

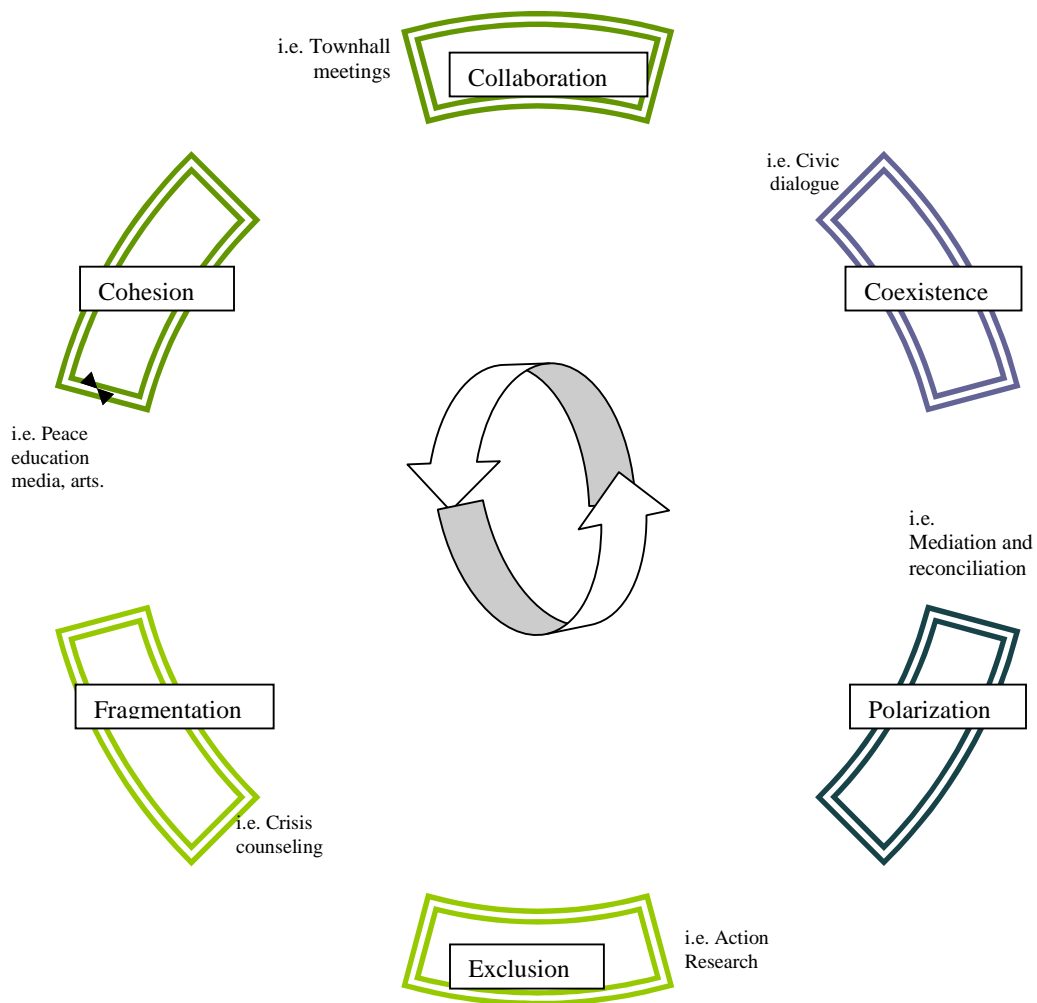
Peace Dialogue in the Social Integration Process An alternative to violence and silence!

A draft Strategy *by, for and with* People

Social integration raises many challenges and questions, such as:

- How do we get along when differences arise – in the community, country or organization?
- What procedures, capacities and institutions help to resolve differences by peaceful and just means, and
- How do we improve procedures, capacities and institutions to sustain social integration and move together towards a flourishing peace (i.e. beyond *negative* peace or the mere absence of conflict)?

The answers are manifold and complex and have given rise to a draft strategy illustrated in part, below, and amplified in the following text. The strategy revolves on multi-stakeholder dialogue.



I. Introduction

Peace Dialogue is guided by United Nations approaches to peace, development and human rights and, more specifically, by the vision and values of the World Summit for Social Development that placed social integration on the international agenda -- essentially, as a multi-stakeholder process of mutual accommodation in social transformation to create a 'society for all.'

Mutual accommodation is a particular challenge when groups have fought and killed each other; wealth and power are unevenly distributed, or when groups have clashing interests. It can remain a challenge in more peaceful social relations as well – in relations of coexistence, collaboration and cohesion – when tolerance of difference, agreement on priorities and explorations of shared meaning are subjects of debate, discussion and dialogue.

PD-SIP responds to the challenges of mutual accommodation -- and to opportunities for social transformation -- by a hands-on strategy. The strategy builds on and builds *in* current approaches – from different domains including socio-political, socio-economic and psycho-cultural – to unfold a modular construction that stakeholders may use as is, and/or deconstruct and reconstruct to suit their needs and realities, using dialogue as a tool. (The present paper outlines the strategy. A longer paper, under preparation, adds commentary and illustrative examples).

A. Guiding principles

The following interdependent principles have guided the formulation of the draft strategy and would continue to guide its applications: Unity within diversity with social justice, where

- unity refers to coherent interconnection of diverse people in a social system (it does not imply uniformity or conformity);
- diversity refers to individual and group differences that are innate or chosen, and
- social justice refers to fair mindedness in how stakeholders negotiate the unity within diversity principle, recognizing that people have rights and responsibilities as well as different needs and opportunities.

B. Working definitions.

Social integration is here seen as a *multi-stakeholder process of mutual accommodation in social transformation towards more peaceful and just social relations and institutions*. Social integration is a potential and a choice. It should never be imposed.

Dialogue is creating common meaning: this emerges from and flows through the group.

Peace is a positive phenomenon (more than the absence of conflict) that is manifested in a commitment to mutual accommodation in transforming social *fragmentation, exclusion and polarization* – and advancing social relations of *coexistence, collaboration and cohesion*.

Peace dialogue is defined as a dialogue *practice* of mutual accommodation applied in different dialogue *procedures* to achieve social transformation.

II. The Strategy

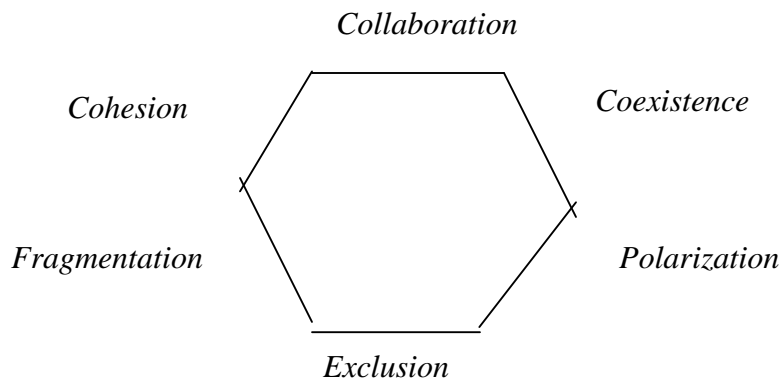
The strategy has evolved through desk audit, in-house and e-dialogue – and continues to evolve in a collaborative search ‘through shared meaning’ (as in the original Greek word *dia-logos*). A multifaceted approach has emerged for use in:

- Developed, developing and countries-in-transition
- In peace or post conflict situations
- At local, national or international levels (but mainly the first)
- Within and across different domains: socio-political, socio-economic and psycho-cultural.

Its modular construction supports separate yet integrated perspectives on four critical components of social integration: Social Integration Stages and Stakeholders, Dialogue Procedures and Practice.

A. Stages of Social Integration

Stages of social integration are formulated as stages of social relations in a model framework. The framework invites stakeholders to explore different stages of social relations – between negative (lower half of hexagram) and positive (upper half) that are, however, seen here as formative and expansive stages of social relations.



In an application, stakeholders themselves define what the stages mean to them: tentative definitions are as follows:

- Fragmentation arises in situations of abuse, armed conflict, and social breakdown i.e. social relations disintegrate (most profoundly at the psychological level) creating a need for crisis counseling;
- Exclusion arises where there is neglect or oppression (in legislation and custom) i.e. social relations are unequal and inequitable creating a need for action research to achieve inclusion through self-help and livelihood strategies;
- Polarization arises when groups mobilize against each other (most profoundly along the lines of religious/ethnic identity) i.e. social relations are hostile and combative creating a need for mediation/reconciliation;

The transition from polarization to coexistence is pivotal: that is when the focus shifts from healing and mending social relations to investing in strengthening relationships.

- Coexistence arises with tolerance of difference i.e. social relations revolve on civic dialogue and consensus-building creating a need to prioritize and act;
- Collaboration arises with a widening sense of socio-economic justice i.e. social relations have a need for participatory development planning, and
- Cohesion arises with shared meaning i.e. social relations have a need to create flourishing peace in education, arts, media, inter-religious dialogue, sports etc.

The somewhat fluid nature of the stages requires stakeholders to define more precisely where they are now and where they wish to be – i.e. their need and intention. If a priority need is to heal distress (at the fragmentation stage), it elicits crisis counseling or healing ritual or professional therapy, as stakeholders decide. Once distress is resolved, people are ‘freed’ to move to other stages where other needs/intentions arise.

B. Stakeholders in Social Integration

The Social Summit enumerated several categories of stakeholders: individuals and families, civil society groups and organizations, Governments and United Nations agencies and bodies, businesses and the media. These and others play different roles in social integration, potentially as:

- Facilitator
- Perpetrator
- Victim
- By-stander.

The roles are often interchangeable as when by-standers become victims. Victims become perpetrators. Facilitators are suddenly cast as victims or perpetrators, and so on. The PD-SIP strategy is designed to facilitate social transformation of perpetrator, victim and by-stander roles through participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue. This dialogue is not always easy but, in time, common ground can be found, social transformation experienced and facilitative capacities gained that, combined, provide a resource to reinvest in strengthening social relations of coexistence, collaboration and cohesion.

C. Dialogue procedures

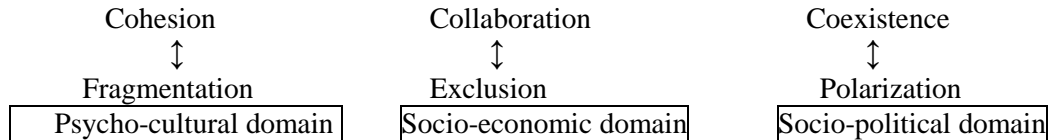
Dialogue procedures are tools, techniques and methodologies developed locally and/or professionally to address particular social transformation needs. For example, where there is Fragmentation with inner/outer peace shattered, a need arises to mend/heal distress that can be met by stress counseling. Other needs arise at the stages of exclusion, polarization etc. for which there is an already existing repertoire of dialogue procedures, such as:

Stages	Needs/intention	Peace Dialogue procedures¹
1. Fragmentation Inner/outer peace is shattered. Survival is threatened.	To mend/heal distress. Rehabilitate for resilience. Mental health underpins all transformations towards peaceful social relations.	Stress counseling, active listening, healing ritual, public information. [Other procedures: policing & peacekeeping; relief aid and social services. When these are sensitive to social relations, they support and ‘mainstream’ a social integration approach]
2. Exclusion <i>Out</i> -groups are disempowered and made invisible.	To build livelihood skills and options. Re-tool for work. Work skills and access secure inclusion without need for revolt by excluded with counteracting repression by elite.	Action research in microfinance and cooperative enterprises. Collective bargaining in the workplace. Community-based (re-)integration of displaced peoples and migrants. [Other procedures: Affirmative action; redistributive taxation.]
3. Polarization Competing groups clash in quest for recognition and equality.	To resolve conflicts. Reconcile for harmony. Dialogue provides an alternative to violence or silence.	Mediation & reconciliation. [Other procedures: Adjudication. Arbitration]
4. Coexistence People tolerate diversity	To tolerate diversity. Re-align views democratically. Civil society creates associations, engages in collective decision-making, and supports good citizenship and governance.	Civic dialogue practiced in forums, associations, governance, democracy. [Other procedures taken FOR people, without dialogue]
5. Collaboration People participate in socio-economic planning for social justice.	To participate in development plans. Redirect development planning to reach all. Inclusive development helps planners to pick up signals of distress, balance interests, pool resources and share benefits.	Town hall meetings, focus groups, Community score cards, Citizen report cards, hands-on impact assessments. [Other procedures taken FOR people, without dialogue]
6. Cohesion People share meaning/values: <i>Unity in diversity with social justice</i>	To build peace culture. Re-imagine new possibilities. People build flourishing lives and cultures.	Arts – narrative and metaphor Media – discussion and reflection Education – mindfulness and capacities Religion – meaning and ethics Science – enquiry and testing Sports – outreach and celebration [Other procedures taken FOR people without dialogue]

¹ Among the procedures listed, some are listed in square brackets as ‘other’. These other procedures are undertaken ‘for’ people. They are more top-down. Insofar as they are undertaken with sensitivity to social relations, however, they can be said to ‘mainstream’ a social integration approach.

A careful review of the stages above reveals that, as presently defined, they fall in three domains. First, fragmentation and cohesion (on the left side of the hexagram) pertain to the psycho-cultural domain where emotion and ideation are a direct concern. Exclusion and collaboration (centre of the hexagram) pertain to the material world where socio-economic wellbeing is a concern. And polarization and coexistence (right side of hexagram) pertain to the socio-political domain where civility is a direct concern including conflict resolution and civic dialogue as shown here (in schema and matrix):

Schema: Domains and Stages



Matrix: Domains and Procedures by Stages:

Domain	Dialogue Procedure (Illustrative) – by Stage
Psycho-cultural domain (emotion & ideation focus):	- Crisis counseling to heal trauma/ <u>fragmentation</u> - Peace arts, media and education to advance <u>cohesion</u> .
Socio-economic (material focus):	- Life and livelihood skills to remedy <u>exclusion</u> - Town hall meetings to advance <u>collaboration</u> .
Socio-political (civility focus):	- Reconciliation/mediation to resolve <u>polarization</u> . - Civic dialogue and assembly to advance <u>coexistence</u> .

With progress, facilitators of social integration develop a comprehensive repertoire of dialogue procedures to ensure a holistic social integration process (for sustainability).

D. Dialogue practice

An emerging discipline of dialogue is helping to refine the use of dialogue procedures such as those above. It is providing guidance on how best to participate and facilitate, reflect and take action. These four elements of practice are as essential to sustain social discourse as nutritional elements (vitamins, minerals, protein and carbohydrates) are to physical life – and in the way the nutritional elements are embedded in the world’s varied recipes, so too are the dialogue elements embedded in the world’s varied dialogue procedures (as listed earlier). The four elements vary owing to culture, professional paradigm, and individual preference i.e.

- Participation can range from passive to actively engaged, and
- Facilitation from hierarchical decision-making to egalitarian.
- Reflection may be focused on external reality alone or also on internal processes.
- Action can be wise and appropriate, or precipitous and disastrous.

E. Possible Indicators

Stakeholders themselves set and adjust their indicators or progress markers, but some tentative suggestions are made here, as a basis for discussion:

The stages of social relations (fragmentation to cohesion) may serve as indicators of social transformation.

Stakeholder roles (decline in perpetrator etc. and rise in facilitators) may be used as a progress marker (evidence may include ‘communities of practice’).

Dialogue procedures demonstrate a variety of approaches to fit different needs and intentions – and achieve sustainability.

Dialogue practice – how stakeholders refine and apply such basic elements as participation, facilitation, reflection and action – is seen in distilled knowledge.

III. Illustrative case (Example of an Application)

The strategy’s components -- social integration stages and stakeholders, dialogue procedures and practice -- were applied to the **Mali** peace process of the 1990s, retrospectively, mainly to see if the hexagram framework could help to trace social transformations. Though oversimplified, it appears that the instability in Mali arose from #2, exclusion, with the Kel Tamashek (Tuareg) and other northern people isolated from the development that was occurring in the metropolitan centre. A series of droughts in the 1970s and 1980s destroyed livelihood sources and drove many into exile (exacerbating stage #2, exclusion). Exiled youth gained employment in foreign armies returning later to Mali with military skills that they pitted against the Mali government (stage #3, polarization). The government responded by convening a meeting with one stakeholder (attempting coexistence, stage #4). The stakeholders who were excluded from this meeting grew resentful and suspicious. Fighting resumed and spread. The government fell and nation-wide fragmentation was threatened (stage #1).

The turning point came with a new government that was open to all the parties. It was given impetus by one elder’s peace dialogues that, when successful, were replicated in neighbouring communities. In a short time, a broader regional (and even national) peace movement emerged. Government, traditional leaders, women and civil society groups joined in peace dialogues (stage #4). International donors lent support. Inclusive socio-economic development strategies were agreed (stage #5). In 1996, in a public square in Timbuktu, three thousand firearms were burned in a symbolic Flame of Peace. In subsequent years, nomads commemorated the event. Later the commemoration grew into national gatherings and, since 2001, international music Festivals in the Desert (stage #6, cohesion).²

A range of typical social integration stakeholders were involved in the Mali peace process, in different roles. At different times government and youth were perpetrators but also, later on, key facilitators of the peace. Other facilitators were elders, women, external donors and civil society entities including musicians. Victims were the northern people owing to marginalization exacerbated by drought (and a casualty was a government that fell owing to inability to resolve the tensions).

Dialogue was central to the entire process, and it occurred across three domains. Socio-political dialogue was evident in conflict resolution and civic dialogue that reduced

² See www.triban-union.com for information on *Festival in the Desert* music DVD made at the event.

tensions. Then socio-economic dialogue could arise, focusing on livelihood and inclusion of the northern peoples in national development plans. No trauma was reported but a cultural component was evident as when the Peace Flame of 1996 from 3000 rifles was commemorated yearly with, in 2003, in an International Music Festival in the Desert.

The above summary was based on several cases studies. It is abbreviated and approximate yet the exercise confirmed that trends in social relations can be traced, and that stakeholders and dialogue procedures can be identified retrospectively. For the most part, however, these social integration elements are glossed over in standard conflict and peace case studies. A more systematic approach, therefore, might help to mine peace processes for lessons learned in social integration.

IV. Reflections on the Strategy: Structured yet Flexible, Limitations and Strengths

PD-SIP has limitations and strengths. And it attempts to be both structured and flexible. The structure is there to support cross-case analysis (retrospectively as in the Mali example above, and prospectively as would arise in action research). The flexibility is to invite innovation by local stakeholders.

<u>Structured Strategy</u>	<u>Flexible approach</u>
6 Stages of social relations	Actual stages in any case or situation
Dialogue elements	Dialogue procedures to use
Principles	Stakeholders
Generic aims	Results

Limitations. PD-SIP requires:

- stakeholder interest in and commitment to building more peaceful and just social relations and institutions;
- reasonably stable living conditions since life threatening crises require other responses such as security or food aid (though insofar as such interventions are sensitive to social relations they can be said to ‘mainstream’ a social integration approach) and, perhaps also
- a particular mindset that is prepared to forego *satisfice* (choosing the first useful option that emerges) in order to *maximize* (explore among alternatives that a multi-faceted strategy brings to light).

Potential contributions/strengths of PD-SIP lie in its holistic and hands-on approach, where in regard to:

- Peacebuilding, its focus on positive peace may help to expand on efforts aimed only at reaching a negative peace (i.e. the absence of conflict);
- Development, where the PD-SIP accommodation of negative and positive aspects of social relations may help to inform development approaches that insensitive to conflict (including as consequences of its own work);

- Both Peace and Development spheres, insofar as PD-SIP incorporates a psycho-cultural domain (usually omitted) together with socio-political, socio-economic;
- Dialogue, where PD-SIP seeks to be global in its range of tools thereby extending beyond dominant approaches located mainly in the West and North and, finally,
- Resources, in that PD-SIP can be employed in resource-poor settings.

V. Some Questions for Reflection

The following questions are exploratory, to set us thinking and talking on the usefulness of the strategic components, and on how to revise and/or apply them. Thus, in your view, with regard to:

Social Integration Stages (as summarized above):

how useful are stages (i) for facilitating hands-on social integration processes and/or (ii) retrospective case study analysis?

Social Integration Stakeholders:

(i) who are the key actors i.e. facilitators, perpetrators, victims and by-standers in general and (ii) in regard to a particular case?

Dialogue Procedures:

(i) Is it useful to propose the building of a workbox or repertoire of dialogue procedures (across the three domains) and (ii) is the toolbox helpful when analyzing case studies to determine whether dialogue was used and if so what?

Dialogue Practice:

(i) How is it possible to assess the quality of dialogue practice? What are some useful indicators we could use?

The Strategy:

(i) how to make the strategy more effective; (ii) in what way does it relate to your work? (iii) What other strategies of a similar nature would you advise us to explore?

In sum, the multi-faceted strategy outlined here is made manageable by the *pivotal* use of dialogue for defining need and agreeing on intention for change. From twinning social integration with dialogue a new dynamic emerges to enrich both arenas.

Annex**UN background**

Peace Dialogue in the Social Integration Process (PD-SIP) is informed by United Nations aims, including:

- To live together in peace with one another as good neighbours (*the Charter, 1945*).
- To promote human rights (*the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948*).
- To promote social integration, employment and poverty alleviation as interrelated objectives (*World Summit for Social Development, 1995*)
- To promote a culture of peace (*General Assembly resolution 53/243, 1998*)
- To reduce poverty (*the Millennium Development Goals, 2000 and ongoing*)
- To devise a strategy for change: a collective response to current opportunities and threats facing humanity (*Report of the Secretary-General In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all, A/59/2005, 2005*).

In 1995, the UN made a commitment to promote social integration as a multi-stakeholder process of creating safe, stable and just societies (the Social Summit).

In 2000, the UN resolved to further its commitment to promoting social integration by strengthening the effectiveness of organizations and mechanisms working for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, and to increase the capability of United Nations bodies to promote social integration in post conflict situations.³

In 2005, regarding the development agenda, the Secretary-General acknowledged that “the concept of social integration has yet to be fully incorporated (and) the challenge is to ensure that the concept of social integration is at the centre of all (development) policies and to find practical ways and means of achieving a ‘society for all’”⁴

Thus, whether in peace or development, social integration is a continuing theme. And an evolving enterprise in its own right focused on the inclusion of people as agents and beneficiaries in decision-making that affects their lives.

“Peace is not only the absence of conflict, but also requires a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation” Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (General Assembly Resolution A/53/243, 1999).

“The current visible shift away from marginalization to consultation to participation, and the concurrent trend of promoting partnerships are positive developments which must be encouraged” (UN-Habitat - World Urban Forum. July 2004).

³ UN. 2000. General Assembly Resolution “Further initiatives for social development” S-24/2..

⁴ Report on the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, document A/60/1.