

# **Humiliation and Resiliency in the Social Integration Process:**

## **Towards a model framework and policy dialogue at the United Nations**

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Most people (and many peoples) have experienced both humiliation and resiliency. [The speaker gave an example from the life of Stephen King<sup>1</sup>]. To minimize the former and strengthen the latter is an objective of a project entitled “*Dialogue in the Social Integration Process: Peacebuilding by, for and with People*” (SIP) – a United Nations initiative that is rooted in Member States’ commitment to Social Integration as one of three themes of the World Summit for Social Development, 1995.

Through *reflective and participatory* dialogue, the SIP model creates space (and support) for parties to transform social relations that are fragmented, unequal, polarized – and to strengthen relations that are coexisting, collaborating and cohesive.

Humiliation can be experienced at any stage of the model when people experience trauma, exclusion, disrespect – as well as when people are not heard, not included in decision-making that affects their lives, and not enabled to be creative in peaceful ways.

Prevention of private and public humiliation begins by providing the space and opportunity for mending social relations, but it is only the first step. Building capacities and knowledge to end the cycle of humiliation is where the work begins.

The model recognizes that social integration must be voluntary and locally owned, and that it is an ongoing process. The model is guided by principles of *social justice* and *unity within diversity* i.e. a recognition that “an integrated society does not simply expect particular groups to adjust to the prevailing norms, but continually adapts and adjusts to accommodate different elements and through such adaptation it maintains its inner cohesion.”<sup>2</sup>

Following a conceptual exploration (2004), the United Nations’ Social Integration Branch (in the *Division for Social Policy and Development*, Department of Economic and Social

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen King. 2002. *A memoir of the craft – On Writing*, p. 20. Scribner. New York.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General. *World Summit for Social Development: An overview*. A/CONF. 166/PC/6. 4 January 1994.

Affairs) will test application of the model (2005) in support of a policy dialogue (2005-06).