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# Facilitating Participation of Diasporas in Peacebuilding



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Opportunities for Development, Peace and Integration Policy

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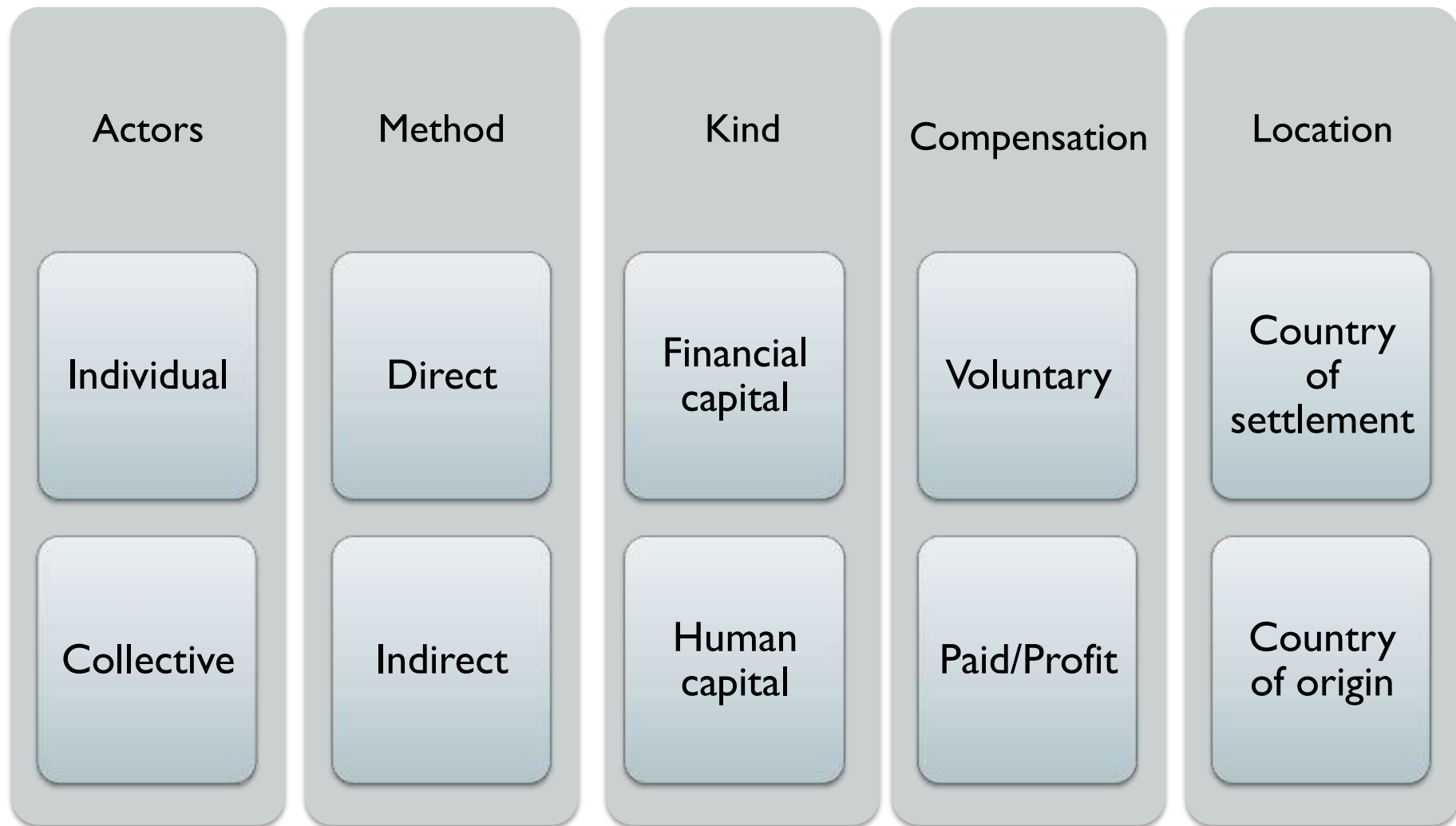
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# Outline

- 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