

# Sustaining Peace in Practice: Building on What Works

EDITED BY YOUSSEF MAHMOUD, LESLEY CONNOLLY, AND DELPHINE MECHOULAN



**Cover Photo:** Nobel Peace Prize laureate Leymah Gbowee, head of the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), greets members of the group in Monrovia, Liberia, on October 5, 2017. ZOOM DOSSO/AFP/Getty Images.

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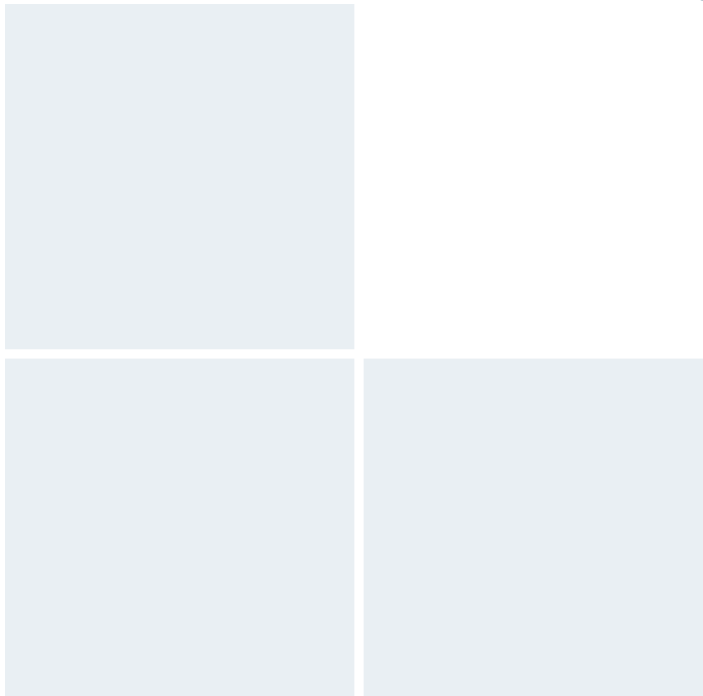
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## Executive Summary

We are beginning to understand what peace is—the structures, attitudes, and institutions that underpin it, and the motives that drive people to work for it. Still, peace remains largely an elusive goal, often negatively portrayed as the absence of violence. It has been assumed that if we can understand the complexity of war and violence, we will be able to foster and sustain peace. We do not study peace, and therefore we tend to focus on the problems of conflict and aggression rather than the solutions associated with peace.<sup>1</sup> With this approach, prevention is viewed as a crisis management tool to address the destructive dynamics of conflict after they have occurred, typically through short-term and externally driven responses.

To address this peace deficit, this report aims to reframe prevention for the purpose of sustaining peace rather than only averting conflict. The overarching aim is to build a shared understanding of what prevention for sustaining peace looks like in practice at the national and international levels. This is achieved by looking at sustaining peace in the context of a number of different themes: the Sustainable Development Goals and gender, entrepreneurship, human rights, local governance, preventing violent extremism, UN peace operations, and UN regional political offices. The Gambia is featured as a case study to illustrate what the sustaining peace approach can look like in practice at the country level. Seven key recommendations arise from this overview of sustaining peace:

1. **Shift the starting point of analysis:** For prevention to serve the overarching goal of sustaining peace, peace, rather than conflict, should be the starting point of analysis. This entails identifying the societal factors that contribute to durable peace rather than only those that contribute to conflict.
2. **Focus on long term-solutions, not time-bound activities:** Sustaining peace is an ongoing exercise, not a one-time intervention. Sustaining peace can help strike a balance between the short-term need to prevent the outbreak of violence and the long-term nature of laying the foundations for self-sustaining peace.
3. **Ensure approaches and solutions are locally owned:** Sustaining peace initiatives should be locally owned, regionally anchored, and internationally supported. They should not only focus on building the capacity of the state but also on empowering citizens, with special attention to strengthening the social, political, and economic factors that make societies resilient and allow people to resolve disputes without violence.
4. **Form innovative partnerships:** Prevention is a shared task and responsibility that requires cooperation among many different actors. Within each country, sustaining peace is a task that should be fulfilled by national governments and all other national stakeholders in a collaborative manner. At the international level, cooperation on sustaining peace should flow through all three pillars of UN engagement—peace and security, development, and human rights—which requires cooperation and policy coherence across UN entities.
5. **Ensure decision making is responsive, inclusive, and participatory:** By taking into account a diversity of perspectives, including those of vulnerable groups, sustaining peace approaches are more likely to address the needs of everyone in society, to have broad buy-in, and to be responsive to the changing needs of the society. Efforts must be made to create spaces for the participation and leadership of key stakeholders, particularly women.
6. **Promote human rights as an enabler of sustaining peace:** Human rights should be seen as a tool for prevention for sustaining peace, given the strong and positive correlation between peacefulness and the upholding of human rights. The relationship between

<sup>1</sup> Peter Coleman, “The Missing Piece in Sustainable Peace,” Earth Institute, November 6, 2012, available at <http://blogs.ei.columbia.edu/2012/11/06/the-missing-piece-in-sustainable-peace/>.

sustaining peace and human rights can be considered mutually reinforcing.

7. **Link sustaining peace with sustainable development:** Because peace is both an enabler and an outcome of sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a

strategic entry point for sustaining peace. Both the 2030 Agenda and the sustaining peace resolutions offer holistic approaches that emphasize the link between sustainable development and peace.



# Introduction

*Lesley Connolly and Laura Powers<sup>1</sup>*

## What Is Prevention for Sustaining Peace?

We are beginning to understand what peace is—the structures, attitudes, and institutions that underpin it, and the motives that drive people to work for it. Still, peace remains largely an elusive goal, often negatively portrayed as the absence of violence.

It has been assumed that if we can understand the complexity of war and violence, we will be able to foster and sustain peace. We do not study peace, and therefore we tend to focus on the problems of conflict and aggression rather than the solutions associated with peace.<sup>2</sup> With this approach, prevention is viewed as a crisis management tool to address the destructive dynamics of conflict after they have occurred, typically through short-term and externally driven responses.

With the Advisory Group of Experts' Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture in 2015 and subsequent General Assembly and Security Council resolutions (70/262 and 2282, respectively), the concept of sustaining peace was introduced into the peace and security paradigm. Both as a goal and a process, sustaining peace involves shifting the starting point of analysis to look at what is still working in society—the positive aspects of resilience—and building on these.<sup>3</sup>

Under existing dominant paradigms, prevention continues to be defined negatively, largely due to its attachment to conflict (e.g., prevention of violent extremism or prevention of organized crime). The sustaining peace agenda challenges the traditional understanding of preventive action and seeks to move the conversation from one primarily focused on reactive intervention to one that places prevention at the core of global peace and security.

Achieving this shift requires adopting a holistic

approach that prioritizes national ownership by supporting local actors who are already taking proactive measures to promote peace at home, and engaging with all stakeholders in society. Local and national efforts to sustain peace must also find support at the international level through the work of the United Nations. Sustaining peace is strengthened by the convergence of the three pillars of the United Nations' work: peace and security, human rights, and development. Understanding and supporting work related to these three pillars can make the preventive element of sustaining peace more effective.

As we move to operationalize prevention for the purpose of sustaining peace, there is a need for a change in mindset. As noted in Chapter 1 of this volume, effective leadership is needed to unite actors around a common vision that ensures adequate and predictable financing and strengthens joint analysis and planning with partners engaged in peace efforts on the ground. Sustaining peace cannot simply be seen as a rebranding of existing work; it must be embraced as a new approach that can benefit all countries, not just those affected by conflict.

## Project Rationale

Over the past year IPI has been working to reframe prevention for the purpose of sustaining peace rather than only averting conflict. The overarching aim of this project is to build a shared understanding of what sustaining peace and prevention look like in practice at the national and international levels.

In pursuit of this, IPI, with funding from ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) and resources provided by the German Federal Foreign Office, organized a series of monthly, high-level “conver-

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Coleman, “The Missing Piece in Sustainable Peace,” Earth Institute, November 6, 2012, available at <http://blogs.ei.columbia.edu/2012/11/06/the-missing-piece-in-sustainable-peace/>.

<sup>3</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

sations on prevention for sustaining peace.” These conversations brought together member states and other key stakeholders with a view to exploring the practical policy implications of such a conceptual shift.

In an effort to guide the conversations, IPI commissioned nine studies, each of which explored different thematic issues and their relation to sustaining peace. Following each meeting, an analytical paper was produced and shared among member states and other stakeholders in order to drive forward the prevention for sustaining peace agenda and contribute to a better understanding of what sustaining peace looks like in practice.

## Overview of the Volume

This volume is a compendium of these studies, some of which served as issue briefs for the conversations. It seeks to unpack the key elements of prevention for sustaining peace when applied to certain thematic areas and to suggest how the UN can contribute to sustaining peace.

The first part of this volume unpacks the concept of sustaining peace and illustrates what it looks like in practice. Although the central tenants of sustaining peace were laid out in the dual resolutions, practitioners are still struggling to fully conceptualize what sustaining peace looks like on the ground. Chapter 1 therefore explores how we can reframe our understanding of prevention for the purpose of sustaining peace. First and foremost, the authors argue that prevention for sustaining peace needs to break free from the more traditional perspectives of conflict analysis and instead look at the positive aspects of resilience in peaceful societies.

Building on this, the second part of the volume explores prevention for sustaining peace as it relates to specific thematic areas. Exploring the different facets of prevention makes it possible to draw conclusions that provide a more holistic idea of what sustaining peace means in practice. Central to this discussion is the importance of inclusivity. Political and economic inclusion of women and youth, addressed in Chapters 2 and 3, is central to making societies resilient. When their leadership is unleashed, these groups can make positive contributions to sustaining peace.

Chapter 2 focuses on gender equality and

women’s empowerment as an outcome and enabler of sustaining peace through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a particular focus on Target 5.5, which aims to ensure inclusion of women “at all levels of decision making in political, economic, and public life.” Evidence provided by the Institute for Economics and Peace and the McKinsey Global Institute shows that gender equality and women’s empowerment are closely linked to stability and peacefulness. The chapter argues that investment in Target 5.5 could unleash the potential of women’s leadership and facilitate their meaningful participation in decision making. Their inclusion would in turn lay better foundations for sustainable peace and development.

Chapter 3 focuses on how entrepreneurship can contribute to preventing conflict and sustaining peace. It identifies points of convergence between entrepreneurship and peace, recognizing that these are likely to be highly context-specific. It concludes that the economic incentives and peace dividends that can be sparked by entrepreneurship warrant greater attention and offers recommendations for harnessing the positive aspects of entrepreneurship while reining in or mitigating potential harm.

Chapter 4 explores how human rights can be pursued as a preventive tool for the purpose of sustaining peace. Reflecting on three countries—Mauritius, Senegal, and Tunisia—this chapter demonstrates how, despite the internal vulnerabilities and external pressures these three countries may face, upholding human rights has helped them sustain peace. The chapter draws on data from the Institute of Economics and Peace demonstrating strong and positive correlations between human rights protection, the rule of law, and states’ levels of peacefulness.

Chapter 5 addresses the role of local governance in sustaining peace. It explores three ways local governance actors can contribute to sustaining peace: managing resources effectively and efficiently in delivering services and promoting sustainable development, giving people a voice in a representative and inclusive way, and nurturing political will to resolve conflict through nonviolent means. It also explores the challenges of sustaining peace through local governance, looking at the municipality of Mbizana in South Africa where bad local governance could threaten long-term peace.



In light of the increasing complexity of modern conflicts, Chapter 6 considers how violent extremism threatens peace, and how efforts to prevent violent extremism can have a positive impact if conceived and implemented from a sustaining peace perspective. The chapter argues that policymakers and practitioners should shift from pursuing only state-centric, securitized approaches toward enhancing local factors that are found to strengthen the resilience of communities to violent extremism.

In the third part of this volume, the focus shifts to looking at sustaining peace within the context of UN engagement in conflict-affected countries. The UN is deeply engaged with conflicts around the world, particularly through its peace operations, which are increasingly complex, expensive, and lengthy. By adopting a sustaining peace perspective in implementing key provisions of its mandate, the UN could help prevent the outbreak of conflict and mitigate its impact at the local, national, and regional levels.

Chapter 7 focuses on how UN peace operations can be designed and implemented to help build self-sustaining peace rather than just prevent relapse into conflict. In particular, considering most current peace operations are deployed in countries with weak state institutions, it considers how they can support the return and extension of state authority without doing harm. The chapter suggests that, by upholding the primacy of politics and engaging in people-centered approaches and context-sensitive analysis, the UN's stabilization efforts would have a better chance of promoting legitimacy and of laying the foundations for self-sustaining peace.

Chapter 8 looks at four UN regional political offices—in West Africa, Central Asia, Central Africa, and Africa's Great Lakes region—which were created to harmonize efforts to anticipate and address cross-border threats and defuse tensions.

However, while their mandates contain many elements related to prevention and sustaining peace, these offices remain focused on addressing the proximate causes of conflict rather than on identifying and reinforcing existing capacities for peace. This chapter focuses on how the mandates of these regional political offices could be designed and implemented from the perspective of sustaining peace.

In the last part of this volume, the sustaining peace approach is applied to a specific case study. By looking at a country through the lens of sustaining peace, peace rather than conflict becomes the starting point for analysis. This entails identifying what is still working in a society, not just what is broken and needs to be fixed. It also entails focusing on all countries—those that have gone through conflict and those that have not. The chapter thus looks at the Gambia, a country that has peacefully undergone a difficult political transition. The chapter argues that, although the Gambia remains somewhat stable, it is in need of investment to sustain peace, with particular focus on empowering and promoting entrepreneurship among women and youth, as well as transitional justice and good governance.

The volume ends with a series of recommendations on how to advance the discussion on prevention for sustaining peace. The aim of this volume is to develop a shared understanding of what sustaining peace looks like in practice on the basis of concrete local, national, and international preventive practices. It argues that in order to promote prevention for the purpose of sustaining peace, there is a need to supplement traditional approaches to preventing destructive conflict, violence, and injustice with the equally important endeavor of identifying and strengthening the structures and processes that are conducive to durable peace.



**PART I:**

**THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINING PEACE**



# Chapter 1.

## Sustaining Peace: What Does It Mean in Practice?

*Youssef Mahmoud and Anupah Makoond<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

In its review of the peacebuilding architecture, the Advisory Group of Experts introduced the language of “sustaining peace” as a counterpoint to the term “peacebuilding.” Although conceived as a comprehensive process, peacebuilding has come to be narrowly interpreted as time-bound, exogenous interventions that take place “after the guns fall silent” in fragile or conflict-affected states.<sup>2</sup> Sustaining peace seeks to reclaim peace in its own right and detach it from the subservient affiliation with conflict that has defined it over the past four decades.<sup>3</sup>

Since the UN Security Council and General Assembly adopted landmark identical resolutions on sustaining peace in April 2016, UN member states and practitioners have started to reflect on what this concept means.<sup>4</sup> This chapter seeks to contribute to these discussions by unpacking the definition of sustaining peace and providing examples of what it looks like in practice at the national and international levels. It also aims to clear up the political cobwebs in the minds of some suspicious stakeholders fearful that the concept is another Trojan horse for outside intervention.

First, we describe sustaining peace as an explicit and deliberate policy objective for all states, regardless of whether they are beset by violent conflict. Second, sustaining peace is underpinned by an infrastructure composed of institutions, norms, attitudes, and capacities spanning different sectors and levels of social organization. This infrastructure needs to be constantly nurtured and updated to adapt to changing contexts and circumstances. Third, sustaining peace is conceived as a necessarily endogenous process that requires

strong and inclusive national ownership and leadership. Finally, sustaining peace is multi-sectoral and all-encompassing, amounting to a meta-policy deserving of attention at the highest levels of national government.

Committing to sustaining peace entails revisiting the starting point of the process of building peace; as such, it ushers in a paradigm shift in our understanding of peace. Sustaining peace attempts to broaden the peace agenda to include proactive measures aimed at building on peace where it already exists by reinforcing the structures, attitudes, and institutions that underpin it. This new paradigm has the potential to strengthen the prevention agenda as well as to render ongoing peacekeeping interventions more effective. It is not a radical call to substitute existing interventions with new processes, but it is intended as a complete overhaul to how we approach peace and peace-related interventions.

### Conflict Is Not the Starting Point

The peace agenda has its roots in the scholarship of peace and conflict studies and is supported by a rhetoric that ranges from the narrower discourse of post-conflict reconstruction to broader debates on peaceful coexistence. In practice, however, peacebuilding has up until now been confined to the narrower end of the spectrum; it tends to be perceived as relevant solely to contexts where conflict is manifest or proximate. As a result, peacebuilding is seen as an extension of conflict resolution or conflict transformation.

The binary relationship ascribed to conflict and peace means that stable states where there is no

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture*, UN Doc. A/69/968-S/2015/490, June 30, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Youssef Mahmoud, “Freeing Prevention from Conflict: Investing in Sustaining Peace,” *IPI Global Observatory*, April 21, 2016, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2016/04/prevention-sustaining-peace-hippo-ban-ki-moon/>.

<sup>4</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

violent conflict are excluded from the study of peace, when in fact these are the case studies most likely to unveil the factors associated with peace. All societies possess attributes that contribute to sustaining peace, whether their institutions, their culture, their policies, or the less tangible, quotidian, and tacit norms of interaction between individuals and groups. However, where manifest conflict is absent, these attributes remain undocumented and are rarely nurtured. Existing capacities for peace risk falling into oblivion, which could expose even the most peaceful societies to future conflict. Thus, the sustaining peace agenda should be applied to and adopted by all states.

Whereas the starting point of peacebuilding is conflict and the process is one of transitioning from war to peace, sustaining peace begins with identifying those attributes and assets that have sustained social cohesion, inclusive development, the rule of law, and human security—the factors that together contribute to a peaceful society. As many scholars have argued, conflict is a natural phenomenon arising from social interactions, and even a desirable one, in so far as it often leads to innovation and progress.<sup>5</sup> In this regard, peace is not so much the absence of conflict as it is the ability to manage and transform conflict in a peaceful and constructive manner. Assuming, therefore, that all societies experience conflict, those that do not descend into violence must possess the structures and capacities for sustaining peace, even if these are not made explicit.

## Defining the Infrastructure That Sustains Peace

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing those seeking to understand sustaining peace is to define the concrete actions that will contribute to its effective implementation. The conceptual basis for sustaining peace can be traced back to Johan Galtung's seminal work on "positive peace."<sup>6</sup> Positive peace requires building and strengthening the factors that foster peace.<sup>7</sup> Among these factors

are those that enable "everyday peace," such as solidarity and compassion between different ethnic groups, and systemic factors, such as equitable distribution of resources, well-functioning institutions, tolerance for diversity and human rights, security from physical harm, and access to food and clean drinking water.<sup>8</sup>

Sustaining peace seeks to place greater emphasis on detecting and strengthening what is already working, not only what is in disrepair and needs fixing. Even societies under stress have capacities that need to be nurtured. Moreover, sustaining peace is an ongoing exercise, not a one-time intervention. Contexts change, because of both internal fluctuations and external shocks, requiring a concomitant adjustment in the norms and institutions governing society. For example, migration patterns alter the social balance of a society, and maintaining social cohesion in the face of such changes demands that citizens be willing and able to adopt new norms of social interaction and extend their threshold of tolerance. The inability to respond to changes, both internal and external, is an indicator of the weakness of a society's infrastructure for peace.

## An Endogenous Process

The emphasis on identifying context-specific capacities as a starting point for sustaining peace makes it primarily an endogenous process. Seen through this lens, sustaining peace is not a time-bound intervention defined by the funding cycles of donors or mandates of peace operations; rather, it is an ongoing effort most effectively undertaken through national policies. Peace can be most effectively sustained when it is conceived as a public good for which the state is responsible. However, as with other public goods, it is the shared responsibility of all stakeholders, and indeed all citizens, to contribute to it.

Peace is multidimensional and multi-sectoral. It cuts across different levels of human organization, from the interpersonal to the societal, rendering

5 See, for example, John Paul Lederach, "Conflict Transformation," *Beyond Intractability*, October 2003, available at [www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation).

6 See Baljit Singh Grewal, "Johan Galtung: Positive and Negative Peace," August 30, 2003, available at [www.activeforpeace.org/no/fred/Positive\\_Negative\\_Peace.pdf](http://www.activeforpeace.org/no/fred/Positive_Negative_Peace.pdf).

7 Mahmoud, "Freeing Prevention from Conflict."

8 Institute for Economics and Peace, "Positive Peace Report 2016," available at <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Positive-Peace-Report-2016.pdf>; Roger Mac Ginty, "Everyday Peace: Bottom-Up and Local Agency in Conflict-Affected Societies," *Security Dialogue* 45, no. 6 (2014).



sustaining peace a highly collaborative task that requires strong leadership. National ownership of a process that is inclusive of all key stakeholders, including the private sector, women, and youth, is thus a cornerstone of successful efforts to build sustainable peace. Inclusivity is key to ensuring that peace is maintained over time.

Peace, unlike law and security, cannot be enforced from the top, but must be woven into society from within and from below by fostering partnerships and incentives to maintain it. Dialogue among individuals, groups, and social sectors, as well as between the government and its citizens, is key to the success of the sustaining peace enterprise; so is enlightened, inclusive leadership at all levels of society.

## The Praxis: Sustaining Peace as a Deliberate Meta-Policy

So far, we have argued that sustaining peace applies to all societies and is not necessarily confined to unstable environments or designed to calm the ravages of violent conflicts. It is a multi-sectoral, endogenous, and ongoing process that is the shared responsibility of states and all citizens. This begs the question: How do we sustain peace in practice?

One could assume that peace is an automatic outcome for states that have inclusive, transparent, and accountable institutions, fair legal frameworks, inclusive economic policies, and a culture of tolerance. However, by relegating peace to the status of an implicit consequence of other national policies, we risk overlooking fundamental factors that contribute to peace. Sustaining peace also relies on the intention and willingness to foster peaceful societies. Hence, peace needs to be made a deliberate policy objective of the state. This means that core government ministries, in addition to fulfilling their intrinsic functions, must explicitly address challenges to peace and contribute to its

sustainability.

Seen from this perspective, sustaining peace cannot simply sit alongside economic, social, or security policies. It must be positioned above all the different sectors, akin to a meta-policy that builds on and accounts for all other policies. All policies must be infused with the intention to sustain peace, which in turn will make them more durable and coherent. The mandate to sustain peace should be housed at the apex of national and local government structures.

A case in point is Ghana's creation of a National Peace Council in 2011, whose mandate is to facilitate and develop mechanisms for preventing, managing, and resolving conflict and building sustainable peace.<sup>9</sup> Another country that has made peace a deliberate policy objective is Costa Rica, which in 2009 created a Ministry of Justice and Peace, signaling a policy shift from preventing violence to promoting peace.<sup>10</sup> As another example, in 2015 the Kenyan Parliament adopted a peace policy after more than ten years of national stakeholder consultations. The policy and the infrastructure for peace it sets out, including a National Peace Council, are expected to prevent a range of conflicts, including resource-based, religious, cross-border, and wildlife-related conflicts, among others.<sup>11</sup>

Given that positive peace is both an outcome and an enabler of sustainable development, the effective implementation of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets can be used as a vehicle for building sustainable peace.<sup>12</sup> This symbiosis can be depicted as a wheel where the hub is peace and the SDGs are spokes pointing toward and away from it.

Peace is more than the sum of its parts (or pillars). Subtler, less visible policies such as building trust between individuals and groups, as well as between the state and its citizens, need to be nurtured through dialogue and open, safe channels of communication. Tunisia's attempt to create a

9 William A. Awindor-Kanyirige, "Ghana's National Peace Council," Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, August 2014, available at [www.globalr2p.org/media/files/2014-august-policy-brief-ghana-national-peace-council.pdf](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/2014-august-policy-brief-ghana-national-peace-council.pdf); Paul van Tongeren, "Infrastructures for Peace Is a Promising Approach," *Peace Monitor*, April 1, 2013.

10 Susie Shutts, "Costa Rica Creates Department of Peace," *Yes! Magazine*, September 22, 2009, available at [www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/costa-rica-creates-department-of-peace](http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/costa-rica-creates-department-of-peace).

11 Maria Osula, "Finally! A Peace Policy in Kenya," *Saferworld*, November 4, 2015, available at [www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/news-and-analysis/post/174-finally-a-peace-policy-for-kenya](http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/news-and-analysis/post/174-finally-a-peace-policy-for-kenya).

12 See Chapter 2 of this volume.

national council for social dialogue is an example of movement toward such policies.<sup>13</sup>

## Implications for the UN Reform Agenda

As described above, “sustaining peace” is a thoroughly endogenous process; states need to institute national policies whose objective it is to lay the foundations for sustainable peace. A final point that needs to be addressed, then, is the role of the international community. Bilateral and multi-lateral institutions have committed billions of dollars to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and other crisis management activities around the world. The shift toward sustaining peace does not obviate the need or absolve these actors of the responsibility to support peace.

It does, however, call for a new approach to international interventions. They should place greater emphasis on identifying factors of resilience within societies and carving out the space needed for national stakeholders to play a leadership role in fostering peace, no matter how weakened by war and strife they may appear.<sup>14</sup> New situations calling for the deployment of international peacekeeping operations may still arise, but the hope is that with more countries subscribing to an agenda for sustaining peace, these circumstances will be less frequent. Even where they do arise, a sustaining peace approach should render peacekeeping operations more effective as they take on a more enabling and less intrusive role.

As Secretary-General António Guterres continues to ponder how best to pursue his “diplomacy for peace” agenda, the conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and Libya could paradoxically provide useful entry points—provided the outcome, beyond ending violence and stabilizing shattered societies, is also formulated from a sustaining peace perspective. Similarly, as he leads an overhaul of UN peace operations and the supporting governance structures, the secretary-general should look at these operations from the perspective of prevention and sustaining peace. Regional political offices in Africa and Central Asia are low-hanging fruit.

This shift in perspective would require the UN to develop a qualitatively different way of conducting peace and conflict analysis and programs that give politics, people, and inclusive national ownership an uncontested home.<sup>15</sup> Tinkering with the tools as if perfecting them were the objective in and of itself would do injustice to the secretary-general’s ambition.

Sustaining peace constitutes a paradigm shift in how we think about peace and how we address conflict. As a process and an objective, building sustainable peace is not the burden of outsiders. Even under the direst of circumstances, external interventions should endeavor to build on what people know and what they have. Societies that have developed national infrastructures for peace offer valuable lessons for this eminently internal enterprise. More needs to be done to demystify the concept at the national and global levels. This volume merely starts the conversation.

13 “Projet de loi sur la création d’un Conseil national pour le dialogue,” *Le Temps*, November 13, 2016, available at [www.letemps.com.tn/article/100083/projet-de-loi-sur-la-cr%C3%A9ation-d%E2%80%99un-conseil-national-pour-le-dialogue](http://www.letemps.com.tn/article/100083/projet-de-loi-sur-la-cr%C3%A9ation-d%E2%80%99un-conseil-national-pour-le-dialogue).

14 Interpeace, “Fostering Resilience for Peace: Annual Report 2015,” available at <http://3n589z370e602eata9wahf4.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Interpeace-2015-Annual-Report2.pdf>.

15 Mahmoud, “What Would It Take to Make a ‘Surge in Diplomacy for Peace’ Work?” *IPI Global Observatory*, January 19, 2017, available at <http://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/01/sustaining-peace-diplomacy-antonio-guterres/>.

**PART II:**

**APPLYING SUSTAINING PEACE  
TO SPECIFIC AREAS**



## Chapter 2.

# Sustaining Peace and the SDG on Gender Equality

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## Introduction

With the adoption of the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on sustaining peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a multilateral policy consensus is emerging around a common vision for peaceful societies. Building and promoting positive peace, rather than containing conflict and its consequences, is recognized as a more effective strategy for addressing today's complex and interlinked global challenges. These global frameworks treat prevention as an integral part of effective and participatory governance and view peace as both an enabler and an outcome of sustainable development. Under this broad conception of peace, all groups and individuals are free to pursue their needs and aspirations without fear, with equal opportunities, with justice, and in security.

“Sustaining peace,” as enshrined in the joint General Assembly/Security Council resolutions on peacebuilding, offers a new approach to enhance the capacity of societies not only to address the immediate consequences of conflict but also to prevent the outbreak of violence using peaceful means. From a sustaining peace perspective, peacebuilding is a long-term, nationally driven process that focuses on strengthening the attitudes, structures, and institutions associated with peace rather than the factors that drive and sustain conflict.

The sustaining peace framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development share common principles, such as national ownership, universality, inclusivity, people-centered approaches, long-term perspectives, and a call for coherent implementation across the three UN pillars. Inclusive, transparent, and effective

decision making and respect for the rule of law are critical for achieving the SDGs and for sustaining peace. The link between the two agendas is not only Goal 16, which calls for the promotion of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies; there are at least thirty-six targets across the seventeen SDGs related to nonviolence, justice, and inclusivity. These include Goal 4 on promoting a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship education, and appreciation of cultural diversity and Goal 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements.

In addition, the effective implementation of several SDGs will not only prevent the outbreak of conflict but also lay the foundations for self-sustaining peace and development. These include Goal 10 on inequality within and among nations, Goal 8 on decent work for all, and Goals 8, 12, 13, 14, and 15 on climate and the management of natural resources. Goal 5, which aims to “end all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere,” echoes the letter and spirit of the sustaining peace resolutions as they relate to gender equality and women's contributions to prevention.

## Women's Participation, Peace, and Sustainable Development

To illustrate the preventive potential of the SDGs, this chapter focuses on Target 5.5, which aims to “ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic, and public life.” It does not cover the other relevant targets or goals mentioned above. The evidence below, with contributions from the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) and McKinsey Global

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Institute (MGI), explores the transformative effects of women's participation.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to normative advances on women's political participation and leadership, there is now overwhelming evidence that gender equality and women's empowerment are closely linked to stability and peacefulness. According to the largest dataset on the status of women in the world to date, gender equality is a stronger predictor of a state's peacefulness than its level of democracy, religion, or gross domestic product (GDP). Where women are more empowered, the state is less likely to experience civil conflict or go to war with its neighbors.<sup>3</sup> Countries ranked as most stable and peaceful overall generally have a high percentage of women in leadership positions. Iceland, for example, is ranked as the most peaceful country according to the *Global Peace Index*, and is also ranked first in the World Economic Forum's *Gender Gap Index*.<sup>4</sup>

When it comes to political representation, as the percentage of women in parliament increases by five percent, a state is five times less likely to use violence when faced with an international crisis.<sup>5</sup> It is also less likely to abuse human rights, commit torture, or wrongfully imprison its citizens. For countries engaged in peace processes and transitions, women's participation helps reach and sustain peace agreements. Evidence shows that inclusive processes better address underlying dynamics and conflict drivers, and help build and identify resilience capacities required for the consolidation and continuity of a peaceful state.<sup>6</sup>

As a result, increasing women's participation and representation in leadership and decision-making positions leads to higher levels of peacefulness and better development outcomes for society. Closing the gender gap helps restore trust and confidence,

and enhances the sustainability of policies and resilience of communities. Despite this evidence, enabling factors such as political and economic participation have been the slowest areas of gender inequality to change—when compared to women's educational attainment and health advances, for example (see Figure 1).

Viable economies and sustainable economic growth are also positively correlated to increased gender equality. Likewise, gender inequality hurts not only women's access to the economy, but overall levels of development. According to the UN Development Programme, “A 1% increase in gender inequality reduces the country's human development index by 0.75%.”<sup>7</sup> Though they are half of the world's population, women generate just 37 percent of the world's GDP while spending three times as much time as men on unpaid caretaking—a massive economic contribution.<sup>8</sup>

If gender gaps in work and society were addressed to unleash the full potential of women, the world economy would experience a significant boost. According to data analysis from MGI, were women to participate in the economy identically to men, global GDP would increase by up to \$28 trillion by 2025.<sup>9</sup> This extent of growth in economic participation is unlikely, due to remaining barriers to women's participation, as well as culture and personal choice. But the economic impact of gender equality is clear. “Achieving the economic potential of women will require addressing gender gaps both in society and in work,” including essential services and enablers of economic opportunity, legal protection and political voice, and physical security and autonomy.<sup>10</sup>

Data show that encouraging and supporting women's leadership and participation has a wide

2 See Institute for Economics and Peace, “The SDGs as a Prevention Agenda for Sustaining Peace: Quantitative Evidence on the Link between Goal 5 and Goal 16,” October 2016; and McKinsey Global Institute, “The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth,” October 2016, available at [www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/how-advancing-womens-equality-can-add-12-trillion-to-global-growth](http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/how-advancing-womens-equality-can-add-12-trillion-to-global-growth).

3 Valerie M. Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, *Sex and World Peace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

4 See Institute for Economics and Peace, “Global Peace Index 2016,” available at [http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/GPI-2016-Report\\_2.pdf](http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/GPI-2016-Report_2.pdf); and World Economic Forum, “Global Peace Index 2015,” available at [www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2015/](http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2015/).

5 Mary Caprioli, “Gendered Conflict,” *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 1 (2000).

6 Marie O'Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, and Thania Paffenholz, “Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes,” International Peace Institute, June 2015, available at [www.ipinst.org/2015/06/reimagining-peacemaking-womens-roles-in-peace-processes](http://www.ipinst.org/2015/06/reimagining-peacemaking-womens-roles-in-peace-processes).

7 UN Development Programme (UNDP), Africa Human Development Report, 2016, available at [www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/2016-africa-human-development-report.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/2016-africa-human-development-report.html).

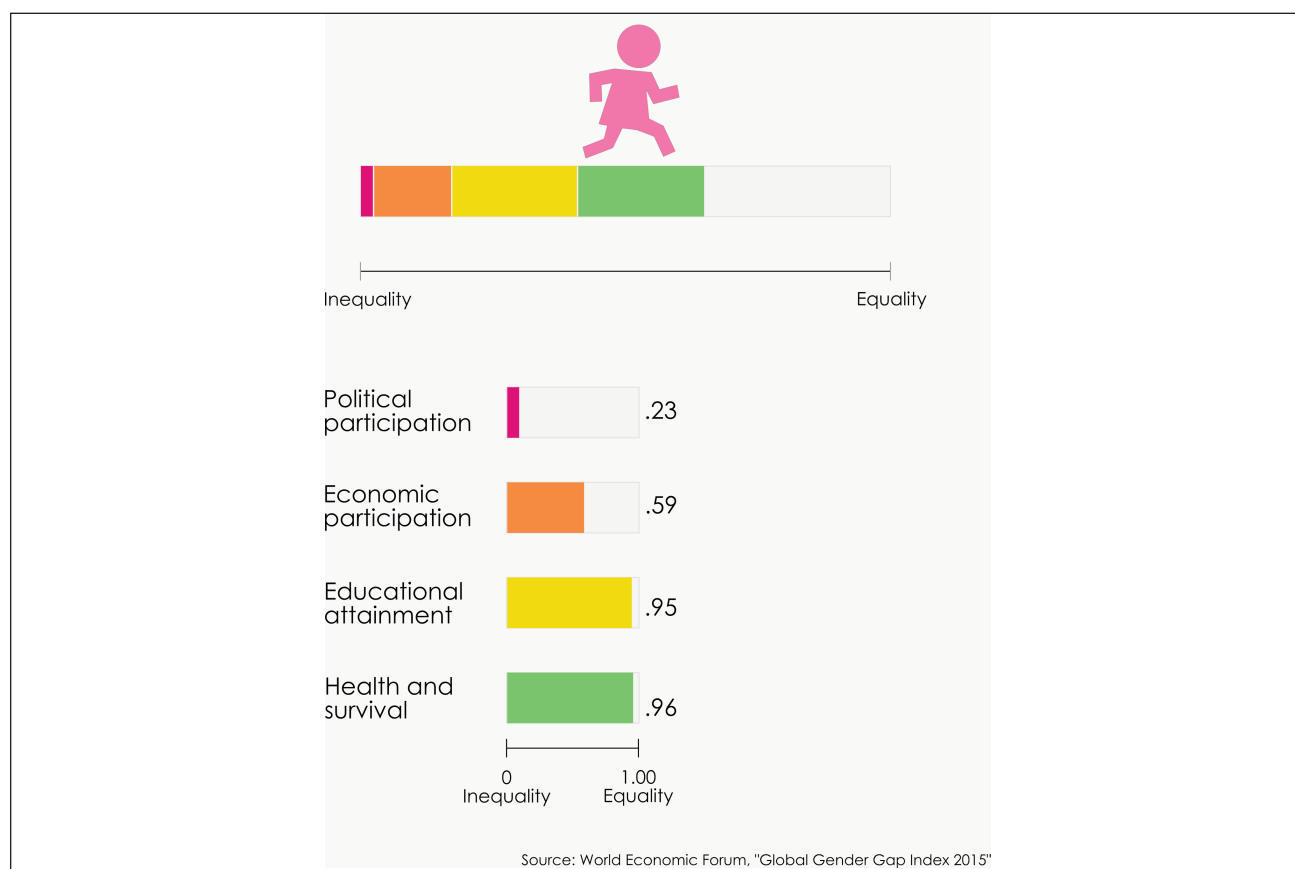
8 McKinsey Global Institute, “The Power of Parity,” p. 2.

9 Ibid., p. 1.

10 Ibid., p. 2.



Figure 1. Closing the gender gap



range of positive outcomes for economic prosperity. Some studies have found a positive correlation between the number of women on a company's board and its financial success, because the quality of governance improves with greater inclusion.<sup>11</sup>

Many factors help create the conditions for the participation and empowerment of women. According to MGI, these include open and adequate education for all, health plans designed specifically for women, laws on domestic violence, and laws and policies on the number of leadership and decision-making positions for women.

The main indicator for Target 5.5—currently still being fine-tuned—is the “percentage of seats held by women and minorities in national parliament and/or sub-national elected office according to their respective share of the population.” Quotas

can be a valuable tool to ensure women's participation in key decision-making, implementation, or monitoring bodies. However, quotas alone may be insufficient to harness the preventive and stabilizing power of women.

Metrics compiled by the IEP in 2016 show, counterintuitively, that increased women's participation in parliament achieved through quotas is not necessarily correlated with peace, despite significant evidence otherwise demonstrating that inclusive national institutions with equal gender representation have positive effects on peacefulness and prevention. This finding, far from discrediting the usefulness of quotas, demonstrates the need for multidimensional indicators. According to the IEP, “A much clearer relationship between peace and women's participation in leadership in political, economic and public life emerged using a multidimensional

<sup>11</sup> World Bank, *Women, Business and the Law 2016: Getting to Equal*, 2015, available at <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2016/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2016.pdf>.

mensional indicator of gender equality.”<sup>12</sup> The IEP’s data show that countries with a broad range of gender-equal outcomes in 2010 were more peaceful in 2015.

Similarly, the implementation of Target 5.5 involves diverse indicators, which range from perceptions of gender roles to education access and economic opportunity. States are drafting and adopting plans to translate and incorporate the SDGs into their national strategies, and in so doing have started developing further strategies to fully integrate women in policy and practice (see Box 2).

## Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter was to help facilitate a discussion on how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can serve as a strategic entry point to prevention for sustaining peace. It explores the links between the SDGs and their potential for creating the social, economic, and political conditions that may prevent the outbreak of violent conflict and lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. The compelling empirical research presented in the chapter shows that investment in Target 5.5 could unleash the leadership potential of women, facilitate their meaningful participation in decision making, and thus advance sustainable peace and development.

### Box 1. Reconciling national and customary law

Many constitutions forbid discrimination on the basis of sex, but the application of customary laws on issues relating to marriage, divorce, and disposal of property can often override national constitutions. Having committed to the goal of gender equality and women’s empowerment, some countries have started tackling the issue of reconciling existing national policies and strategies with customary laws and traditions. These efforts have focused both on updating legal frameworks and on engaging with local leaders to counter the negative social and cultural norms that inhibit women’s rights. Transforming national constitutions and reconciling customary and statutory laws have resulted in more gender-equitable access to civil law (generally understood as a better vehicle for women’s political participation), protected women’s rights, and helped women realize their citizenship.<sup>13</sup>

### Box 2. National implementation of the SDGs in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone has linked the SDGs to its national Agenda for Prosperity, which includes a pillar on “gender and women’s empowerment.”<sup>14</sup> In order to achieve this pillar, the national plan calls for a variety of key indicators to be met. These include: the proportion of women aged 15–49 with secondary and higher education; the share of women employed in non-agricultural activities; the proportion of women aged 20–45 married before/at age 18; the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament; the proportion of women mayors and local councilors and chairpersons; laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15–49 access to sexual and reproductive healthcare; and information, education, and legal frameworks (including customary law) that guarantee women’s equal right to land ownership and other entitlements. This is one example of a national plan that integrates or “domesticates” the SDGs in detail, and that links to prevention: the plan highlights the importance of a “robust peace infrastructure” for ensuring sustainable development.

<sup>12</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, “The SDGs as a Prevention Agenda for Sustaining Peace,” p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> UNDP, *Africa Human Development Report*, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Government of Sierra Leone, *Advanced Draft Report on Adaptation of the Goals in Sierra Leone*, July 2016, available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10720sierraleone.pdf>.

## Chapter 3.

# Entrepreneurship for Sustaining Peace

*Youssef Mahmoud, Anupah Makoond, and Ameya Naik<sup>1</sup>*

## Introduction

The sustaining peace narrative posits the existence of an ecosystem that can simultaneously prevent the outbreak of violent conflict and proactively foster peaceful societies.<sup>2</sup> Economic opportunities are an important component of this ecosystem; the inequitable distribution of resources, economic deprivation, exclusion, and joblessness have all been well-documented as root causes of conflict both nationally and globally.<sup>3</sup> Although the relationship between economic development and peace is complex and is neither direct nor immediately apparent, the availability of equal economic opportunities can contribute to preventing conflict and sustaining peace.<sup>4</sup>

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, serves as “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.”<sup>5</sup> It offers an effective blueprint for inclusive national development policies that are universally applicable, that “leave no one behind,” and that contribute to sustaining peace. Entrepreneurship, as referenced in the 2030 Agenda, is not only critical to achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 on decent work and economic growth,<sup>6</sup> but can also catalyze progress toward the twin goals of prosperity and peace.<sup>7</sup> A growing number of scholars and practitioners have come to study entrepreneurship as

both a job creator and a peace incubator, particularly in post-conflict settings.<sup>8</sup>

Definitions of “entrepreneurship” abound.<sup>9</sup> Practically speaking, an entrepreneur may be defined as “a person with the vision to see a new product or process and the ability to make it happen.”<sup>10</sup> This chapter makes a clear distinction between “necessity entrepreneurs,” for whom—in the absence of formal economic opportunities—self-employment is one of few options to earn a living, and “innovative entrepreneurs,” who drive systemic change and foster inclusive growth, impacting the economy on a meaningful scale. For example, street vendors and traders are important parts of local economies but typically employ only themselves or their immediate family. While these people are *enterprising*, this type of business does not necessarily drive economic growth. In contrast, given the right environment, a genuine entrepreneur has the ability and motivation to build new fast-growing businesses that create social value as well as jobs.

Innovative entrepreneurship, as defined above, is a cornerstone to the development of a vibrant local private sector, which—in addition to creating jobs and economic opportunities—can make a powerful contribution to the ecosystem of peace. Peace is not the sole preserve of the state: entrepreneurs, keen to protect their businesses from the instability brought on by violence, can be convincing peace

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2 See Chapter 1 of this volume.

3 Steven Koltai and Matthew Muspratt, *Peace through Entrepreneurship: Investing in a Startup Culture for Security and Development* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institutions Press, 2016).

4 Phil Vernon, “Bread and Peace: Linking Economic Development and Peacebuilding,” *GREAT Insights* 5, no. 1 (February 2016), available at <http://ecdpm.org/great-insights/prosperity-for-peace/bread-peace-linking-economic-development-peacebuilding/>.

5 UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (September 25, 2015), UN Doc. A/RES/70/1, preamble.

6 Ibid.

7 For an overview of the literature, see Wim Naudé, “Entrepreneurship and Economic Development: Theory, Evidence and Policy,” Institute for the Study of Labor, July 2013, available at [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2314802##](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2314802##).

8 Roy Laishley, “After War, Creating Jobs for Peace,” *Africa Renewal Online*, April 2009, available at [www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2009/after-war-creating-jobs-peace](http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2009/after-war-creating-jobs-peace).

9 Jean-Baptiste Say, quoted in Roger L. Martin and Sally Osberg, “Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review* 5, no. 2 (Spring 2007).

10 Koltai and Muspratt, *Peace through Entrepreneurship*.

brokers. As a pathway to greater economic security and stability, ethical entrepreneurship can help individuals lead more dignified lives and appease sentiments of marginalization that are often at the root of violence. Finally, in order to promote entrepreneurship, it is necessary to improve the “ease of doing business,” a process that can contribute to better governance—a key determinant of peaceful societies.

## Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs as Peace Actors

Entrepreneurship can develop and expand the local private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises. A strong local private sector can directly and tangibly contribute to restoring and sustaining peace. This has been demonstrated in both Colombia and Tunisia, where private sector actors have actively contributed to brokering peace and negotiating for more democratic modes of governance.

In Colombia, the private sector has been part of the peace talks between the government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) since the administration of President Andrés Pastrana in the late 1990s. Although those talks failed, business engagement in peacebuilding initiatives since then has become more intense and sophisticated. One example is the Fundación Ideas para la Paz, a think tank set up by a group of Colombian businesspeople to advance academic and technical know-how on peacebuilding processes and the engagement of the private sector.<sup>11</sup> The private sector was an important source of support for the recent (and more successful) negotiations led by the administration of President Juan Manuel Santos, which is also working with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to support rural entrepreneurship as a path to rehabilitating victims of the armed conflict.<sup>12</sup>

In Tunisia, the Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts (UTICA), which represents about 150,000 private companies (including many small and medium-sized enterprises) was an influential member of the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015. The Quartet orchestrated an inclusive dialogue after months of debilitating social protests, leading to a road map to help steady the country’s post-revolution transition. UTICA has continued to advocate for structural reforms through a Tunisia 2020 program on sustainable growth, which it launched in November 2016.<sup>13</sup> In both Tunisia and Colombia, the participation of the private sector was motivated by a combination of civic responsibility and business interests that intersected broadly with those of society. When the business of business is peace, the private sector can serve as a legitimate peace broker.

## Entrepreneurship as a Means to Decent Work

Economic growth and job creation are necessary components of building sustainable peace, but they are not sufficient conditions for peace. When inequalities persist against a backdrop of macroeconomic growth, a vicious cycle of social exclusion and economic deprivation can undermine peace. Moreover, when inequality intersects with identity politics, social cohesion may be severely undermined.<sup>14</sup> It is important, therefore, not to stop at job creation but also to think about “decent work.” Indeed, SDG 8 calls for the promotion of “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.”<sup>15</sup>

A March 2017 briefing from the Brookings Institution examines how the economic model of various countries in the Middle East and North Africa has resulted in high levels of unemployment and economic marginalization, particularly among

11 See [www.ideaspaz.org/foundation/about](http://www.ideaspaz.org/foundation/about).

12 UNDP Colombia, “Empleabilidad y emprendimiento para familias rurales víctimas del conflicto armado: ‘Somos Rurales,’” available at [www.co.undp.org/content/colombia/es/home/operations/projects/poverty\\_reduction/proyecto-desarrollo-economico-incluyente-rural-para-familias-vic.html](http://www.co.undp.org/content/colombia/es/home/operations/projects/poverty_reduction/proyecto-desarrollo-economico-incluyente-rural-para-familias-vic.html).

13 Daniela Henrike Klau-Panhans, “The Private Sector and Peace: What Does Tunisia’s Nobel Peace Prize Teach Us?” *Voices: Perspectives on Development*, October 16, 2015, available at <http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/private-sector-and-peace-what-does-tunisia-s-nobel-peace-prize-teach-us%20/>.

14 Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman, eds., *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

15 See “Targets and Indicators” at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8>.

the youth population.<sup>16</sup> Demand for jobs cannot be sustainably addressed through public sector hiring. At the same time, a recent survey found that more than 80 percent of youth in Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and the Palestinian Territories believed that starting a business is a good career choice. Despite this entrepreneurial enthusiasm, the stark reality is that many countries lack the environment and incentives for entrepreneurial activity to thrive.<sup>17</sup> This dissonance between what youth aspire to and the opportunities available to them contributes to emigration, which represents a flight of human capital, and to the frustrations that have fueled uprisings across the region over the last decade.

From a positive peace perspective, research by the Institute for Economics and Peace on the connection between youth development, social entrepreneurship, and sustaining peace found that there is a strong correlation between positive peace (a measure of the attitudes, institutions, and structures that support peace) and the Youth Development Index. In an enabling environment where the potential of youth can flourish, the demographic dividend is not only economic but can also contribute to restoring a measure of stability and resilience to labor markets, especially in countries recovering from conflict.<sup>18</sup> This is not to suggest a simple or linear relationship between employment programs and peace, but rather to emphasize that peaceful and resilient societies can better promote and benefit from youth development and youth-led entrepreneurship.<sup>19</sup>

One concrete policy to promote youth entrepreneurship would be to put in place educational and vocational training programs geared toward entrepreneurship.<sup>20</sup> Such education should be widespread—rather than confined to the secondary

and higher levels or to private schools—and should be designed to cultivate a spirit of initiative and self-sufficiency in all children at an early age. To teach and encourage creativity, it is also necessary to have a high tolerance for failure, which must be reinforced and embraced as part of the process of learning and innovation.<sup>21</sup> An education system reliant on rote learning, rooted in “a pervading culture of risk avoidance and fear of failure,”<sup>22</sup> cannot contribute to an entrepreneurial culture, nor will it help individuals develop the life skills needed to face adversity, including violent conflict, in a constructive manner.

## Social Entrepreneurship and Sustaining Peace

Societies that have been affected by conflict often suffer from low levels of social cohesion and may be highly polarized along ethnic, socioeconomic, or political lines. Regardless of social and political differences, the need and desire to rebuild one's livelihood and to prosper economically is likely to constitute common ground between groups. Entrepreneurial initiatives can create sites for intergroup socialization based on this shared interest, which can become a lever for social cohesion and the establishment of sustainable peace. For example, Jusoor is an entrepreneurship program in Lebanon aimed at teaching the next generation of Syrian business owners to rebuild what the war has destroyed.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation and the Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development jointly provide Palestinian entrepreneurs with business skills, and create opportunities for Israeli and Palestinian businesspeople to forge professional

16 Bessma Momani, “Entrepreneurship: An Engine for Job Creation and Inclusive Growth in the Arab World,” Brookings Institution, March 29, 2017, available at [www.brookings.edu/research/entrepreneurship-an-engine-for-job-creation-and-inclusive-growth-in-the-arab-world/](http://www.brookings.edu/research/entrepreneurship-an-engine-for-job-creation-and-inclusive-growth-in-the-arab-world/).

17 Jacqui Kew et al., “Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship,” Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and Youth Business International, September 2013, available at [www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/GenerationEntrepreneur.pdf](http://www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/GenerationEntrepreneur.pdf).

18 International Labour Organization, Peacebuilding Support Office, UNDP, and World Bank, “Employment Programmes and Peace: A Joint Statement on an Analytical Framework, Emerging Principles for Action and Next Steps,” September 2016, available at [www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/-dgreports/-/-dcomm/documents/statement/wcms\\_535665.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/-dgreports/-/-dcomm/documents/statement/wcms_535665.pdf).

19 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Youth Development, Social Enterprise, and Sustaining Peace,” background note, June 2017.

20 See, for example, the AGREE Initiative in Sierra Leone at [www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/9/lakshmi-puri-speech-on-launch-of-agree-initiative](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/9/lakshmi-puri-speech-on-launch-of-agree-initiative).

21 Bill Lucas, “Creative Teaching, Teaching Creativity and Creative Learning,” in *Creativity in Education*, Anna Craft, Bob Jeffrey, and Mike Leibling, eds. (London: Continuum, 2001).

22 Momani, “Entrepreneurship: An Engine for Job Creation and Inclusive Growth in the Arab World.”

23 Emma Sheppard, “Young Entrepreneurs in Syria: They Will Rebuild What the War Has Destroyed,” *The Guardian*, May 30, 2017, available at [www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2017/may/30/syria-young-entrepreneurs-war-jusoor-mujeeb-techstars-unfpa-startup-weekend-remmaz](http://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2017/may/30/syria-young-entrepreneurs-war-jusoor-mujeeb-techstars-unfpa-startup-weekend-remmaz).



and personal relationships.<sup>24</sup> These initiatives also demonstrate the importance of entrepreneurship for displaced persons as a means to earn a livelihood, contribute to their host or transit communities, and build new skills and relationships.

Such activities that are premised on an entrepreneurial strategy but whose main purpose “is not the maximisation of profit but the attainment of certain economic and social goals, and which [have] the capacity for bringing innovative solutions to the problems of social exclusion and unemployment,” are typically referred to as “social entrepreneurship.”<sup>25</sup> Although definitions of “social entrepreneurship” remain contested and somewhat imprecise, it remains a useful concept for conceptualizing the relationship between entrepreneurship and peace.<sup>26</sup>

Social entrepreneurship is often carried out at the grassroots level, thereby allowing for a more granular understanding of community needs and points of friction. As outlined above, policies that foster and support both existing and new entrepreneurs should thus be pursued not only to create self-employment, but also to maximize economic opportunities and to create new sites for exchange and interaction. In the past few decades, the body of literature and community of practice dedicated to social entrepreneurship have grown. Youth-led social entrepreneurship in particular has been observed as having many positive outcomes: it can boost social cohesion, enable the transfer of skills among youth, and address important issues around identity, alienation, and disenfranchisement. As a class, entrepreneurs display remarkable resilience, enduring and flourishing even in difficult environments, and in turn making their communities, societies, and countries more resilient as well.

## The SDGs and a Fair Business Environment as Incubators for Peace

Access to entrepreneurial opportunities requires a favorable investment climate and fair enforcement of regulations, and the SDGs provide a base for the creation of such conditions. One of the targets under SDG 8 is to “strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.” This is complemented by SDG 9.3, which calls on nations to “increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.”<sup>27</sup> Strengthening these capacities is more than a mere technocratic exercise; governance is also a determinant of the business environment. For example, high levels of cronyism and patronage undermine regulations and institutions and create barriers to new business entrants.<sup>28</sup>

A fair and competitive business environment is one indicator of good and just economic governance and increases the likelihood of equitable economic distribution. Countries with the least business-friendly regulations are also likely to have high income inequality, a known driver of unrest and violence. When regulations are not in place, are unfair by design, or are not enforced impartially, access to capital and the authorizations required for starting a business are more likely to be dependent on clientelist networks, nepotism, and bribery. Policies aimed at improving the business environment can therefore

24 Jessica Banfield, Canan Gündüz, and Nick Killick, eds., “Local Business, Local Peace: The Peacebuilding Potential of the Domestic Private Sector,” *International Alert*, July 2006, available at [www.international-alert.org/publications/local-business-local-peace](http://www.international-alert.org/publications/local-business-local-peace).

25 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, “Job Creation through the Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship,” 2013, p. 17, available at [www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/130228\\_Job%20Creation%20through%20the%20Social%20Economy%20and%20Social%20Entrepreneurship\\_RC\\_FINALBIS.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/130228_Job%20Creation%20through%20the%20Social%20Economy%20and%20Social%20Entrepreneurship_RC_FINALBIS.pdf).

26 Martin and Osberg, “Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition.”

27 See “Targets and Indicators” at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg9>.

28 Michael Breen and Robert Gillanders, “Corruption, Institutions and Regulation,” *Economics of Governance* 13, no. 2 (2012).



### Box 1. Women and entrepreneurship

SDG 5.5 calls for ensuring women's full and effective participation in political, economic, and public life. Supporting women entrepreneurs is one path through which governments and the UN can make progress toward this goal.

In Liberia, UNDP has been working with a group of women motorcycle taxi operators, known as the Pink Panthers (for their bright pink jackets and helmets.)<sup>29</sup> During the Ebola outbreak, the Pink Panthers modified their services to provide home delivery of groceries and essentials. This helped to minimize the number of people going out in public or interacting at markets, where they were at risk of exposure to the virus. By responding flexibly to this challenging situation, the Pink Panthers were able to assist with the prevention and recovery effort while also providing a valuable service.

In India, the Swayam Shikshan Prayog (Self-Teaching Project) works with rural women in the states of Maharashtra and Bihar to help them become clean-energy entrepreneurs.<sup>30</sup> The women organize themselves into self-help groups, which then introduce their communities to innovations such as biogas-based clean stoves, rechargeable solar lanterns, groundwater-conserving irrigation techniques, and vermiculture-based composting. This enterprise earned a UN Climate Award at the 2016 Marrakech Climate Change Conference and highlights the many opportunities for entrepreneurs to contribute to the achievement of SDG 2.4 (sustainable agriculture), SDG 6.4 (water management), SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy), and SDG 14.2 (marine and coastal ecosystems).

be a means of “building more effective, accountable and inclusive institutions.”<sup>31</sup>

The objectives of building sustainable peace and creating a sound business environment thus converge on the question of governance, particularly as it relates to the design and enforcement of business regulations. The Institute for Economics and Peace describes a sound business environment—defined as “the strength of economic conditions as well as the formal institutions that support the operation of the private sector”—as one of eight “Pillars of Positive Peace.” It notes that “business competitiveness and economic productivity are both associated with the most peaceful countries, as is the presence of regulatory systems that are conducive to business operations.”<sup>32</sup>

## Conclusions

There are numerous points of convergence between entrepreneurship and sustaining peace. At

a broader conceptual level, entrepreneurship may be seen as addressing the economic drivers of violent conflict. Noting the complexity of the relationship between conflict, peace, and the economy,<sup>33</sup> it is perhaps more useful to focus on mutually reinforcing dynamics between entrepreneurship and peace, rather than to attempt to frame entrepreneurship as a “solution” to conflict. Four such dynamics have been explored: creating an inclusive local private sector, promoting decent work, supporting social entrepreneurship, and fostering a sound business environment.

In reality, the complementarity between peace and entrepreneurship is likely to be highly context-specific, making generalizations on best practices difficult. Even so, the 2030 Agenda gives governments an effective blueprint for crafting national development policies that could create an enabling environment and a resilient ecosystem to simultaneously promote entrepreneurship and build sustainable peace.<sup>34</sup>

29 UNDP Liberia, “Supporting post Ebola Recovery: Female Motorcyclists Empowered,” November 9, 2015, available at [www.lr.undp.org/content/liberia/en/home/presscenter/articles/2015/11/09/supporting-post-ebola-recovery-female-motorcyclists-empowered.html](http://www.lr.undp.org/content/liberia/en/home/presscenter/articles/2015/11/09/supporting-post-ebola-recovery-female-motorcyclists-empowered.html).

30 See [www.sspindia.org/about-us/](http://www.sspindia.org/about-us/).

31 See “Targets and Indicators” at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16>.

32 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Positive Peace Report 2016,” available at <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/02/Positive-Peace-Report-2016.pdf>.

33 Ballentine and Sherman, *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict*.

34 Anita Ernstorfer et al., *Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals by Supporting Peace: How Business Can Contribute*, CDA Collaborative Learning and UN Global Compact, 2015, available at <http://cdacollaborative.org/publication/advancing-the-sustainable-development-goals-by-supporting-peace-how-business-can-contribute/>.

This is not to suggest that all forms of entrepreneurship are virtuous or have a positive impact. Conflicts create opportunities for both legal and criminal entrepreneurs. Unethical and illegal enterprises, such as those engaging in arms, drug, or human trafficking or forcing people to work in dangerous settings such as mines or fishing boats, can prey upon and magnify the vulnerabilities of those weaker than themselves. Businesses can distort policies or politics, engaging with and supporting corrupt or undemocratic leaders.

Nonetheless, the economic incentives and peace dividends that can be sparked by entrepreneurship warrant greater attention and have practical and policy implications for the United Nations. In order to harness the positive aspects of entrepreneurship while reining in or mitigating potential harm, it is recommended that:

1. Where the UN has a peacebuilding or development mandate, country assessments and peace and conflict analyses should systematically map existing entrepreneurial initiatives that, in addition to their intrinsic economic value, have explicit peacebuilding benefits for the community. These benefits may include helping victims of war and civil strife to recover and build new lives, creating jobs and inclusive opportunities for affected communities, or providing public goods where normal services are unavailable. This mapping should be gender-sensitive and should include an assessment of the “business environment” (i.e., the factors enabling or inhibiting entrepreneurship).
2. An integrated entrepreneurship development strategy should be designed to help the most promising entrepreneurs and social innovators

(particularly youth and women) scale up their initiatives. This strategy should be aligned to the 2030 Agenda, particularly the goals and targets that reference inclusive economic growth and decent work for all (SDG 8), resilient infrastructure and innovation (SDG 9), the reduction of inequality (SDG 10), and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16). The primary responsibility for the development of such a strategy rests with member states and other national stakeholders, with UN resident coordinators and their respective peace and development advisers playing a proactive role in ensuring this strategy is informed by and builds on existing efforts. Where relevant, UN regional economic commissions, regional political offices, the World Bank, and regional development banks should also contribute to this endeavor.

3. Peace operations should encourage the host country to develop a strategy for creating an environment that fosters entrepreneurship, with particular attention to youth-led social entrepreneurship. Specific elements of this enabling environment (as suggested in the analysis above) should be incorporated into the design and planning of these operations, serving as performance benchmarks toward an exit strategy, and progress toward these benchmarks should be monitored and reported on. Such progress is likely to have wide-ranging benefits including improved service delivery and confidence in government. Such an exit component can play a critical role in linking short-term programmatic activities such as quick impact projects to the long-term vision of sustaining peace.

## Chapter 4. Human Rights and Sustaining Peace

*Aïssata Athie and Youssef Mahmoud<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

In the dual resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly and Security Council in April 2016, “sustaining peace” is understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account.<sup>2</sup> As noted in Chapter 1 of this volume, sustaining peace can be seen as “an explicit and deliberate policy objective for all states, regardless of whether or not they are affected by conflict.” Indeed, all societies possess features that contribute to sustaining peace, whether through their institutions, culture, policies, or other norms of interaction among individuals and between people and their states. Sustaining peace thus requires identifying the attributes and assets that have “sustained social cohesion, inclusive development, the rule of law and human security.”<sup>3</sup>

Sustaining peace further promotes a holistic approach integrating all three pillars of the UN’s engagement—human rights, peace and security, and development—so as not only to contain the immediate consequences of conflict but also to prevent the outbreak of violence by addressing the root causes of conflict. Human rights violations and lack of accountability and prosecution for such violations are often drivers of conflict.<sup>4</sup> Monitoring human rights, therefore, could provide early warning of and help prevent destabilization of societies. Secretary-General António Guterres alluded to this in addresses to the Security Council in 2017, where he observed that “upholding human

rights is a crucial element of prevention,” and “human rights are intrinsically linked to sustaining peace.”<sup>5</sup>

This chapter seeks to demonstrate the role of human rights as a tool for prevention for sustaining peace. It reflects on three countries that, in part through their commitment to uphold and safeguard the rule of law and human rights, have managed to remain relatively peaceful, despite internal vulnerabilities and external pressures: Mauritius, Senegal, and Tunisia. The chapter thus focuses on what relatively peaceful societies can teach us about sustaining peace.<sup>6</sup>

### Human Rights as a Tool for Prevention for Sustaining Peace

As stated by Secretary-General Guterres in his address to the Human Rights Council in February 2017, “Perhaps the best prevention tool we have is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—and the treaties that derive from it. The rights set out in it identify many of the root causes of conflict; but equally they provide real world solutions through real change on the ground.”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, human rights monitoring and analysis can provide early warning of grievances that, if left unaddressed, may lead to violence. Widespread human rights abuses can be an indicator of future instability or a harbinger of the imminent risk of violent conflict. Human rights can thus serve as a preventive tool for sustaining peace.

When looking at human rights as a tool for

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<sup>2</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 1 of this volume.

<sup>4</sup> Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Combating Impunity and Strengthening Accountability and the Rule of Law,” available at [www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/Combatingimpunityandstrengtheningaccountability.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/Combatingimpunityandstrengtheningaccountability.aspx).

<sup>5</sup> UN Secretary-General, “Remarks at Security Council Meeting on ‘Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Human Rights and the Prevention of Armed Conflict,’” April 18, 2017, available at [www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-04-18/secretary-generals-remarks-security-council-meeting-maintenance](http://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-04-18/secretary-generals-remarks-security-council-meeting-maintenance).

<sup>6</sup> Douglas P. Fry, “Conclusion: Learning from Peaceful Societies,” in *Keeping the Peace: Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Societies around the World*, Graham Kemp and Douglas P. Fry, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> UN Secretary-General, “Remarks to the Human Rights Council,” February 27, 2017, available at [www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2017-02-27/secretary-generals-human-rights-council-remarks](http://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2017-02-27/secretary-generals-human-rights-council-remarks).

prevention, it is necessary to consider the full spectrum of rights—not just political and civil rights but also economic, social, and cultural rights (i.e., rights related to the workplace, social security, family life, participation in cultural life, and access to housing, food, water, healthcare, and education, among others).<sup>8</sup> Discrimination and inequalities—particularly horizontal inequalities between ethnic, religious, and other population groups, whether in the form of differential access to public goods and services, limitations on freedom of expression, or denial of economic participation—can be powerful drivers of human rights violations, which pose a direct threat to peace.<sup>9</sup>

## Human Rights and Positive Peace

Human rights cement the bond between individuals and promote peaceful coexistence, thereby making societies more resilient. Research from the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) has shown that there is a strong connection between respect for human rights and peacefulness, or “positive peace.”<sup>10</sup> IEP defines positive peace as the attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.<sup>11</sup> This is further enshrined in Johan Galtung’s “positive peace” framework, according to which peace is not merely the absence of violence but also the presence of factors associated with peaceful societies.<sup>12</sup> Positive peace thus represents the capacity of a society to meet the needs of its citizens, reduce the number of

grievances that arise, and resolve remaining disagreements without the use of violence.<sup>13</sup> As such, a state that respects and upholds human rights and the rule of law to prevent and address grievances is more likely to witness peace and stability.

One of the “pillars” IEP uses to measure positive peace is composed of human rights indicators: the “Acceptance of the Rights of Others” pillar (or the “rights pillar”).<sup>14</sup> According to IEP, “Formal laws guaranteeing basic human rights and freedoms and the informal social and cultural norms that relate to behaviors of citizens serve as proxies for the level of tolerance between different ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socio-economic groups within a country.”<sup>15</sup> IEP found that “the level of acceptance of the rights of others heavily impacts how individuals and groups will respond when a conflict arises” and that there is a relationship between the acceptance of the rights of others and peacefulness.<sup>16</sup> When expressing their grievances in functional democracies, individuals are less likely to resort to violence because they know that their rights are guaranteed by robust, inclusive, permanent, and independent institutions. Such grievances will most likely be handled through relatively peaceful and constitutional means.<sup>17</sup>

Often hailed as an example of stable democracy in West Africa,<sup>18</sup> Senegal is an example of a country that has remained peaceful in part through its commitment to pluralism and acceptance of the rights of others (see Box 1).

8 OHCHR, “Frequently Asked Questions on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,” 2008, p. 2, available at [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/FAQ%20on%20ESCR-en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/FAQ%20on%20ESCR-en.pdf).

9 OHCHR, “Early Warning and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,” 2016, available at [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/EarlyWarning\\_ESCR\\_2016\\_en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/EarlyWarning_ESCR_2016_en.pdf).

10 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Human Rights and Sustaining Peace,” background note, October 2017.

11 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Global Peace Index 2017,” p. 78, available at <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/06/GPI17-Report.pdf>.

12 Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969).

13 See Chapter 1 of this volume.

14 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Pillars of Peace, Understanding the Key Attitudes and Institutions That Underpin Peaceful Societies,” September 2013, available at [www.gpplatform.ch/sites/default/files/Pillars%20of%20Peace%20Report%20%20IEP.pdf](http://www.gpplatform.ch/sites/default/files/Pillars%20of%20Peace%20Report%20%20IEP.pdf).

15 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Positive Peace Report 2016,” available at <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/02/Positive-Peace-Report-2016.pdf>.

16 Ibid, p. 64.

17 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Human Rights and Sustaining Peace.”

18 See, for example, Dan Robinson, “Obama Praises Senegal, Calls Mandela ‘Hero for World,’” *Voice of America*, June 27, 2013, available at [www.voanews.com/a/obama-pays-tribute-to-mandela/1690242.html](http://www.voanews.com/a/obama-pays-tribute-to-mandela/1690242.html).

### Box 1. Senegal

In a region where political violence and instability are recurrent, Senegal has managed to remain relatively stable and peaceful, despite being home to one of sub-Saharan Africa's longest-standing insurgency movements in its Casamance region. According to IEP's 2017 Global Peace Index, Senegal is the sixtieth most peaceful country out of 163. Several factors account for this notable score. Senegal enjoys strong and independent institutions that control the ways power is acquired and exercised in accordance with the constitution, as well as a strong civil society capable of holding the government accountable. This was demonstrated in practice when, prior to the 2012 presidential elections, Abdoulaye Wade attempted to run for a third term (despite the constitutional two-term limit); protests led by the "Y'en a marre" citizen movement ("we are fed up") succeeded in mobilizing popular opposition against this move, and Wade eventually relented.<sup>19</sup>

Another key element of Senegal's stability is its attachment to inclusion, diversity, and pluralism.<sup>20</sup> Senegal's political leaders have cultivated the idea that pluralism is a core part of the country's national identity, and it has been common for political leadership to emphasize that Senegal is "a diverse but unified nation."<sup>21</sup> Despite 95 percent of its population being Muslim, Senegal is a secular state, and freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution. The fact that this predominantly Muslim country's first president, Léopold Sédar Senghor, was Christian hints at the nation's commitment to these values. The constitution also recognizes six official languages in addition to French, and national legislation prohibits the formation of political parties based on religion or ethnicity.<sup>22</sup>

Although its society is diverse and plural, Senegal has faced challenges to its territorial integrity from the Casamance region's independence movement. However, rather than seeking to marginalize the separatist movement (through military force or coercion), the choice was made to include moderate members of the movement in the political sphere at the national level.<sup>23</sup> The language of the region's Joola ethnic group was also enshrined in the constitution as one of the country's official languages.

## Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the sustaining peace agenda share common principles related to "national ownership, universality, inclusivity, people-centered approaches, long-term perspectives, and a call for coherent implementation across the three UN pillars."<sup>24</sup> The value of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is that, like human rights and sustaining peace, they are universal and applicable to all countries regardless

of their level of development (unlike the Millennium Development Goals, which only applied to "developing countries").<sup>25</sup> The link between development and the upholding of human rights could thus be an entry point for dialogue and engagement with states.

Both the sustainable development and sustaining peace agendas promote a focus on prevention to identify and address the factors that put countries at risk of crisis or violence.<sup>26</sup> The rationale of the 2030 Agenda is that fulfilling the SDGs will "foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence."<sup>27</sup> This provides a connection between peacefulness and human rights, as the

19 Tanguy Berthemet, "Au Sénégal, la voix montante des 'Y'en a marre,'" *Le Figaro*, February 23, 2012, available at [www.lefigaro.fr/international/2012/02/23/01003-20120223ARTFIG00638-au-senegal-la-voix-montante-des-y-en-a-marre.php](http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2012/02/23/01003-20120223ARTFIG00638-au-senegal-la-voix-montante-des-y-en-a-marre.php).

20 Scott Straus, *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership and Genocide in Modern Africa* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), p. 226.

21 Ibid., p. 207.

22 Ibid., pp. 229–230.

23 Ibid.

24 See Chapter 2 of this volume.

25 OHCHR, "Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/MDG/Pages/The2030Agenda.aspx>.

26 Ibid.

27 UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (September 25, 2015), *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, UN Doc. A/RES/70/1.



2030 Agenda seeks to “achieve and protect the human rights of all,” with 156 of its 169 “integrated and indivisible” targets having either a direct or an indirect link to human rights.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the seventeen SDGs address various human rights standards, including access to food, water, sanitation, quality education, healthcare, and housing.<sup>29</sup> The 2030 Agenda also strives to “leave no one behind” and commits to equality and nondiscrimination, two fundamental principles of human rights.<sup>30</sup>

Mauritius, which has stood out as a socio-economic and democratic success story in Africa, is an interesting case for analyzing the correlation and interdependence between social and economic rights and sustaining peace (see Box 2).

## Effective and Independent Institutions to Guarantee Human Rights

States are obligated to respect, protect, and fulfill the fundamental human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As such, they need to ensure access to effective mechanisms and institutions to address grievances and put an end to cycles of discrimination and marginalization. Whether judicial or non-judicial, these mechanisms and institutions must seek to provide redress to victims and ensure accountability for perpetrators of violations. As noted by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Justice delivery involves the ability of the State to ensure the peaceful resolution of disputes, the prosecution and punishment of crimes, and effective remedies for violations of rights.”<sup>31</sup> Solid, independent institutions able to

address grievances in a manner that respects human rights reduce the likelihood that individuals or groups will resort to violence when disputes arise. The state must also guarantee equal access to these institutions for all (women, youth, minorities, etc.).

National human rights institutions can play an important role in promoting and monitoring the implementation of international human rights standards at the national level. These can take different forms, including ombudspersons, human rights commissions, hybrid institutions with multiple mandates, or consultative and advisory bodies.<sup>32</sup>

Civil society organizations can also help to create space for debate and dialogue. They play a key role in driving local reform processes and promoting tolerance, justice, and human rights, all of which are essential to sustaining peace. As described by OHCHR, “An active and functioning civil society is the foundation for ensuring the accountability of the Government and its law and policies.”<sup>33</sup> Indeed, as stated by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, “If leaders do not listen to their people, they will hear from them—in the streets, the squares, or, as we see far too often, on the battlefield. There is a better way: more participation; more democracy; more engagement and openness. That means maximum space for civil society.”<sup>34</sup>

Tunisia, the epicenter of the 2011 “Arab Spring,” has a history of a robust and vigilant civil society. Many observers credit this robust civil society for fostering the country’s progress toward democratization and “facilitating dialogue and compromise across political divides” at times of national stress or when the formal political institutions hit an impasse (see Box 3).<sup>35</sup>

28 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Human Rights and Sustaining Peace.”

29 UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1.

30 OHCHR, “Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

31 OHCHR, “Early Warning and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,” p. 18.

32 OHCHR, “Principles Relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles),” December 20, 1993, available at [www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfNationalInstitutions.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfNationalInstitutions.aspx).

33 OHCHR, “Early Warning and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,” p. 18.

34 United Nations, “At High-Level Event in Support of Civil Society, Secretary-General Says ‘They Protect Our Rights: They Deserve Their Rights,’” September 23, 2013, available at [www.un.org/press/en/2013/sgsm15314.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sgsm15314.doc.htm).

35 Eva Bellin, “Drivers of Democracy: Lessons from Tunisia,” Crown Center for Middle East Studies, August 2013, p. 4.



## Box 2. Mauritius

Since obtaining independence in 1968, successive Mauritian governments have committed to investing in human capital and the creation of a favorable business environment, both of which are key positive peace pillars, according to IEP.<sup>36</sup>

A “high level of human capital” refers to “a country’s stock of skills, knowledge and behaviors” and includes education, access to healthcare, and the provision of essential services such as water.<sup>37</sup> IEP notes that a greater level of human capital tends to increase “social cohesion, economic development and peace.”<sup>38</sup> For example, Mauritius’s provision of free education up to the university level has contributed to the creation of a productive and reliable workforce, and in 2016 the literacy rate was 90.6 percent—the highest in Africa.<sup>39</sup> Further, the Mauritian state guarantees free and accessible healthcare to all and has made it a priority to provide all of the population access to safe drinking water (99 percent of the population currently has access).<sup>40</sup> In 2016 Mauritius ranked second in Africa (after the Seychelles) on the UN Development Programme’s (UNDP’s) Human Development Index (and sixty-fourth globally), and life expectancy at birth in Mauritius is 74.6 years compared to the African average of 60 years.<sup>41</sup>

Another of IEP’s pillars of positive peace is the presence of a “sound business environment,” referring to the ability to conduct business in a fair and open marketplace.<sup>42</sup> In Mauritius, this is illustrated by policies that aim to encourage and facilitate foreign and domestic investment, including the country’s low corporate tax rate, training opportunities, simplified administrative procedures, and access to financing.<sup>43</sup>

IEP highlights the interdependent nature of its pillars of peace; strengthening one will strengthen the others.<sup>44</sup> In Mauritius, investment in human capital and an open and favorable business environment, combined with strong rule of law and good governance, can thus be credited as contributing to this success story.<sup>45</sup>

Mauritius has faced internal vulnerabilities and external pressures such as ethnic tensions, trade shocks, and the impact of climate change on the agricultural sector (notably the sugar cane industry) and the livelihoods of farmers.<sup>46</sup> But despite these pressures, according to the Global Peace Index, Mauritius is the twenty-second most peaceful country in the world.<sup>47</sup>

## Addressing Concerns and Challenges

Some states have raised concerns about linking human rights to sustaining peace. One of these concerns is that discussions on human rights, particularly within the UN, are often perceived as a

selective “naming and shaming” exercise primarily targeting developing countries.

A second core concern is that human rights violations (perceived or otherwise) have, in some cases, been used to justify politically motivated foreign interventions and regime change.<sup>48</sup> For instance, the 2011 intervention in Libya, which was first presented as a “humanitarian intervention”

36 Jeffrey Frankel, “Mauritius: African Success Story,” Harvard Kennedy School Faculty Research Working Paper Series, September 2010, p. 25, available at [https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/4450110/Frankel\\_MauritiusAfrican.pdf?sequence=1](https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/4450110/Frankel_MauritiusAfrican.pdf?sequence=1).

37 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Pillars of Peace,” p. 40.

38 Ibid.

39 UNDP, “Mauritius: Human Development Indicators,” available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/MUS>.

40 Ibid.; Joseph Stiglitz, “The Mauritius Miracle, or How to Make a Big Success of a Small Economy,” *The Guardian*, March 7, 2011, available at [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/mar/07/mauritius-healthcare-education](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/mar/07/mauritius-healthcare-education); Jeffrey Frankel, “The Little Economy That Could,” *Foreign Policy*, February 2, 2012, available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/02/02/the-little-economy-that-could/>.

41 UNDP, “Mauritius: Human Development Indicators.”

42 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Pillars of Peace,” p. 17.

43 Frankel, “The Little Economy That Could.”

44 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Pillars of Peace,” p. 2.

45 Frankel, “The Little Economy That Could.”

46 Jean-Michel Jauze, “Maurice, petit pays, grandes ambitions,” *European Journal of Geography* (2012).

47 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Global Peace Index 2017.”

48 Eric A. Heinze, “Waging War for Human Rights: Toward a Moral-Legal Theory of Humanitarian Intervention,” *Human Rights & Human Welfare* 3 (2003).

### Box 3. Tunisia

In the Middle East and North Africa region, Tunisia is transitioning to a nascent democracy despite economic, security, and governance challenges, as well as regional and global pressures. Tunisia has maintained its commitment to uphold human rights and create an environment where citizens can express their needs and aspirations freely and peacefully. This is exemplified by the space given to civil society organizations and the government's practice of consulting these groups in decision making, as was done during the drafting of the 2014 constitution.<sup>49</sup> Civil society's involvement in the transition process, in particular the role of the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet in easing political crises, has been credited for helping keep the process on track.<sup>50</sup>

The 2011 revolution, which was deeply rooted in socioeconomic grievances, enabled civil society groups to expand their advocacy and activism to economic, social, and cultural rights, which have often been neglected in favor of political and civil rights.<sup>51</sup> Civil society groups successfully advocated for the 2014 constitution to enshrine the right to work and to a decent salary and to consolidate women's rights.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, Tunisia's constitution devotes a full chapter to universal freedoms and rights, including women's rights inscribed in the 1956 Personal Status Code. It also goes beyond the 1959 constitution's freedom of belief to recognize the freedom of worship and emphasizes the concept of citizenship.<sup>53</sup> The constitution decrees the creation of a Constitutional Court as a guarantor of these rights with the power to invalidate laws deemed not in conformity with the human rights standards affirmed in the constitution.

To further consolidate women's rights, in July 2017 the Tunisian parliament adopted a landmark law criminalizing all forms of violence against women.<sup>54</sup> The following month the President established a committee to look into individual freedoms and gender equality issues not addressed by the new law, such as possibly reforming the inheritance law, which only entitled female heirs to half as much property as their male family counterparts.<sup>55</sup>

On the economic and security fronts, however, Tunisia continues to face challenges. With an unemployment rate of 15 percent (32 percent for young people) and the presence of violent extremist groups in the region, the situation remains of concern.<sup>56</sup>

aimed at protecting civilians from violations, subsequently revealed ulterior political motives, including regime change.<sup>57</sup> Linking human rights to sustaining peace could be challenging if states feel that they are being selectively targeted or that there are hidden political motives.

A third challenge to human rights in general relates to the lack of enforcement and states' use of

the principle of sovereignty to justify their refusal or reluctance to engage on human rights. Human rights tools and mechanisms are treaty-based; they derive from legal commitments voluntarily made by member states in accordance with this principle of sovereignty. However, some human rights, such as the right to life, freedom of conscience and religion, and prohibition of torture, are non-

49 Asma Noura, "Origins, Evolution and Challenges to the Human Rights Movement in Tunisia," Arab Reform Initiative, September 2017, pp. 14–16.

50 Margaret Williams and Youssef Mahmoud, "The New Tunisian Constitution: Triumphs and Potential Pitfalls," *IPI Global Observatory*, February 27, 2014, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2014/02/the-new-tunisian-constitution-triumphs-and-potential-pitfalls/>; Council of Europe, "La transition politique en Tunisie," April 26, 2017, p. 9, available at <http://website-pace.net/documents/18848/3421624/20170426-La-transition-politique-Tunisie-FR.pdf/384874b9-b421-4399-9db7-72a3da857040>.

51 Noura, "Origins, Evolution and Challenges to the Human Rights Movement in Tunisia."

52 Constitution of Tunisia, 2014, art. 40, available at [www.constitutionnet.org/vl/item/tunisia-constitution-2014](http://www.constitutionnet.org/vl/item/tunisia-constitution-2014).

53 José Vericat, "Women's Struggle for Citizenship: Civil Society and Constitution Making after the Arab Uprisings," October 2017, available at [www.ipinst.org/2017/10/womens-struggle-for-citizenship-after-the-arab-uprisings](http://www.ipinst.org/2017/10/womens-struggle-for-citizenship-after-the-arab-uprisings).

54 Youssef Mahmoud, "Tunisia's New Protections for Women: A Legislative Revolution and Missed Opportunity," *IPI Global Observatory*, August 9, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/08/tunisia-violence-against-women-law/>.

55 Antonia Blumberg, "Tunisia Just Took a Big Step forward on Muslim Women's Rights," *Huffington Post*, September 15, 2017, available at [www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/tunisia-muslim-women-marriage\\_us\\_59bc42ffe4b02da0e142181f](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/tunisia-muslim-women-marriage_us_59bc42ffe4b02da0e142181f); Youssef Mahmoud, "In Tunisia's March toward Women's Rights, Finish Line Is in Sight," *IPI Global Observatory*, August 17, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/08/tunisia-women-rights-islam/>.

56 Council of Europe, "La transition politique en Europe."

57 Michah Zenko, "The Big Lie about the Libyan War," *Foreign Policy*, March 22, 2016, available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/22/libya-and-the-myth-of-humanitarian-intervention/>.

derogable at any time under any circumstances, meaning they are applicable even to states that have not ratified the conventions around them.<sup>58</sup> Yet none of the core human rights treaties provide for solid mechanisms to ensure accountability for their non-fulfillment or violation.

Further, existing monitoring mechanisms within the UN have had little impact. For example, the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, by which all member states periodically undergo an assessment of their human rights records, basically consists of states reviewing their own track record, with little space given to other stakeholders such as civil society organizations.<sup>59</sup>

Despite these challenges, it remains in a state's best interest to uphold the rule of law and human rights. Indeed, according to IEP's 2017 Global Peace Index, the most peaceful countries are those with the most solid human rights records. While this is not to suggest a simple or linear relationship between upholding human rights and peace, the data indicates that violating or failing to uphold human rights does not sustain peace or make societies peaceful.

## Conclusions

Connecting the human rights and sustaining peace agendas offers a unique, strategic entry point to help shift from a culture of crisis management to one of prevention, especially in a global context where human rights tend to be restricted or attacked in the name of security.<sup>60</sup> The UN's

Human Rights Up Front Initiative, which requires the entire "UN system to be alert to deteriorating human rights situations," is a step in the right direction and should be strengthened across all UN pillars.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated, meaning they are rules that can be referred to and claimed by any individual (regardless of his or her nationality) at any time. The legitimacy of human rights as a result of their universality makes them a solid foundation for building and fostering self-sustaining peace. This is further demonstrated through the strong and positive correlation found by IEP between the "acceptance of the rights of others" and states' levels of peacefulness.<sup>62</sup>

The cases of Mauritius, Senegal, and Tunisia demonstrate that, despite internal vulnerabilities and external pressures, countries can sustain peace, in part because of a strong commitment to upholding human rights. Their resilience to political, economic, and social shocks is an important factor accounting for their relative peacefulness. As human rights often spark suspicion and distrust, these positive examples can demonstrate how human rights can be used as a tool for prevention and could facilitate engagement and dialogue with skeptical states. Emphasizing what works rather than what does not is at the core of the sustaining peace concept, and all three countries offer valuable lessons as the international community struggles with the practical meaning of sustaining peace.

58 OHCHR, "Core Human Rights in the Two Covenants," September 2013, available at <https://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/IHRS/TreatyBodies/Page%20Documents/Core%20Human%20Rights.pdf>.

59 OHCHR, "Universal Periodic Review," available at [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx).

60 OHCHR, "Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism," available at <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet32EN.pdf>.

61 OHCHR, "Early Warning and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights."

62 Institute for Economics and Peace, "Human Rights and Sustaining Peace."

## Chapter 5.

# The Role of Local Governance in Sustaining Peace

*Alain Tschudin and Albert Trithart<sup>1</sup>*

## Introduction

The joint resolutions on sustaining peace passed by the UN Security Council and General Assembly suggest that “sustaining peace should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account.” More specifically, they also identify good governance as integral to the promotion of sustaining peace.<sup>2</sup>

The focus of the resolutions, however, is on national governance; the local level is conspicuous in its absence. This reflects a broader trend whereby the UN and other external actors tend to incorporate local perspectives into their peacebuilding work as background information while primarily engaging with national counterparts in capital cities.<sup>3</sup>

This focus can be problematic, particularly when the central government is fragmented or lacks broad legitimacy. Recognizing this, the Advisory Group of Experts on the 2015 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture recommended that “new approaches need to be found, which understand peacebuilding, at least in its early phases, as having more to do with strengthening local domains of governance than trying to re-establish strong central authority.”<sup>4</sup>

“Local governance,” as defined by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), refers to

subnational institutions, systems, and processes that provide services to citizens and through which citizens “articulate their interests and needs, mediate their differences, and exercise their rights and obligations.”<sup>5</sup> Local governance is delivered through “a complex set of political relationships between many different actors—formal and informal, national and local—which interrelate with each other in diverse ways.”<sup>6</sup> These actors could include, for example, a mix of municipal governments, traditional chieftaincies, community-based organizations, and religious institutions.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter explores how good local governance can contribute to sustaining peace in three ways: (1) by delivering services and promoting sustainable development more effectively and efficiently; (2) by giving people voice in a representative and inclusive way; and (3) by nurturing political will to resolve conflict and sustain peace. It also highlights how local governance actors can undermine peace if they do not fulfill these functions effectively.<sup>8</sup>

## Managing Resources Effectively and Efficiently

Perhaps the most visible function of local governance structures is to deliver basic services such as healthcare, education, water, sanitation, justice, and security. Managing delivery of these services at the local level can contribute to sustaining peace in several ways. People are best-

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2 Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

3 Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, Introduction to “Leveraging Local Knowledge for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding in Africa,” International Peace Institute, March 2015, available at [www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IPI-Rpt-Leveraging-Local-Knowledge-rev.pdf](http://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IPI-Rpt-Leveraging-Local-Knowledge-rev.pdf).

4 United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, UN Doc. A/69/968–S/2015/490, June 30, 2015, p. 16.

5 UNDP, *Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings: Building a Resilient Foundation for Peace and Development*, 2016, p. 3.

6 Anuradha Joshi and Markus Schultze-Kraft, “Localising Governance: An Outlook on Research and Policy,” *IDS Bulletin* 45, no. 5 (September 2014), p. 5, available at [https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/7341/IDSB\\_45\\_5\\_10.1111-1759-5436.12099.pdf?sequence=1](https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/7341/IDSB_45_5_10.1111-1759-5436.12099.pdf?sequence=1).

7 For example, Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan identifies eight distinct modes of local governance in West Africa. See “The Eight Modes of Local Governance in West Africa,” *IDS Bulletin* 42, no. 2 (March 2011), p. 24, available at [https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/7586/IDSB\\_42\\_2\\_10.1111-j.1759-5436.2011.00208.x.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/7586/IDSB_42_2_10.1111-j.1759-5436.2011.00208.x.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

8 On these three dimensions, see D. Hemson, J. Carter, and G. Karuri-Sebina, “Service Delivery as a Measure of Change: State Capacity and Development,” in *State of the Nation: South Africa 2008*, P. M. Kagwanja and K. Kondlo, eds. (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2009).

positioned to describe their own needs and aspirations, and local governance actors are closer to the people than national authorities or international nongovernmental organizations. This enables them, at least in theory, to respond to people's needs, address local-level inequalities, and leverage existing capacities for service delivery.<sup>9</sup>

When provided by local governments in a fair, equitable, and reliable manner, service delivery can also increase the visibility, credibility, and legitimacy of the state.<sup>10</sup> This is particularly true in the wake of conflict or instability, when the provision or restoration of basic services can be seen as “the materialization of the peace dividend,” showing people the benefits of peace and increasing their commitment to sustaining it.<sup>11</sup> Even in countries at peace, effective local service delivery can increase citizens' trust in the state at both the local and the national levels.

Beyond service delivery, local governments have an important role to play in sustainable development more broadly. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes this in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11—“make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”—which was largely included in the agenda thanks to a campaign by local governments.<sup>12</sup>

But local delivery of services and promotion of sustainable development do not inherently support peace. It should not be assumed that local actors will respond to local needs in an equitable manner; local governance structures may be controlled by elites who are corrupt or represent a narrow set of interests, leading to services that favor certain groups over others. Moreover, local governments often lack sufficient financial, technical, or human resources or statutory authority, causing them to

fail to meet expectations. A failure to respond to people's needs or to meet their expectations can undermine peace, as seen in South Africa's widespread community-level protests (see Box 1). Decentralization, therefore, needs to come with the transfer of significant authority, responsibility, and resources to local governments and mechanisms to hold local service providers accountable.<sup>13</sup>

Although local governments are generally in front when it comes to service delivery, other local actors can also play a role. This is particularly the case when a state's authority does not extend to the local level. In Syria, for example, local coordination committees “provided support for victims and families of prisoners, organised alternative hospitals, took charge of water distribution and bakeries, collected garbage and informed the population through a wealth of local magazines and alternative radio stations.”<sup>14</sup> At the same time, to prevent parallel systems from emerging, governments need to coordinate with non-state actors on service delivery, such as by engaging in dialogue, mutually agreeing on their respective roles, or setting policy goals.<sup>15</sup> In countries at peace, too, service delivery can provide an opportunity for local governments to cooperate with civil society organizations and other local actors.

## Giving People a Voice

Another important function of local governance structures is to give people a voice, both by representing their constituencies and giving them opportunities to participate at the local level and by relaying their interests and needs to higher-level actors. In particular, this can give a voice to historically disadvantaged groups or those that are underrepresented at higher levels of government. In India, for example, reserved seats for women,

9 Derick W. Brinkerhoff, “State Fragility and Governance: Conflict Mitigation and Subnational Perspectives,” *Development Policy Review* 29, no. 2 (March 2011).

10 Dion van den Berg and Michael James Warren, “Acting Local: How Decentralized Government Can Help Build States,” *IPI Global Observatory*, September 16, 2015, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2015/09/syria-assad-local-government-peacebuilding-colombia/>.

11 Martijn Klem and Georg Frerks, “How Local Governments Contribute to Peace-Building,” in *City Diplomacy*, Arne Musch et al., eds. (The Hague: VNG International, 2008), available at [www.vng-international.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CityDiplomacyRole\\_of\\_Local\\_GovernmentsEngels.pdf](http://www.vng-international.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CityDiplomacyRole_of_Local_GovernmentsEngels.pdf).

12 General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262; United Cities and Local Governments, “The Sustainable Development Goals: What Local Governments Need to Know,” August 2015, available at [www.uclg.org/en/media/news/sustainable-development-goals-what-local-governments-need-know](http://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/sustainable-development-goals-what-local-governments-need-know).

13 Dele Olowu and James Stevenson Wunsch, *Local Governance in Africa: The Challenges of Democratic Decentralization* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004).

14 Doreen Khoury, “Syria—Organising for the Future: Grassroots Governance and National Peace,” *Accord* 25 (2014), available at [www.c-r.org/accord/legitimacy-and-peace-processes/syria-organising-future-grassroots-governance-and-national](http://www.c-r.org/accord/legitimacy-and-peace-processes/syria-organising-future-grassroots-governance-and-national).

15 Richard Batley and Claire McLoughlin, “State Capacity and Non-state Service Provision in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States,” *Governance and Social Development Resources Centre*, February 2009, available at [www.gsdr.org/docs/open/eirs3.pdf](http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/eirs3.pdf).



### Box 1. Dissatisfaction with local government in Mbizana, South Africa

In recent years, South Africa has come to be called the “protest capital of the world.” Between 1997 and 2013 there were an average of 900 community protests a year. More recently, the number has climbed as high as 2,000 a year.<sup>16</sup> This apparent frustration was borne out by a survey by Good Governance Africa indicating broad dissatisfaction with government performance. The survey also found that the majority of respondents thought people were attracting attention to their grievances through violent protest. This dissatisfaction permeates all the way to the local level, where the perceived effectiveness of service delivery, economic development, and administration varied widely among municipalities.<sup>17</sup>

The worst-performing municipality was found to be Mbizana in Eastern Cape province—particularly significant to South Africa as the birthplace of Oliver Tambo, a stalwart of liberation who wished for “peace and prosperity for all South Africans.” Over the past twenty-three years, the municipality has not yielded the fruit of democratic transformation, and citizens are dissatisfied with local governance, posing a risk to long-term development and peace.

A local-level survey by Good Governance Africa found the population in Mbizana to be financially precarious, with low personal income (a median of \$55 per month), mass unemployment (47.3 percent), and heavy reliance on government grants and “passive” forms of remuneration. Access to services was found to vary significantly within the community, with only moderate access to the most basic services, whether provided by the municipality, provided by the community, or self-enabled. For example, 77 percent of respondents accessed sanitation through toilets located outside their house, while 11 percent had no access to toilets at all. In terms of economic development, the municipality is trying to unlock opportunities, including through the Mbizana Rural Enterprise Development Hub, but the economy is dominated by the retail sector, with few opportunities in manufacturing and agriculture. Moreover, much of the money made in Mbizana is invested outside the municipality.<sup>18</sup>

When people were asked what areas the municipality should address most urgently, employment creation topped the list, followed by healthcare and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, safety and security, and land and housing. Resoundingly, people communicated their dissatisfaction with the municipality’s inability to deliver on its own vision to fight poverty, provide affordable services, facilitate a people-driven economy, build sustainable communities, protect and preserve the environment, and strengthen a culture of performance and public participation.<sup>19</sup>

Mbizana is not only the worst-performing municipality in South Africa; it also has one of the highest levels of protest. These protests have been found to be attributable to poor service delivery and unresolved community complaints, as well as political disagreements within the municipal council and crime-related incidents.<sup>20</sup>

lower castes, and tribes in local governments has helped bring previously excluded voices into local-level decision making (see Box 2).

Just as easily, however, local governance can reflect exclusive local power dynamics. For example, while many states have sought to recognize “traditional” local governance arrange-

ments such as chieftaincies, such arrangements may reflect “patrimonialism; predation and corruption; patronage; [and] absence of real accountability to the people.”<sup>21</sup> At the same time, while local elections are the most democratic way to pursue inclusive local government, they do not guarantee inclusivity; in fact, they may reinforce

16 Carin Runciman, “South African Protesters Echo a Global Cry: Democracy Isn’t Making People’s Lives Better,” *The Conversation*, May 18, 2017, available at <https://theconversation.com/south-african-protesters-echo-a-global-cry-democracy-isnt-making-peoples-lives-better-77639>.

17 Good Governance Africa, “Voter Sentiment on Governance in South Africa,” March 2017, available at [www.gga.org/gga-voter-sentiment-survey-summary/](http://www.gga.org/gga-voter-sentiment-survey-summary/).

18 Good Governance Africa, “Mbizana Municipality Local Governance Report,” October 2017, available at [www.gga.org/mbizana-citizen-survey-report-2017/](http://www.gga.org/mbizana-citizen-survey-report-2017/).

19 Ibid.

20 Christopher Ugochukwu Nwafor, “Factors Influencing Community Protests in the Mbizana Municipality” (master’s thesis, Durban University of Technology, 2016), available at <http://openscholar.dut.ac.za/handle/10321/1570>.

21 De Sardan, “The Eight Modes of Local Governance in West Africa.”

## Box 2. Empowering disadvantaged groups at the local level in India

In 1992 India ratified a constitutional amendment establishing a new system of local government (the *panchayati raj*) to decentralize administration to the local level. The amendment reserved seats in local-level panchayats for “scheduled” castes and tribes (those listed in the constitution as being historically disadvantaged) in proportion to their share of the population. It also reserved one-third of panchayat seats for women; more than half of India’s states have now expanded this reservation to 50 percent. In addition, the amendment reserved one-third of posts for the heads of panchayats for these groups. This change had the potential to give voice to those who had traditionally been excluded.

Simply in terms of numbers, the results were impressive. In 2014 nearly 3 million Indians were elected to almost 250,000 panchayats, of whom 19 percent were from scheduled castes, 12 percent were from scheduled tribes, and 46 percent were women (by comparison, only 12 percent of national parliamentarians in India are women).<sup>22</sup>

In practice, the effect on inclusion has been more complicated. In some panchayats, representatives of dominant castes forced their colleagues from scheduled castes to sit on the floor or on separate chairs, or they supported weak candidates from these castes in order to manipulate them once in office. But in another panchayat, representatives from a former untouchable caste have been “vocal, freely expressing their views and taking full advantage of various welfare schemes.”<sup>23</sup> One study also showed that members of scheduled castes or tribes serving as heads of panchayats delivered more benefits to the village as a whole and to their group specifically.<sup>24</sup>

Studies have also found positive effects of the increased representation of women in panchayats. At least initially, studies showed that women elected to reserved seats were generally less experienced and more likely to turn to their husbands for help. At the same time, however, in panchayats headed by women, more women have participated in village meetings, and these panchayats have invested more in issues such as drinking water and sanitation.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, over time, villages with women-led panchayats have seen more women running for and winning elections, as well as the weakening of gender stereotypes.<sup>26</sup> This increased inclusion of women has the potential to make peace more durable in India: evidence has shown that “increasing women’s participation and representation in leadership and decision-making positions leads to higher levels of peacefulness and better development outcomes for society.”<sup>27</sup>

identity-based politics, especially when turnout is low.<sup>28</sup>

Local governance actors, therefore, need to be held accountable, including through public participation beyond elections. Local governance can be a laboratory for innovative, participatory approaches to policymaking, such as the participatory budgeting model that emerged and spread from city governments in Brazil. Even when the actual

role of citizens in such processes is small, they can contribute to sustaining peace. For example, a study in the Netherlands found that local participatory policymaking not only makes people “feel more responsibility for public matters” but also “increases public engagement, encourages people to listen to a diversity of opinions, and contributes to a higher degree of legitimacy of decisions.”<sup>29</sup>

22 Open Government Data Platform India, “All India Level Number of Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions from 2001 to 2014,” available at <https://data.gov.in/catalog/number-elected-representatives-panchayati-raj-institutions>.

23 B. S. Baviskar and George Mathew, eds., *Inclusion and Exclusion in Local Governance: Field Studies from Rural India* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2009).

24 Pranab Bardhan, et al., “Impact of Political Reservations in West Bengal Local Governments on Anti-Poverty Targeting,” *Journal of Globalization and Development* 1, no. 1 (2010).

25 Lori Beaman, et al., “Political Reservation and Substantive Representation: Evidence from Indian Village Councils,” in *India Policy Forum 2010/11*, Suman Bery et al., eds., National Council of Applied Economic Research and Brookings Institution (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2011).

26 Lora Beaman, et al., “Powerful Women: Does Exposure Reduce Bias?,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124, no. 4 (2009).

27 See Chapter 2 of this volume.

28 UNDP, *Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings*.

29 Ank Michels and Laurens De Graaf, “Examining Citizen Participation: Local Participatory Policy Making and Democracy,” *Local Governance Studies* 36, no. 4 (2010).



## Nurturing Political Will for Peace

In addition to managing resources effectively and giving people a voice, local governance structures can also nurture political will for sustaining peace. Effective decentralization can allow local governments not only to deliver services but also to serve as fora for people to engage in dialogue with each other and negotiate local-level issues. When there is intense local-level competition between groups, for example, local governments could provide opportunities for power sharing. In Northern Ireland, power-sharing arrangements between Nationalists and Unionists emerged in local councils well before the Belfast Agreement provided for power sharing at the national level.<sup>30</sup> Such efforts at local-level conciliation can help build political will for peace at the national level.

More informal local arrangements can also build political will for sustaining peace. Local peace committees, for example, can create opportunities for dialogue between representatives of communities in competition at the local level. This can help mitigate localized violence, resolve local disputes, and empower local peacebuilders.<sup>31</sup> In the Central African Republic, for example, formal and informal committees have mediated agreements on local issues such as allowing people access to markets or cemeteries.<sup>32</sup>

At the same time, however, such efforts to sustain peace often fail to transcend the local level and can easily be swamped by national dynamics. Local peace committees and similar local initiatives are most effective when part of a broader “infrastructure for peace” that links the national and local levels.<sup>33</sup> For example, South Africa’s 1991 National Peace Accord set up a three-level infrastructure for peace: (1) a National Peace Committee and

National Peace Secretariat; (2) regional peace committees; and (3) local committees and local-level peace monitors. These levels each had distinct but complementary roles and coordinated with each other during the country’s three-year transition period.<sup>34</sup>

Another challenge is that local governance actors do not always have the political will for peace. They can include “warlord fiefdoms, crude protection rackets meting out vigilante justice, or communal enclaves that advance the security interests of one group at the expense of others.”<sup>35</sup> They can also act as spoilers that complicate national efforts to sustain peace. Indeed, when it comes to local governments, there is little empirical evidence that decentralization on its own significantly reduces conflict.<sup>36</sup>

These challenges highlight the importance of looking at the local level to see what is already working and what is not. This can help channel support to build on promising local efforts to sustain peace that are already in place—and, importantly, to link these to efforts at the national level.

## Conclusions

The UN sustaining peace resolutions have a gap when it comes to the local level. Good governance is integral to sustaining peace, but only if achieved at the national and local levels. At the same time, local governance actors do not always help sustain peace at the local level or contribute to national-level efforts. National, regional, and international actors should keep the following in mind when supporting local governance as part of an approach to sustaining peace:

- **Support to local governance must be context-specific:** To an even greater extent than at the

30 Colin Knox, “Emergence of Power Sharing in Northern Ireland: Lessons from Local Government,” *Journal of Conflict Studies* 16, no. 1 (1996).

31 Andries Odendaal, “An Architecture for Building Peace at the Local Level: A Comparative Study of Local Peace Committees,” UNDP, December 2010, available at [www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/pdfs/UNDP\\_Local%20Peace%20Committees\\_2011.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/pdfs/UNDP_Local%20Peace%20Committees_2011.pdf).

32 Marie-Joëlle Zahar and Delphine Mechoulan, “Peace by Pieces? Local Mediation and Sustainable Peace in the Central African Republic,” International Peace Institute, November 2017, available at [www.ipinst.org/2017/11/local-mediation-and-sustainable-peace-in-the-central-african-republic](http://www.ipinst.org/2017/11/local-mediation-and-sustainable-peace-in-the-central-african-republic).

33 Paul van Tongeren, “Potential Cornerstone of Infrastructure for Peace? How Local Peace Committees Can Make a Difference,” *Peacebuilding* 1, no. 1 (March 2013).

34 Hans J. Giessmann, “Embedded Peace: Infrastructures for Peace: Approaches and Lessons Learned,” Berghof Foundation, 2016, pp. 24–27, available at [www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/infrastructures-for-peace--approaches-and-lessons-learned.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/infrastructures-for-peace--approaches-and-lessons-learned.html).

35 Ken Menkhaus, “Local Governance and Peacebuilding: Challenges of Legitimate Representation,” *Accord* 25 (2014), available at [www.c-r.org/downloads/Accord25\\_LocalGovernanceAndPeacebuilding.pdf](http://www.c-r.org/downloads/Accord25_LocalGovernanceAndPeacebuilding.pdf).

36 Joshi and Schultze-Kraft, “Localising Governance: An Outlook on Research and Policy.”

national level, context is critical at the local level. Those supporting local governance need to be wary of generalizations and focus on the particular political cultures, power relations, and existing capacities in the areas where they engage. Failure to do so can make such support unsustainable and unrepresentative, at best, or undermine peace, at worst.

- **Local governance is not just about local government:** Efforts to improve local governance should first look at what is already working, and they should look beyond state structures. Local governance is generally provided by a complex network of formal and informal actors. Buy-in and participation from key private sector actors, civil society organizations, or traditional leaders is often pivotal to success. This means that strengthening local governance is not synonymous with decentralization and local elections. Focusing on these formal processes without understanding how they relate to informal arrangements can ensure their failure and undermine existing institutions, inadvertently increasing the risk of conflict.
- **Not all local governance is “good governance”:** Local governance should not be romanticized. As with the national government, local governance structures will only contribute to sustaining peace if they are inclusive, effective, and account-

able. This means that national governments and international supporters should give local governments the capacity and authority to deliver while also ensuring the communities they represent have adequate mechanisms to hold them accountable.

- **Neither local nor national governance can sustain peace in isolation:** Sustaining peace writ large often starts with concrete, small-scale progress at the grassroots level. But local-level efforts to build peace are generally not sustainable on their own; local dynamics driving conflict and peace are inextricably linked to national dynamics. Local and national governance structures can both more effectively contribute to sustaining peace if working together as part of a national “infrastructure of peace.”
- **Support to local governance is inseparable from support to development:** Improving local-level service delivery and economic development can be an entry point for sustaining peace. Likewise, peace will not be sustainable if people do not see its dividends in their day-to-day lives. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Goal 16, which calls for “effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels,” can provide a framework for linking local governance and local development, particularly through service delivery.

## Chapter 6.

# Preventing Violent Extremism and Sustaining Peace

*James Bowen and Arsla Jawaid<sup>1</sup>*

## Introduction

The dual resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly in April 2016 placed the “sustaining peace” concept at the center of the UN’s peacebuilding work. These resolutions recognized sustaining peace as “both a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account.”<sup>2</sup>

The contours of what “sustaining peace” means for policymakers and practitioners are still under debate, as noted in Chapter 1 of this volume. Though not mentioned in the April 2016 resolutions, there is a clear need to examine responses to violent extremism from this perspective.

This is particularly so given the failure of existing approaches to meaningfully abate the problem. The Institute for Economics and Peace’s latest Global Terrorism Index, for example, reports that violent extremism continues to be a major cause of death and instability around the world. Though the total number of deaths caused by such violence dropped from 2015 to 2016, the index’s average country score deteriorated by 6 percent during the same period, which was attributed to the expansion of groups such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State (ISIS) into several new countries.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the constantly evolving and multifaceted nature of contemporary violent extremism underlines the need to address the root causes of this phenomenon rather than its immediate or geographically specific manifestations, analysis of which is often influenced by the agendas of politicians, the media, and other groups.

As examined in this chapter, the sustaining peace agenda is well-positioned to recalibrate responses to violent extremism. It can help to mobilize the

political will—and subsequent resourcing—that will be critical to enact meaningful change. This can be done through actors within the multilateral system, including representatives of UN member states seeking philosophical and structural evolution across the UN and other bodies. This could include encouraging civil society, the private sector, women’s and youth groups, and other sectors to be agents for change in their own countries and communities.

A sustaining peace approach to addressing violent extremism must definitively break from strategies that rely too heavily on enforcement of law and order, surveillance, and other security-based measures, and that fail to consider other values such as sustainable development and the protection of human rights. Such isolated approaches have often proven ineffective or even counterproductive to the goal of long-term peace.

Sustaining peace is instead inherently aligned with prevention-based, “whole-of-society” approaches such as “countering violent extremism” (CVE), or, as the UN prefers to call it, “preventing violent extremism” (PVE). It not only can provide new incentives to adopt and prioritize these approaches but can also address persistent issues with how they are used in practice—particularly the dominant role of states.

Furthermore, a sustaining peace approach could help to address the wider panoply of factors that contribute to general instability and conflict across the globe and that in turn contribute indirectly to violent extremism.

By ultimately situating peace and peaceful societies rather than conflict and conflict-riven societies as the primary reference point for research, analysis, and subsequent programming and policymaking, the sustaining peace approach

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<sup>2</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, “Global Terrorism Index 2016,” available at <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/02/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.pdf>.

could help communities move beyond the need to “counter” or “prevent” violent extremism altogether.

## Complex Problems Require Complex Solutions

Violent extremism has been a prominent concern of global policymakers and politicians for decades, yet its continued prevalence attests to the difficulty of adopting or faithfully implementing sustainable solutions. In addition, the problems facing decision makers appear more complex and adaptive with each passing year.

Violent extremism encompasses much more than the killing or physical harming of people or the destruction of property. It includes, among other things, the seizure or destruction of land and other means of economic production, as well as sexual abuse and other human rights violations.

Additionally, new extremist groups and cells are almost continually fragmenting and forming, and their tactics and strategies constantly evolving, as seen in the spate of ISIS-inspired vehicle and knife attacks in Western Europe in 2016 and 2017.

Furthermore, violent extremism is not, as often portrayed in global media, confined to perpetrators who claim allegiance to Islam. It is far more wide-ranging and multi-faceted, and cuts across many religious, ethnic, political, and other lines. There has, for example, been a marked rise in right-wing extremism in the West in recent years, with some studies suggesting right-wing violence outranks jihadist terrorism in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, there is currently a looming threat of significant new violence due to increased military activity against a number of extremist groups, primarily in the Middle East, where a coalition of forces is achieving considerable success against ISIS. Interviews with young men who fled Mosul shortly before it fell in June 2017 reveal that, while ISIS may be losing territory, it is rapidly increasing

its number of regional sleeper cells.<sup>5</sup>

These setbacks to extremist groups are also producing a large-scale return of foreign fighters to their countries and communities of origin, with more radical views, new capabilities to carry out attacks, and increased grievances following their battlefield defeats. The UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, for instance, estimated in May 2017 that rates of fighters returning to some European countries had increased by a third in the past year.<sup>6</sup>

While combating the direct threat of violent extremists remains critical to preventing widespread death and destruction, responses based on law and order and security are, in isolation, frequently ill-suited to achieving lasting peace in such a dynamic and fragile environment. They can, in fact, even be counterproductive to this aim by exacerbating the grievances that foment extremism in the first place. Kenyan authorities’ overzealous security crackdowns on the country’s ethnic Somali inhabitants, including the inhabitants of refugee camps—a practice that is often labeled as “fighting terror with terror”—is a prime example; these crackdowns have frequently been implicated in increased radicalization and recruitment of these populations by al-Shabaab extremists.<sup>7</sup>

Radicalization provoked by such responses inflicts a double blow, for it removes the potential of those targeted—often young men—to serve as partners in creating peaceful societies. These young people, who could otherwise be highly productive members of society, are particularly susceptible to extremist recruitment, especially where other risk factors such as poor governance and weak political participation are present.<sup>8</sup>

The growing realization of the need to move beyond heavy-handed approaches has been a key factor behind the rise of preventive responses to violent extremism, as represented by the increasing prominence of the CVE/PVE discipline. As Naureen Chowdhury Fink, then of the Global

4 Charles Kurzman and David Schanzer, “The Growing Right-Wing Terror Threat,” *New York Times*, June 16, 2015, available at [www.nytimes.com/2015/06/16/opinion/the-other-terror-threat.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/16/opinion/the-other-terror-threat.html).

5 Interviews conducted by Arsla Jawaid, Iraq, June 2017.

6 Alissa de Carbonnel, “U.N. Counterterrorism Chief: Europe Faces Return of ‘Dangerous’ IS Fighters,” *U.S. News & World Report*, May 18, 2017, available at [www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2017-05-18/un-counterterrorism-chief-europe-faces-return-of-dangerous-is-fighters/](http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2017-05-18/un-counterterrorism-chief-europe-faces-return-of-dangerous-is-fighters/).

7 Sirkku Hellsten, “Radicalisation and Terrorist Recruitment among Kenya’s Youth,” Nordic Africa Institute, February 2016, available at [www.files.ethz.ch/isn/196275/FULLTEXT01.pdf](http://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/196275/FULLTEXT01.pdf).

8 Lyndsay McLean Hilker and Erika Fraser, “Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States,” Social Development Direct, April 30, 2009, available at [www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/con66.pdf](http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/con66.pdf).

Center on Cooperative Security, explained in 2015, these approaches are “synonymous with a focus on prevention that reflects the need for more nuanced measures and responses than the use of force.”<sup>9</sup>

## Integrating CVE/PVE with Other Agendas

Growth in CVE/PVE activities is wholly complementary to the sustaining peace agenda, which puts particular attention on “the prevention of conflict and addressing its root causes.”<sup>10</sup> The emphasis sustaining peace places on the shared responsibility of governments and other national stakeholders to achieve peaceful outcomes is also well-aligned with calls for a “whole-of-society” approach to preventing extremism, as articulated at a landmark CVE summit hosted by US President Barack Obama in 2015 and many CVE/PVE exponents subsequently.<sup>11</sup> As outlined in the 2016 resolutions, sustaining peace similarly encompasses multifaceted efforts to strengthen the rule of law, promote sustainable development, enhance national reconciliation and unity, enhance access to justice, promote good governance, and protect human rights.

Sustaining peace proponents could thus take a particular interest in the continued integration of preventive practice with other peace-enhancing agendas, at the UN and elsewhere.<sup>12</sup> Prominent among these agendas is sustainable development. As noted by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, “There is now recognition that violent extremism poses a serious threat to development and that effective strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism need to include a development response.”<sup>13</sup>

Progress on this front includes explicit normative and programmatic links between development and

prevention of extremism in Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals; the World Bank’s support for addressing societal exclusion as a driver of radicalization; and new guidelines from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development that allow inclusion of CVE/PVE activities in accounting related to development targets. The UN Development Programme—once reluctant to engage with counterterrorism or countering violent extremism—also now considers “violent extremism and the need to govern increasingly diverse and multicultural societies” to be interlinked. Its strategic response includes promoting inclusive development, tolerance, and respect for diversity.<sup>14</sup>

A major challenge to furthering the evolution of prevention remains the fact that, even with rising commitments, official support to traditional forms of counterterrorism involving policing, surveillance, foreign interventions, and related activities continues to far outweigh that devoted to preventive measures and tackling root causes. To give one illustration, the US is estimated to have spent \$6.4 billion on military operations to defeat ISIS between August 2014 and August 2016 alone. This compares with approximately \$15 million for the entirety of its PVE activities at home and abroad in 2016.<sup>15</sup>

At a meeting of civil society organizations in New York in June 2017, an attendee noted that proposals for community-based, civil-society-led preventive endeavors often meet with broad agreement from ground-level security actors, who see the value of such efforts in complementing their work.<sup>16</sup> Support for such integration, however, is often lacking from diplomats, politicians, and others who ultimately dictate policy. This

9 Naureen Chowdhury Fink, “Countering Violent Extremism: What Are the Key Challenges for UN?” *IPI Global Observatory*, November 3, 2015, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2015/11/countering-violent-extremism-united-nations-ban-ki-moon/>.

10 Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

11 Eric Rosand and Madeline Rose, “How Close Is ‘Whole of Society’ Movement against Violent Extremism?,” *IPI Global Observatory*, September 16, 2016, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2016/09/countering-violent-extremism-terrorism-united-nations/>.

12 Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

13 Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, externally distributed memo, June 20, 2017.

14 UNDP, “Preventing Violent Extremism through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity,” February 14, 2017, available at [www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/discussion-paper---preventing-violent-extremism-through-inclusiv.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/discussion-paper---preventing-violent-extremism-through-inclusiv.html).

15 Eric Rosand, “Investing in Prevention: An Ounce of CVE or a Pound of Counterterrorism?,” Brookings Institution, May 6, 2016, available at [www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/05/06/investing-in-prevention-an-ounce-of-cve-or-a-pound-of-counterterrorism/](http://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/05/06/investing-in-prevention-an-ounce-of-cve-or-a-pound-of-counterterrorism/).

16 Global Center on Cooperative Security, meeting, New York, June 20, 2016.



imbalance in priorities cannot help but skew the overall response to violent extremism in favor of harder-edge tactics, as well as their unwanted side effects, often nullifying the good work done by proponents of prevention.

This problem is clear not only in individual states, but also within the broader multilateral system, many of whose instruments and decision-making processes remain beholden to a reactive, security-focused approach. The UN, moreover, is not an institution that inherently fosters the sort of inclusiveness needed to take holistic approaches to problems. Surveys in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan have revealed that young people, in particular, feel their voices are not heard in such high offices and massive bureaucratic structures.<sup>17</sup>

Another illustration of the world body's limitations when it comes to prevention can be found in the development of Secretary-General António Guterres's new UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (the preference for that term over CVE or PVE alone is instructive). While Guterres conceived of this as "giving adequate priority to prevention and sustaining peace,"<sup>18</sup> more than forty civil society organizations objected to a lack of consultation in its formulation and the neglect of their concerns in the final product.<sup>19</sup> Though former Secretary-General Ban's 2015 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism took a promising step toward introducing PVE into the UN mainstream, it was also seen as failing to properly include civil society or adequately define what was meant by "violent extremism" and hence as offering rather nebulous policy prescriptions.<sup>20</sup>

## Moving Beyond a State-Centric Approach

The reason for Ban's omission is likely a simplistic one: effective prevention and, for that matter,

sustaining peace inherently rely on a greater role for, and appreciation of, civil society. Properly defining the problem is thus problematic for the many states that uphold the most constricting conceptions of sovereignty and typically use these to define terrorism and extremism and how they respond to them.

This persistent state domination of prevention is a major challenge for the sustaining peace agenda. Its inevitable end product is that narrow, typically short-term interests tend to inform most related decision making. State-based CVE/PVE programming has, for example, often been seen as unfairly targeting certain communities, primarily Muslim ones, and as treating the entirety of their members with suspicion. Among these efforts are the United Kingdom's long-running Prevent strategy—one of the first national prevention programs—which has been criticized for being obtrusive and alienating Muslims throughout its entire fifteen-year lifespan.<sup>21</sup>

As Larry Attree, head of policy at the NGO Saferworld, notes, state-based prevention typically focuses almost exclusively on disrupting the recruiting activities of extremist groups. It thus ignores the fact that "instability almost always results from a range of other actors using violence in abhorrent ways."

Consider Yemen. For years, Western governments and media portrayed Yemen as, above all, a dangerous haven for Al Qaeda. But in fact, the biggest threat to stability in Yemen was the abuse and cynicism of its ruling elites.... Because Western actors saw only the 'violent extremism' issue, they failed to prioritise and nourish social empowerment and constructive reform, and this accelerated Yemen's degeneration into all-out war.<sup>22</sup>

States are thus often unwilling to grapple with the ultimate internal causes of extremism, which frequently include their own policies. In some cases, authorities and leaders are themselves

17 Pew Research Center, "Muslim Publics Share Concerns about Extremist Groups," September 10, 2013, available at [www.pewglobal.org/2013/09/10/muslim-publics-share-concerns-about-extremist-groups/](http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/09/10/muslim-publics-share-concerns-about-extremist-groups/).

18 United Nations, "New Counter-Terrorism Office to Build Partnership with Member States on Countering Transnational Threats, Secretary-General Tells General Assembly," February 22, 2017, available at [www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18453.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18453.doc.htm).

19 Eric Rosand and Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini, "UN Counterterrorism Reform Overlooks Crucial Partner," Just Security, April 24, 2017, available at [www.justsecurity.org/40226/counterterrorism-reform-overlooks-important-partner-fight-violence-extremism/](http://www.justsecurity.org/40226/counterterrorism-reform-overlooks-important-partner-fight-violence-extremism/).

20 Naz Modirzadeh, "If It's Broke, Don't Make It Worse: A Critique of the U.N. Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism," *Lawfare*, January 23, 2016, available at [www.lawfareblog.com/if-its-broke-dont-make-it-worse-critique-un-secretary-generals-plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism](http://www.lawfareblog.com/if-its-broke-dont-make-it-worse-critique-un-secretary-generals-plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism).

21 Dominic Casciani, "Analysis: The Prevent Strategy and Its Problems," BBC, August 26, 2014, available at [www.bbc.com/news/uk-28939555](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28939555).

22 Larry Attree, "Shouldn't YOU Be Countering Violent Extremism?," Saferworld, May 14, 2017, available at <https://saferworld-indepth.squarespace.com/shouldnt-you-be-countering-violent-extremism>.



beholden to ideologies that legitimize violence and even propagate it among their own and other populations.

If states are truly looking to tackle violent extremism, they must address their own behavior. This is both a clear expectation of the sustaining peace agenda and borne out by extensive research. The Institute for Economics and Peace, for example, finds that “ninety-three per cent of all terrorist attacks between 1989 and 2014 occurred in countries with high levels of state-sponsored terror—extra-judicial deaths, torture and imprisonment without trial.”<sup>23</sup> According to the US State Department:

State-sponsored violence correlates highly with the emergence of violent extremist organizations. Countries with above-average levels of state-sponsored violence double their risk of a violent extremism organization emerging. Countries with the highest levels of state-sponsored violence quadruple their risk of a violent extremism organization emerging.<sup>24</sup>

Secretary-General Ban summed up the connection between state behavior and the roots of extremism when reporting to the UN General Assembly in January 2016: “Poisonous ideologies do not emerge from thin air. Oppression, corruption and injustice are greenhouses for resentment. Extremists are adept at cultivating alienation.”<sup>25</sup>

Under these circumstances, overcoming the inability to respond to contemporary extremism will involve more than simply recalibrating funding priorities in favor of more prevention. It will instead entail states adopting a major ideological shift and, as sustaining peace advocates, agreeing to a more collaborative project that also takes into account the abilities and priorities of the UN, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, civil society, women’s and youth groups, the private sector, and

a range of other partners. Attendees at a recent IPI event in Chad stressed that it will also be critical to ensure synchronicity of activities among all invested parties, including where issues of violent extremism cross national borders, as in the Lake Chad region.<sup>26</sup>

The enormity of the challenge becomes clearer when we consider the range of factors known to allow extremism to flourish and to which effective and inclusive policies must respond.”<sup>27</sup> A recent paper by the European Radicalization Awareness Network identified the “push” factors behind extremism as including “social, political and economic grievances; a sense of injustice and discrimination; personal crisis and tragedies; frustration; alienation; a fascination with violence; searching for answers to the meaning of life; an identity crisis; social exclusion; alienation; marginalization; disappointment with democratic processes; [and] polarization.”<sup>28</sup>

The same paper isolated “pull” factors as including “a personal quest, a sense of belonging to a cause, ideology or social network; power and control; a sense of loyalty and commitment; a sense of excitement and adventure; a romanticized view of ideology and cause; the possibility of heroism, [and] personal redemption.”<sup>29</sup>

The task is thus to ensure that communities are built on the inverse of these push factors: in place of grievances there must be shared values and a commitment to dispute resolution, in place of injustice there must be justice, in place of alienation there must be inclusion, and so on. Policymakers and practitioners must also ensure that communities develop a range of alternative factors that can pull people away from extremism and toward peace, so that they are not tempted to look to violent means of attaining a sense of belonging, excitement and adventure, and so on.

23 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Global Terrorism Index 2016.”

24 David M. Robinson, “Remarks at the Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism,” April 7, 2016, available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/cso/releases/remarks/2016/255681.htm>.

25 UN Secretary-General, “Remarks at General Assembly Presentation of the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” January 15, 2016, available at [www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2016-01-15/un-secretary-generals-remarks-general-assembly-presentation-plan](http://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2016-01-15/un-secretary-generals-remarks-general-assembly-presentation-plan).

26 International Peace Institute, “Investing in Peace and the Prevention of Violence in the Sahel-Sahara: Second Regional Conversation,” August 2017, available at [www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPI-E-RPT-Chad-Meeting-NoteEnglish.pdf](http://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPI-E-RPT-Chad-Meeting-NoteEnglish.pdf).

27 CVE/PVE proponents generally speak in terms of a combination of “push” and “pull” factors that drive people toward violent extremism. The former are structural—largely socioeconomic, political, and cultural—phenomena. The latter work on a more persuasive individual basis and include emotional and ideological motivations.

28 Magnus Ranstorp, “The Root Causes of Violent Extremism,” Radicalization Awareness Network, January 4, 2010, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-papers/docs/issue\\_paper\\_root-causes\\_jan2016\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/issue_paper_root-causes_jan2016_en.pdf).

29 Ibid.

Eliminating the factors that push individuals or groups into extremism will not be easy but essentially remains a challenge of political will—something that sustaining peace can help to summon. Developing alternative factors that pull people toward peace rather than away from it is arguably a much harder and longer-term task. As the anthropologist Scott Atran has noted, individuals' need to create new meaning principally arises from the fact that "the western nation-state and relatively open markets that dominate the global political and economic order have largely supplanted age-old forms of governance and social life."<sup>30</sup> In the absence of any new alternative sense of purpose, many members of a range of societies around the world have turned to malignant interpretations of religious, cultural, or ethnic identities, typically revived from the distant past.

This, then, suggests the need for a mass recalibration of the global trajectory of recent decades and the consideration of specific national and local contexts. In the case of pluralist European countries, to give but one example, it means forging new societal narratives that can more adequately accommodate traditional ethnic, political, and religious identities, alongside those of newer immigrant and other minority communities.

## From Prevention to Positive Peace

Despite the scale and complexity of the challenges involved in removing the roots of extremism, there are countless examples of societies that have managed these challenges well in a range of different cultural, geographical, socioeconomic, and other contexts. The largest contribution of sustaining peace to efforts to respond to extremism and terrorism may be focusing the world's attention more on learning the lessons of these success stories. This would entail a further alignment of the discipline with sociologist Johan Galtung's "positive peace" framework, wherein

peace is not merely the absence of violence but the presence of factors associated with peaceful societies.<sup>31</sup>

In arguing for such an approach to violent extremism, a 2016 report from the US-based National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism recalled the inquiries of criminologist Travis Hirschi in the 1960s, who wrote that his field should expend less energy on asking, "Why do they do it?," and more on, "Why don't we do it?"<sup>32</sup> By following this logic, and using peace and peaceful societies rather than conflict and conflict-riven societies as a reference point for research, analysis, and subsequent policymaking and programming, sustaining peace can put the emphasis on a more holistic and permanent solution to violent extremism.

The positive peace project has already been taken up by bodies such as the Institute for Economics and Peace, which has identified a list of qualities that define peaceful societies: a well-functioning government, a sound business environment, equitable distribution of resources, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbors, free flow of information, high levels of human capital, and low levels of corruption.<sup>33</sup> These are factors whose breakdown is also often implicated in rising levels of extremist violence. They could thus serve as the basis for communities developing their own locally tailored plans for inoculating against such violence.

As another example, proponents of sustaining peace could look to countries such as Senegal, which, though predominantly Muslim and located in a region with a considerable extremist threat, has experienced comparatively little extremist violence. Past analyses of the country, including that of University of Wisconsin–Madison Professor Scott Strauss, have isolated its reservoir of religious tolerance, inclusion, pluralism, and accommodation as critical to its relative avoidance of conflict.<sup>34</sup>

At the most granular level, a focus on inbuilt capacities for peace would involve working as

30 Scott Atran, "Extremism Is Surging. To Beat It, We Need Young Hearts and Minds," *The Guardian*, August 20, 2017, available at [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/20/extremism-is-surging-to-beat-it-we-need-young-hearts-and-minds](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/20/extremism-is-surging-to-beat-it-we-need-young-hearts-and-minds).

31 Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969).

32 Pete Simi, Steven Windisch, and Karyn Sporer, "Recruitment and Radicalization among US Far-Right Terrorists," National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, November 2016, available at [www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START\\_RecruitmentRadicalizationAmongUSFarRightTerrorists\\_Nov2016.pdf](http://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_RecruitmentRadicalizationAmongUSFarRightTerrorists_Nov2016.pdf).

33 Institute for Economics and Peace, "Positive Peace Report 2016."

34 Scott Strauss, *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership, and Genocide in Modern Africa* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

closely with individuals who have succumbed to extremism as with those who have chosen other pathways. This approach would help determine the factors driving decisions that support peace, not only those responsible for conflict.

While the factors that societies identify as enhancing their resilience to violent extremism will depend on a range of context-specific conditions, they might include things such as the provision of civic education. UNESCO has identified civic education as vital to engendering critical thinking and debating contentious ideas; it is also a factor often absent from formal state-run education systems.<sup>35</sup>

Another factor could be social entrepreneurship, which offers youth an alternative to violent extremism. As noted in Chapter 3 of this volume, “As a class, entrepreneurs display remarkable resilience, enduring and flourishing even in difficult environments, and in turn making their communities, societies, and countries more resilient as well.”

Public-private partnerships could also help to build resilience in many communities. Partnerships between governments and digital companies such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google have already focused on developing “counternarratives” and other safeguards against extremist recruitment online.<sup>36</sup> They could go beyond this, however, so that the corporate sector develops stronger partnerships with communities to create jobs and deliver healthcare, humanitarian aid, and education.

Locally tailored and inclusive responses are likewise critical in rehabilitating and reintegrating former extremists into societies. As Arsla Jawaid argues in a recent article on returnees, “Rehabilitation programming should be one-on-one, tailor made for each returnee in addressing the specific motivating factors that drove that person to leave the country in the first place.”<sup>37</sup> Perhaps the most celebrated response to this issue has been

Denmark’s “Aarhus model,” a largely community-led approach with a one-on-one method in which a range of individuals, from psychologists to faith and community leaders and families, works to address the factors that propel individuals toward extremism, as well as peace.<sup>38</sup>

## Ensuring Continual Engagement

To ensure societies foster the conditions for self-sustaining peace, it will be imperative for policy-makers and practitioners to regularly engage in and with communities to enhance the local factors that are found to best strengthen their immune systems. This engagement needs to extend not only to those communities currently beset by violent extremism but also to those that might be at risk at some point in the future. Owing to the complicated nature of extremism, with its range of ideological motivations and structural causes, this will be a large group.

The number of affected societies becomes larger still when considering the return of foreign fighters. Here the discourse must change to reflect that the responsibility for responding to violent extremism cannot be passed off to others. Extremists now returning to Western countries, for instance, are not created in a vacuum in a particular Middle Eastern or sub-Saharan battleground to which they traveled; they are as much a product of endogenous factors in the communities in which they were raised.

Community engagement should of course seek to avoid being intrusive and poorly targeted, like much past preventive work. Thankfully, the sustaining peace approach helps guard against this. Its sense of universal responsibility compels all communities to constantly contribute to sustaining peace and thus precludes targeted stigmatization.

Responses to violent extremism could ultimately be incorporated into what Youssef Mahmoud and

35 UNESCO, “Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policy-Makers,” 2017, available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002477/247764e.pdf>.

36 See, for example, Julia Harte, Dustin Volz, “U.S. Looks to Facebook, Private Groups to Battle Online Extremism,” Reuters, February 24, 2016, available at [www.reuters.com/article/us-internet-militants-counterterrorism/u-s-looks-to-facebook-private-groups-to-battle-online-extremism-idUSKCN0Y010](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-internet-militants-counterterrorism/u-s-looks-to-facebook-private-groups-to-battle-online-extremism-idUSKCN0Y010).

37 Arsla Jawaid, “From Foreign Fighters to Returnees: The Challenges of Rehabilitation and Reintegration Policies,” *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 12, no. 2 (2017).

38 Preben Bertelsen, “Danish Preventive Measures and De-radicalization Strategies: The Aarhus Model,” *Panorama: Insights into Asian and European Affairs*, January 2015, available at [http://psy.au.dk/fileadmin/Psykologi/Forskning/Preben\\_Bertelsen/Avisartikler\\_radikalisering/Panorama.pdf](http://psy.au.dk/fileadmin/Psykologi/Forskning/Preben_Bertelsen/Avisartikler_radikalisering/Panorama.pdf).

Anupah Makoond call a national “meta-policy” for sustaining peace.<sup>39</sup> This meta-policy could be overseen, for example, by an overarching, whole-of-government mechanism that monitors national policies to ensure they explicitly nurture the factors associated with peacefulness rather than conflict and do not unwittingly do harm.

## Conclusions

There are major challenges associated with the sustaining peace agenda—principally its ability to attract adequate and sustainable funding. These must be managed if it is to be successfully implemented across the UN system and within its member states all the way down to the individual level. The ability of sustaining peace to improve responses to violent extremism will ultimately depend on how well these challenges are overcome.

Nonetheless, the above analysis suggests that sustaining peace could play an important role in responding to contemporary violent extremism—a complex phenomenon that continues to command much of the world’s attention.

First, proponents of sustaining peace could advocate for the UN system, its member states, and various other institutions to move away from reflexively adopting reactive, security-focused responses to violent extremism in isolation, acknowledging that these have short-term and often counterproductive effects.

Second, in acknowledging that CVE/PVE activities are broadly compatible with sustaining peace, sustaining peace proponents could work to enhance political will and institutional support for further implementation of their associated efforts. They could also cooperate by connecting preventive action to other work streams such as peacebuilding, sustainable development, and human rights.

Third, sustaining peace proponents should work to increase awareness of the state-centric nature of much CVE/PVE and to make it more inclusive of the needs and abilities of all actors in society. When preventive activities are state-centric, they tend to

overlook the potential for state action itself to exacerbate violent extremism. The focus of sustaining peace on governments working more closely and cooperatively with partners such as the UN, regional institutions, civil society, and women’s and youth organizations is a great asset here.

Fourth, sustaining peace proponents could compel policymakers and practitioners to move beyond the current somewhat isolated conception of violent extremism to consider the broader range of causes of instability and conflict globally and develop appropriate responses. This would involve seeking a more fundamental, long-term solution to the phenomenon of violent extremism, rather than merely addressing its periodic manifestations around the world.

Fifth, and finally, sustaining peace proponents could encourage actors within the UN system and its member states—and their myriad institutions and individuals—to focus more research, analysis, policymaking, and programming on isolating and enhancing those factors that contribute to peaceful societies than on those that contribute to conflict-prone ones. Recalling that sustaining peace aims to “build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account,”<sup>40</sup> peaceful and inclusive countries and communities should become the primary reference point for action on ending violent extremism.

The challenge of achieving these outcomes is obviously significant. Yet so is the expediency of finding a more effective and sustainable solution to violent extremism. And, indeed, so is the scale of ambition of the sustaining peace agenda. It is, as the Advisory Group of Experts that birthed the concept contends, “truly a systemic challenge,” and one that spans the UN’s intergovernmental organs, Secretariat, programs, specialized agencies, and ground-level operations.<sup>41</sup> From there, sustaining peace extends to the world body’s member states and the diverse range of communities, organizations, and individuals within them. It thus has great capacity to influence the future direction of these parties and their interactions with one another.

<sup>39</sup> See Chapter 1 of this volume.

<sup>40</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

<sup>41</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, UN Doc. A/69/968-S/2015/490, June 30, 2015.

Ultimately, action through the sustaining peace agenda will rely on promoting the agency of each and every member of society and a process of continual engagement between parties. Action by states and multilateral organizations will be critical, though approaches should also come from the

bottom up and involve a myriad of actors, each with clearly demarcated roles in defeating the proximate and structural causes of violent extremism while laying the foundations for building and maintaining peace.

**PART III:**

**SUSTAINING PEACE  
AND THE UNITED NATIONS**





## Chapter 7.

# Peace Operations and Sustaining Peace: The Restoration and Extension of State Authority

*Youssef Mahmoud and Delphine Mechoulan*<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

As member states continue to discuss what sustaining peace means in practice, it is important to examine how peace operations can be designed and implemented to help build self-sustaining peace rather than just prevent relapse into conflict.<sup>2</sup> This chapter focuses on how “the restoration and extension of state authority,” a recurrent mandate of several peacekeeping operations, can be tailored to achieve this objective. It is suggested that the primacy of politics, people-centered approaches, context-sensitive analysis, performance legitimacy, and rule of law, rather than simply stabilization, must drive this process.

The responsibility of a state, as defined in contemporary political theory, is to deliver a range of public goods and services to its citizens and create inclusive structures and processes that enable them to participate in public policy debates and fulfill their legitimate needs and aspirations without fear, with justice, and in security. Only then can the state secure compliance with legitimate political, legislative, administrative, and legal decisions enacted on citizens’ behalf. It is this *quid pro quo* that creates a trusting relationship between the governors and the governed.

When countries are under stress or in conflict, states tend to focus on how power is acquired, maintained, and exercised rather than on people-centered governance. In situations where the state has residual capacities to provide some basic services, the lion’s share of these capacities tends to be directed toward security and is sometimes skewed toward state security or regime security rather than human security.

In situations where there is or has been conflict that has adversely affected the state, the restoration or extension of state authority is judged necessary for securing sustainable peace.<sup>3</sup> The majority of current peace operations are deployed in countries with weak state institutions, limited or absent administrative, judicial, and security capabilities, and in some instances, a pervading mistrust between the central government and outlying territories.

Therefore, one of the questions that needs to be asked is: Which authority or authorities are these peace operations expected to reestablish and for what purpose? Moreover, is it government or governance that is being decentralized—in other words, is decentralization a process where the center is extending its control over the periphery or empowering existing, resilient governance capabilities in the periphery? What activities can peace operations engage in to support the return and extension of state authority? And how might these activities look from the perspective of prevention and sustaining peace? This chapter aims to offer some reflections on the above questions.

## Extension and Restoration of State Authority in Peace Operations

Although no fixed definition has been established, the extension of state authority is generally understood “as a set of activities that are conducive to strengthening the authority of the government over a country’s territory in a legitimate manner.”<sup>4</sup> The services the state is expected to provide

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<sup>2</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

<sup>3</sup> Jake Sherman, “Peacekeeping and Support for State Sovereignty,” in *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations*, Center on International Cooperation (New York: Lynne Rienner, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Jue Gao, et al., “Extending Legitimate State Authority in Post-Conflict Countries: A Multi-Case Analysis” (capstone project, School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, May 2015).

### Box 1. Extension of state authority in the DRC, Liberia, and Somalia

UN Security Council Resolution 2277 (2016) renewing the mandate of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) emphasized that the mission's support for the restoration of state authority should be carried out under the international stabilization plan. This plan aims in part at opening up government access to certain regions and increasing the provision of services in an effort to increase the government's credibility.

In Security Council Resolution 1509 (2003) on Liberia, state authority is associated with the proper administration of natural resources, SSR, electoral support, and security. Interestingly, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) experimented with regional hubs aimed at improving citizens' access to governance structures and services.<sup>5</sup> While some level of service delivery was realized, it did not necessarily improve accountability.

In Somalia, the integrated office of the resident coordinator/deputy special representative of the secretary-general (RC/DSRSG) developed a Community Recovery and Extension of State Authority/Accountability (CRESTA/A) approach/unit in 2016, which aims to link top-down statebuilding with bottom-up, community-led recovery. It does so by enabling the government to engage with local communities in "newly recovered areas and support the outreach and dialogue process that will bring the community together and establish a system allowing disputes to be resolved through a recognized mechanism...and resources to be shared equitably."<sup>6</sup>

"should be understood not simply as a good to be delivered but as a channel of interaction between citizens and the state.... This, in turn, supports the view that state legitimacy is an ongoing process that governments must continually engage in, rather than an outcome they can achieve and be done with."<sup>7</sup>

In peace operations, activities associated with assistance to the return or reestablishment of state authority range from support for political participation, state capacity building, and the return of rule of law institutions, to security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR).

The initial focus for both the host government and the UN tends to be on reestablishing the state's territorial control. In dire security situations, the return of relative safety is understood as the necessary first step. This is often done via the deployment of military peacekeepers and state security forces to enable the return or (re)deployment of civilian staff and state representatives. While the physical presence of the state is undeni-

ably important in bolstering its image, this does not automatically improve perceptions of state authority and does even less for its perceived legitimacy. Indeed, in the eyes of the public, what is restored may be a state and institutions whose legitimacy is contested, or whose previous policies were drivers of conflict.

The Advisory Group of Experts entrusted with the ten-year review of the UN peacebuilding architecture argued that UN missions need to empower and engage with traditional authorities, civil society actors, the private sector, and religious and academic leaders as they would with the host country's central government.

As outlined in this chapter, establishing a legitimate and functioning state as the principal safeguard against relapse into conflict is crucial. It is, however, an endeavor that requires several decades and hence outlives the lifetime of a peacekeeping operation. Trying to achieve quick fixes and rapid results, though important and sometimes unavoidable (for example in crisis and live-conflict situations), may not be the most

5 Marina Louisa Caparini, "Extending State Authority in Liberia: The Gbarnga Justice and Security Hub," Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), 2014, available at <http://hdl.handle.net/11250/226333>.

6 United Nations, "Programme Quarterly Progress Report (January–June 2016): Support to the Federal Government of Somalia in Stabilization in Newly Recovered Areas," available at [www.un.org/content/dam/somalia/Reports/Q2-2016/UN%20MPTF%20Bi-annual%20Progress%20Report%20Support%20to%20Stabilization%20Project-final.pdf](http://www.un.org/content/dam/somalia/Reports/Q2-2016/UN%20MPTF%20Bi-annual%20Progress%20Report%20Support%20to%20Stabilization%20Project-final.pdf).

7 Rachel Gordon and Dyan Mazurana "Can Services Deliver Legitimacy and Build Peace?," UN University, May 7, 2015, available at <http://cpr.unu.edu/can-services-deliver-legitimacy-and-build-peace.html>.

**Box 2. Extension of state authority in Mali**

Security Council Resolution 2295 (2016) extended the mandate of the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to support the reestablishment of state authority throughout the country. But eighteen months after the signing of the June 2015 peace agreement, tangible outcomes are still largely missing. The mission's understanding of the return of state authority as outlined in the secretary-general's report from May 2016 appears to focus first on the return of state administration and defense and security forces, and second on facilitating the delivery of basic services. The mission's activities supporting the return of state authority fall under most of its pillars of work aimed at facilitating the implementation of the peace agreement.

Many of MINUSMA's activities are designed to support traditional initiatives to manage conflict and build local capacity, reflecting an understanding that the return of state authority should empower local and traditional authorities. However, in places such as Kidal where security is dire, the mission is often compelled to assist the state in its securitization strategy.

Another problem exists in Timbuktu, where residents have deemed government officials from the south as non-representative (and these officials themselves perceive being posted in the north as a punitive measure). In instances where very few local, northern representatives have been appointed, the necessary backing from the central government to work toward reestablishing a legitimate state is lacking.

**Box 3. Extension of state authority in the Central African Republic**

Security Council Resolution 2301 (2016) indicates that the UN mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) should support "the reconciliation and stabilization political processes, the extension of State authority and the preservation of territorial integrity." As in other missions, the civil affairs section and the political affairs division, together with the human rights division, conduct many of the initiatives aimed at extending state authority. However, due to an extremely limited government presence, the mission ends up "playing a leading role in delivering services or taking decisions which are expected from state institutions."<sup>8</sup> Therefore, in instances where the state is absent, the line between enabling state authority and replacing it is extremely fine and becomes difficult to manage.

effective and durable way of promoting the reestablishment and restoration of legitimate state authority. The process, in fact, is as important as the goal, and the principles of inclusive local ownership should be highlighted. Moreover, it is important to emphasize the mission's enabling role rather than its potential to substitute itself for the state.

## Extending State Authority from a Sustaining Peace Perspective

What would a mandate to support the extension or return of state authority look like if it were designed and implemented with the intent of preventing the return of conflict and of sustaining

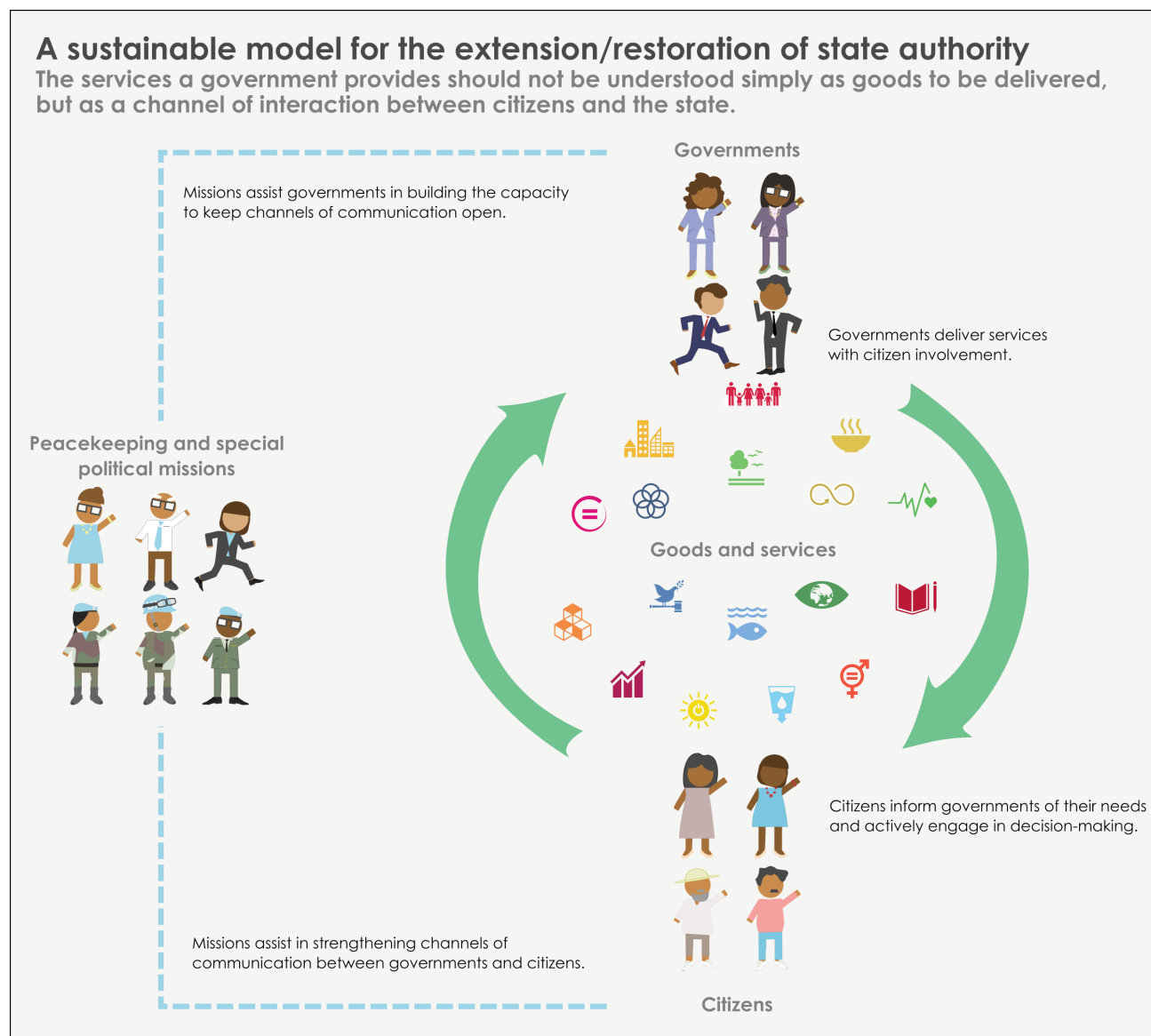
peace after the mission has left? This chapter provides a few concrete suggestions.

**Context-sensitive and inclusive analysis:** Context-sensitive analysis is critical. The analysis should include not only the factors that impede peace, but also the capacities that still function and could serve as a foundation for extending state authority. The analysis should be conducted in a participatory manner that takes into account national and local perspectives, particularly of women and youth.

**Mission-wide strategy for sustaining peace:** An important step for peace operations is to develop, on the basis of the above analysis, a mission-wide strategy for sustaining peace (i.e., the primacy of politics). Supporting the extension of legitimate state authority would be but one of many strands in

<sup>8</sup> UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Civil Affairs Handbook*, 2012, p. 198.

Figure 1. A sustainable model for the extension and restoration of state authority



such a strategy. For country situations on its agenda, the Peacebuilding Commission, in its revitalized role, could lend valuable support to this exercise, drawing on the extensive knowledge of country-specific configurations and its Working Group on Lessons Learned.

**People-centered approaches:** The extension of state authority cannot focus solely on the (re)deployment to the periphery of central state institutions, but must ensure that state institutions and mechanisms supported by peace operations are participatory. This implies a need for a bottom-up, people-centered approach where local communities play an important role in decision making and

where progress is not only measured in terms of the redeployment of state institutions, but also in terms of how people's daily lives are positively affected. To the extent possible, peace operations should facilitate such an approach, which would involve them enabling more and doing less.

**A compact of mutual accountability:** The special representative of the secretary-general (SRSG) and mission leadership, acting on behalf of the Security Council, should engage in conversations with the host government in the initial stages of a mission's deployment to develop a shared understanding of what is meant by "extension of state authority" and how it should be carried out in ways that enhance

its legitimacy and lay the foundations for sustaining peace. The outcome of such a conversation would be an agreement on governance benchmarks to be achieved by the host government and matched by support activities from the UN mission. Such an agreement of mutual accountability would also inform the mission's exit strategy. Under such a scheme, the host government would be expected, through an appropriate modality, to provide periodic progress reports to the Security Council, as would the UN mission through the standard reporting mechanisms.

## Conclusions

Overall, the restoration and extension of state authority provides an opportunity to embed the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions in the concept of sustaining peace. Ideally, such mandates should not be excessively detailed, allowing missions to establish needs and tasks through on-the-ground consultations. By approaching the implementation of their mandates from a sustaining peace perspective, peace operations would play a more enabling and less intrusive role.



## Chapter 8.

# UN Regional Political Offices and Sustaining Peace

*Youssef Mahmoud and Delphine Mechoulam*<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The identical 2016 UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on sustaining peace define peace as both a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society that takes into account the needs of all segments of the population.<sup>2</sup> Sustaining peace is conceived of as a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by governments and all other national stakeholders. It is seen as flowing through all three pillars of the UN's work, integrating development with peace and human rights, and is intrinsically linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where peace is both an enabler and an outcome.

As outlined in Chapter 1 of this volume, viewing prevention through the lens of sustaining peace encourages a shift from time-bound, externally driven activities that use conflict rather than peace

as the starting point in searching for solutions. Prevention for sustaining peace keeps a long-term perspective and is motivated by the humility to learn from what still works well in societies and to respect that people and communities, even under stress, have existing capacities for resilience, not just needs. This conceptual shift entails identifying and strengthening those capacities while addressing the threats to peace and their underlying drivers. The focus is no longer on restoring stability after violence but on investing in structures, attitudes, and institutions associated with peaceful societies.

Seen through this lens, peace is not needed only in conflict-affected societies. Prosperous countries cannot take their continued peace and stability for granted if they pursue or tolerate policies that create inequalities, exclusion, and discrimination.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter focuses on how the mandates of UN

### Box 1. Preventing the outbreak of violent conflict

In the Gambia, after conceding the presidential election to his opponent Adama Barrow in early December 2016, former President Yahya Jammeh contested the results and declared a state of emergency, creating a significant risk of violent protests and conflict in the country. The response of ECOWAS was swift and united; a mission was deployed within several days to convey ECOWAS's support of a peaceful political transition in conformity with the results of the election. A few days later, ECOWAS declared its intent to take all measures necessary to enforce the results of the election; in other words, the only solution for Jammeh was to accept defeat and cede power.

The special representative of the secretary-general for UNOWAS, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, seeking to raise international pressure on President Jammeh to respect the outcome of the presidential election, engaged with national, regional, and international stakeholders to help resolve the crisis peacefully. He spearheaded joint AU-ECOWAS-UN statements, accompanied ECOWAS heads of state in their visits to Banjul, and advocated full support for regional efforts, including the joint ECOWAS-AU mediation team. The efforts of UNOWAS, the AU, and ECOWAS were fully supported by a united Security Council and by the secretary-general. Since the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Gambia, UNOWAS, in close coordination with ECOWAS and the AU, has been working closely with the new government in support of its efforts to advance democratic governance, respect for the rule of law and human rights, socioeconomic recovery, and sustainable development.

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<sup>2</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

<sup>3</sup> Magdy Martínez-Solimán, "Sustaining Peace for Development," *Huffington Post*, September 22, 2016, available at [www.huffingtonpost.com/magdy-martanezsoliman/sustaining-peace-for-deve\\_b\\_12090260.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magdy-martanezsoliman/sustaining-peace-for-deve_b_12090260.html).

regional political offices could best be leveraged to support key regional and country-specific stakeholders to engage in prevention not only as a tool to avert the outbreak of, escalation of, or relapse into violence, but also to lay the foundations for self-sustaining peace.

## Why Were Regional Political Offices Created?

In 2002, in an attempt to address increasingly regional and cross-border challenges to peace and security and to promote cooperation and partnerships in West Africa, the United Nations created its first regional political office, the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA), in Dakar, Senegal. This was followed in 2007 by the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, and in 2011 by the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) in Libreville, Gabon.

An intermediate level between country-specific field operations and UN headquarters, these offices were intended as a discrete tool for the United Nations to provide good offices for preventive diplomacy based on early warning and mediation. They were envisioned as having a key role in harmonizing efforts by other UN entities (country teams or other UN missions in the region) and by regional and subregional organizations to identify threats early and defuse tensions (e.g., trans-border security challenges or illicit trafficking in West and Central Africa and Central Asia). Regional political

offices moreover played a key role in strengthening capacities of countries and regional organizations.

A tool for both pre- and post-conflict situations, as well as for peaceful societies, regional political offices were established to provide knowledge and analysis channeled through strong political leadership. Their strategic position and location in the region enabled them to build relationships, both in capital and in local communities, and keep open channels of communication, thereby improving information exchange with a variety of local actors and encouraging dialogue. As UN regional presences, they provided important knowledge to the UN system in times of crisis.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the creation of these regional offices by an exchange of letters between the secretary-general and the president of the Security Council and the minimal reporting demanded of them were thought as a way to allow them to work with a high degree of discretion and flexibility.

## Current Mandates and Links to Prevention for Sustaining Peace

### WEST AFRICA AND THE SAHEL

Since its inception in 2002, the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) has been tasked with providing good offices to prevent conflict in the region, promote peacebuilding, and develop an effective partnerships with regional organizations, in particular the Economic Community of West African

### Box 2. Water diplomacy as an entry point for prevention

Water issues were one of the key areas of engagement of UNRCCA's preventive diplomacy. Indeed, water issues in Central Asia are both potential sources of conflict and enormous opportunities for cooperation. The regional office first conducted water diplomacy under the leadership of its former head, Miroslav Jenča, and continues to do so under its current head, Petko Draganov. As Jenča explained, "We provided technical support, prepared the documents [for agreements on water sharing], based on the advice and expertise of top international water law experts and based on existing UN water law conventions. [But] we also drew extensively on local expertise, combined it with international best practice and worked closely with the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. It involved political engagement too because ultimately it is a question of building trust and political will."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Teresa Whitfield, "Political Missions, Mediation and Good Offices," in *Review of Political Missions 2010*, Center on International Cooperation, 2010, available at [http://peaceoperationsreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2010\\_rpm\\_whitfield\\_politicalmissions.pdf](http://peaceoperationsreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2010_rpm_whitfield_politicalmissions.pdf); Richard Gowan, "Multilateral Political Missions and Preventive Diplomacy," US Institute of Peace, 2011, available at [www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/SR299.pdf](http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/SR299.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Youssef Mahmoud, "Acting Locally on Preventive Diplomacy: Q&A with Miroslav Jenča," *IPI Global Observatory*, March 31, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/03/preventive-diplomacy-central-asia-kyrgyzstan/>.

States (ECOWAS) to draw attention to possible threats to regional peace. In 2016 UNOWA was merged with the UN Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel to create the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). UNOWAS has been mandated to “craft synergies to better engage with the countries of West Africa and the Sahel” and “to support regional solutions to cross-cutting threats to peace and security, such as terrorism and violent extremism, transnational organized crime, piracy and maritime insecurity.”<sup>6</sup> It has also been tasked with enhancing the capacities of regional institutions and leading the implementation of the 2013 UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, which focuses on a wide range of programs and initiatives in the areas of governance, security, and resilience. The regional office has contributed to a number of positive diplomatic outcomes, including leveraging its geographic proximity, diplomatic expertise, and cooperation with regional organizations to prevent the escalation of conflict in Guinea in 2010.

Although the mandate of UNOWAS has evolved and contains many tasks relating to prevention and sustaining peace, the actions of UNOWAS have remained reactive rather than driven by the long-term goal of sustaining peace. Moreover, due to the number of countries under its purview and its limited staff and funds, UNOWAS has mostly

focused on assessing fragility and challenges to peace in the region. Nonetheless, it has made a number of attempts, in coordination with regional organizations, in particular ECOWAS, to map progress and capacities for peace at the local level.<sup>7</sup>

### CENTRAL ASIA

The UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) was established in 2007 in Turkmenistan at the request of the five countries of Central Asia. Its role was to liaise with the governments of the region on issues relevant to preventive diplomacy, conduct monitoring and analysis, maintain contact with regional organizations, and facilitate coordination and information exchange. In addition, UNRCCA was meant to provide an overall framework and leadership for preventive activities conducted by the UN country teams and to maintain close contact with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to ensure a comprehensive and integrated analysis of the situation in the region.

The special representative of the secretary-general for UNRCCA, Miroslav Jenča (2008–2015), supported the office’s preventive capacity by building its credibility and ensuring a high degree of access to the region’s governments. According to Jenča, “Initially, some thought to call the regional

#### Box 3. Working with mediators and women editors

In July 2016 UNOCA, in partnership with Gabon and the secretariat of ECCAS, hosted a conference of national mediators and ombudsmen of Central African states in Libreville. The mediators of Gabon and Chad, the ombudsman of Burundi, and the deputy defender of the people of Equatorial Guinea attended the conference. One of the outcomes of the conference was the establishment of a steering committee that included representatives of the mediators of Central African states present during the conference, the ECCAS Secretariat, UNOCA, and the Association of Mediators of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (chaired by Senegal). In May 2017 UNOCA, with assistance from the UN Department of Political Affairs, hosted a training workshop for the staff of the offices of these national mediators and ombudsmen. The workshop aimed to build the institutional capacity of the offices and enhance working level cooperation within and between these offices, the ECCAS Secretariat, and UNOCA.

In 2017, UNOCA is working to strengthen a regional platform of women editors in order to promote the women, peace and security agenda in Central Africa through the print media; to mobilize and foster solidarity and cohesion among current and aspiring leading women editors on the women, peace and security agenda; and to promote mentorship and coaching of the next generation of women editors and publishers in the sub-region on women, peace and security.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://unowas.unmissions.org/background>.

<sup>7</sup> See [www.gppac.net/news/-/asset\\_publisher/fHv91YcOz0Cl/content/regional-response-capacity-for-conflict-prevention/](http://www.gppac.net/news/-/asset_publisher/fHv91YcOz0Cl/content/regional-response-capacity-for-conflict-prevention/) and <http://issat.dcaf.ch/Learn/Resource-Library2/Case-Studies/Creating-a-National-Dialogue-to-Prevent-Future-Conflict-in-Guinea-Bissau>.

center a regional conflict prevention center, and there were some voices saying that this was an inappropriate title—‘we don’t have conflict, so we want preventive diplomacy.’”<sup>8</sup> The UN’s experience with a regional office in Central Asia is indeed different from that in West and Central Africa, as it evolved in a subregion where there are no peacekeeping operations.

UNRCCA has sought to focus on building knowledge and relationships in the region through in-depth analysis and cultivation of communication channels with leaders, elites, security forces, and civil society. Such an approach has been found to help develop national capacities and common positions on how to act in an emerging crisis.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, engaging and balancing the interests of external actors early on can help create pathways to peace by opening up alternatives to violence among conflicting parties.

This approach was crucial in resolving the 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan. UNRCCA worked in close cooperation with a number of international partners, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU, to engage with national partners to defuse the conflict. UNRCCA was effective in acting as a conduit for diplomatic efforts, reducing risks of duplication and maximizing impact. It built on its anticipatory analysis of the actors, as well as on the dividends of its long-term investment in relationship building. Moreover, good cooperation with the UN country team and the resident coordinator in Kyrgyzstan, as well as with the UN Peacebuilding Fund and international financial institutions, meant that the engagement was truly integrated.

## CENTRAL AFRICA

The UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) was established in 2011 in Gabon following requests by countries in the subregion for such a regional office. It was mandated to “assist Member States and Sub-regional organizations in consolidating peace and preventing potential conflicts.” In addition to providing good offices for

prevention and peacebuilding, the mission also cooperates with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and other regional organizations to promote peace and stability.<sup>10</sup> Its mandate was shortened and reviewed in 2015 following a strategic interagency review and consultations with all international and national stakeholders, giving the mission more flexibility in conducting tasks and setting priorities.<sup>11</sup>

The resources at UNOCA’s disposal are limited in the face of the region’s size and challenges (as is the case for the other regional offices). As a result, the mission has had to focus its attention on countries at risk of instability, mostly due to disputed electoral or constitutional processes, as well as on regional security challenges such as violent extremism, piracy, poaching, and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). Its regional partner, ECCAS, remains weak and has not been fully empowered by countries in the region to act on its behalf. The regional office does, however, cooperate extensively with the UN country teams present in Central Africa and, when needed, provide them with political cover to tackle sensitive issues. It also hosts regular meetings of heads of UN offices in the subregion to ensure a common understanding of current threats to peace and security and to identify areas for cooperation and partnership.

In the Central African Republic, for example, UNOCA has worked closely with the UN mission (MINUSCA) to ensure countries in the subregion buy into the government’s efforts to bring back peace and stability. To that effect, UNOCA was able to use its regional mandate to engage with subregional heads of state, as well as with the ECCAS Secretariat (also based in Libreville), to advocate for additional support for the Central African Republic.

## GREAT LAKES

The United Nations also deploys a number of special envoys with regional political coverage and a focus on good offices, mediation, and prevention, including for the Great Lakes. The mandate of the

8 Mahmoud, “Acting Locally on Preventive Diplomacy: Q&A with Miroslav Jenča.”

9 International Crisis Group, “Seizing the Moment: From Early Warning to Early Action,” June 23, 2016, available at [www.crisisgroup.org/global/seizing-moment-early-warning-early-action](http://www.crisisgroup.org/global/seizing-moment-early-warning-early-action).

10 See <https://unoca.unmissions.org/en/mandate-and-missions>.

11 The 2015 mandate, for example, explicitly called for UNOCA to establish a dedicated analytical unit under the Political Affairs Section, which would contribute to better analysis of the region.



Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region was established by an interdepartmental delegation in 2013. A key driver of the mandate was the adoption, in February 2013, of a UN-brokered framework aimed at stabilizing the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. The Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework—signed by Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania—encompassed commitments at the national, regional, and international levels to bring peace and stability to eastern Congo and the region.

As with the other regional political offices, the special envoy's collaboration with UN country teams has helped orient its work toward prevention and sustaining peace. The special envoy has also worked to mobilize private investment for infrastructure, development, tourism, and youth employment as part of efforts to increase stability and implement the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. Across the regional political offices, however, progress is still needed to work with resident coordinators to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into their mandates.

## Conclusions

The mandates of regional political offices contain many elements related to prevention and sustaining peace (good offices, mediation, and inclusion). They engage in cross-regional issues, build key relations with regional partners, and strengthen national capacities for peace. Overall, however, these offices remain focused on addressing the proximate causes of conflict rather than identifying and reinforcing capacities for peace with a view to preventing the outbreak of conflict. Moreover, they lack resources and rely exclusively on extra-budgetary funding for many of their core activities. Below are several broad suggestions as to how the mandates of these regional political offices could be strengthened from the perspective of sustaining peace:

- **Regional political offices should work with regional partners and other UN entities, including country offices/resident coordinators and peace operations, to identify resilient**

**capacities for peace.** These should include the capacities of women, youth, business and religious leaders, traditional authorities, and educators. Regional political offices should also advise on how to leverage these capacities to address ongoing or potential threats to regional peace and stability. Such peace mapping would enable national and international interveners to build on what still works in society and avoid doing harm while still addressing urgent challenges to peace and security.

- **The secretary-general should empower the heads of regional political offices to implement his “surge of diplomacy for peace” from a sustaining peace perspective.** This could be undertaken through various instruments, including the compacts he co-signs with them. This would have obvious implications both for resources (in terms of the availability of regular and predictable funding) and for leadership (in terms of the selection, performance, accountability, and professional development of special representatives/special envoys of the secretary-general). Both of these implications would need to be taken into account in the implementation of any reform of the UN Secretariat's peace and security architecture.
- **Regional political offices should support and accompany UN resident coordinators to further strengthen resilient local and national capacities as well as infrastructures for peace** as an integral part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. An explicit element of the mandate relating to the implementation of the SDGs could be considered as part of the compact mentioned above. Prevention will thus be treated as nationally driven, governance and development function, rather than only a peace and security imperative. This support to country teams in non-mission settings, with a political dimension, should focus both on the capital and local levels.
- **The relationship between regional political offices and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) should be strengthened and leveraged,** notably with a view to increasing access to PBF resources. This would help increase the regional dimension of peacebuilding and intensifying resource mobilization efforts.



**PART IV:**  
**CASE STUDY ANALYSIS**



## Chapter 9.

# Sustaining Peace in the “New Gambia”

Lesley Connolly<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

According to the 2017 Global Peace Index, the Gambia has fallen eighteen places since 2016 and is among the top five countries to have experienced the largest deterioration in an ongoing conflict.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the Gambia is facing a range of socioeconomic challenges including increasing poverty, a growing rural-urban divide, a decreasing literacy rate, and high unemployment.<sup>3</sup>

Yet despite the country’s fragile socioeconomic and political climate, the Gambia peacefully resolved its political impasse and successfully transitioned to democracy in January 2017. The impasse began on December 1, 2016, when Gambians took to the polls and voted in current President Adama Barrow, thus removing then-President Yahya Jammeh. Jammeh, who had been in power since 1994, shocked the international community by conceding the election, committing to make way for Barrow.

A week later, however, Jammeh contested the results and declared a state of emergency. This exacerbated political tensions and heightened the risk of violent protests and the eruption of conflict.<sup>4</sup> In an effort to avert a crisis, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with the support of the United Nations and the African Union (AU), responded swiftly, launching a series of high-level mediation efforts and deploying ECOWAS troops to the border.<sup>5</sup> These efforts were successful, and in January 2017 President Barrow

was sworn into office, paving the way for a peaceful political transition.

This transfer of power was heralded as a landmark win for democratic governance on a continent often characterized by authoritarian rule and life-long presidents. The “New Gambia,” as it is now commonly referred to, is re-engaging with the international community, and transition and development initiatives are already underway.

The question remains, however, whether the Gambia will be able to sustain peace in the long term. In an effort to answer this question, this chapter examines the Gambia through the lens of “sustaining peace;” a concept formally introduced into UN vocabulary in April 2016 by dual resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly. The resolutions define sustaining peace as “a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account.”<sup>6</sup> The resolutions also specify that sustaining peace is “a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the Government and all other national stakeholders.”<sup>7</sup> The concept should therefore be seen as flowing through all three pillars of the UN’s work to promote an integrated approach to peace, development, and human rights, where peace is seen as both an enabler and an outcome.<sup>8</sup>

This chapter highlights three main areas that should be prioritized for the purpose of sustaining peace in the Gambia: women’s empowerment, youth empowerment and entrepreneurship, and

1 Lesley Connolly is a Senior Policy Analyst at IPI.

2 Institute for Economics and Peace, “Global Peace Index 2017,” p. 25, available at <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/06/GPI-2017-Report-1.pdf>.

3 There was an 18 percent increase in the number of people classified as poor in the Gambia between 2010 and 2015. As rural poverty is rising, the wealth gap between rural and urban Gambians is widening. In Banjul, 10.8 percent of the population lives below the poverty line compared to 69.8 percent of those in rural Gambia. The country’s literacy rate is 40.1 percent and is lower for women (35.5 percent) than for men (45.7 percent). Only 51 percent of the working age population is employed, and unemployment rates are even higher in rural areas. World Bank, *Macro Poverty Outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa: The Gambia*, October 2017, available at <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/214601492188159621/mpo-gmb.pdf>; Government of the Gambia, *National Development Plan (Draft)*, 2017.

4 Government of the Gambia, *National Development Plan (Draft)*, 2017.

5 Lesley Connolly, “The Gambia: An Ideal Case for Prevention in Practice,” *IPI Global Observatory*, October 4, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/10/the-gambia-an-ideal-case-for-prevention-in-practice/>.

6 Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

transitional justice and good governance. It explains how investment in these areas has helped prevent the escalation of conflict and how it can contribute to the maintenance of long-term national peace and stability.<sup>9</sup>

## Women's Empowerment

The connection between gender equality, stability, and peacefulness is supported by a wealth of evidence. Indeed, “gender equality is a stronger predictor of a state’s peacefulness than its level of democracy, religion, or GDP. Where women are more empowered, the state is less likely to experience civil conflict or go to war with its neighbors.”<sup>10</sup> Moreover, there is a positive correlation between economic growth and gender equality and evidence that increasing “women’s participation and representation in leadership and decision-making positions leads to higher levels of peacefulness and better development outcomes for society.”<sup>11</sup>

Women and girls continue to be disadvantaged due to patriarchal norms and practices, including in customary law, which does not allow women to inherit land and which does not give women equal status in judicial processes. In addition, women cannot control or own land despite their predominant role in farming and their role in ensuring food security, and women disproportionately face financial access barriers that prevent them from participating in the economy and improving their lives, including access to credit and bank accounts.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, many women have poor access to social services, healthcare, and education and work in low-wage jobs. Gender-based violence is frequent in the Gambia, with 20 percent of

women between the ages of 15 and 49 having experienced physical or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.<sup>13</sup>

Despite being illegal, underage marriage is still prevalent, with 30 percent of women between the ages of 20 and 24 having married before the age of 18. This forces many girls to leave school prematurely.<sup>14</sup> Seventy-five percent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 have undergone female genital mutilation,<sup>15</sup> and the maternal mortality rate in 2015 was 706 deaths per 100,000 live births. While this figure has decreased over the past twenty-five years, it remains high in comparison to global averages.<sup>16</sup>

The Jammeh regime demonstrated a commitment to empowering women and reducing gender inequality, including by establishing the National Women’s Council within the Department of State for Women’s Affairs, which acts as a forum for women to access legal support.<sup>17</sup> The ensuing adoption of the Women’s Act (2010), the Sexual Offences Act (2013), and the Women’s Amendment Act (2015) banning female genital mutilation also signified progress in advancing the rights of women.<sup>18</sup> In addition, in 2012, the Gambia adopted a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, recognizing the impact that conflicts in neighboring countries have had on Gambian women.<sup>19</sup> Enforcement, however, has been a challenge. This is particularly the case in the provinces, where female genital mutilation is deeply entrenched in the culture. There is also concern that many in the country associate strict enforcement of these laws with the former regime and that the change of government will result in greater disregard for these protections.<sup>20</sup>

9 This chapter is based in part on an issue brief published by IPI: Lesley Connolly and Cheryl He, “Toward a New Gambia: Linking Peace and Development,” International Peace Institute, January 2018, available at [www.ipinst.org/2018/01/toward-a-new-gambia-linking-peace-and-development](http://www.ipinst.org/2018/01/toward-a-new-gambia-linking-peace-and-development).

10 See Chapter 2 of this volume.

11 Ibid.

12 UNDP, *The Gambia Sustainable Development Goals Roadmap: United Nations MAPS Mission to the Gambia Report*, 2017.

13 Ibid.

14 United Nations and Government of the Gambia, *The Gambia United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017–2021*, 2017; Interview with the chairperson of the Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO), the Gambia, May 2017.

15 UNDP, *The Gambia Sustainable Development Goals Roadmap: United Nations MAPS Mission to the Gambia Report*, 2017.

16 World Health Organization, UNICEF, UN Population Fund, World Bank Group, and UN Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group, *Maternal Mortality in the Gambia 1990–2015*, available at [www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/gmb.pdf](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/gmb.pdf).

17 Access Gambia, “Department of State for Women’s Affairs,” available at [www.accessgambia.com/information/womens-affairs-department.html](http://www.accessgambia.com/information/womens-affairs-department.html).

18 Bruce Asemota, “Gambia: ‘Women’s Act 2010 Amendment a Step in the Right Direction,’” *The Point*, March 3, 2017, available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201703030793.html>.

19 Government of the Gambia, *The Gambia National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2012.

20 Interview with representative of UN Population Fund, Greater Banjul, the Gambia, June 2017.

Women in the Gambia also face financial exclusion, mainly due to limited access to land and credit. Social and cultural norms make it difficult for women to acquire vital information on available financial services, while the lower literacy rate among women (35.5 percent compared to 45.7 percent for men) means more women have difficulty processing and comprehending information they do have access to.<sup>21</sup> Simply being able to open a bank account and access credit would help expand the economic opportunities available to women in the Gambia.

Despite the difficult and repressive operating environment for civil society organizations championing women's rights in the Gambia under the Jammeh regime,<sup>22</sup> some organizations have been successful. The National Women Farmers Association (NAFWA), for example, is a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that promotes commercially viable agriculture and food security among female farmers in order to move them away from subsistence farming and toward economic self-sufficiency. NAFWA also builds women's capacity to open and manage small businesses and advocates for more land ownership rights for women.<sup>23</sup>

The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO), an umbrella organization of NGOs operating in the Gambia, takes a slightly different approach.<sup>24</sup> It works to educate men in the Gambia on how women can contribute to society and how they can be supported in this effort. It is also teaching fathers the importance of education for girls, especially in rural regions.<sup>25</sup>

Taking into consideration the strong links between gender equality and sustaining peace, the government should prioritize and mobilize

funding for initiatives targeted at increasing women's empowerment and improving gender equality. It will also have to mobilize the necessary resources.

## Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

The Institute for Economics and Peace has found a strong correlation between "positive peace" (a concept similar to sustaining peace) and the Youth Development Index.<sup>26</sup> While the relationship between youth and peace is not simple or linear, there is evidence that "peaceful and resilient societies can better promote and benefit from youth development and youth-led entrepreneurship."<sup>27</sup>

This is especially true in the Gambia, where youth make up 65 percent of the population.<sup>28</sup> Youth unemployment in the Gambia sits at 70 percent, while the ratio of youth unemployment to adult unemployment is 2.3.<sup>29</sup> A major contributor to youth unemployment is access to high-quality education and training systems and a lack of skills or mismatch between the skills possessed and those demanded in the labor market.

This has contributed to young people seeking alternative means of livelihood, including through irregular migration and employment in the informal sector. Gambians are one of the top nationalities who have gone the "back way" to Italy in 2017, which sees them crossing the Mediterranean in search of greater economic opportunity.<sup>30</sup> A 2015 survey of 16-to-30-year-olds found that "65 out of 100 respondents claimed to know at least two friends or relatives who had travelled the back way"<sup>31</sup> to Europe, and 56 percent claimed that unemployment is the major problem

21 Government of the Gambia, *National Development Plan (Draft)*, 2017; John Isaac, "Expanding Women's Access to Financial Services," World Bank, February 26, 2014, available at [www.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/04/01/banking-on-women-extending-womens-access-to-financial-services](http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/04/01/banking-on-women-extending-womens-access-to-financial-services).

22 In 2016 Freedom House rated the Gambia as "not free," with a rating of 6.5 out of 7 (with 7 being the least free), highlighting the repressive political environment, lack of civil and political freedoms, and constant threat of reprisals and detention against NGOs. Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2016: The Gambia," 2016, available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/gambia>.

23 See <http://nawfa.gm/about.html>.

24 TANGO was founded by a group of NGOs to minimize conflict and competition between NGOs and encourage partnerships.

25 Interview with Fatai Saine Gaye, owner of Gaye Njorro Hair Plus, Greater Banjul, the Gambia, June 2017.

26 Institute for Economics and Peace, "Youth Development, Social Enterprise, and Sustaining Peace," background note, June 2017.

27 See Chapter 3 of this volume.

28 Youth is defined as people under the age of 35.

29 Government of the Gambia, *National Development Plan (Draft)*, 2017.

30 Louise Hunt, "Meet the Gambian Migrants under Pressure to Leave Europe," IRIN, July 20, 2017, available at [www.irinnews.org/feature/2017/07/20/meet-gambian-migrants-under-pressure-leave-europe](http://www.irinnews.org/feature/2017/07/20/meet-gambian-migrants-under-pressure-leave-europe).

31 Ibid.



affecting young people and motivating them to risk migration via the back way.<sup>32</sup>

With the change in government in the Gambia came the expectation of a higher quality of life, with better employment opportunities, greater access to education, and improved delivery of social services. The Barrow government has realized this need and placed youth unemployment as a top priority, offering skills training and apprenticeship schemes through the National Youth Service Scheme. However, the survey mentioned above found that “many young people were unaware of these programmes or did not believe they were effective.”<sup>33</sup> More is needed from the government to communicate opportunities and connect with youth to understand their expectations. The National Youth Council offers an opportunity to establish this link (see Box 1).

In addition to government initiatives, several private institutions have launched initiatives in an effort to meet the demand for improved access to and delivery of education and training. One example is the UN Conference on Trade’s Empretec program, which works to help current and hopeful entrepreneurs build skills to support them in developing “innovative and internationally competitive small and medium-size enterprises.”<sup>34</sup> EMPRETEC offers seven programs that focus on entrepreneurship-training workshops, including specific programs for youth and women.<sup>35</sup> They are

based on two central methodologies that work to shift the behavior of participants: the “Entrepreneurship Training Workshops and a comprehensive Business Development Support and Advisory Service.”<sup>36</sup> With the support of UNDP, the initiative was set up in 2014 and has worked with 2,500 entrepreneurs across six regions in the country so far. Further investment in these programs could not only help expand their reach but also assist in developing and strengthening the skills youth need to increase their economic opportunities.

Due to its high youth population, prioritization of initiatives aimed at empowering youth should be a central focus of the new government’s work on sustaining peace within the country. Investing in entrepreneurship as a means of job creation is an investment in peace.

## Transitional Justice and Good Governance

The sustaining peace resolutions emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict, strengthening the rule of law, and fostering national reconciliation. This includes ensuring “inclusive dialogue and mediation, access to justice and transitional justice, accountability, good governance, democracy, accountable institutions, gender equality and respect for, and protection of, human rights and fundamental freedoms.”<sup>37</sup> Transitional

### Box 1. The National Youth Council

The National Youth Council was established in 2000 and has played a central role in empowering Gambian youth during the transition. Several interviewees from civil society and the private sector stressed that there has been little communication from the new government on what is being done and what plans it has for the country. There have only been isolated incidents of protests and demonstrations, but many interviewees warned that these illustrate brewing tensions. The National Youth Council has managed to defuse a number of protests planned by youth, but the fear is that if youth are not engaged in the short term, their “energy [to bring about change] can easily slip to dissent.”<sup>38</sup> There is a sense that youth feel responsible for putting this new government in power so are anxious to see the results of this change, including more employment opportunities and better quality of life.

32 Louise Hunt, “The Gambia Faces Battle to Deter Its Young People from Migrating Abroad,” *The Guardian*, September 11, 2015, available at [www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/sep/11/the-gambia-migration-livelihood-empowerment-agricultural-project-concern-universal](http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/sep/11/the-gambia-migration-livelihood-empowerment-agricultural-project-concern-universal).

33 Ibid.

34 See [www.empretecgambia.gm/about-us-basic](http://www.empretecgambia.gm/about-us-basic).

35 See [www.empretecgambia.gm/trainings](http://www.empretecgambia.gm/trainings).

36 Ibid.

37 Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

38 Interview with president of the National Youth Council in the Gambia, Banjul, The Gambia, June 2017.

justice refers to the ways in which countries that have emerged from periods of conflict and repression address mass human rights violations where traditional justice systems cannot provide the necessary response. Some of the aims of transitional justice are to establish or strengthen rule of law and accountable institutions that enable individuals to voice grievances and seek justice for past and present human rights abuses.<sup>39</sup> Strong national institutions “play an important role in promoting and monitoring the implementation of international human rights standards at the national level.”<sup>40</sup>

In line with this approach, when President Barrow assumed office he committed to enhancing and improving “human rights, access to justice and good governance for all.”<sup>41</sup> There are three elements to the government’s plan: undertaking a constitutional review, improving rule of law, and instituting a transitional justice process. After decades of bad governance, the government is committed to regaining the trust of the population, building strong institutions, and restoring its reputation as a beacon of democracy on the continent.<sup>42</sup>

The new government has initiated a process to review and update the 1997 constitution to ensure it meets the needs of the Gambian people. This will be challenging due to the manipulation of the country’s institutions by the former regime over the past two decades to maintain and centralize power around one man. It is important that this process is comprehensive and consultative to ensure the constitution is people-centric rather than driven by political expediency.<sup>43</sup>

In order to strengthen the rule of law in the country, the government is planning to reform the legal sector and solidify proposals for the establishment of a Human Rights Commission. This will include a comprehensive review of existing criminal justice legislation to reform laws

restricting political and civic freedoms, especially relating to freedom of expression. The government will work to establish more courthouses and ensure that judges and magistrates can operate on a full-time basis in rural areas, where justice is difficult to access. These efforts to expand the judicial infrastructure can help make people more aware of their rights.<sup>44</sup>

Another key area of concern in regard to rule of law is the personal security of Gambians during the political transition. Under the Jammeh regime, the Gambia was considered one of the safest countries on the continent. However, due to a perceived lack of law enforcement, there is less fear of repercussions for committing crimes, and security concerns are rising as a result. Reports of rape, house break-ins, and petty crime have increased, leaving people concerned that the new government is not prioritizing the safety of ordinary people.<sup>45</sup>

In order to strengthen the population’s trust in the security forces, the government has undertaken security sector reform. Central to this process is the formulation and adoption of a comprehensive national security policy, along with the necessary legislation. The policy would seek to identify threats to national security, clarify the functions of the country’s key security institutions, and structure them in line with the provisions of the policy, ultimately strengthening rule of law and accountability in the country.<sup>46</sup>

The government has also committed to the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address the gross human rights violations of the past. This mechanism aims to hold abusers accountable for their actions, provide closure for those affected by human rights violations, help the government establish and document an accurate historical record of events, and pay reparations to victims.<sup>47</sup> Aiming to assist in the development of this mechanism, in May 2017 the Ministry of Justice held a three-day national

39 International Centre for Transitional Justice, “What Is Transitional Justice,” available at [www.ictj.org/about/transitional-justice](http://www.ictj.org/about/transitional-justice).

40 See Chapter 4 of this volume.

41 United Nations and Government of the Gambia, *The Gambia United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017–2021*, p. 106.

42 Ibid.

43 Interview with solicitor general of the Gambia, the Gambia, June 2017.

44 Ibid.

45 Interview with WANEP representative, the Gambia, June 2017.

46 Interview with UN country team, the Gambia, May 2017.

47 UNDP, *The Gambia United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017–2021*.

stakeholders conference on justice and human rights in collaboration with UNDP, the Institute of Human Rights Development in Africa, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and UNICEF. The conference sought to create a forum for consultation and dialogue as a prelude to fundamental constitutional and institutional reforms that will strengthen the rule of law and the protection of human rights in the Gambia. It identified challenges and gaps in the justice system and allowed for discussions concerning the design of a transitional justice strategy and the establishment of applicable transitional justice mechanisms for the Gambia moving forward.<sup>48</sup>

While the focus of the new government should not exclusively rest on transitional justice, initiatives that aim to re-establish the rule of law and deal with past violations are important for enabling national reconciliation and the unity needed for the country to move peacefully forward into a new era.

## Conclusions

As the Gambia moves forward in its transitional period and solidifies its national development

plans, the new government must address transitional justice while investing in economic growth, gender equality, and youth employment in order to maintain peace and stability throughout the country. Neglecting any of these elements risks disgruntling a population in search of a more prosperous future.<sup>49</sup>

Looking at a country through the lens of sustaining peace, it is peace rather than conflict that is the starting point. This requires identifying and focusing on what is working in a society, rather than on what is broken and needs to be fixed. A sustaining peace approach focuses not just on restoring stability after violence but also on investing in structures, attitudes, and institutions associated with peaceful societies. Further, the sustaining peace approach can be used to examine all countries—regardless of whether or not they have experienced conflict.<sup>50</sup> Using this approach can help keep attention on countries, like the Gambia, that are not experiencing violent conflict despite the existence of internal vulnerabilities and external pressures but are nonetheless in need of long-term investment to sustain peace.

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48 Government of the Gambia, report of the national stakeholder conference, May 2017.

49 Interview with UN country team, the Gambia, May 2017.

50 See Chapter 1 of this volume.

## Conclusion

*Lesley Connolly and Laura Powers<sup>1</sup>*

“Peacebuilding” first entered the UN vocabulary in 1992 with Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s Agenda for Peace, which defined it as “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.”<sup>2</sup> The 2000 report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the Brahimi Report) further refined the definition of peacebuilding as “activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war.”<sup>3</sup> As such, peacebuilding is often seen to take place after the security-intensive, peacekeeping-focused phase, as a reactive response to conflict.<sup>4</sup>

Peacebuilding underwent another shift in meaning with the 2015 Advisory Group of Experts’ Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture and subsequent dual resolutions passed by the General Assembly and Security Council embracing the “sustaining peace” framework. Sustaining peace, according to the resolution, is “a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account.” Efforts to sustain peace are expected to flow through the three pillars of UN engagement—peace and security, human rights, and development—with conflict prevention playing a central role.<sup>5</sup> During the General Assembly debate following the adoption of the resolution on sustaining peace, most member states hailed the conceptual shift from peacebuilding to sustaining peace as transformative and forward-looking. It was noted that the shift meant that

peacebuilding is no longer confined to post-conflict situations but applies to all phases: before the outbreak of conflict, during conflict, and after conflict has abated.<sup>6</sup>

The chapters included in this volume advocate that the standard approach to prevention, which primarily focuses on violent conflict, should be supplemented by one that promotes the fundamental conditions and processes conducive to durable peace. This approach is underpinned by the argument that peace has a greater chance of enduring if it is built on what still works in society rather than on what does not work. Additionally, the chapters in this volume make the point that sustaining peace is not relevant solely to contexts where violent conflict is manifest or proximate but should be pursued as an explicit and deliberate policy objective for all states. This requires greater emphasis on national ownership, including supporting local actors who are already taking proactive measures to promote and nurture peace at home and in their communities. It also requires a change in mindset and innovative leadership that places peace, rather than conflict, as the starting point for context analysis and policy prescriptions.

This volume has approached a number of key policy strands from the sustaining peace perspective to highlight how their design and implementation can help build sustainable peace and stability. Each chapter offers insights and key takeaways for both practitioners and policymakers working to build and sustain peace. These are summarized below.

<sup>1</sup> Lesley Connolly is a Senior Policy Analyst at IPI. Laura Powers is a Research Assistant at IPI.

<sup>2</sup> UN Secretary-General, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping—Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to the Statement Adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992*, UN Doc. A/47/277, June 17, 1992, art. 21.

<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly and Security Council, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/55/305–S/2000/809, August 21, 2000, para. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Lesley Connolly, “Then and Now: How the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture Is Meeting Its Mandate,” African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, June 2015, available at [www.africaportal.org/publications/then-and-now-how-the-united-nations-peacebuilding-architecture-is-meeting-its-mandate/](http://www.africaportal.org/publications/then-and-now-how-the-united-nations-peacebuilding-architecture-is-meeting-its-mandate/).

<sup>5</sup> Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262; General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (September 25, 2015), UN Doc. A/RES/70/1.

<sup>6</sup> Youssef Mahmoud and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, “With New Resolutions, Sustaining Peace Sits at Heart of UN Architecture,” *IPI Global Observatory*, April 29, 2016, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2016/04/sustaining-peace-peacebuilding-united-nations-sdg/>.

## Shift the Starting Point for Analysis

Each chapter in this volume argues that peace, not conflict, should be the starting point for conflict prevention and the promotion of self-sustaining peace. This requires looking at societal factors that contribute to peace rather than only at those that contribute to conflict. For example, the Institute for Economics and Peace has argued that a well-functioning government, equitable distribution of resources, free flow of information, and acceptance of the rights of others are key pillars of peaceful societies.<sup>7</sup>

By promoting peace as a positive aspiration for states rather than as a response to violent conflict, the sustaining peace approach has a better chance of being owned as a nationally driven agenda. When nationally owned, this agenda will more likely be in tune with the specific needs of the country and have a greater chance of long-term sustainability. Further, freeing prevention from its negative association with conflict means that we can study societies where there is no violent conflict and learn how, despite internal vulnerabilities and external pressures, they remain peaceful.

## Focus on Long-Term Solutions, Not Time-Bound Activities

Sustaining peace is an ongoing exercise, not a one-time intervention. Sustaining peace can help strike a balance between the short-term need to prevent the outbreak of violence and the long-term nature of laying the foundations for self-sustaining peace.

As noted in Chapter 9 of this volume, for example, the Gambia is reengaging with civil society and the international community following its first peaceful transfer of power to begin programs on sustainable development, transitional justice, and other issues. In order to ensure this transition is sustainable, the government is creating long-term plans to institute these initiatives, building on Gambians' existing capacities for

resilience.

Also reflecting the need for a long-term approach, the chapter on preventing violent extremism notes that we need to “move away from reflexively adopting reactive, security-focused responses to violent extremism in isolation, acknowledging that these have short-term and often counterproductive effects.” Breaking free of a reactive, short-term approach to preventing violent extremism could also encourage policymakers and practitioners to consider the broader range of causes of instability and conflict and to focus also on the factors that contribute to peace.

## Ensure Approaches and Solutions Are Locally Owned

Sustaining peace initiatives should be locally owned, regionally anchored, and internationally supported. These initiatives should not only focus on building the capacity of the state but also on empowering citizens, with special attention to strengthening the social, political, and economic factors that make societies resilient and allow people to resolve disputes without violence. As the UN engages with national and local actors, it is important to note that the UN has limitations and therefore needs to bolster and support the work of those already working in the countries where it operates. This approach will increase efficiency and increase the likelihood that initiatives are tailored to the specific needs of the country.

In countries beset by conflict or undergoing difficult political transitions, UN responses should learn from what still works well in these countries and to respect that every society, however broken it may appear, has capacities, not just needs. The chapter on UN peace operations, for example, argues that, when the UN is supporting state institutions, there is a need for “a bottom-up, people-centered approach where local communities play an important role in decision making.” Building on what people have and what they know and giving them the space to be the driving force of

<sup>7</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, “Positive Peace Report 2016,” available at <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Positive-Peace-Report-2016.pdf>.



positive change better lays the foundations for ownership and for self-sustaining peace.

International initiatives on sustaining peace must also be intrinsically connected to action at the local level. As noted in the chapter on local governance, local governance actors are essential to prevention and sustaining peace, including by linking insights and lessons from their communities into the policy debate. Local actors are not only best-placed to understand conflict dynamics but will also remain after international actors leave and thus be tasked with ensuring the durability of interventions. National and international actors should prioritize building the capacity of inclusive, accountable local governance structures to deliver services and economic development in response to the needs of their communities and to prevent local-level conflicts.

## Form Innovative Partnerships

Prevention is a shared task and responsibility that requires cooperation among many different actors to ensure its sustainability. At the country level, sustaining peace is a task that should be fulfilled by national governments and other national stakeholders in a collaborative manner. At the international level, sustaining peace requires cooperation through all three pillars of UN engagement—peace and security, development, and human rights—which requires cooperation and policy coherence among UN departments. This will promote linkages between different areas of focus such as inclusive dialogue, mediation, accountable institutions, good governance, access to justice, and gender equality that, if supported and strengthened, would contribute to sustaining peace.<sup>8</sup>

In order to address this wide array of areas, there is a need to build and strengthen partnerships between the UN and regional and subregional actors. Regional and subregional actors are central to prevention, particularly when it involves direct external intervention. Given their proximity to the countries in question, they often have more credibility and a more vested interest in preventing

outbreaks of violence.

As presented in the chapter on UN regional political offices, these offices can help build partnerships with states in the region as well as with regional and subregional organizations to prevent the outbreak of conflict. The UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia are examples of innovative partnerships for peace. In order to further unleash their potential for sustaining peace, the chapter argues that these regional political offices should work with other UN entities, including country offices, resident coordinators, and peace operations to identify resilient capacities for peace including those of women, youth, and businesses. These offices should also be empowered to work with UN resident coordinators to further strengthen national infrastructures for peace and help ensure that sustaining peace runs through all national policies.

## Ensure Decision Making Is Responsive, Inclusive, and Participatory

Interventions in support of sustaining peace should begin with analysis of the multi-faceted societies in which they will take place to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are included in the decision-making process. By taking into account a diversity of perspectives, including those of vulnerable groups, a sustaining peace approach is more likely to address the needs of all levels of society, to have long-term buy-in and traction, and to be responsive to the changing needs of society. Efforts must be made to create spaces for the participation and leadership of key stakeholders, particularly women.

The connection between gender equality and women's empowerment to stability and peacefulness has been decisively proven. As noted in Chapter 2 in this volume, "Gender equality is a stronger predictor of a state's peacefulness than its level of democracy, religion, or GDP. Where women are more empowered, the state is less likely

<sup>8</sup> Youssef Mahmoud, "Freeing Prevention from Conflict: Investing in Sustaining Peace," *IPI Global Observatory*, April 21 2016, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2016/04/prevention-sustaining-peace-hippo-ban-ki-moon/>.



to experience civil conflict or go to war with its neighbors.” Further, it presents evidence that increasing “women’s participation and representation in leadership and decision-making positions leads to higher levels of peacefulness and better development outcomes for society.”

## Promote Human Rights as an Enabler of Sustaining Peace

Human rights should be seen as a tool for prevention for sustaining peace, given the strong and positive correlation between peacefulness and the upholding of human rights.<sup>9</sup> Protecting human rights can reduce inequality, uphold human dignity, strengthen the legitimacy of and trust in the government, and mitigate some drivers of conflict. The relationship between sustaining peace and human rights can be considered mutually beneficial, as human rights can promote sustaining peace, while sustaining peace can also promote human rights. For example, Mauritius, Senegal, and Tunisia have all remained relatively peaceful in part through their commitment to human rights.

Chapter 4 in this volume argues that human rights monitoring and analysis can provide early warning of tensions that, if left unaddressed, may lead to violence. Having strong national human rights institutions can “play an important role in promoting and monitoring the implementation of international human rights standards at the national level.” Mechanisms such as ombudspersons, human rights commissions, or transitional justice mechanisms can create vital spaces for citizens to voice grievances and manage conflict through nonviolent means.

## Link Sustaining Peace with Sustainable Development

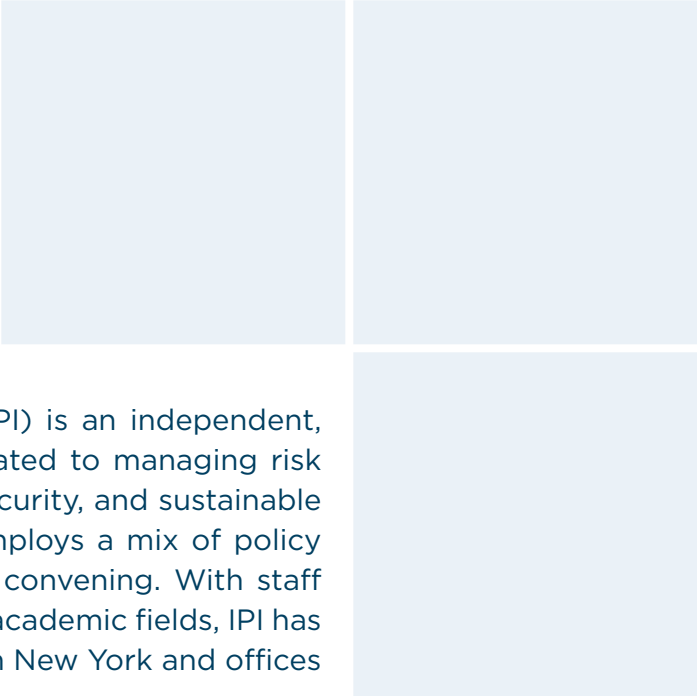
Sustainable development demands the provision of equal opportunities, resources, and life prospects for men and women to enable individuals to shape their own lives, achieve their potential, and contribute fully to their families and communities. Because peace is both an enabler and an outcome of sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development serves as a strategic entry point for sustaining peace. Both the 2030 Agenda and the sustaining peace resolutions offer holistic approaches that emphasize the link between sustainable development and peace; as noted in the 2030 Agenda, “There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.”

Economic growth and development are a central aspect of both sustainable development and peace. Sustainable Development Goals 1 (no poverty), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequality), and 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies) all highlight the importance of inclusive economic growth and stability.

Economic hardship often disproportionately affects youth, such as through higher unemployment rates and reduced opportunities for the future. But youth populations also have the capacity to boost economic growth. The Institute for Economics and Peace, in its Positive Peace Index, has found that there is a strong correlation between positive peace and the Youth Development Index. Chapter 3 in this volume argues that, while the relationship between employment programs and peace is not simple or linear, there is evidence that “peaceful and resilient societies can better promote and benefit from youth development and youth-led entrepreneurship.” Entrepreneurship can create jobs, promote innovative initiatives, and bolster economic growth. Though this is not a guarantee of peaceful societies, it can help make societies more resilient.

<sup>9</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, “Youth Development, Social Enterprise, and Sustaining Peace,” background note, June 2017.





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