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## KOFF – swisspeace

- Conflict-sensitivity in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations
- swisspeace Presents Research Projects at SVPW's Annual Congress
- Regional Workshop on Gender and HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe

## Focus

- Fragile States, Illegitimate States?

## News from Swiss NGOs

- The International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
- Geneva Peacebuilding Platform: Discussions on Conflict and Fragility after Busan
- Cemented Future? Natural Resources and Human Rights in Guatemala

## News from Swiss Government Agencies

- SDC: Increased Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-affected Countries
- HSD: Stabilization in the DR Congo
- Independent Governance and Oversight Mechanism of the ICoC

## International Partner Organizations

## Events, Publications, Web Tip

## KOFF – swisspeace

### Links

- [swisspeace: Peacebuilding Analysis & Impact](#)
- [KOFF website](#)
- [KOFF-HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation conflict-sensitivity circle](#)

Further information:  
KOFF [Sidonia Gabriel](#)

### Conflict-sensitivity in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations

There is nothing new about conflict-sensitivity in international development cooperation. The concept is familiar to most organizations and is now standard practice, the aim being to avoid negative effects and strengthen positive ones on the conflict context. Implementation on the ground is not yet satisfactory however.

In the current debates on fragile states conflict-sensitivity is once again of particular relevance. A practice-oriented approach that can be integrated in on-going project cycle management is therefore required. In this context HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and the Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF) have together elaborated a conflict-sensitivity training manual. Building on this experience KOFF is at present trying to further develop the concept in various institutional contexts and sectors in collaboration with KOFF member organizations and multilateral actors. The core aspects are illustrated in a conflict-sensitivity circle building on the seven Do no Harm steps. Conflict analysis also plays a key role: The analysis of the interaction between intervention and the conflict context is based on questions relating to the organization, activities and partners. The development of practical approaches for implementation in the organizations remains a serious challenge however.

Conflict-sensitivity is just one possible approach when dealing with fragile and conflict-affected situations. Intervention in such circumstances also requires adaptations with regard to management and security issues. Actors need to be aware that a conflict-sensitive approach can be highly political: for example should contacts with local authorities dominated by rebel groups be upheld in order to ensure project implementation? Despite a practice-driven conflict-sensitivity tool, the need for a deeper understanding of the conflict context and serious discussions of its political implications persist.

02.02.2012

### Links

- [Conference program](#)
- [swisspeace: research activities](#)

### swisspeace Presents Research Projects at SVPW's Annual Congress

The plenary session of this year's Swiss Political Science Association (SVPW/ASSP) Annual Congress focused on the topic of "Power Transitions in the International System". After keynote speeches by Joseph Nye, Amrita Narlikar and Duncan Snidal, the political scientists present discussed specific topics in thematic working groups. In the working group on security and peace policy, four members of swisspeace provided insights into their current research projects, including the first results into the role and relevance of private consulting firms in the state-building process in South Sudan. A second presentation looked at economic relations between Swiss and Afghan small and medium enterprises and the extent to which these might contribute to development in the agricultural sector. It was made clear that the diaspora has a major intermediary role to play, and that investment in many small agricultural enterprises seems to hold out more promise than supporting a few

Further information:  
swisspeace  
[Sara Hellmüller](#)  
[Laurent Goetschel](#)

larger urban production units. Two swisspeace doctoral candidates also presented their PhD projects in this working group. The outlined research project on impact assessment of peacebuilding analyses the effects of increasing evaluations and result-oriented approaches in the field from a scientific perspective. The second project looks at the role of culture in peacebuilding with the example of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It shows how culture influences perception of the significance of peace and conflict by international and local actors.

This working group also included researchers from the universities of Liège, Mohammend V Souissi in Rabat, Lille 2 and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETHZ). The discussion once again made it clear that swisspeace places particular emphasis on qualitative case studies that focus in detail on specific cases, as opposed to large-n quantitative studies. The added value of this approach is to delve deeper into a given context, bringing to light cultural and historical specificities.

03.02.2012

## Links

- [swisspeace: Gender webpages](#)
- [SDC: Humanitarian Aid](#)

Further information:  
KOFF [Barbara Brank](#)

## Regional Workshop on Gender and HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe

The Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF) conducted a regional workshop on gender mainstreaming in Harare for the Humanitarian Aid Africa of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). This event held in February brought together various heads of program of African SDC cooperation offices and partner organizations for exchanges on the methods and instruments required for gender-sensitive implementation of projects and programs. Various case studies and field visits allowed the participants to put into practice the approaches and methods learned. The thematic focus "gender and the HIV/AIDS pandemic" as well as "gender and food security" fitted the regional context and reflected SDC program priorities in Zimbabwe.

A thorough gender analysis of the HIV/AIDS pandemic made it clear that the issue continues to be seen as a woman's problem. Women and girls must bear the brunt of the consequences of this widespread disease, having to care for infected family members as well as for AIDS orphans. Women also have to deal with the social stigma of the disease. Once it is known they are infected they are often rejected by their partner and their own family. Men and male adolescents on the other hand take up far less responsibility for the spread of the pandemic or its impact. The programs of donor organizations focus above all on reducing the burden on those affected. Many projects help women to care more effectively for the weak and the sick, or help them to secure the family income. In doing so however they tend to ignore the fact that such projects actually increase the burden on women. What is lacking is a strategic approach to make men accept their share of responsibility. The workshop with the SDC and its partner organizations therefore formulated new objectives, which demand a stronger participation of men.

16.02.2012

## Focus

### Links

- [OECD/DAC: Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States](#)
- [swisspeace: Publications on Statehood & Conflict](#)
- [Crisis States Research Centre/LSE: Resilient State](#)
- [Africa Power and Politics](#)
- [Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Web Tip](#)

### Fragile States, Illegitimate States?

**The international community has paid much attention to the so-called “fragile states” for more than a decade. An increasing amount of development aid goes to these countries, in which most peacebuilding projects are furthermore implemented. The concept of fragility is however problematic, since the definition is based on a functionalist understanding of statehood that does not allow to comprehend actual statebuilding processes.**

Fragile states have come into the international spotlight mainly because of security considerations. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, both the institutional instability of states like Afghanistan and the fact that terrorist organizations can operate freely on their territory have been regarded as a threat to international stability. Rebuilding these seemingly dysfunctional states has thus been seen as an effective way to combat terrorism.

#### **Development against fragility?**

From a security policy issue the question of fragile states was transformed into a fundamental problem of development cooperation. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as well as most of the development agencies have given priority to the support for fragile states. There is general agreement that the fight against poverty requires the reconstruction of such states. An important share of bilateral and multilateral development aid thus flows to these countries.

But what exactly is a “fragile state”? How is the concept defined and on the basis of which criteria is the degree of “fragility” measured? There is no consensus on these questions and debates continue. There is however one constant element in the various definitions and indices for measuring the weakness or failure of a state. The perspective is usually based on functionalism, which means that a state’s capacities are always measured in relation to functions that are considered fundamental. A state should be able to exert the monopoly of violence and to ensure the safety of its citizens. Additionally it must provide services in the areas of health, education and infrastructure. And finally its institutions should uphold the principles of the rule of law and (good) governance. Fragile states are thus defined by the OECD Principles for Good International Engagement as those states that are unable or unwilling to perform such fundamental tasks.

#### **Understanding fragile states**

That security, well-being and fundamental rights are more likely to be guaranteed in a state that meets the criteria mentioned above seems unquestionable. The difficulty with such a functionalist perspective lies in the fact that it is based on a highly normative stand which has its origins in the idealized model of the rational-legal state of the sociologist Max Weber. The so-called “fragile” states are thus analyzed not in terms of their actions, but rather with regard to their negative deviation from a norm. The emphasis is thus laid on what states *are not* or on what they *are not* doing.

Yet, the main objective of the considerations on fragile states and resulting challenges for policymakers are antithetical. What is important to know is how states function and how they build their institutions. Only in this way can international actors understand existing governance problems. The analysis of the state's historical trajectories should therefore not be regarded as "fragile" or "failed" byproduct of the international community, but rather as independent political systems, while considering each state's uniqueness as well as historical, cultural and political similarities among states.

### **Legitimacy as a social construct**

The historical sociology of the state disposes of certain instruments with which to meet such challenges. Rather than following an exclusively formal or legalistic perspective, the existing balance of power should serve as a point of departure for the analysis of a state. Various state and non-state actors daily negotiate and allocate responsibilities in the area of governance. It is important to view states as more than merely an amalgam of institutions with predetermined tasks, but rather as an evolving historical process that reflects a temporary balance of political power. The development of a state is thus neither linear nor predictable. The weakness of a state is often attributed to the lack of autonomy of state institutions with regard to the society, thus favoring clientelism and corruption and preventing the development of a rational-legal state. Nevertheless, the lack of a clear demarcation between state and society is neither a specific characteristic of fragile states nor a problem *per se*. Quite to the contrary, the relationship between the state and its society is a key element for understanding statehood.

The risk involved in the continuing use of the term "fragile state" is that it may render the concept unintelligible or to hide what needs to be understood rather than offering suggestions for effective strategies and measures. Giving greater weight to the historical trajectories of the states would enable to circumvent these difficulties to some extent. Such an approach would help international actors to understand why some states like Zambia, which seem to meet all the criteria of a fragile state, nonetheless show surprising political stability, and why for example a state with extreme fragility in terms of social welfare can at the same time count on a strong security apparatus.

Such an analytical perspective would above all help to understand the development of the state's legitimacy. A seemingly fragile state does not necessarily lack legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens. And *vice versa*, as the popular uprisings in the Arab world have clearly demonstrated, a state's strength is no guarantee for political legitimacy. Rather than classifying states on a normative scale of fragility as a way of determining the extent of their need for international support, we would do better to focus our attention on the social development of legitimacy or the lack of legitimacy of existing governance institutions.

20.02.2012

Further information:  
swisspeace [Didier Péclard](#)

## News from Swiss NGOs

### Links

- [Resource materials on IDPS](#)
- [Civil society involvement](#)
- [OECD: IDPS](#)
- [Interpeace](#)
- [New Deal Agreement](#)
- [OECD Principles on Engagement in Fragile States](#)
- [OECD Dili Declaration](#)

Further information:  
Interpeace  
[Koenraad Van Brabant](#)

### The International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding

The first phase of this policy dialogue took place between the High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness of Accra in 2008 and Busan in 2011. Significant about this *International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding* (IDPS) hosted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was the active involvement of governments of 19 “fragile and conflict-affected states”, who grouped as the “g7+”. Civil society also participated though not with the same member status as states. Interpeace has provided the platform for civil society engagement with the IDPS. Civil society was indeed actively accompanying the IDPS through the provision of formal input papers for example.

Thematic working groups of the IDPS concentrated on political dialogue, capacity strengthening, planning as well as aid instruments. This policy process resulted in a *New Deal Agreement* that invites development partners to work differently in so-called fragile situations. There is a tendency to highlight and promote this New Deal. Yet its natural complement, the g7+ Statement in annex to the earlier Dili Declaration should not be forgotten, since it sets out the commitments of governments in fragile countries to their populations. The IDPS developed five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals. Progress on them is held to be a precondition for progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). More significantly, the IDPS reintroduced concerns about violence, conflict and peace into the mainstream development paradigm. Many feel that those concerns need to be explicitly built into a new post-MDG framework.

The declarations in the framework of the IDPS tend to be more political than is often the case with such intergovernmental agreements. There are explicit references to inclusive political dialogue and legitimate politics within fragile countries. Notwithstanding, the IDPS has largely been a conversation about aid and aid flows to fragile and conflict-affected states rather than about peacebuilding and statebuilding. Surprisingly, it has so far neither unpacked the vague concepts of “fragility” and “resilience”, nor paid any attention to why and how countries have slipped into violence and fragility. The dialogue rather made the assumption that “fragility” is essentially the same in countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Burundi, the DR Congo or Timor Leste. Yet, it is more likely that the nature, scope and reasons for persistent fragility as well as the resources available to each country are very different. Thus, the pathways out of fragility will probably also be different for each country. After all, in the OECD Principles on Engagement in Fragile States and many other policy and learning guidance, the “context” takes priority over the “text”. It remains to be seen if such fundamental questions will be taken up by the IDPS in the post-Busan phase.

04.02.2012

## Links

- [Geneva Peacebuilding Platform](#)
- [Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence](#)
- [Meeting Report](#)
- [OECD: IDPS](#)
- [IDPS: Policy Documents](#)

Further information:  
Geneva Peacebuilding  
Platform  
[Achim Wennmann](#)

## Geneva Peacebuilding Platform: Discussions on Conflict and Fragility after Busan

At a meeting co-organized by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development at the end of January in Geneva, experts, policymakers, NGO representatives and governments discussed the outcome of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan within the *International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding* (IDPS). Discussions focused also on directions and opportunities to strengthen the post-Busan conflict and fragility agenda. The meeting came to the conclusion that the transformation of the *New Deal Agreement* into concrete actions will be full of challenges, since various obstacles in reducing fragility faced by the international community and recipient countries remain. Moreover, the implementation of the generic Agreement will face great difficulties when confronted with the very different contextual realities in the affected countries. For experts at the meeting, the transformation of the New Deal Agreement into concrete actions nonetheless also represents an opportunity to advance the conflict and fragility agenda. In particular the current shift from donor-recipient relations to the relationship between governments and their societies will change the focus of efforts.

The meeting in Geneva showed that the Busan outcome agreement reflects the beginning of a global consensus, since the conference in Busan experienced the active participation of various actors from donor countries and civil society to states affected by fragility, but also emerging powers such as Brazil and China. The IDPS therefore marked the positive engagement of emerging powers with the global development agenda. Moreover, it has established a new framework with five goals for peacebuilding and statebuilding which are not addressed by the Millennium Development Goals framework. Legitimate politics, justice, security, economic foundations as well as revenues and services as explicit objectives will therefore help to continue and expand international engagement in fragile states.

06.02.2012

## Links

- [PBI](#)
- [Guatemalanetz](#)
- [Rights without Borders](#)
- [Mining: Good for Guatemala?](#)
- [Guatemala's Indigenous Women in Resistance](#)

## Cemented Future? Natural Resources and Human Rights in Guatemala

In 2006 the Guatemalan company Cementos Progreso launched the project San Juan to build a cement plant and a quarry in various communes of San Juan Sacatepéquez. The Swiss company Holcim has a 20 percent stake in the venture.

The indigenous population was not consulted about the project by the authorities; therefore they carried out their own poll. The result was clear: 8'946 voted against the construction of a cement works, and only four in favor. Despite this resounding refusal the municipal authorities granted the building permit. Since then the situation has remained tense. Since beginning of June 2007 a number of organizations reported a massive increase in police and military presence, a campaign of intimidation with attacks on the population as well as the arrest and arraignment of those opposed to the project. To date some 20 opponents have been found dead in mysterious circumstances.

Further information:  
PBI [Judith Schnyder](#)

Due to the threat to those involved in the non-violent resistance by the Qamaló k'í Aj Sanjuani (People of San Juan Unite), Peace Brigades International (PBI) has provided protective accompaniment since 2009. At the end of January 2012 two representatives of the indigenous communities were invited to Switzerland by PBI and the Guatemalanetz. During their 10-day stay they met with representatives of Swiss civil society, the federal administration, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations and the media. They also called attention to their plight in a number of public events.

Switzerland is committed to demanding that the private sector accept greater responsibility for human rights and the environment. However, the case of San Juan Sacatepéquez makes it clear that an approach based on voluntary mechanisms is not able to provide meaningful protection. The current campaign, "Rights without Borders" is therefore continuing to call for binding rules to oblige businesses to respect human rights and environmental standards in their activities. 15.02.2012

## News from Swiss Government Agencies

### Links

- [SDC](#)
- [Message on Switzerland's International Cooperation in 2013-2016](#)
- [SDC: CPSM Handbook](#)
- [OECD/DAC](#)
- [OECD: Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States](#)
- [New Deal Agreement](#)

### SDC: Increased Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-affected Countries

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC is to increase its engagement in fragile states affected by violence, recognizing that fragility and violent conflicts have a growing influence on development programs and humanitarian efforts. This is one novelty in the Message to Parliament on International Cooperation in 2013-2016 which the Swiss Federal Council adopted in February.

A survey by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) showed that international donors were not doing enough to implement the 2007 OECD "10 Principles for Good Engagement in Fragile States". New efforts were therefore needed at the policy level. In the framework of the *International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding* (IDPS), donors and fragile states negotiated a *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*. This New Deal was approved by the SDC Directorate prior to the forth summit on aid effectiveness in Busan. SDC Director-General Martin Dahinden also stressed at the meeting in South Korea the importance of Conflict-Sensitive Program Management (CSPM), announcing that SDC's engagement in fragile and conflict-affected contexts would increase in the future by 15-20 percent.

The five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals of the New Deal count as overall objectives for SDC's efforts in fragile partner countries. Moreover, the implementation of CSPM is now mandatory. Topics such as human rights, access to justice, armed conflict and dealing with the past must henceforth be included in context analyses as well as in the formulation of strategy and in programming. The SDC has good reasons for this focus. The situation of poor and marginalized target communities in fragile and conflict-affected regions is made worse by violence. Additionally the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not being achieved in these regions.

Further information:  
SDC [Markus Heiniger](#)

With concepts designed to prevent violence and a human rights-based approach the SDC can act against the root causes of poverty and inequality. Specific measures must aim at eliminating structural fragility and supporting conflict transformation in the countries concerned, helping to protect the populations while contributing to development. Thanks to its good reputation and recognized impartiality the Swiss development cooperation is in a good position to support efforts to solve protection and poverty problems in fragile regions.

Success in the area of protection and development is costly however and the risks are considerable. Further improvements will therefore be needed at the level of context and conflict analysis as well as in the area of security. Efficiency and risk considerations can also help to develop the kind of coherent approach that is particularly important from a Whole-of-Government perspective. In the past the SDC has managed to obtain good results in difficult circumstances by adapting its approach and methods – for example in Nepal, the Great Lakes Region or Afghanistan. While increasing its efforts in fragile states the SDC will thus be able to draw on its own experiences.

15.02.2012

#### Links

- [Human Security Division](#)
- [ISSSS](#)

## HSD: Stabilization in the DR Congo

Among international donors and the United Nations, stabilization is increasingly considered as the policy response of choice to deal with fragility in contexts such as Haiti, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The UN-led International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS) was developed in 2008 and 2009 to deliver tangible peace dividends and reinforce political progress in eastern DR Congo. It is the main vehicle of support to the Government's Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for War-Affected Areas (STAREC). The ISSSS delivers program support under five components: security, political processes, restoration of state authority, return, reintegration and recovery, as well as the fight against sexual violence. After the first phase (2009-2011) has been completed, planning and prioritization are currently taking place for the second phase (2012-2014). The Human Security Division (HSD) of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA will put at the disposal of the Stabilization Support Unit two consultants with longstanding experience in the region in order to contribute to the development of the strategic framework and the implementation of the second phase.

While ISSSS has shown some progress with regard to the rehabilitation and construction of essential infrastructures, it has been criticized by many for representing a "top-down" and "technical" approach towards stabilizing eastern Congo. Unsuccessful attempts at fostering local ownership and being oblivious to the various political dynamics at play are other points raised. Although the restoration of state authority is crucial, one of the main challenges is that in many areas the state itself is perceived by the population as the main source of insecurity and conflict. Local reconciliation and dialogue are therefore key elements in order to ensure that restoration of state authority does not reproduce existing power structures,

Further information:  
FDFA [Lukas Probst](#)

but contributes to increased state legitimacy and accountability. During the current planning phase, ISSSS partners will confront those challenges and should address key pending issues related to dialogue and reconciliation. 16.02.2012

#### Links

- [Comments may be submitted online](#)
- [International Code of Conduct](#)
- [ICoC Outreach Events](#)

Further information:  
FDFA [Rémy Friedmann](#)

## Independent Governance and Oversight Mechanism of the ICoC

Building on the foundations of the Montreux Document, which articulated pertinent state obligations under international humanitarian law and good practices for the use of Private Security Companies (PSC) in situations of armed conflict, the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) was launched in 2010 as a broader Swiss initiative to promote better governance, compliance and accountability for PSCs operating in complex environments.

In November 2010, at the signatory ceremony, 58 PSCs signed the ICoC. Since then the number has risen to 307 signatory companies. The ICoC is only open for signature by private security companies, but governments and non-state clients such as humanitarian organizations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and private firms can make supportive policy statements and publicly declare their intent to incorporate the ICoC in future service contracts with PSCs.

A multi-stakeholder Temporary Steering Committee with representatives from governments, the industry and civil society has taken the process to a second stage by developing a charter for a permanent ICoC governance and oversight mechanism. This mechanism will be vested with various authorities and responsibilities, including the certification of member companies' compliance with the ICoC, auditing and monitoring of their work in the field, reporting requirements and a mechanism to address alleged violations of the ICoC. The draft charter of the oversight mechanism is now open for online comments until 16 March 2012. These comments will be considered by the Temporary Steering Committee which will suggest a Charter for adoption by mid-May. 18.02.2012

## International Partner Organizations

### Info

News from ten international KOFF partner organizations.

- [Berghof Foundation](#)
- [CDA Collaborative Learning Projects](#)
- [Conciliation Resources](#)
- [EPLO](#)
- [forumZFD](#)
- [FriEnt](#)
- [GIZ](#)
- [GPPAC foundation](#)
- [International Alert](#)
- [Plattform Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung](#)

### Berghof Foundation

- The Berghof Foundation released a [policy report](#) on the conditions under which armed resistance or liberation movements show the political will to restore the state's monopoly over the use of force and participate in post-war governance. It does so by investigating the post-war security and political transitions in South Africa, Colombia, El Salvador, Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Burundi, South Sudan, Nepal and Aceh. The report is complemented by a more comprehensive [volume](#) edited by the same authors. Also part of this program is the next issue of the [Berghof Transitions Series](#) on the former rebel group and current ruling party CNDD-FDD in Burundi.

### FriEnt

- The latest edition of [FriEnt-Impulses](#) focuses on the New Deal Agreement and outlines the way forward after the Busan summit in South Korea. The edition also looks at capacity building as an instrument of conflict transformation.

### International Alert

- International Alert has been selected as one of the world's top hundred NGOs in a list unveiled by [The Global Journal](#). The journal has published its ranking for the first time: International Alert came 79th and second among peacebuilding NGOs. That makes International Alert one of seven EPLO member organizations which made it to the top 100.

## Events

### Info

This section gives pointers to selected events in Switzerland pertaining to civil peacebuilding.

- "In Palästina verlor ein Volk sein Land: was nun?" is the title of a book by journalist Marilène Schnieper, which will be [presented by the author](#) in Le Cap (French Church Bern) on 6 March. The event, organized by the [feminist peace organization cfd](#), addresses the issue of the Nakba, Europe's share of responsibility and possible solutions to the Middle East conflict.
- [Peace Brigades International](#) is offering a training course in international protective accompaniment for human rights activists, 17-18 March in Solothurn. [Applications](#): till beginning of March.
- As a member of the NGO Coordination Post-Beijing, [Terre des Femmes Switzerland](#) in collaboration with Advocacy and Support for Migrant Women and Victims of Trafficking (FIZ ) is organizing the [annual meeting](#) on the subject of "Violence against girls and young women: where does Switzerland stand?" in Bern, 24 March. [Application and program](#).
- The Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (ICP) is to hold a [training workshop](#) on social therapy in Bern, 24-25 March. It will discuss various ways to combat collective violence in a society that is a prey to racism, discrimination and xenophobia. [Registration](#).

- [Peace Watch Switzerland](#) (PWS) is to provide trainings for deployment as human rights observer in Chiapas, Guatemala and Colombia, 26-29 April and 10-13 May, in Zofingen. [Information and applications](#): till 8 April.
- [Steps for Peace](#) is offering [various advanced training courses](#) on peacebuilding-related topics between April and December in Berlin. The subjects include training in relation to security risks in areas of conflict, peace education and conflict-sensitivity.
- The [Institute of Federalism](#) is conducting its 24th International [Summer University on Federalism, Decentralization and Conflict Resolution](#) between 20 August and 7 September. The three-week course will enable advanced students and young professionals to gain scientific and practical insights into these areas. The Institute is also offering an "Internship Programme for Young Professionals in Federalism". For a period of six weeks in September and October, participants who have completed the course will be able to benefit from work experience in Swiss federalism. [Application](#) till 31 March.
- In collaboration with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the University of Basel, swisspeace is offering for the first time a [Certificate of Advanced Studies CAS in Civilian Peacebuilding](#). This one-year post-graduate course between September 2012 and August 2013 is aimed at practitioners with experience in peace promotion, development cooperation or social work. [Additional information](#) and [registration](#): till 30 June.

## Publications

### Info

- [F. Akindès \(Ed.\), 2011. Côte d'Ivoire : la réinvention de soi dans la violence. CODESRIA.](#)
- [F. Akindès, 2012. Côte d'Ivoire : Pardonnez ou punir? In: Alternatives International, Hors-série N°10, January 2012, pp. 94-95.](#)

### From Stability to Instability: the Search for Identity in the Ivory Coast

The violence that occurred after the presidential elections of December 2010 showed that the Ivory Coast is still far away from its former stability. A new study entitled "*Côte d'Ivoire : la réinvention de soi dans la violence*" sheds light on the socio-political crisis that has lasted since the year 2000, using seven different perspectives. The hypothesis formulated by the research group of Francis Akindès is that the Ivory Coast's unrest is connected to a national search for identity. The different components of society are fighting over how to redefine the concept of their nation and on what kind of civic integration it should be based on. It also considers the impact migration has on a new national identity, and how patriotism develops new national sentiment. Moreover, a new political culture based on violence and intimidation is taking hold of the nation's youth. The analysis thus highlights the reasons why in the Ivory Coast ideas of nationhood can lead to violent conflicts. The question of governance seems crucial to understand the political instability. Akindès attributes the Ivory Coast's political frictions to the difficulty of developing a new social contract. No general sense of belonging unites the political circles. Neither the supporters of President Houphouët-Boigny, who was responsible for the long period of stability, nor those who promote the idea of a new ethnocentric

nation seem to have the upper hand. The study comes to the conclusion that there's a need for a fundamental social debate to deal with the identity crisis and the lack of perspectives in the Ivory Coast.

21.02.2012

#### Info

- [S. Bieri, L. Fankhauser, A. Sancara und N. Stolz, 2011. Mehr. Wert. Beiträge zur geschlechtergerechten wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung. Universität Bern/Caritas/DEZA](#)

### Contribution to Gender-Equitable Economic Development

Celebrating its 50-year jubilee, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies (IZFG) of the University of Bern and Caritas have just published a study on gender-equitable economic development. The authors take a critical look at ways to promote economic development, and the extent to which such efforts actually improve women's living conditions. For those who deal professionally in the area of peacebuilding with questions of gender mainstreaming and the promotion of women, the publication contains a stimulating presentation of current debates in development circles. The authors do not fail to point out that the impact of development initiatives on various segments of the population can also be influenced by political upheavals and the loss of social security.

The study draws on experiences of Swiss actors in Nepal, Georgia, Bangladesh or Kosovo, and summarises the current state of gender mainstreaming and the promotion of women's rights. It makes clear that there are no panaceas for poverty reduction, be it economic growth, the integration of women in value chains or micro-financing. Nor can the cause of gender equality be advanced as long as questions of unpaid chores such as caring for household and family, but also of who manages available resources are left out of the equation. The authors feel that a human rights-based approach to discrimination against women should be at the core of the efforts to combat poverty. Interviews with representatives from the Swiss trade policy and fair trade make it clear that their activities were not gender-sensitive. The study cannot resolve doubts that such gender-blind projects are implemented at the expense of women.

23.02.2012

## Web Tip

### Info

- [Crisis State Research Centre](#)
- [The Collaborative Research Center](#)

## States in Crisis – Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood

Some states collapse following armed conflicts or experience large-scale violence, while others are able to respond effectively to internal conflicts. As part of a large-scale research project the LSE Crisis States Research Centre has analyzed the causes of destabilizing events and their impact on fragile states. The research also looks into factors that contribute to state reconstruction in post-war periods, and factors that impede rebuilding. The Centre makes available on its website research and policy documents that break new ground.

The Collaborative Research Center of the Free University of Berlin, specialized in questions of governance, also provides a wide variety of information and working papers on statehood in fragile contexts. Its interdisciplinary research focuses on different forms of statehood in areas where governments are unable to deploy. New findings in the four project areas – theoretical foundations, governance institutions, security and welfare & environment – also provide important new knowledge.

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