Peacebuilding Commission
Working Group on Lessons Learned

Local Governance and Decentralization in Post-War Contexts
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Introduction

It is readily recognized that rebuilding institutions of governance is a high priority in post-conflict contexts. Indeed, external actors tend to privilege support to central government institutions as part of a larger peacebuilding and state building agenda. Yet in many post conflict contexts it is equally important to pay early attention to local governance because that is often the point of entry for people in a society to interact with the state and receive services and support from the state. Decentralization of governance may also facilitate greater participation of communities, inc

relationship between central and sub-national institutions, whether they are public, private or civic."[2] Decentralization can relate to the distribution of authority and responsibility in political, fiscal, administrative, and divestment matters.[3] Each of these types of decentralization has its own challenges and responses that can be further explored. However, for all of them, it is important to ensure that adequate mechanism

central government's influence in areas of the country may be weak.

§ **Ensuring that externally initiated programs of decentralization be carefully designed and take into account historical and cultural issues as well as public perceptions of who owns and leads the efforts.** In some settings, there may be a poor culture of participation and experience with power-sharing and representational empowerment. Furthermore, taking into account existing institutions and traditional community-based structures in a situation while

women, are represented. Adequate provision of basic services by both the central and local government, with a suitable distribution of responsibilities to each, is important to build confidence among the local populations as well as within the internationa

Annex

The four main types of decentralizati