

## **OPERATIONALIZING SDG 16 AND THE TRIPLE NEXUS: EXPLORING LESSONS FROM CURRENT PEACEBUILDING PRACTICE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS**

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### **OVERVIEW**

This session was a problem-solving deep dive into exploring practical examples of the operationalization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 and the humanitarian–peacebuilding–development triple nexus. Grand bargain commitments to durable solutions and to the triple nexus emphasize the importance of the synergies between these areas of intervention. To meaningfully connect crisis response to peacebuilding, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states, the international community must break down the artificial barriers that tend to create siloes. The triple nexus offers an opportunity for actors from across the spectrum to learn from and work with each other to deepen their understanding of the linkages between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions. These three are fundamentally important to achieving SDG 16 on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

### **FOCUS AND OBJECTIVES**

This session aimed to discuss and share learning generated thus far, including from the Sida-funded Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Program of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Somalia. It also addressed how change happens and how this can be catalysed by bridging or removing the often artificial siloes that separate humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work.

### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Grand bargain commitments to durable solutions and to the triple nexus (humanitarian–peace–development) emphasize the importance of synergies between these areas of intervention. To meaningfully connect crisis response to peacebuilding, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states, it is necessary to break down the artificial barriers that tend to create siloes.

The nexus offers the opportunity for actors from across the spectrum to learn from and work with each other to deepen understanding of the linkages between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions. These three are fundamentally important to achieving SDG 16.

This event was a valuable opportunity to bring together a range of implementers, think tanks and donors from peacebuilding, humanitarian and policy backgrounds to share experiences and explore practical examples and solutions for operationalizing SDG 16 and the humanitarian–peacebuilding–development triple nexus.

It enabled participants to explore ways of bridging or removing the often artificial siloes that separate humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work, to improve the response to the needs of the people we serve.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Donors should consider joint funding streams, jointly managed by their humanitarian, development and peace teams for protracted crises to invest in ‘nexus’ programmes. Interventions in this joint funding stream would be designed to intentionally build in positive peace elements, such as conflict-sensitivity analysis, inclusion, institutional capacity building and local ownership. Where possible, these initiatives should be in alignment with national development plans, policies and processes.
- Increase efforts to ensure the inclusion of local people in the processes, establishing dialogue platforms.
- Focus on context and conflict analysis. Donors can also promote context-driven programming by supporting more flexible approaches that build learning into the programme cycle and allow for adaptation.
- Mainstream the idea of peace responsiveness (a more ambitious approach than conflict sensitivity and do no harm) in the United Nations and other institutions
- To be able to practically implement the triple nexus in complex conflict situations, there is a need for documentation of both successes and failures.
- Invest in measuring peacebuilding outcomes, including through qualitative methods such as storytelling. It is important in peacebuilding to recognize that not everything that counts can be counted. Rich qualitative analysis can give us deeper insight into peacebuilding dynamics and results than purely quantitative methods.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Humanitarian action can have both negative and positive consequences.

People do not live their lives in siloes, though the aid community tends to be organized and operate in siloes

Proper knowledge of and regular analysis of the context is integral to the impact of programmes.

Trust and confidence building should operate both vertically and horizontally.

The speakers highlighted the importance of inclusion of all voices—ethnic groups, women and youths.

Strengthening state institutions and accountability for service delivery is important in peacebuilding, including at the local level.

Service delivery can be a useful entry point, or platform, around which to organize people-to-people peacebuilding and build social cohesion.

It is possible to continue development activities, even in ongoing conflicts; there are always pockets of peace that would enable this.

Work on the peace part of the nexus so that more international actors can understand the peace responsiveness part, and see how to build positive peace programming into development and humanitarian approaches.

Multilateral collaboration is important in establishing convening spaces, where people come together on shared issues. Work on the existing mechanisms on the ground.

Collective outcomes should be ‘people focused’, but for it to work it needs leadership and effective coordination among donors. It is not enough to talk about it without having functioning mechanisms to make it reality.

## RESOURCE LINKS AND DOCUMENTS

Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *Strategy for Sustainable Peace 2017–2022* (Government Offices of Sweden: Stockholm, 2017), <<https://www.government.se/country-and-regional-strategies/2018/01/strategy-for-sustainable-peace-20172022>>.

Bryld, E., *Evaluation of Sida's Support to Peacebuilding in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts: Somalia Country Report* (Sida: Stockholm, 2019), <<https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/evaluation-sida-s-support-peacebuilding-conflict-and-post-conflict-contexts-somalia>>.

Groleau, G., *A Silent Crisis in Congo: The Bantu and the Twa in Tanganyika* (International Rescue Committee: New York, 31 Aug. 2017), <<https://www.rescue.org/report/silent-crisis-congo-bantu-and-twa-tanganyika>>.



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