



ANNEX 1 Network priority themes and working modalities (conclusion from think tables and working group discussions)

A) Human Rights

In many contexts human rights violations and fragility go hand in hand. Often seen as mere symptoms of underlying tensions in a society, they can also transform into structural causes for conflict – thus actively fuelling a process that undermines social coherence and stability and eventually jeopardises development. As former UN General Secretary Kofi Annan framed it: “Humanity will not enjoy security without development, it will not enjoy development without security, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights.” Addressing human rights is therefore one key responsibility of development actors in their endeavours to reduce poverty worldwide. SDC is aware of this and since 2006 has an institutional human rights policy to guide its human rights activities.

The discussion on human rights and the human rights based approach (HRBA) at the F2F has been attended with a lot of interest by a very committed group of SDC staff (field and HQ). Some of them have already been part of the CAPEX working group in the follow up of the 2011 F2F in Amman and were able to refer to an extensive background with regarding the implementation of the SDC human rights policy in general and the HRBA in particular.

From the group work, a laundry list of desirables has emerged. In the categories of CHRnet’s three thematic priorities they present themselves as follows:

1. Policy:

NEEDS

When compared to CSPM the implementation of SDC’s human rights policies lacks behind particularly when it comes to their integration into the PCM tools. The discussion has shown that a stronger push “from above” to use the HRBA would be of help.

Further, particularly where several offices of the Federal Administration are present in the same context, conflicts of interest may hinder a consistent HR programming. Such conflicts might arise i.e. when economic interests undermine HR advocacy positions. Here, SDC staff would desire some guidance on how to anticipate such tensions and potentially work towards common positions as Switzerland.

Specific need for...	Next steps	Who?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of the HRBA into SDC’s normative documents on CS / CP etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbying and working with QA to integrate HRBA into CS / CP guidelines. 	FP/TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipation and mitigation of tensions in WOGA offices with conflicting agendas (i.e. economic interests vs: sustainable development). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? tbd 	TU

2. Knowledge Broker:

NEEDS

A very strong need has been directly expressed not only for already existing information material and implementing tools on SDC's human rights policies being collected and valorised but also for the provision of active training on the use of the HRBA. Further, staff want to be able to rely on solid backstopping to support them both at HQ and in the field on tricky questions regarding human rights programming and HRBA.

A further clear need has been identified in the discussion on CSPM and HRBA: Many staff seemed to be confused about the precise definition and the use/applicability of CSPM and HRBA and unclear whether the two conflict or mutually enforce each other, whether one is part of the other or both are completely separate concepts. Finally, it also appeared hard to detect how the two are positioned in SDC with regard to their institutional importance.

Specific need for...	Next steps	Who?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarification on CSPM/HRBA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Newsletter contributions 	TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collection, valorisation and dissemination of already existing HRBA information material, including the condensed insights of the CAPEX. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Newsletter contributions ▪ Intra web (already there?!) 	TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training and exchange on the application of the HRBA at COOF level and at HQ, possibly with e-learning tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs assessment with selected COOFs – then decide on further steps. ▪ Check on already available e-learning resources. 	TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assistance to SDC programmes on HR achievement measurement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect already existing information on HR indicators. ▪ Produce collection in Newsletter. 	TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Backstopping re: HRBA application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ i.e. establish a roster of resource persons for specific questions ▪ i.e. forming a permanent small expert team within SDC who would also be able to conduct trainings upon request at HQ or in the field. ▪ i.e. tapping resources at the OHCHR, IHRN and academic research centres. 	TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exchange between networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish contacts with concerned networks (i.e. Migration / Climate Change / Water) to present HRBA. 	FP/TU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exchange and learning across the Federal Administration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open up CHRnet for other offices of the Federal Administration, esp. HSD. 	FP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensitivity towards working on HR in Islamic / other cultural contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect on HR in Islamic / other cultural contexts. ▪ Dissemination in Asia Brief or 	Informal working group (LGP,

	Newsletter.	MOUPA, BAH, BOY)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to rely on first-hand experience on work with Swiss Guidelines on the Protection of HR Defenders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COOF Kabul to pilot and reflect on experiences. Experience sharing in Asia Brief or Newsletter. 	Informal working group (BAH)

3. Projects & Partnerships:

NEEDS

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Specific need for...	Next steps	Who?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	-

B) Protection

1) Why is protection relevant and important for the CHR network?

- Because the following definition of protection, which has reached a certain consensus among humanitarian actors, is not fundamentally different from the HRBA: *“All activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law” (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2002)*
- Protection, as a set of activities, aims both at engaging the duty bearers by reminding them their responsibilities and at involving communities so that they improve their own protection mechanisms (empowerment). Protection activities are about behaviour change. That is the reason why protection does not only imply working in fragility or in conflict, but also on fragility and on conflict prevention.
- Protection issues (e.g. lack of access, forced displacement, forced recruitment, sexual and gender-based violence, etc.) and the incapacity of a state to prevent and/or address them can be as much a result as a driver of conflict and fragility.
- Protection is not only relevant for humanitarian actors in emergency contexts, but also for development and political actors in transition and fragile contexts.

2) What are the key questions for the network?

- What does protection mean and entail? How do we, Switzerland, understand protection? How is it relevant to SDC/RC?
- How can protection activities concretely contribute to Switzerland efforts to reduce fragility? How do they relate to the New Deal PSGs and their indicators? How are they related to the focus on CSPM within SDC?
- How to improve the coordination between the different Swiss actors (in particular SDC/HA, SDC/RC and PD/HSD) in order to have a more comprehensive and effective approach with regards to protection issues in transition and fragile contexts? What are the most important relevant and priority protection issues with regards to this objective?
- What are the good practices with regards to a Comprehensive Aid Approach by Switzerland's to protection issues in fragile contexts?

3) Working modalities

- Communication/sensitisation: protection as main theme in an upcoming CHR newsletter.

- Debate on the CHRnet blog moderated by protection focal person.
- Presentation and discussion on the protection strategic and conceptual framework during an upcoming CHRnet meeting.
- Case study (stocktaking and experience sharing) on SDC's efforts (mainly through advocacy and support to specific programmes) to deal with access issues and maintaining/enhancing humanitarian/development space in fragile contexts. Possible contexts could include: South Sudan, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, Afghanistan, Nepal, OPT and Syria crisis. Monitoring could also be done through the new MERV (inclusion of an additional section on access).

4) Expectations towards the CHRnet focal point:

- Guarantee space and time for discussions on protection in network meetings, online forums, etc.
- Promote cross-border discussions among different Swiss actors.

C) Civil Society / Participation

In line with the INCAF *Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals* SDC increasingly focusses its engagement to strengthen state and public institutions in fragile contexts. At the same time, the civil society still deserves our attention as an important partner. In many ways **it remains the main “driver of change” and thus continues to be one of SDC’s key allies:**

- ... to anchor the respect of human rights,
- ... to create ownership for reform in the justice and security sectors,
- ... to strengthen democratic control of state institutions.

We therefore recommend that the network keeps alert to the **role of civil society as a driver of change**. In particular, the following questions shall be dwelt on:

- Which **institutional risks** for SDC derive from the active support of CSO actors (who often position themselves in clear opposition to their government)?
- How can **SDC contribute to the protection of CSO actors**? (If our support increases the visibility of such actors we also expose them to new potential risks. These have to be mitigated: cf. Swiss Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders)
- Which **good practices on CSO-support** are available within SDC? Where did our support eventually widen the “space for development”? Will it be possible to build upon these experiences in other contexts?
- **CSOs can act as connectors in polarised societies**. How can their “reconciliation powers” be employed to increase a society’s ability to resolve conflicts and heal itself? (cf. SDC’s DwP programmes)
- How can we contribute to the **improvement of the legal frameworks** in order to strengthen the position of CSOs and provide them with greater leeway for action in a specific context?

Modalities: How to approach the issue?

- **Communication:** Civil Society / Participation shall be taken up as the theme of an upcoming CHRnet newsletter. JTM could contribute with an article.
- **The Swiss Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders:** What do they imply for the Cooperation Offices and how are they implemented by them?
- **Dialogue with the DLGN-Network:** The exchange with the DLGN-Network shall be reinforced, particularly regarding the engagement with civil society actors. The CHRnet could

try to strengthen the “CHR-lens” in the activities of the DLGN-Network (Workstream Civil Society Participation).

- In **cooperation with Swisspeace/KOFF** and its links to CSO networks the perspectives of the CSOs themselves shall be tapped and included into the discussion: How do they see SDC’s role in the support of civil society initiatives? Where do they see a potential for cooperation?
- **Reconciliation:** The task force DwP continues its work and increases its focus on civil society actors.

D) Gender

The Gender and the CHR networks decided to work more closely together because there are many common themes that are highly relevant for both networks. It’s widely known that women have special needs in conflict affected situations and even in a post-conflict situation gender dynamics play an important role.

The two networks identified three levels of cooperation:

- **Topics:** The network members confirmed in a Think Table the importance of the following common subjects that should be discussed within the two networks: participation of women in peace processes and SSR; Gender-Based-Violence (GBV); Nexus between Gender, Culture and Islam. A main finding was that GBV is a reality in all societies regardless of whether or not an armed conflict is taking place, but it often increases during times of crisis because societies are put under stress and normal checks and balances break down. The two networks will therefore give this subject the necessary attention by creating a working group in the Gender Network in order to take stock of SDC experiences in this field.
- **Tools:** Men and women experience violence and conflict differently. Due to the special needs of women in fragile and conflict affected contexts, it is important to integrate a gender lens in conflict analysis. The objective is to work with existing Gender and CSPM tools and to integrate Gender in conflict analysis and vice-versa.
- **Policy:** The two networks suggest working together on the policy level in two concrete topics:
 - 1) National Action Plan 1325: The UN Resolution 1325 acknowledges the specific effect of armed conflict on women and recognizes women’s role in preventing and resolving conflicts. The NAP 1325 is implementing the resolutions objectives. The revised NAP of Switzerland for the period 2013 to 2016 was recently launched and the networks will organize joint events on this matter.
 - 2) Integrate Gender in the New Deal: With the New Deal specific challenges facing fragile and conflict affected states gained momentum, but the debate did not address gender specific issues in this agenda. Integrating a gender perspective into the international engagement in fragile states is crucial for the support to statebuilding. The New Deal offers different entry points for addressing gender across the 5 PSG’s (e.g. **Legitimate Politics**: women’s participation in decision-making and peace processes; **Security**: representation of women in the security sector; **Justice**: influence of customary law on marriage and inheritance issues; **Economic foundations**: access to land; **Revenues & Services**: access to public services).

E) Monitoring and Fields of Observations for context changes

After setting the [normative standards and adapting the tools to work in fragile states](#) it is important to use them adequately. Monitoring of context (MERV), domain outcomes and their contribution to positive change and out of fragility and finally the assessment of possible negative side effects of project need different fields of observations and indicators. This workstream will focus on result

frameworks of cooperation strategies, their link to fields of observation of the MERV and as well as to program monitoring.

F) Communication

In accordance with the evaluation on network communication conducted during the F2F meeting from March 2nd to 6th, 2014 the CHR Thematic Unit decided not to build up a new platform (shareweb) for the moment. Instead, the existing tools (e.g. Newsletter and Blog) shall be improved and adapted to the members' needs in order to enable dialogue, exchange and more participation. The debate at the F2F and the survey showed that the members need more participatory and transparent communication tools.

Main Findings of the Survey and next steps

The overall impression of the existing communication tools is rather positive. Yet, the horizontal exchange, especially the sharing of good practices, between members of the network in the field and at HQ could be enhanced by more participation and involvement. The Newsletter appears as being the most visible and appreciated tool, while the Intra web page appears as more heavy and less user-friendly. Members are less aware of the Blog, but do appreciate interactive and participatory contents such as video interviews.

The survey has shown that existing tools are for the moment sufficient, but need to be adapted in order to better link the field and HQ and enable a more systematic, moderated and continued exchange within the network. Among the most important needs of the network members with regard to communication is access to and sharing of information (52% highly necessary), followed by thematic exchange and discussions (48% highly necessary). Document sharing and management (32% highly necessary) and co-editing of documents (32% highly necessary) are not considered as key priority for a large number of members.

The CHR Thematic Unit is planning to take the following measures in order to adapt the existing tools

- **Exchange and discuss along the Newsletters' Thematic Input:** Each Newsletter has a thematic focus (e.g. Gender, Service Delivery and Peace – and Statebuilding), which offers an opportunity for discussions and exchange of best practices. In the next editions a moderated thematic discussion will be launched on the blog, where members can share their experiences from their contexts with regard to the specific subject. After this exchange we will produce a practical factsheet with a synthesis of the main findings and collect best practices.
- **Creation of password-protected working areas:** The network members can work together by co-editing and sharing documents on different themes on our blog. The members of the different work streams will have the opportunity to collaborate in a protected area.
- **Creation of a password-protected information page:** In addition to our bi-monthly Newsletter the network members will get information on training opportunities, new publications, ongoing activities and relevant network documents on our blog.