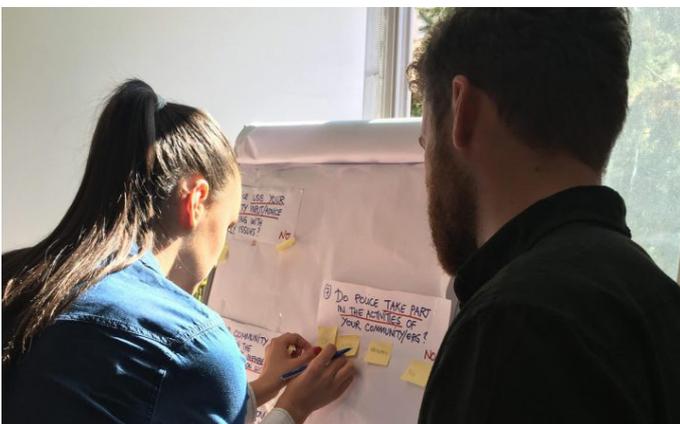


Enhancing the capacity of marginalised groups to make peace processes more successful

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About the research

[PeaceCapacity](#) resulted from the findings of the [EU-CIVCAP](#) project, which assessed EU capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and within this, capacity building. Capacity building refers to efforts to strengthen organisations' and individuals' capacities to meet the challenges of achieving sustainable peace and include trainings, workshops and mentoring activities. Those running these activities are referred to as 'capacity builders'. While capacity building exercises are expensive, they are [considerably 'cheaper'](#) than dealing with the consequences of conflict. However, whilst targeting the 'local', capacity building activities often privilege powerful groups. Therefore, 'local' solutions may reinforce existing power structures, and exclude groups that are already marginalised, making interventions less likely to succeed. To overcome this, we ran three training workshops for marginalised actors in Hargeisa, London (for diaspora) and Pristina, and produced a [catalogue of lessons identified](#), [policy briefings](#) like this one for policy-makers, and a training [handbook](#) for local actors.



Participants at the Pristina PeaceCapacity workshop, Kosovo, October 2017.
Photo: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria

Policy implications

- Capacity builders should adapt initiatives to the particularities of the context to ensure that training materials remain relevant to local participants. Where possible key local participants and organisations should be consulted during the design and delivery phases.
- Capacity builders should improve the chances of an activity becoming sustainable by 'training the trainer', or at least including in their programmes detailed information about how participants can train other people to use existing training materials.
- Capacity builders should be aware of the potential of new technologies, particularly [social media](#), and should exploit this potential to promote inclusiveness and increase the capacity of marginalised groups. They should also mitigate/minimise the [risks](#) associated with the use of these technologies, especially where it can lead to further exclusion.
- [Evaluation](#) and effective learning mechanisms should be put in place. Capacity building programmes must develop consistent monitoring mechanisms to facilitate continuous improvement and reporting, and to track progress over time. Evaluation mechanisms also support changes to capacity building activities where participants have identified problems regarding the content or methodology.

Key findings

Conflict prevention initiatives should emphasise capacity building. Capacity builders must reflect on the above recommendations when designing new initiatives. Our recommendations were formulated from the following findings:

- Understanding the local context and ensuring [local ownership](#), through the practical and financial support of these processes, is crucial.
- Our workshops required adaptation for Pristina, Hargeisa and London, as in each instance the participants had different levels of capacity in different areas, and therefore were interested in some topics more than others. This also related to their differing demographic compositions.
- ‘The local’ is often conceptualised in a way that marginalises certain groups; we were challenged throughout to attract workshop participants who represented a broad range of society, and who were often excluded and not regularly attending similar workshops. This was only possible through key intermediary local gatekeepers.
- In all instances, the participants were most interested in the positive and negative effects of new technologies, in particular social media.
- Finally, our evaluation process of testimonial collection has revealed a series of lessons identified for our project, and for future capacity building activities.

Further information

For more information about PeaceCapacity, see <https://peacecapacity.net/>. PeaceCapacity’s Catalogue of Lessons Identified is available at <https://peacecapacity.net/lessons/>.

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