



ITALY NGO FORUM AND EU CONFERENCE

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The roles of Human-Security & Participatory-Democracy in lessening the fight over control and in answering human rights issues

Main Points:

1. **Participatory Democracy** – setting-up a mechanism for wide participatory decision-making involving local community-leaders emphasizing human-security (Multi-Track Negotiations).
2. **Win-Win Conflict-Resolution Skills** as means for communication during negotiations
3. **A Campaign based on shared interests and benefits of peace** 'A Shared Society Achieves Human-Security'.

Decision-making enacted by the Israeli government does not mostly involve prior discussion with minority-leaders and disregards minority needs. Examples of one-way decisions concern Palestinian housing, infrastructure and demands for display of loyaltyⁱ, are proven to increase hostilityⁱⁱ.

There is a need to establish a mechanism for minority-participation in Israel, and for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations which will indeed answer the human-needs of diverse sectors. Studies in the UK have shown the effectiveness of cross-community committees in mediating between communities and government"iii.

While attempts to advance Palestinian needs through political or legal streams are controlled due to structural imbalances - the cultivation of community-development can create a productive platform for answering human needs.

However, bringing together leaders from diverse communities requires skillful intervention. The Government and most communities do not recognize benefits of answering human-needs of all residents, requiring a shift from win-lose,^{iv} fear-based approaches to conflict unto win-win approaches.

Therefore it is necessary to equip community-leaders with skills for inclusive community-development and other-than-violent approaches to conflict-resolution. Leaders can learn to avoid escalation and answer local-problems in an inclusive, productive way.

According to Susskind^v “Win-lose bases itself on the fight over resources and disinterest in the notion of sharing”. What is needed therefore is a strategy for “selling the benefits of a shared society” to heterogenic target-groups.

Notions of human security, as "freedom from fear" and economic-sustainability can become the basis for win-win campaigns promoting a shared-society.

Focusing on developing Community Leadership, which would offer alternative solutions for the benefit of all sectors, is crucial for creating of sustainable societies.

Establishing broad-consensus regarding the means of communication during track2 negotiations, with shifting the understandings from win-lose to a win-win shared society – can bring about the longed-for human security.

Hilia Tsedaka has been teaching Conflict-Resolution (NVC) and Community-Development to Israeli-Palestinian community-leaders since 2004. She has established a Cross Cultural Committee of some 30 community leaders and has won an honorary-award from MIT at the “Just-Jerusalem Competition”, for her Win-Win Jerusalem project, combining leadership-trainings with an economic plan for Jerusalem. Hilia has lectured and generated interest at MIT, Washington and the UK.

Bibliography

ⁱ An example for the ineffectiveness of one-sided decision-making was seen when the Israeli government introduced a law 'allowing' Israeli Arabs to participate in the National-Service. It was not discussed with Arab community leaders prior to ratification and as a result was not meaningfully implemented and led to frustration from all sides. The Intifadas are more examples for outcomes of neglected community needs.

ii. The Hampshire’s interfaith "Local Area Agreement" and “Local Strategic Partnerships” (LSPs) effective in promoting both community needs “Strategic Partnerships. Community Opportunity Prosperity” ⁱⁱⁱ Local governmentPerformance Framework LSPs
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Nir, Ori; <http://peacenowconversation.org/?author=11>, 6/26/2009.

Susskind, Lawrence and Patrick Field. *Dealing With An Angry Public: The Mutual Gains Approach To Resolving Disputes*. New York: Free Press, January 1, 1996