

SUSTAINING PEACE IN PRACTICE: REFLECTIONS FROM IMPLEMENTATION AT COUNTRY LEVEL

INSTITUTIONAL LEAD

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation; Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict; International Peace Institute

MODERATOR

Henrik Hammargren

Executive Director,
Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

OVERVIEW

In this session, speakers shared the findings of country-level research on how the United Nations Security Council resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace are being operationalized. They explored the innovations taking place and the remaining challenges, and stimulated participants to examine these findings and experiences more broadly. The session sought to enhance understanding of ongoing efforts to strengthen the UN's work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in practical terms and to look more closely at what is required to deepen operational coherence, partnerships and inclusivity. In addition, the discussion linked the processes related to implementation of the resolutions on sustaining peace to other UN reform efforts, such as the new Resident Coordinator system, and follow-up of the UN–World Bank report, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, while also identifying methods to better encourage and support realization of the changes called for in the peacebuilding and sustaining peace resolutions.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the session was to assess the changes at country and regional level as a result of the sustaining peace resolutions and what can be expected with regard to the implementation process over the coming months

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace are open concepts to be adapted and defined at country level and in dialogue with national actors. The sustaining peace framework aims to bring coherence and tools in an increasingly complex world, where peace agendas are no longer isolated processes.

There has been progress in implementation, particularly regarding the promotion of coherence and national ownership. In contrast, follow-up on recommendations for securing adequate and predictable financing is lagging behind.

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) is recognized as having become a stronger organization after being delinked from the Resident Coordinators. Similarly, the UN and the World Bank have increasingly conducted joint analyses and have an ongoing dialogue on the specific needs and goals for addressing underlying drivers of conflict.

Responses to displacement have been adapted to consider sustainability and inclusivity.

The operationalization of sustaining peace can be considered in terms of willingness and capacity. For instance, in Cameroon there is capacity but not willingness—the government is reluctant to recognize the problems. It is necessary to ask whether the governments are part of the dialogue about the nexus of development and peace; whether they are recognizing the problems.

In the case of Liberia, there are good dynamics in terms of the resident coordinator working closely with the national government. There is also more coherence at country level, including coherent joint analyses, and there have been efforts to strengthen partnerships. Liberia has developed a

peacebuilding plan supported by the UN and incorporated into the national development plan, although it remains largely unfunded.

The importance of partnerships with regional actors is recognized as being critical, with West Africa being cited as a positive example. There is ownership at both the local and regional levels—a problem for one country is understood to affect the whole region, the whole system. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) play an important role: as soon as there is a problem, there is consensus on the importance of responding.

While civil society actors are recognized as having an important role, they are often not included in developing strategies for prevention. The aim should be to build the capacity of local civil society.

The question was raised about whether the operationalization of sustaining peace and Pathway for Peace may be a supply-driven agenda, which might be missing opportunities to listen for context-specific demands. It is important to remember that the sustaining peace resolutions were adopted unanimously by all Member States with commitment to their implementation reaffirmed in two new parallel resolutions in 2018.

There is a problem of conversations taking place at different levels, with the resident coordinators, for example, largely absent in some of the discussions. Operationalization requires ongoing dialogue; it is about recognizing the complementarity of all roles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Better articulate the intersection of security and development. There is a need for a broader discussion on how security actors interface with development interventions, for instance in West Africa.
- Engage academia, for instance regarding the spread of information about displacement in local languages, including Arabic (e.g. on refugee and human rights).
- Look at livelihoods as a way to sustain peace: stakeholders from the private sector can play an important role and provide solutions, for instance by advocating for policies that open up employment for refugees and creating platforms for entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Work with stakeholders to address displacement more comprehensively and have refugee responses as part of national peacebuilding and development plans. .
- To improve the quality of funding and partnerships, establish dialogue with all actors. Instead of expanding the number of non-governmental organization partners, deepen relationships and build local capacity.
- Create a reporting mechanism for country-specific progress that is taking place, similar to that of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which has galvanized energy, although it would be even better if it is not only voluntary.
- In the case of Cameroon, there is opportunity for funding civil society. This would provide an opportunity for actors to engage who would otherwise not have the chance.
- Make the 2020 review of UN peacebuilding as coherent as possible, bringing together perspectives from the UN, national governments and other partners.
- UN Headquarters staff are expected to be on the same page regarding the SDGs and provide coherent support.

SESSION QUOTES

‘There is always something that can be done [to build peace], if not for now, then probably for later, plenty that can be done even in the midst of crisis—this is the core of prevention.’

‘Collaboration in the field has never been as close as today.’

‘A lot of the changes we see come from civil society. So my question is: what would civil society want to see from the UN?’

‘This is not about connecting bureaucracies but breaking them down and recognizing who should do what, as well as linking steps together towards sustaining peace.’

‘Adopting the resolution doesn’t mean that they bring it back home.’

‘It’s not a question of money but how we use the different tools and resources available, in order to advance a transformative agenda like sustaining peace.’

HIGHLIGHTS

Among the main challenges ahead, five ‘P’s were recognized: (a) How to make Pathways for Peace implementable? (b) Peace as part of SDG 16; (c) Peace in the humanitarian–development–peace nexus (d) Partnerships; and (e) People—numbers are increasing.

Civil society is an important source of resilience and change.

The more that countries develop a peacebuilding plan, the larger the body of knowledge will be.

There should be effort to leverage dialogues taking place and to turn them into action through a more coherent approach.

It is extremely important to recognize what does work—what is needed is more, longer-term support to those who are already demonstrating a great effort with good results.

RESOURCE LINKS AND DOCUMENTS

UN Security Council Resolution 2282 (on sustaining peace), 27 Apr. 2016, <[https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282\(2016\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282(2016))>.

United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, ‘Peacebuilding and sustaining peace’, Report by the Secretary-General, A/72/707–S/2018/43 18 Jan. 2018, <<https://undocs.org/A/72/707>>.

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, ‘Peacebuilding and sustaining peace’, <<https://www.daghammarskjold.se/peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace/>>.

World Bank and United Nations, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* (World Bank Group: Washington, DC, 2018), <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>>.



Dag Hammarskjöld
Foundation



This session report was produced onsite at the 2019 Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development hosted by SIPRI and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The report aims to reflect the session discussion. The views, information or opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of SIPRI, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs or other institutes associated with the session