



CONCEPT NOTE

KPAC23: Margins | Centres of Security & Rule of Law

Implications for SRoL's contributions to social cohesion and just social contracts

Nairobi & The Hague
8-10 November 2023 in Nairobi
7 December 2023 in The Hague

Who gets to interpret, evaluate, shape, think about, and write about social contracts? Who gets to make decisions on the role and contribution of security and the rule of law within them? Which experiences, perspectives, and stories are systematically made (in)visible, or politically (ir)relevant for SRoL policy and programming?

KPAC23 will discuss the contribution of SRoL policy and programming to social contracts using the lens of Margins | Centres. The centres are the spaces in which one can define and shape a dominant interpretation of a particular issue and, if relevant, prioritise individual and public action, while the those within the margins follow those interpretations and agenda-setting.

In healthy Margins | Centres dynamics, the centres are occupied by those who live actual experiences and navigating issues first-hand that being discussed in the SRoL sector; these individuals are directly impacted by policy and programming choices. In this instance, margins are then occupied by duty bearers, service providers, and allies. However, SRoL policies and programmes do not always display healthy Margins | Centres dynamics.

Often instead, dynamics of status, privilege, power, and repression place those who should not be occupying the centre...in the centre, relegating the lived perspectives and experiences of those who stand to benefit or are impacted by SRoL policies and programmes to the margins. They are not heard nor valued by those who sit in the centres either, because reaching them is practically difficult or politically unpalatable.

We see unhealthy dynamics between margins and centres across a multitude of binaries that are important for the contribution of SRoL to social contracts. These include capitals v. border regions, majority vs minority clans, mainstream v. marginalised political views, armed actors v. unarmed communities, elites v. 'the people', consortium leads v. consortium members, refugee camps v. host communities, cis-men v. marginalised gender identities, dominant racial and ethnic identities v. marginalized ones, well-served neighbourhoods v. degraded ones, and geopolitically dominant actors v. weaker ones.

How can we heal these unhealthy dynamics to unlock the contribution that SRoL institutions and mechanisms can contribute toward just social contracts and social cohesion? KPAC23 will be a moment to take stock of the network's knowledge on this question, discuss new insights and test current practices.

Objectives: healing

KPAC23 will discuss dynamics between margins and centres in SRoL and its contribution to social cohesion and social contract, in order to get to a deeper understanding of pitfalls and best practices in healthy SRoL policy design and implementation and to concrete proposals for improving current practice.

KPAC23 applies the Margins | Centres frame to the following aspects of SRoL contribution to social contracts:

- Understanding polarisation trends and defining interventions to strengthen social cohesion.
- Ensuring equality and inclusion in governance
- Opening closed and repressive political spaces
- Responding to climate disasters and preparing for a better future in times of climate crisis.
- Making practical advances towards locally-driven change, funding modalities, and partnership dynamics

KPAC23 is a space where each of these five conversations has its stage, before a final discussion on the last day brings together the main insights and discusses the way forward.

- **Centripetal Forces:** what pulls inward toward to concentrate power, influence, and resources towards the centre and reinforcing existing power structures and inequalities? (These might include for instance: concentration of political power, socio-economic disparities, policy processes...)
- **Centrifugal Forces:** What are the strategies to reclaim authority and power over one own's lived experience away from the entrenched centres? How can the established order be challenged effectively and peacefully to promote inclusivity and empower marginalised groups? (These might include for instance: social movements and activism, decentralisation models...)

These two forces are not static and continuously interact and shape the dynamics of social contracts over time, and societies may experience shifts between these forces depending on various factors such as political events, socioeconomic changes, and cultural shifts.

KPAC23 will put an emphasis on concrete examples and mechanisms for improving practices and policies. We are interested in moving beyond mere criticism of unhealthy Margins | Centres dynamics and would like to give the stage to actors with experience and proposals to effectively heal them.

Each session will include an open forum for participants to share ideas and insights to recognise the multiple experiences and perspectives included in the KPSRL network.

Process and key dates

A combined process of targeted outreach and [call for contributions](#) will be used to shape KPAC23's programme. KPSRL Secretariat will first reach out to network members working on (specific) ongoing trajectories (KMF, PLI, 2023 thematic headline trajectories...) to seek their contributions in relation to identified sub-themes. As of 15 August, a [call for contribution](#) has opened to KPSRL larger community.

- Targeted outreach for contribution: 24 July - 15 August, 2023
- Open call for contributions: 15 August - 15 September, 2023 ([click here](#) to submit a proposal)
- Evaluation and announcement of selected sessions: 15 -22 September, 2023