

## **Panel Executive Brief: Peacebuilding Perspectives on Stabilization Implementation**

Peacebuilding means actors, especially those who feel traumatized by the conflict, have their grievances heard. National, local and non-state actors need to all be heard or else pre-existing power dynamics that created the conflict are not reformed. Moreover, the varying USG actors – USAID, Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DoS)– must also coordinate with each other in order to ascertain every agency’s perspective and utilize their respective strengths in the stabilization process.

### **Speakers**

Charles “Chic” Dambach - *CEO, Operation Respect*

Dr. Matthew Levinger - *Director, National Security Studies Program, The Elliott School, GWU*

Bridget Burke - *Director, West Africa and Haiti Region, Chemonics International*

*Moderator:* Dr. Johanna Mendelson Forman - *Senior Advisor, Stimson Center*

### **Key Issues/Problems discussed:**

- Legitimacy depends on public interest – how do we know which local actors are viewed as legitimate and how do we best utilize those actors?
- Radicalization is more often the result of marginalization than religious affiliation
- Challenges that stem from the political nature of peacebuilding

### **Key Recommendations:**

- Need to bring local actors together
- Shared vision about future developments and goals among relevant local actors is crucial
- Local actors are not ipso facto good, so it’s necessary to use caution when supporting local actors and to understand the benefits and consequences of choosing certain local actors
- Need to stop separating mental health/trauma from stabilization works
- Perceived identity of peacebuilding initiatives is key – can contribute to the success or failure of stabilization efforts

### **Significance of SAR:**

The SAR emphasizes how important it is to bring together all of the relevant actors from different sectors associated with the conflict. Additionally, the SAR endorses examining the multitude of factors that affect peacebuilding and stabilization initiatives. Understanding the cause and effect aspects of a given conflict is imperative, which is why local actors must be utilized appropriately.