an annual budget of less than $1000.
  - Does representative democracy, by default, mean a choice given to the people “to do it their way”? Who decides how democracy happens—the processes and consequences—if the country decides not to hold a truth commission, it is their choice. There are issues with short-term satisfaction with the values of the West versus the long-term vision of a country’s citizens.
  - Lessons from the development field: Project-specific approaches also work. Building a well together and talking about the collaboration on this specific project is important. Reconciliation begins when people are able to talk to each other. Democratic decision-making happens when participants problem solve and make decisions together. If development work is done well, it is an excellent doorway into doing conflict resolution work. It can be seen as a concrete project without fear of it being a political project or a reconciliation project. People can engage in the project and see the concrete positive
Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

outcomes of it. Plus people pedagogically learn through experience, so the development project becomes a way to do reconciliation and learn skills and political decision-making through action. The only way to do effective peace building is to build on practical things that have meaning for people in their lives.

- We need to understand the difference between economic democracy and political democracy and which is more important to people. Most will say economic and will, for example, potentially support Hamas if they redistribute resources for economic good (e.g. wells, water, etc.)

• Build bridges between civic leaders and government institutions and bring together individuals and institutions from all levels in divided societies
  - We need to bring middle and grassroots levels together to influence the top and make changes. Grassroots community groups have electoral power but often lack knowledge. Middle level has knowledge and representative ideas but not the electoral power to influence parliament. We need to seek out influential civic leaders who can serve as a bridge between grassroots and national leadership.
  - We need to move from process-oriented (giving dialogue skills) to theme-oriented (reforming parliaments, school system curriculum, security reform, coexistence, etc.). This detailed work with institutions, where bargaining and identity-politics happen on a daily basis, can give the best return on investment (e.g. the Ministry of Public Works that actually has an impact on the lives of people). We are not working with this middle level, because it is not flashy and takes sustained and hard work, yet this is the level that most impacts people’s lives.
  - We must avoid an unbalanced approach by focusing on extremities such as grassroots organizations on one end and powerful leaders on the other end and ignoring the middle ground (the detailed functioning of institutions). We spend $70 million on elections in Haiti but do not put sufficient funds into supporting institutions and structures that will govern after the elections (e.g. judiciary).
  - We sometimes lose sight of grassroots efforts in democratic processes. A leader such as Mandela was key but he did not bring democracy to South Africa single-handedly. There were 1,000 local leaders at the grassroots level and 20 years of education teaching local leaders to focus on changing the system (“We don’t hate whites, we hate the system”). South Africans owned this grassroots process and the national outcome was South African, not UN-driven.
  - Inclusive democracy and governance should start locally through engagement by NGOs, trade unions, and local politicians. National level democracy processes are often unreceptive to the involvement of these groups.

• The outcomes—what are the results of these dialogues and forums
  - We need to focus on outcomes/results and design next steps (e.g. help ministry of national reconciliation to incorporate these outcomes/priorities into a national plan) and not dialogue just for dialogue’s sake.
  - Participatory processes often become “events” driven by donors and organizations. How do we make these processes sustainable over the long-term and truly inclusive?
  - Examples of inclusive practices that worked and had an impact:
    - Albania (getting civil society organizations to work together by creating incentives—“we help with water and electric problems but you have to work together
    - South Africa
    - Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland didn’t want to be left behind due to media pressure from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland).
IV. CODIFY METHODOLOGIES FOR COEXISTENCE WORK AND FOR WORK AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF THE DEMOCRACY AND COEXISTENCE FIELD

- Document lessons learned and disseminate these lessons
  - Documenting and sharing innovative and effective strategies that have been successfully tested and integrated across agencies allows for improvement and builds awareness. We need more evidence of how we have involved both high level leadership and diplomacy efforts with social cohesion efforts at the grassroots level.
  - We need success stories/narratives that will translate to the institutions we work with. How do we attribute success to the actions we took? Showing evidence that something did not happen that would have happened with coexistence lens and work is hard to do.

- Examine the evolution of the conflict analysis approach to see where we have come and where we still need to go
  - We need to examine the evolution of conflict resolution approaches:
    1) from early warning to conflict analysis approach (where we look at structural issues vs. the proximate issues of the conflict itself)
    2) from headquarter-focused to grassroots/local action
    3) from capitals to local; 4) from externally–driven to internally–driven

- Develop and fine-tune analytical tools that have been successfully applied in multiple contexts

- Institutionalize mechanisms for political and civic dialogue to ensure there are clear outcomes (not just dialogue for dialogue’s sake)
  - One key challenge is in working with governments to operationalize policies and institutionalize mechanisms for dialogue, inclusive/participatory processes, and to manage expectations that are raised by inclusive processes.
  - Sustainability and institutionalization of coexistence work is an issue. When funds run out and we move on to where conflict is more threatening, the work disappears but problems come back to haunt us. Ideas for what we need for sustainability: Human rights commissions, electoral commissions, and/or a trust fund for a key local NGO to continue the work.

- Map and connect the work being done at many levels by many institutions so that we understand more clearly how to work together effectively and leverage synergies
  - We need linkages and complementarity between all of our interventions:
    - Development (economic): building schools, health centers, water systems, micro-credit
    - Coexistence (social): dialogue, negotiation, and diplomacy
    - Democracy (political): electoral assistance, good governance.
  - The development community and the UN are not integrated enough. The UN operates at a country level and is disconnected from other organizations like World Bank, which creates decompartmentalization. A disconnect between political and technical work: For example, we pledged $750 million to Haiti but we are still not making an impact. Many actors work in isolation. We need to map the work and connect it.
  - There are four main places of fragmentation: terminology and concepts, headquarters versus country offices, international and national stakeholders, and across disciplines.
  - We must create a community of practice: Who do we unite with to create frameworks and instruments around collaborating across all these different lines? We need to network and collaborate more effectively.
V. BUILDING AWARENESS/CHANGING MINDSETS

- Make the case for the value of coexistence-sensitive policy and practice
  - We need to demonstrate how coexistence work makes democracy and development initiatives more effective and why complementary approaches generate better results.\(^6\)
  - It is important to understand and convey the value of coexistence and how it relates to our democracy and governance work: What are the best ways to reach others in this area of work? How do we bring them to the table? How do we change their mindsets and build their awareness?
  - We need to raise awareness in our own organizations and get colleagues on board to work at the intersection of democracy and conflict. When there are not many like-minded individuals within agencies, some coexistence champions have relied on influential outsiders to sway the opinions of decision-makers at the top levels.
  - Changing mindsets and mentalities is important to our goal of fostering participatory processes in which people begin working together. Creating frameworks is only the first step; we need to accept that some people are not receptive to the conflict and coexistence lens and would rather use the development or democracy lens.

- Build a common language and terminology
  - Choice of words matters, and language itself needs to be conflict-sensitive.

- Create a movement: moving from champions to broader acceptance and buy-in
  - We must cultivate a core group of people who have the necessary mindsets to create democratic institutions, which can in turn help change mindsets and shift paradigms.
  - Awareness-building and constituency-building is important to the success of transitional processes. One approach is to start with champions at a local level and identify influential and credible groups that are able to convince others.
  - Momentum must be created. Gender is an example of “momentum seized”: and is now talked about explicitly while it was rarely talked about a few years ago. Gender issues engaged a lot of people who knew a little bit (wide reach) as well as experts (in-depth knowledge). If our work engages only experts, issues become ghettoized and results not as broad.

- Destigmatize and demystify the concept of conflict resolution/coexistence
  - It is very important to destigmatize and demystify the concept of conflict resolution. We have to show people that conflict resolution is part of as the work of a government and that ‘technical skills’, capacity building in mediation, and dialogue is beneficial.

- Create an infrastructure for peace (a forward-looking vision focusing on peace)
  - Shifting and transforming systems overnight is not possible.
  - We are very good at preparedness for war. We need commensurate efforts at preparedness of peace, which involves the same kinds of groups. This requires a shift from conflict-focus to peace-focus and maintaining a forward-looking vision when examining the causes of conflict. Educational institutions, experts, research institutions, and think tanks should all work toward creating an infrastructure for peace.

VI. OVERCOMING ORGANIZATIONAL/INSTITUTIONAL OBSTACLES

\(^6\) Complementarity means that individuals and organizations working in coexistence and related fields understand that their effectiveness depends upon each others. Building upon this understanding, they work with awareness of, and sometimes in collaboration with, the other disciplines.
Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

- **Revisit and Activate Organizational Mandates—Push the Boundaries**
  - Within our agencies, we need to seek critical entry points for organizational change through existing mandates and policy frameworks. Activating existing mandates is key.
  - “Democracy that delivers” and “processes with impact” require our flexibility and a willingness to change course mid-stream: some strategies may be outside of our mandates, but can be important entry points. We must use multiple strategies at once.

- **Create incentives to do this work and to collaborate**
  - How do we “take our own medicine” and make changes within our own organizations to find the win-wins?
  - We need to actively create incentives for collaboration because few get rewarded for doing this; in fact, some might get sanctioned. Leaders are key to creating incentives for collaboration—it will not happen if they do not back it up.

- **Engage in practical, specific projects with partners to create win-wins and successes**
  - Efforts need to be targeted at implementing concrete and effective steps as part of coexistence work (adding value) and infusing thinking among people and departments so that it becomes an integrated way of doing business.

### III. Final Reflections

Participants offered the following ideas and reflections in response to a question posed at the end of the meeting: “What steps will you take as a result of this meeting?”

**Mainstreaming the issue and awareness-raising around coexistence:**

- I will describe a coexistence lens so that people can recognize it and can act on it.
- I will start using coexistence as a conceptual framework for our work.
- I will use what I have learned at a specific meeting of the Framework Group.
- I will help build a better understanding of coexistence/conflict resolution and how it relates to other fields. I will show others that it is not only about development or economics and demonstrate how we need a coexistence lens as part of our work to really be successful.
- I was happy to learn the terminology so that I can more comfortably converse on these matters with colleagues and take advantage of opportunities.
- I will carry on these conversations with colleagues and get the dialogue going.
- I will work with the Framework Team to bring together coexistence, development, and democracy work.
- I will share the coexistence lens with colleagues and explain how it can help us deal with post-conflict societies.

**Use information here to more effectively integrate coexistence with democracy and governance work**

- I will bring back information about win-win transactional leaders and how to find these leaders and leverage win-win transactions.
- I will create dialogue processes and take them to the next level. I will make sure the dialogue assists with the democratic processes and is not just dialogue for dialogue’s sake.
- I will spend time thinking about how to foster the incentive process so it does not feel imposed on people. I will remember that inducing conflict prevention from the outside doesn’t work.
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

Spread the word and make the case for coexistence: Documentation and Dissemination
- I will reach out to the U.S. media and encourage them to cover more conflict prevention stories. I will partner with the media.
- I will work to document our experience in this area and publicize lessons and stories so more people can see the intersections.
- I learned champions do matter. This is a meeting of champions. Now we need space for documenting and reflecting on what we know to move things forward beyond champions.

Generate New Knowledge and Capacity Building
- Education will create a generation of professionals with a new value system and points of view on these issues.
- Figuring out how to apply coexistence work to authoritarian places like Iran.
- Publish papers on Governance, Conflict Prevention, and Development

IV. Conclusions and Follow-Up Steps by CI

The March 1 seminar participants found this opportunity to share experiences, exchange ideas, and learn from their peers very relevant to their ongoing work. The plenary and small group discussions were stimulating and the format allowed for a dialogue on a number of nuanced perspectives in the relationship between democracy and coexistence. These conversations among practitioners and policymakers helped to shed light on the concrete challenges that surface in the process of developing and implementing coexistence and conflict sensitive policies and programs aimed at democracy-building.

From the initial content analysis of the seminar’s discussions, a number of conceptual and practical issues stand out as requiring further attention and inquiry. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- Challenges and opportunities in the institutional domain (lack of organizational leadership and incentives to change, re-envisioning mandates, building awareness, etc);
- Implementation challenges arising from a lack of competencies required for inclusive political dialogue and transitional processes at the national and grassroots levels in countries receiving democratic assistance;
- Methodological challenges and options for designing effective and sustainable political processes that are both inclusive and participator;
- Contextual considerations and dilemmas stemming from the complex and nuanced relationship of democracy and conflict.

As evidenced by the reflections summarized above, many participants furthered their understanding of the relationship between coexistence and democracy and committed building awareness of the added value stemming from integrated and complementary approach within their agencies and vis-à-vis relevant stakeholders. Participants shared specific strategies for integrating the learning from this meeting into their current work and expressed the need, and their commitment, to move forward on future collective learning and collaboration.

CI remains committed to moving forward with its objectives of building increased understanding among relevant stakeholders and fostering a collaborative learning network. CI will continue to build this active constituency and will create more opportunities for sharing and exchanging lessons and approaches in the future. CI is building on its research findings and the learning from this discussion seminar and is in the process of producing
Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Coexistence and Democracy-Building—What is the Connection?
Meeting Summary

a brief overview paper aimed at practitioners and policymakers interested in exploring the intersection of coexistence and democracy-building and governance work. CI will also disseminate a resource list on this topic that includes many publications and lessons learned from its partners in this learning network.

---

7 Anticipated publication date: July 1, 2007