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Facilitating Participation of Diasporas in Peacebuilding



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Municipal Cooperation with Migrant Networks

Opportunities for Development, Peace and Integration Policy

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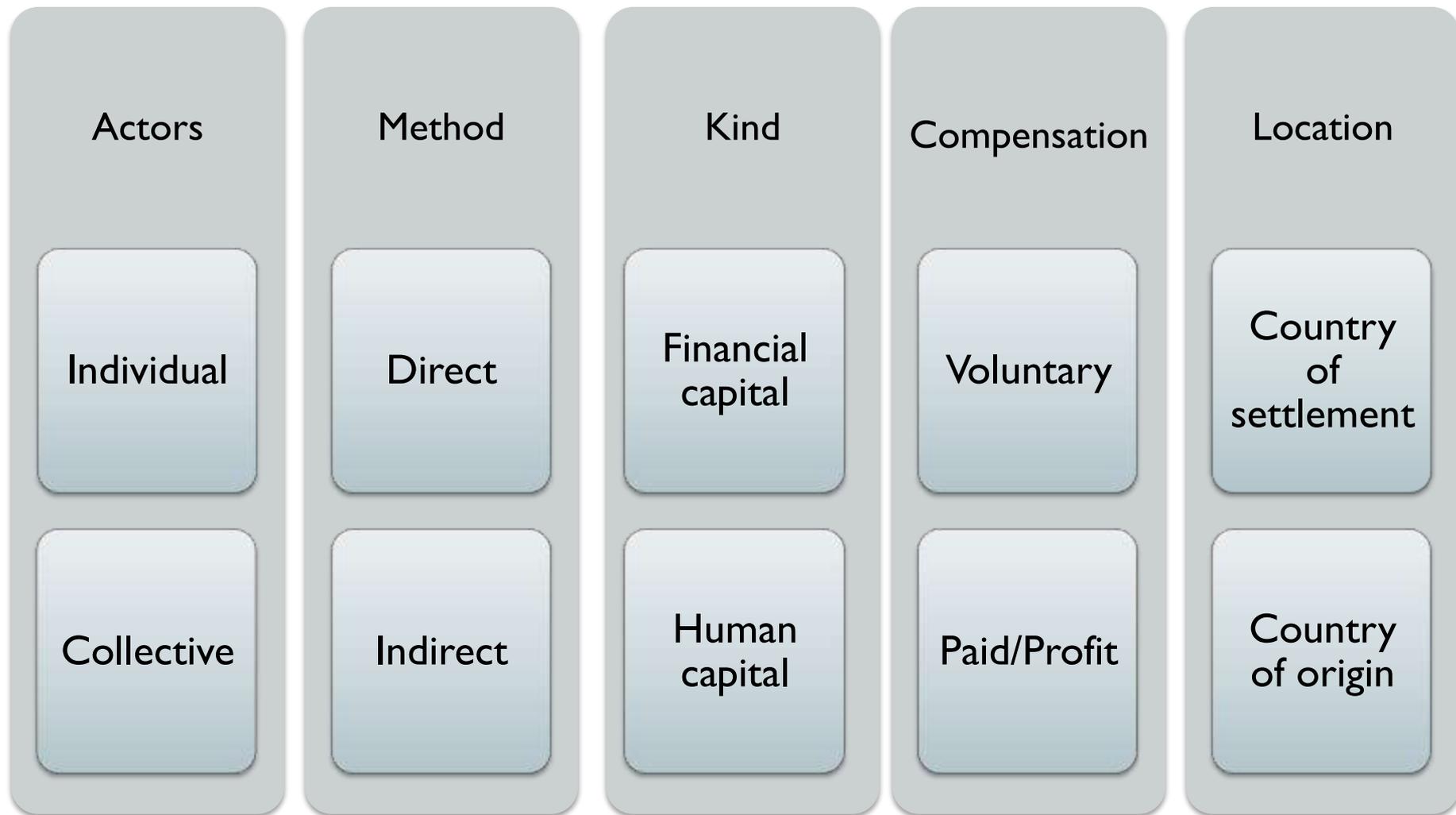
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Outline

- Introduction
- Fragmentation and Politicization
- Formal peacebuilding engagements are few
- Recommendations:
 - *Value local and regional level contributions*
 - *Cooperation cannot be forced but it can be facilitated*
 - *There is room for supporting both professional and voluntary engagements*
 - *There is a wide range of peacebuilding activities to be supported – at times preferably without calling it ‘peacebuilding’*

Introduction



Fragmentation and Politicization?

- Cooperation with diasporas from conflict-settings often seen as problematic for two reasons: fragmentation and politicization
- Fragmentation: Somali example
 - *Observed along regional, clan, socio-economic, religious, gender, generational and political lines*
 - *Considered a major obstacle for supporting transnational engagements*
 - *Often dealt with by demanding umbrella organizations or clan representation*
 - *Policy risks doing harm because it increases the conflict over resources along clan lines, solidifying dividing lines that in Somalia are often quite fluid*
- Politicization: Sri Lankan example
 - *Strong political engagement over the years from Tamil diaspora*
 - *Problematic when working in Sri Lanka to be associated with this diaspora*
 - *Yet not engaging problematic as diaspora does play a role*

A wide range of peacebuilding activities

- DIASPEACE research found very little formal project-based peacebuilding engagements – hardly ever self-identified as peacebuilding activities
- Reasons why it is not labeled as peacebuilding:
 - *Very political and highly contested term in country of origin and diaspora*
 - *National level less important than local/regional levels – more 'bottom up' approaches*
- Peacebuilding = activities aimed at the sustainable transformation of structural conflict factors and patterns. It presupposes a long-term commitment, on the part of both local and external actors, to a process that simultaneously addresses the material and the attitudinal level of a conflict

Recommendations

1. Value local and regional level contributions
2. Cooperation cannot be forced but it can be facilitated:
 - *Focus on specific professions (education, healthcare etc)*
 - *Support own initiatives (eg Nansen Peace Centre)*
 - *Accept the fact that this takes time – after all, there is a conflict!*
3. There is room for supporting both professional and voluntary engagements
 - *Recruitment practices*
 - *Enable diaspora organizations to access funding*
4. There is a wide range of peacebuilding activities to be supported
 - at times preferably without calling it ‘peacebuilding’

Interested in More?

- ADPC Policy Paper – G. Sinatti et al (in print)
- PRIO Handbook – C. Horst et al (forthcoming)
- PRIO Policy Briefs 2008 and 2009
- ...And many more earlier publications from partners, including JYU, BICC, CeSPI, ADPC, PRIO, MPI and APD