**Addressing Religious Content and Actors in Peace Work: Training Experiences and Gaps**

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This workshop brought together 20 participants interested in the nexus of religion and conflict for peacebuilding. The session aimed and addressed four elements:

* **Empirical trends: Provide research on why looking at religion in conflict matters for peacebuilding.**

An increased number of armed conflicts worldwide involve religious elements (Svensson et al. 2018). Therefore, peacebuilders need the awareness, skills and tools to include religious actors and perspectives. Empirical findings from Svensson/Nilsson (2017) RELAC Data was explained and a few case studies of particular interest were highlighted and discussed in the session.

* **Exercise: Practice part of one conceptual tool for understanding and analyzing religion’s role in conflict.**

Realizing the growing need for training on religion and secularity in conflict for peacebuilding, the Culture and Religion in Mediation Program (CARIM) at the Center for Security Studies (CSS) ETHZ and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, together with the Swiss Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organize the yearly Religion and Mediation Course (RMC) since 2014. The RMC is a specialized one-week training for policy makers and peace practitioners. At the request of the Mediation Support Unit of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA), a 3-day version of the course is also organized for both field and headquarters’ staff of the UNDPA.

In the workshop, the overall RMC training approach was briefly illustrated before a brief introduction to a conceptual tool on analyzing religion’s role in conflict. Participants to the session  were asked to reflect on two questions about the role of religious identities and religiously framed issues in two case examples Central African Republic and Tunisia. The contexts were introduced through short video clips. The debriefing that followed the group work yielded insights from the exercise as well as learning from the participants’ professional experiences.

* **Lessons learned: Reflect on the state of the art of training on religion in conflict for peacebuilding.**

The session showed how existing tools for analysis can be expanded to take account of the role of religion in conflict and capture religious dimensions of violent political conflict (see the *Religion in Conflict and Peacebuilding Analysis Guide* by Frazer & Owen (2018)). The session further shared key results from the 2017 practitioners’ workshop on how to train on religion and secularity in conflict for peacebuilding. The practitioner exchange showed a continuing need for training and tools to understand and address the role of religion in conflict transformation. The exchange’s report highlighted five strategic elements to keep in mind for curriculum designers and course organizers on religion in conflict: course design, course content, training methodology, evaluating training, course advertising. Needs further reflection were identified in the fields of strategic communication and messaging to policy makers and practitioners about why they need to learn about religion and secularity in conflict for peacebuilding.

* **Open exchange: questions & comments, needs for training, challenges and current gaps in training, how to address them, etc.**

The workshop participants were invited to contribute their experience and views on how religion and religious actors are relevant in their work and the gaps in resources and training or coaching they encounter and how to address them.