

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINING PEACE

Guidance Note

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Abdul Hamid, 9, walks for two kilometers to reach this battered classroom that he shares with 44 other boys at Asad Soori school, Zheray District. Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, 16 April 2019.
Abdul has six brothers, who go to the same school, and two sisters.
"My father doesn't allow my sisters to go to school. He is concerned about their safety," Abdul says. Intense fighting in Zheray, followed by air strikes, destroyed Asad Soori in 2007.

Contents page photograph: © UNICEF/UN0161148/Anmar
Noor and Sarah walk in the west of Mosul, Iraq, where many buildings have been totally destroyed. "I do not know what happened to my father. He's been missing for three months," says Noor.

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Children are playing soccer with a soldier in the Protection of Civilian Site in Malakal, South Sudan.

GLOSSARY

Conflict sensitivity (framed as ‘do no harm’) is defined as developing and implementing programmes to work most effectively in conflict settings, principally through: a) understanding the conflict context; b) carefully considering the interactions between planned or ongoing interventions and the conflict context; c) acting upon this understanding in programme design and implementation to minimize potential negative impacts; and d) responding to changes in conflict dynamics by adjusting programming.

Decentralization is a process in which authority for planning, management and resource allocation is transferred from the central government to regional or local government departments. There are three types of decentralization: devolution is the transfer of authority to local government; delegation is the transfer of authority to semi-autonomous public authorities (e.g., housing authorities); and de-concentration is the transfer of authority to ministry departments at the subnational level.

Fragility: Definitions, methodologies, data sets and specific criteria for identifying contexts of fragility vary among key development actors. This guidance uses the OECD States of Fragility Framework (2018), which identifies 58 fragile contexts and provides useful guidance for understanding fragility. Fragility is seen by OECD as a shifting and multidimensional phenomenon, in which an extensive set of economic, political, societal, environmental and security factors converge to manifest as risks (and coping capacities) specific to a particular context at specific moment in time. To assess the depth of risk, OECD uses a cluster analysis, drawing on, for example, the indices of: (1) economy: rates of investment,

economic growth, aid flows, rent dependency; (2) political: governance, rule of law, access to justice, fairness of elections, perceptions of corruption, accountability of institutions, delivery of public goods and basic services such as education and health; (3) societal: intra- and inter-group dynamics, inequality, trust, grievances – i.e., how societies function and what binds or divides them; (4) environmental: climate change, extreme weather events, food insecurity; and (5) security: state control over territory; deaths due to armed violence, lethal violence and homicide.¹

Local governance refers to the way local decisions are made and implemented. This includes decisions regarding the prioritization, availability and delivery of local goods and services and ultimately – whether explicit or implicit – who will benefit. Local governance is shaped by formal national, regional and local government policies and by informal interactions and relationships among various levels of government and local actors (e.g., local government, private sector, civil society, communities, traditional or religious leaders). While decentralization is intended to formalize local governance, local governance takes place in both centralized and decentralized contexts.

Local government refers to local-level bodies and institutions created by a constitutional, legislative or executive power for the purpose of carrying out specific functions.² The term ‘local government’ includes all levels of government below the national level (or state level, in federal contexts). Local government exists in contexts that are rural (e.g., districts, communes) and urban (e.g., towns, municipalities). Local government includes institutions with varying

¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *States of Fragility 2018*, OECD, Paris, 2018, p. 109. See: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/states-of-fragility-2018_9789264302075-en#page109

² Shah, Anwar, ed., *Local Governance in Developing Countries*, Public Sector Governance and Accountability Series, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2006.



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mandates and powers, for example: mayor or governor (appointed or elected); local councillors or assembly members (appointed or elected); technical and administrative units that deliver services assigned to local government (e.g., education department, social affairs department); and local offices of semi-autonomous government agencies (e.g., water authority). Local governments usually play a prominent role in local governance.

Peace capacities are institutions, groups, traditions, events, rituals, processes/mechanisms and people that are positioned and equipped to address conflict constructively and build peace. Identifying peace capacities through conflict analysis is foundational to defining potential peacebuilding programming entry points for UNICEF work. Peace capacities can become the building blocks that support peacebuilding.³

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace are both goals and processes. They involve a wide

range of measures to prevent the outbreak, continuation, escalation and recurrence of violent conflict. They address the immediate and root causes and consequences of fragility and conflict and aim to help parties end hostilities and contribute to national reconciliation.⁴ Peacebuilding measures strengthen national, local and individual capacities to effectively address conflict and its structural causes, thereby laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development.⁵

Social cohesion refers to the quality of the bonds and dynamics that exist among groups within a society. Groups can be distinguished in terms of regional, ethnic or sociocultural identity, religious or political beliefs, social class or economic sector, or based on such characteristics as gender or age. Strengthened social cohesion at the vertical level (relations between the state and citizens) and horizontal level (intra- and inter-group relations) is one of the key results of effective peacebuilding interventions.⁶

³ UNICEF Guide to Conflict Analysis, 2016.

⁴ UN Peacebuilding Support Office, 'Guidance on Sustaining Peace', 2017. Available at: <https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2017-03/2017.01.17%20-%20PBSO%20Guidance%20on%20Sustaining%20Peace_170117_final.pdf>

⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide*, UNICEF, November 2016. Available at: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/Programming_Guide_-_Conflict_Sensitivity_and_Peacebuilding_UNICEF_Nov_2016.pdf>, accessed 12 February 2019.

⁶ Ibid.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 WHY PEACEBUILDING AND SUSTAINING PEACE?

A peaceful society is necessary for children to realize their rights. Yet an estimated 500 million children – nearly a quarter of the world’s children – live in countries affected by armed conflict, violence or protracted crisis.⁷ In comparison to children living in developing countries, children living in fragile and conflict-affected settings are more than twice as likely to be undernourished; more than three times as likely to be unable to go to school; twice as likely to die before 5 years of age; and more than twice as likely to be unable to access clean water.⁸ Women, youth and children disproportionately bear the direct and indirect consequences of violence.⁹

UNICEF increasingly recognizes that lasting improvements in children’s ability to realize their rights are possible only if the root causes of fragility, conflict and violence are addressed.¹⁰ Most UNICEF programme resources are spent in fragile and conflict-affected settings.¹¹ So, to ensure that UNICEF investments and child rights achievements in these places are sustained, it is necessary to move beyond direct service provision and emergency response to building strong national and local systems and building up countries’ capacities for creating and maintaining peaceful and inclusive societies.

UNICEF is committed to the UN’s system-wide Sustaining Peace agenda captured in the resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282. This agenda includes "activities aimed at preventing

the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict". Sustaining peace involves a multidimensional range of measures to prevent conflict and reduce the risk of relapse into violent conflict by addressing its root causes, dynamics and consequences. The Sustaining Peace agenda is designed to strengthen national capacities for mediating conflict at all levels, addressing conflict causes and laying the foundations for peace and development.

For peacebuilding to be effective, it is necessary to focus on supporting higher-level political and state-building processes, such as political reconciliation, elections, reform of security sector and rule of law institutions. But this is not sufficient. Peacebuilding strategies must also address the social and economic aspects of conflict. This includes a focus on community-level social cohesion, with attention to divisions among people and groups. Peacebuilding strategies must also aim to reduce incentives for violence, strengthen positive perceptions of the state, and provide mechanisms for building trust and cooperation across communities.

The delivery of equitable and effective social services such as water and sanitation, health and education and child protection plays a role in building and sustaining peace. This has been emphasized in a number of UN documents, including the Sustaining Peace resolutions and the joint global United Nations and the World Bank study *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, an area at the core of UNICEF’s mandate.

⁷ United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Nearly a quarter of the world’s children live in conflict or disaster-stricken countries’, Press release, UNICEF, 9 December 2016. Available at: <www.unicef.org/media/media_93863.html>, accessed 1 February 2019.

⁸ World Bank, World Development Report 2011: *Conflict, security, and development*, IBRD and World Bank, Washington, D. C., 2011. Available at: <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf>, accessed 1 February 2019.

⁹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, States of Fragility 2016: Understanding violence, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2016, p. 15. Available at: <www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264267213-en.pdf?expires=1527864202&id=id&accname=ocid195767&checksum=72CDFB17A7EFAB09D12353B572991B36>, accessed 1 February 2019.

¹⁰ For a definition of fragility, see Glossary.

¹¹ In 2014, “Seventy per cent of UNICEF’s overall programme resources are invested in conflict-affected countries, and 20 of the 25 largest UNICEF country programmes are in countries considered to be ‘fragile’ by the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).” McCandless, Erin, and Kristoffer Nilau-Tarp, *The Contribution of Social Services to Peacebuilding and Resilience: Evolving theory and practice*, UNICEF, 2015, p. 10.

One of the largest operational UN agencies. UNICEF is present before, during and after violent conflict and is a major contributor to peacebuilding efforts. UNICEF seeks to enable the voices of women and children to be heard and works so that their rights and needs are considered in peace processes and in wider peacebuilding efforts. UNICEF's comparative advantage in building and sustaining peace is concentrated on the socioeconomic side of peacebuilding: it focuses on leveraging the equitable delivery and effective management of such essential social services as education, health, clean water and sanitation and child protection. The goal is to strengthen state-society relations, build trust and collaboration within and between groups and improve the capacity of individuals to contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

UNICEF expresses its explicit commitment to building peace and strengthening the links between humanitarian and development programming in the *UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021*. The theory of change for Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan states that UNICEF will work on “interventions that build social cohesion, strengthen national, community and individual capacities to address the causes of conflict constructively, and lay and support foundations for sustainable peace and development.”¹² Furthermore, UNICEF work on peacebuilding and linking humanitarian and development programming is identified as a change strategy in the Strategic Plan results framework, and one of the framework's indicators is the proportion of UNICEF country offices that meet organizational benchmarks on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.¹³

Further reading

- [UN Peacebuilding Support Office, 'Guidance on Sustaining Peace', 2017.](#)¹⁴
- [United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict*, 2018.](#)¹⁵
- [Report of the Secretary-General, *Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace*, 12 January 2018.](#)¹⁶

1.2 WHY PEACEBUILDING THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNANCE?

A key approach to addressing the root causes of fragility, conflict and violence is engaging local governance structures (see Box 1). There is growing evidence that national-level work is not enough to build and sustain peace. For example, efforts to rebuild state authority in fragmented societies from the central level outwards have, at times, actually exacerbated conflict.¹⁷ Furthermore, violence and conflict are increasingly localized and 'urban' in nature. Local governance is key to both understanding these conflict dynamics and addressing them. This is especially true in fragile contexts where the reach of central authorities is limited or non-existent.

Box 1. Local governance

Local governance refers to the way local decisions are made and implemented. This includes decisions regarding the prioritization, availability and delivery of local goods and services and ultimately – whether explicit or implicit – who will benefit. Local governance is shaped by formal national, regional and local government policies and by informal interactions and relationships among various levels of government and local actors (e.g., local government, private sector, civil society, communities, traditional or religious leaders). Local governance exists in both centralized and decentralized contexts.

Local governance plays a critical role in state-society relations. For citizens, local governments are often the most accessible level of public authority and provide opportunities to engage with decision makers who shape their day-to-day lives. Local governments are often in charge of (or share responsibility for) implementing such child-related services as education, child protection and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. So they play a key role not only in the realization of children's rights but also in fostering state legitimacy and state-society relations.

¹² United Nations Children's Fund Executive Board, Theory of Change Paper, UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021, Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged, UNICEF/2017/EB/11, 18 July 2017, p. 74. Available at: <www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-EB11-Theory_of_Change-EN-201707.19.pdf>, accessed 1 February 2019.

¹³ United Nations Children's Fund Executive Board, 'Final results framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021', E/ICEF/2017/18, 17 July 2017, p. 42. Available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1301145/files/E-ICEF_2017_18-EN.pdf>, accessed 2 February 2019.

¹⁴ UN Peacebuilding Support Office, 'Guidance on Sustaining Peace', 2017. Available at: https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2017-03/2017.01.17%20%20PBSO%20Guidance%20on%20Sustaining%20Peace_170117_final.pdf

[Sustaining%20Peace_170117_final.pdf](#)

¹⁵ United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict*, Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2018. Available at: <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>>.

¹⁶ Report of the Secretary-General, *Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace*, 12 January 2018. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/72/707>.

¹⁷ Öjendal, Joakim, Hanna Leonardsson and Martin Lundqvist, *Local Peacebuilding – Challenges and opportunities*, Expertgruppen för biståndsanalys, Stockholm, 2017.

At the same time, local governance provides key entry points for meaningful community participation in local decision making, including by women and youth. Evidence suggests that community participation and accountability mechanisms around local service delivery are crucial for strengthening state legitimacy.¹⁸ Local governance as a participative and inclusive process is also a key platform for communities to peacefully resolve local conflicts, both within and among communities.

Lastly, local governance can help bring about evolution in traditional and religious structures. Traditional and religious leaders often play an important role in conflict-affected settings, particularly in situations where state legitimacy or efficacy is weak. Interacting with traditional and religious leaders may present challenges, however, so it is important that development agencies build the trust necessary to effectively engage them in programmes. Furthermore, evidence suggests that the more frequently traditional structures interact with pluralistic and inclusive formal institutions, such as local governments, the more likely it is that these traditional structures will evolve alongside and complement such institutions.¹⁹

Local governance is not a panacea for peacebuilding, however. Local governance actors and practices are not neutral and can perpetuate exclusionary practices that are sometimes at the root of conflict, such as the marginalization and exclusion of certain groups from local decision-making processes or as beneficiaries of programmes. There is a need for a thorough conflict analysis that unearths such practices and for programming that addresses them. This type of programming could include peacebuilding initiatives like building local capacities for dialogue, reconciliation and inter-group interaction. It could mean working with adolescents to build their own peacebuilding capacities. For local governance interventions such as these to have a country-wide impact in favour of peace, however, they need to connect to national policies (e.g., decentralization policies). This

institutionalizes practices and strengthens links between local and higher levels of governance and among neighbouring communities and actors.²⁰

Further reading

- [Global Stocktake of UNICEF Engagement in Decentralization and Local Governance, 2011–2015](#)²¹
 - A Local Governance Approach to Programming– Guidance for achieving multi-sectoral results through working with local government²²
 - [Child Participation in Local Governance – A UNICEF guidance note](#)²³
 - [UNICEF Engagement in Social Accountability: A stocktake](#)²⁴, accessed July 31 2019.
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1.3 PURPOSE AND OUTLINE OF THIS GUIDANCE NOTE

UNICEF is well positioned to contribute to peacebuilding through local governance. UNICEF teams working in all goal areas of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 frequently act at the local level to achieve results for children. In terms of their peacebuilding work, a 2016 survey of UNICEF engagement in decentralization and local governance identified 18 UNICEF country offices that work on peacebuilding through local governance.²⁵ With a global focus on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies in Sustainable Development Goal 16 (including the target of establishing effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), UNICEF engagement in peacebuilding through local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings is expected to become more prominent. At the same time, donor emphasis on local-level efforts and on bridging the humanitarian and development divide means that there may be more resources to support this type of work.

The complexity of this work calls for clear, evidence-based guidance. Peacebuilding through local governance requires a thorough knowledge of local and national processes and a strong understanding of conflict dynamics. It requires an understanding of the political economies that structure local societies and relations between local communities and national elites.

¹⁸ Denney, Lisa, Richard Mallett and Dyan Mazurana, 'Peacebuilding and Service Delivery', United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, February 2015. Available at: <<https://securelivelihoods.org/wp-content/uploads/Peacebuilding-and-Service-Delivery.pdf>>, accessed 2 February 2019.

¹⁹ Garrigue, Nicolas, *Building a Resilient Foundation for Peace and Development – Local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings*, UNDP How-to Guide, United Nations Development Programme, New York, 2016. Available at: <www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/local_governance/local-governance-in-fragile-and-conflict-affected-settings.html>, accessed 11 February 2019.

²⁰ Öjendal, Leonardsson and Lundqvist, *Local Peacebuilding*.

²¹ de Wijn, Marija, *Global Stocktake of UNICEF Engagement in Decentralization and Local Governance, 2011–2015*, United Nations Children's Fund, New York, November 2016. Available at: <www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/DLG-Stocktake.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

²² de Wijn, Marija, *A Local Governance Approach to Programming– Guidance for achieving multi-sectoral results through working with local government*, UNICEF, 2019.

²³ de Wijn, Marija, *Child Participation in Local Governance. A UNICEF Guidance Note*, United Nations Children's Fund, New York, January 2017. Available at: <www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/UNICEF_Child_Participation_FINAL_4.2018_v2.pdf>, accessed 12 February 2019.

²⁴ de Wijn, Marija, *UNICEF Engagement in Social Accountability: A stocktake*, United Nations Children's Fund, New York, 2018. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Social_Accountability_stocktake.pdf>, accessed July 31 2019.

²⁵ de Wijn, Marija, *Global Stocktake of UNICEF Engagement in Decentralization and Local Governance, 2011–2015*.



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This note provides guidance to UNICEF country offices on programming for peacebuilding through local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Its main objective is to inform the design and implementation of UNICEF peacebuilding interventions and to contribute to the overall effectiveness of UNICEF programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. It does so by providing programming examples (section 3 –The What) and by pointing towards key programming considerations (section 4 –The How). The programming examples offered in this guidance are not necessarily new. Many examples build on existing UNICEF local governance work, such as strengthening local planning and budgeting and inclusive decision-making processes. What is different, however, is that this guidance argues for a more intentional approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding through local governance programming and encourages linking this work explicitly to peacebuilding results.

This guidance note illuminates UNICEF engagement in local governance in both rural

and urban contexts. Although UNICEF considers national decentralization processes to be an important part of their context, and the actions proposed here can be applied to countries undergoing decentralization reform, this note is not intended to provide guidance on how UNICEF should engage in decentralization reform as an approach to peacebuilding.

The guidance note is based on a literature review and three UNICEF case studies. The note examines the best practices and lessons learned that were identified in the literature. It further incorporates guidance from UNICEF policy documents, including *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding: Programming guide and the Guidance on Risk-informed Programming*.²⁶ It draws from experiences engaging in peacebuilding through local governance, including case studies that document UNICEF country office experiences in Colombia, Kyrgyzstan and Somalia.²⁷ These experiences are referenced in the note alongside the relevant peacebuilding and local governance issues they illustrate.

²⁶ These include, among others: *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding: Programming guide*, UNICEF, 2016; *Guidance on Risk-informed Programming*, UNICEF, 2018; *Guide to Conflict Analysis*, UNICEF, November 2016; *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding in UNICEF:*

Technical note, UNICEF, 2012; and *Programme Framework for Fragile Contexts*, UNICEF, New York, April 2018.

²⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Local Governance and Sustaining Peace –Country office case studies', UNICEF, New York 2019.

2. UNICEF APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING AND SUSTAINING PEACE

Peacebuilding involves a wide range of measures to address the immediate and structural causes and consequences of fragility and conflict. Peacebuilding measures strengthen national, local and individual capacities to effectively address conflicts and their structural causes. In this way, they lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development (see Box 2).²⁸

Through its unique role and experiences, UNICEF has a comparative advantage in

the social dimension of peacebuilding. Consequently, the UNICEF approach to peacebuilding focuses on the equitable delivery and effective management of basic social services, including local services. The overarching theory of change for this approach is that social services contribute to peacebuilding by addressing grievances that underlie or which can trigger violent conflict, while offering a means to build, or rebuild, state legitimacy and accountability to society.³¹

Box 2. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Following reviews of the United Nations peace and security architecture, identical resolutions adopted in 2016 by the General Assembly (70/262) and by the [Security Council \(2282\)](#) introduced the concept of 'sustaining peace', which explicitly broadens the focus from post-conflict peacebuilding to include "activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development, and emphasizing that sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the government and all other national stakeholders, and should flow through all three pillars of the United Nations engagement at all stages of conflict [emphasis added]."²⁹

In other words, sustaining peace entails identifying and proactively supporting peace capacities wherever they already exist. While the starting point for peacebuilding is conflict, the sustaining peace approach seeks to understand and reinforce what's already underpinning social cohesion, sustainable development, the rule of law and human security. Sustaining peace is therefore seen as a goal and a process. It is an explicit objective for governments and all other national stakeholders and an agenda that requires cooperation of across all the three pillars of the United Nations in our work in peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian action.³⁰

²⁸ *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide*.

²⁹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2282 (2016), S/RES/2282, adopted 27 April 2016. Available at: <[https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282\(2016\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282(2016))>, accessed 12 February 2019.

³⁰ UN Peacebuilding Support Office, 'Guidance on Sustaining Peace', 2017. Available at: <<https://www.youth4peace.info/system/>

[files/2017-03/201701.17%20-%20PBSO%20Guidance%20on%20Sustaining%20Peace_170117_final.pdf](#)>.

³¹ McCandless, Erin, with Flora Smith and Beth Prosnitz, *Peace Dividends and Beyond: Contributions of administrative and social services to peacebuilding*, United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, New York, 2012.



The UNICEF approach recognizes the importance of including youth in peacebuilding work and the powerful roles they can play in building peace (see Box 3). Adolescence is a pivotal time for identity formation. In fragile and conflict-affected situations, it is critical to support young people who face chronic insecurity, trauma and violence. Evidence shows that a caring personal environment, along with policies and services that are attentive to young people's needs, protection and capabilities, builds their capacity to break long-standing cycles of poverty, discrimination and violence.³²

Adolescents and youth not only witness and survive conflict. In many places, they also play an integral part in preventing and resolving conflict by helping communities recover from violence and by finding creative solutions to long-standing problems. Including young people's perspectives and leadership in conflict prevention and peacebuilding is therefore vital. UNICEF has found that "adolescents have significant knowledge to offer with regard to the conflict situation, its historic roots and how it affects their daily lives."³³

Box 3. The role of young people in peacebuilding

Evidence shows that enhancing young people's participation in decision making and establishing long-term policies to address their economic, social and political aspirations is fundamental to sustaining peace at all levels. Among other resolutions, the 2015 [United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250(2015))³⁴ recognizes young people's important and positive contribution to maintaining and promoting peace and security. This resolution "Urges Member States to consider ways to increase inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict ... and, as appropriate, to consider establishing integrated mechanisms for meaningful participation of youth in peace processes and dispute-resolution."³⁵

³² *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide*.

³³ Seymour, Claudia, *Engaging Adolescents in Conflict Analysis, A Guidance Note, United Nations Children's Fund, New York, May 2013*, p. 9. Available at: <https://eccnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/Adolescents-in-Conflict-Analysis.pdf>

³⁴ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security, S/RES/2250, adopted 9 December 2015. Available at: [<https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250\(2015\)>](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250(2015)), accessed 12 February 2019.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.



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UNICEF peacebuilding activities involve engaging at three impact levels: policy and state institutions, communities (within and among groups) and individuals. Engagement at all three levels addresses root causes and consequences of violent conflict and strengthens capacities for sustainable peace and development. The three impact levels are:

- **Strengthened vertical social cohesion (relationships between state and society):** Impact at this level is brought about by addressing the mechanisms that connect state institutions with local communities and individuals. It also requires working inclusively with sector systems, policies and governance. Working through local governance structures and enhancing their capacities is often a feasible way to achieve results for children in fragile contexts where the legitimacy of central governance is compromised or institutional capacities are weak.³⁶

- **Strengthened horizontal social cohesion (relationships within and among groups):** Recent research highlights the need to address horizontal inequalities and exclusion (and not necessarily poverty) to prevent conflict and build peace.³⁷ Achieving this level of impact requires working with local public actors and communities to strengthen positive relationships within and among groups. Actions include addressing what underlies community-level conflict and building local capacities to respond to the effects of violence.
- **Strengthened individual capacities and contributions:** This is achieved by enhancing the capacities of individuals to deal with the impact of violent conflict and address the causes of conflict as active members of their communities and institutions.

Further reading

- [Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide](#)³⁸
 - [Programme Framework for Fragile Contexts](#)³⁹
 - United Nations, [The Missing Peace: Independent progress study on youth and peace and security, 2018](#).⁴⁰
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³⁶ *Programme Framework for Fragile Contexts*. Available at: <www.unicef.org/emergencies/downloads/eresource/docs/Fragility/Integrating%20Humanitarian%20Response%20and%20Development-%20Programme%20Framework%20for%20Fragile%20Contexts.pdf>, accessed 14 February 2019.

³⁷ United Nations and World Bank Group, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict*, World Bank, Washington, D. C., 2018.

³⁸ *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide*. Available at: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/Programming_Guide_-_Conflict_Sensitivity_and_Peacebuilding_UNICEF_Nov_2016.pdf>, accessed 12 February 2019.

³⁹ *Programme Framework for Fragile Contexts*. Available at: <www.unicef.org/emergencies/downloads/eresource/docs/Fragility/Integrating%20Humanitarian%20Response%20and%20Development-%20Programme%20Framework%20for%20Fragile%20Contexts.pdf>, accessed 14 February 2019.

⁴⁰ United Nations, *The Missing Peace: Independent progress study on youth and peace and security, 2018*. Available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/Progress_Study_on_Youth_Peace_Security_A-72-761_S-2018-86_ENGLISH.pdf>, accessed 25 February 2019.



Hadija Osman Wardhere, 13, outside her home in Moqor Manyow camp for internally displaced people, Baidoa, Somalia, April 28, 2019. Hadija lives in the camp with her parents and six siblings. The whole family travelled over 400 km to Baidoa in 2015 after being forced from their homes by violence and unrest.

3. THE WHAT – PROGRAMMING EXAMPLES

This section details local governance initiatives and projects that can support peacebuilding at the three identified impact levels: strengthened vertical social cohesion, strengthened horizontal social cohesion and strengthened individual capacities and contributions. While local governance activities are presented under these three distinct levels (vertical, horizontal and individual), in practice there is considerable overlap. For instance, local governance activities focused on horizontal social cohesion aim to strengthen relationships among groups. This, in turn, involves ensuring that the state supports equity among different groups – an approach that can also be considered key to vertical social cohesion.

Staff and stakeholders should carry out an in-depth conflict analysis to identify projects and initiatives appropriate to the local context.

Programmes should respond to the root causes and peacebuilding needs that the analysis uncovers (see section 4 – The How).

3.1 LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN SUPPORT OF VERTICAL SOCIAL COHESION

Programming that can contribute to improving relations and trust between state and society (vertical social cohesion) not necessarily specific to peacebuilding but can be part of systems strengthening in a variety of development and humanitarian contexts. In fragile and conflict-affected settings, however, it is particularly important to focus on community participation, accountability and grievance mechanisms; inclusive and equitable service delivery and management; and (re-)connecting communities to the state in a constructive and non-violent manner.

Table 1. Examples of local governance initiatives that support vertical social cohesion

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen local administrative data (e.g., civil registration data, population demographics) and sector-specific data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen local data systems/tools and support the development of local data policies Strengthen local government capacity for data collection, through training, on-the-job coaching and peer-to-peer learning Promote open data systems to enhance transparency and inclusive decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs Enables the state to understand and address inequities and vulnerabilities

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local (real-time) monitoring systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement RapidPro applications, school monitoring systems like eduTrac or dashboard mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs • Addresses community demand for feedback mechanisms and accountability for service provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen community participation in local governance, including participation of women, youth and adolescents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and pilot participatory decision-making processes around local planning and budgeting, including meaningful ways to ensure participation of women and adolescents • Strengthen local government capacity to enable effective participation by women, youth and adolescents, through training, on-the-job coaching and peer-to-peer learning • Enhance community awareness of participatory processes and the right to participate, particularly among women, youth and adolescents • Support the development of national guidelines on local participatory processes, e.g., around local planning and budgeting • Support constructive youth engagement throughout the electoral cycle • Support local government ‘open days’, at which communities can interact with local government officials to learn about their work and share community needs and priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs • Supports constructive state–community interaction Builds trust between the state and communities • Addresses inequities in access to decision making and community grievances around lack of participation

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen transparency, social accountability, and grievance and complaints mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local transparency mechanisms (e.g., community noticeboards; ensuring local policies, plans and budgets are available in accessible formats and language) • Strengthen local government capacity to use transparency mechanisms through training, on-the-job coaching and peer-to-peer learning • Adapt U-Report/RapidPro/eduTrac mechanisms to allow communities to report service outages⁴¹ • Pilot complaints boxes and/or complaints mechanisms that are supported by information and communications technology (ICT) • Collaborate with local media (e.g., radio) to enhance transparency and accountability and support an informed citizenry • Support community scorecard methodologies/interface meetings between community members and (public) service providers or local leaders • Strengthen community awareness of social accountability and grievance and complaints mechanisms • Support the development of national guidelines on local transparency and accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs • Supports constructive state–community interaction • Builds trust between the state and communities • Addresses specific grievances and perceptions at community level that fuel conflict and tension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen local planning and budgeting processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen local government capacity for evidence-based local planning and budgeting, through training, peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange between local governments • Support the development of national guidelines on local planning and budgeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs • Strengthens state capacity to identify and address exclusion and inequity

⁴¹ UNICEF Zimbabwe has used U-Report to improve communication about WASH services between residents and local authorities. When residents report disruptions in service delivery, response teams immediately receive Short Message Service (SMS) notifications about the disruption. The

system has reduced the distances that community members must travel to report faults, reduced response times for addressing service disruptions and improved accountability. It is contributing to continuing improvement of relations between local government councils and residents.

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government resource mobilization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support contributions by the private sector or by communities (cash or in-kind) for capital investments or investment in local goods and services • Encourage community willingness to pay for services, through awareness raising • Engage in national policy advocacy around adequate intergovernmental fiscal transfers to ensure sufficient local resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support horizontal and vertical coordination among local actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen (existing) coordination mechanisms and dialogue among local governance actors • Strengthen (existing) coordination mechanisms and dialogue among local, regional and national state and non-state actors • Support transparency, dialogue and trust building among governance actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community needs • Builds dialogue and trust between local governance actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen local service delivery (e.g., education, WASH) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support public-private partnerships, or partnerships between local government and civil society, to increase coverage, quality and accessibility of local services • Pilot one-stop-shop/one-window services that provide multiple (public) services from a single location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens state responsiveness to community priorities and needs



Somalia remains a fragile and conflict-prone country. A federal structure has existed in Somalia since 2012 and the Somali Compact has enabled the emergence of new federal member states in the southern part of the country.⁴³ Local governments have been operating in the autonomous regions of Puntland and Somaliland for many years, but their establishment in the new federal member states – a process closely tied to other stabilization, conflict resolution and reconciliation efforts – is just beginning.

It is against this background that the UN's Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery (JPLG) began in 2008, implemented by UNICEF, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).⁴⁴

As part of JPLG, UNICEF led efforts to pilot decentralized service delivery in line with the Puntland and Somaliland decentralization road maps. The service delivery model (SDM) that was piloted supported districts to perform their devolved service delivery functions in the areas of education, health and WASH.

The service delivery model includes the following:

- Sector decentralization strategies that clarify the service delivery functions, roles and responsibilities of different levels of government;
- Dialogue and coordination platforms (e.g., technical working groups, sector coordination meetings) that convene authorities from all levels of government to discuss issues related to decentralized service delivery;
- Training for staff in district social affairs departments who have responsibility for overseeing social services in their localities;
- Service delivery planning and budgeting exercises in which district, regional and state authorities discuss service delivery priorities, target facilities and financial contributions (which come from JPLG, district and ministry sources);
- Co-funding grants to help districts carry out their decentralized service delivery functions and to test new procurement, human resources management and other core district systems;
- Use of social accountability tools such as the community scorecard to support citizen engagement and feedback related to local service delivery; and
- Advocacy efforts aimed at sharing district progress and achievements with the Somali public, the state/central government and implementing partners and donors, to encourage greater support for districts' role in service delivery.

Key SDM achievements in Somalia include:

- Dialogue and coordination forums have brought together state and local governments to clarify functions and strengthen collaboration;
- Increased local government ownership of service delivery has resulted in significant increases in contributions to services from local government revenue sources;
- Local government engagement in local service delivery has increased the coverage and reliability of services; and
- Local government authorities have progressively established their legitimacy and increased public trust in their institutions.

⁴² For the full case study, see: 'Local Governance and Sustaining Peace – Country office case studies'.

⁴³ The Government of Somalia and its partners agreed the Somali Compact in September 2013: "It was based on the 'New Deal for engagement in fragile states' agreed at Busan in 2011. Its aim was to provide '... an overarching strategic framework for coordinating political, security and development efforts for peace and state building activities'". Manuel,

Marcus, et al., 'The new deal in Somalia: An independent review of the Somali Compact, 2014–2016', Report, Overseas Development Institute, London, April 2017.

⁴⁴ The United Nations Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery (JPLG) has since been implemented over two five-year phases (2008–2012, 2013–2017); it entered its third phase in 2018.

3.2 LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN SUPPORT OF HORIZONTAL SOCIAL COHESION

Strengthening horizontal social cohesion involves addressing two intertwined features: inequality and social capital. The inequality dimension relates to the goal of promoting equal opportunities and reducing disparities and divisions within a society, while the social capital dimension concerns social relations, i.e.,

interactions and ties between individuals, social groups and institutions.⁴⁵ Local governments – together with other local governance actors – are key to addressing inequality because they can ensure inclusive public policies and equitable public service delivery. Local governance structures are also a key platform for strengthening social capital, because they can foster dialogue within and between communities.

Table 2. Examples of local governance initiatives that support horizontal social cohesion

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support disaggregation of local administrative data (e.g., civil registration data, population demographics) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical support for the design and development of local government management information systems that include disaggregated and child-specific indicators • Pilot data methodologies designed to capture the exclusion of specific population groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports evidence-based policies that reduce disparities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the involvement of traditionally excluded groups (e.g., youth, women, minority/ethnic groups, forcibly displaced communities) in local decision-making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the presence of traditionally excluded groups, including youth, women and minority groups, in local voluntary groups and committees (e.g., standpipe committees) • Train communities, civil society and local governments in inclusive decision making and adolescent/youth participation • Support the inclusion of traditionally excluded groups in local government decision-making processes • Strengthen the capacity of locally elected leaders coming from traditionally excluded groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes equal opportunities • Strengthens positive interaction within and among groups

⁴⁵ Jenson, Jane, Defining and Measuring Social Cohesion, Social Policies in Small States Series, No. 1, Commonwealth Secretariat/United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2010.

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support intra-communal development and infrastructure projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help local governments initiate inclusive local development and infrastructure projects that act as ‘connectors’ between communities⁴⁶ • Engage in ‘urban upgrading’ and creating safe places to reduce urban violence⁴⁷ • Support local social infrastructure (e.g., early childhood development centres or child protection committees) that facilitates positive interaction among different groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces disparities • Addresses perceptions and grievances associated with disparities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support equitable local resource allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track local government resource allocation by population group, neighbourhood, district, etc. • Advocate for the development of evidence-based and inclusive local policies, plans and budgets • Engage in national policy advocacy around intergovernmental fiscal transfers to ensure equitable geographical distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces disparities • Addresses perceptions and grievances associated with disparities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support dialogue and coordination among local governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support inter-municipal development and infrastructure projects • Support dialogue among local governments across country borders • Support coordination and dialogue between refugee camps and neighbouring local governments and between the respective communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens positive interaction within and among groups • Builds trust and inclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with informal local governance actors (traditional, religious or community leaders) and facilitate their involvement in formal local governance processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In any of the above activities, identify informal stakeholders (e.g., local traditional and religious leaders) during the stakeholder analysis and provide them with appropriate role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds trust and inclusion • Expands reach and engagement to traditionally excluded actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote traditional or informal dispute resolution where formal institutions are weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create education campaigns that promote informal dispute resolution • Engage young people in informal dispute resolution mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforms and resolves conflict or grievances within or between groups • Supports transitional justice processes

⁴⁶ See, for instance: World Bank, ‘Projects & Operations: Community development and livelihood improvement “Gemi Diriya” Project’, World Bank, Washington, D. C., <<http://projects.worldbank.org/P074872/community-development-livelihood-improvement-gemi-diriya-project?lang=en>>, accessed 3 February 2019.

⁴⁷ For instance, improving access to public spaces, enhancing lighting and visibility, and setting up social and business facilities along walkways resulted in an increase in pedestrian traffic, community surveillance and social cohesion. See also: United Nations Children’s Fund, *Shaping urbanization for children: A handbook on child-responsive urban planning*, UNICEF, New York, May 2018. Available at: <www.unicef.org/publications/index_103349.html>, accessed 3 February 2019.



Kyrgyzstan gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and shortly after implemented a parliamentary democracy, which was a first for Central Asia. In 2010, Kyrgyzstan adopted a liberal constitution that guarantees the separation of powers, fundamental human rights and a system of governance based on the rule of law.

Kyrgyzstan's independence coincided with a demographic shift, mainly due to the emigration of Russians from the country, which increased the proportion of ethnic Kyrgyz in the population from 50 to 80 per cent. Ethnic Uzbeks, based in the south, make up 14 per cent of the population – currently the largest ethnic minority in Kyrgyzstan. Ethnic Russians, in the north, are 6 per cent of the population.

The changing demographics provided politicians with an opportunity to gain votes through identity politics and populist messaging. In 2010, ethnic violence erupted in the south, resulting in 418 deaths⁴⁹ and the destruction of 2,800 homes.⁵⁰ Feelings of social injustice and suspicion linger, slowing recovery and inter-ethnic integration. The situation remains particularly fragile in the Fergana Valley, which spans Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and is mainly home to ethnic Uzbeks from Kyrgyzstan.

The United Nations Country Team Peacebuilding Needs Assessment conducted in Kyrgyzstan in 2013 highlighted the potential for conflict related to the lack of trust between citizens and the state and among citizens, especially among those of different ethnic groups.⁵¹ The assessment found “instances of weak state control and governance that affect the trust of people in state institutions, as those institutions tend to provide an unequal or uneven access to quality public services, leaving the [sic] room for discriminatory approaches and deprivation from social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights.”⁵² It also identified an overall sense of impunity and a tendency to resort to violence to resolve disputes, leaving women, children and youth most vulnerable. A lack of civic identity and the prevalence of ethno-nationalism increase the potential for conflict. The assessment pointed towards the need for checks-and-balances mechanisms and greater participation in public affairs by minorities, women, youth and other excluded groups.

In the aftermath of the 2010 violence, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan partnered with central and local government, international development organizations and civil society organizations to create a network of youth centres. The youth centres provided a safe space for young people from differing backgrounds to come together, learn technical and social skills and discuss issues and remedial and preventive actions. Since 2012, this programme has taken a more systemic approach, by introducing:

- Common standards for professional youth work in conflict-affected communities, which include a focus on youth leadership, communication and citizenship skills;
- Career planning;
- Youth participation in local government development planning and budgeting; and
- Monitoring of local service delivery.

In parallel, the programme introduced a youth policy course aimed at local public servants at one of Kyrgyzstan's graduate schools.

Since its launch, the youth policy course has trained 50 local self-government (LSG) youth workers. This, in turn, has resulted in the introduction of more than 60 youth initiatives and more than 20 new LSG youth services. In 10 pilot communities, youth now participate in LSG budget hearings through which they can advocate for LSG funds to be allocated to issues that matter to them. The programme also helped LSGs engage the services of civil society organizations and private companies as a way to support local youth policy implementation.

⁴⁸ For the full case study, see: ‘Local Governance and Sustaining Peace – Country office case studies’.

⁴⁹ Freedom House, Memorial Human Rights Center and Norwegian Helsinki Committee, ‘A Chronicle of Violence: The events in the south of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010 (Osh Region)’; Report 2/2012, Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Oslo, 2012, p. 193. Available at: <<https://memohrc.org/sites/all/themes/memo/templates/pdf.php?pdf=/sites/default/files/775.pdf>>, accessed 13 April 2018.

⁵⁰ International Crisis Group, ‘The Pogroms in Kyrgyzstan’, Asia Report No. 193, 23 August 2010, p. 18. Available at: <<https://d2071andvip0wi.cloudfront.net/193-the-pogroms-in-kyrgyzstan.pdf>>, accessed 17 April 2018.

⁵¹ In programme countries, the United Nations Country Team is the United Nations' highest level of inter-agency coordination and decision making.

⁵² United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office and Peacebuilding Fund, Priority Plan for the Kyrgyz Republic. Available at: <<http://mdtf.undp.org/document/download/11877>>, accessed 12 February 2019.

3.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUAL CAPACITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

To leverage the role of local governance for peacebuilding, it is important to help local governance actors implement programmes and projects that aim to anticipate, manage, resolve and transform violent conflict. This work must also enhance the capacities of individuals to deal with impacts of violent conflict and address the causes of conflict as active members of their communities.

Table 3. Examples of local governance initiatives that support individual capacities and contributions

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government in the development of psychosocial and peacebuilding projects that address the specific needs of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local governments, ministries and non-governmental organizations to assess the psychosocial needs of children, adolescents and youth in fragile contexts or in the aftermath of violent conflict • Broker partnerships between local governments and civil society organizations to provide psychosocial and specialized social welfare services that are accessible to different population groups • Broker partnerships between local governments and civil society organizations to provide peacebuilding programmes that are accessible to different population groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the psychosocial needs of children, adolescents and young people in fragile contexts or in the aftermath of violent conflict • Strengthens peace capacities within the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government in the development of youth services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broker partnerships between local governments and civil society organizations to establish youth clubs that are accessible to different population groups • Help local governments establish youth leadership programmes, including, but not limited to, youth parliaments and awards for adolescents and youth who act as community leaders for peace • Support volunteer programmes that engage young people in local development, conflict resolution and basic services provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the needs and priorities of adolescents and young people in fragile contexts or in the aftermath of violent conflict • Strengthens peace capacities within the community • Facilitates positive interaction within and among groups

Programming example	Select activities	Why (peacebuilding dimension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government in the development of youth employment services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local governments in setting up, including through partnerships with civil society and private sector actors, vocational training programmes that are accessible to all population groups • Help local governments establish internship programmes in collaboration with private sector actors • Help local governments establish job placement centres or organize local employment fairs • Advocate for local governments to provide private sector actors with tax incentives for employing local youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the needs and priorities of adolescents and youth in fragile contexts or in the aftermath of violent conflict • Strengthens peace capacities within the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government, civil society, traditional and religious authorities/leaders and communities in reintegrating children formerly associated with armed forces or groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitize and strengthen the capacity of traditional and religious leaders to support the reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces or groups into their communities • Recruit local teams of civil society or religious activists to work with children formerly associated with armed forces or groups and demobilized youth and support their reintegration into families and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the needs of children, adolescents and youth in fragile contexts or in the aftermath of violent conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government, civil society, traditional and religious leaders and communities in reintegrating former gang members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local government and civil society in outreach and reintegration programmes • Support tattoo removal, drug and alcohol counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the needs of children, adolescents and youth in fragile contexts or in the aftermath of violent conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support communities, civil society groups, including youth groups, women's associations etc., in conflict management and strengthening conflict resolution skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train communities and civil society groups in conflict management and conflict resolution • Support community/ neighbourhood policing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens peace capacities within the community



Colombia has been affected by an armed conflict spanning more than 50 years that has disproportionately affected children and adolescents. The armed conflict, which began in the mid-1960s, involved various guerrilla groups. The largest and most influential of these was known as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo, or FARC-EP). Each party to the conflict framed its opposition to the Colombian government differently, but most mobilized supporters via a communist stance, campaigning on such issues as poverty, political exclusion and social justice. At the same time, the government fortified its power by appealing to order and the administration of justice. The resulting conflict led to amplified tensions, many civilian casualties and the geographical spread of the conflict in the 1980s and 1990s. Despite a signed accord with FARC-EP, violence persists and children remain especially vulnerable. Other major armed groups, like the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, or ELN), remain active.

UNICEF Colombia has worked on a wide array of initiatives to tackle the effects of the conflict on children. UNICEF’s child protection section works to increase the capacities of children and youth to participate in peacebuilding through ‘Somos paz’ (We are peace).

Somos paz is a conceptual and methodological tool that promotes and strengthens the capacities of children and adolescents as peacebuilders through art, music, sport and communications. Somos Paz projects are supported by municipalities and local non-governmental organizations. Somos paz starts from the idea that peacebuilding is a process of capacity strengthening: children and adolescents acquire the tools necessary to take the lead in reconciliation activities in their own communities. Somos paz is a proven strategy, having already been implemented in several parts of Colombia with more than 5,000 children and adolescents in total. It is currently used in nine territories.

Somos paz follows on from two strategies to equip children and adolescents to lead the peacebuilding process in Colombia. ‘Paz a la joven’ (Peace to youth) has targeted young community leaders for capacity building. These young people have learned to organize peace movements in their communities and are trained to act as peace ambassadors. ‘Paz a tiempo’ (Peace in time) provides an online six-month certificate course on peace and peacebuilding at the local level for young people aged 12–18 years old. The initiative has generated great interest, with more than 9,000 candidates from across all 32 departments of Colombia signing up for the course.

⁵³ For the full case study, see: ‘Local Governance and Sustaining Peace- Case studies’.



Shafiqa, 12 years old has one wish. There would peace in her village, so she can go back to school. "I am missing my home, friends, the classroom. I dream about the day I teach in my own class and help children read and write." "And I hope every day that dream will come true."

4. THE HOW – PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS

This section outlines key programming considerations for peacebuilding through local governance, as aligned with results-based programming, including:

- Conflict analysis;
- Programme design and implementation; and
- Monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

4.1 CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Developing and using conflict analysis is a prerequisite for ensuring that UNICEF work on local governance in conflict-affected settings is conflict-sensitive and contributes to peacebuilding. Conflict analysis identifies specific conflict dynamics and how they play out at the local level. This helps UNICEF better understand how the conflict context and UNICEF work interact; it also helps prevent unintended (negative) consequences of the programme work. Conflict analysis also helps UNICEF identify entry points for addressing the root causes and dynamics of conflict. A thorough conflict analysis can provide:

- A better understanding of the forces promoting violent conflict and peace and inclusion, as well as other risks in the conflict environment;
- An opportunity to identify evidence-based programming strategies; and
- Programming baselines and targets (see section 4.3).

Conflict analysis can be part of a broader risk analysis for risk-informed programming carried out in partnership with other agencies.⁵⁴ Where possible, UNICEF conflict analysis should be participatory and include analysis of the experiences, perceptions and peace capacities of children and youth. In some contexts, terminology could be adapted to accommodate political constraints or sensitivities (e.g., instead of ‘conflict analysis’, the exercise might more suitably be called ‘social cohesion analysis’,

‘context analysis’, ‘peace and development analysis’, ‘resilience analysis’ or ‘sustaining peace analysis’).

UNICEF’s [Guide to Conflict Analysis](#)⁵⁵ recommends the following steps for a conflict analysis:

- 1. ‘Conflict snapshot’:** This captures a quick profile of a conflict, including its history, impacts and current status. It is useful because it provides a brief overview of the background and extent of a conflict before going into detail. From a local governance perspective, it is essential to be as specific as possible about the local dimension of a conflict.
- 2. Stakeholder analysis:** This step identifies critical local, regional, national and international actors that influence, or are influenced by, the conflict; analyses their perspectives (i.e., interests, needs, positions, resources) and their inter-relationships; determines how to engage stakeholders; and identifies programming opportunities. A stakeholder mapping and matrix is useful for this exercise. Examples: At the local level, the mapping and matrix should include stakeholders with formal influence (e.g., mayor) as well as those with informal influence (e.g., community leaders, influential personalities).
- 3. Analysis of conflict dynamics:** This analyses the interactions between multiple stakeholders; identifies ‘dividers’ and ‘connectors’; and identifies windows of opportunity for appropriate programmatic responses. Examples: At the local level, dividers may include land disputes, a past trauma left unaddressed or discriminatory practices by local service providers. Connectors may include the joint management of local resources, collaboration between groups and events or places that bring people together.

⁵⁴ *Guidance on Risk-informed Programming*.

⁵⁵ *Guide to Conflict Analysis*. Available at: <<http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee->

[assets/resources/Guide_to_Conflict_Analysis_-_UNICEF_Nov_2016.pdf](#)>, accessed 11 February 2019.

4. Root and proximate causes: This step identifies both root and proximate causes of the conflict. Root causes are underlying socio-economic, cultural and institutional factors that create the conditions for destructive conflict. Proximate causes contribute to the escalation of tensions and create an enabling environment for violence. Examples: Inequalities, lack of participation and historical grievances are common root causes of conflict or violence at the local level; aggressive rhetoric, economic decline and increasing competition over resources are common proximate causes at the local level.

5. Triggers: It is critical to be aware of potential triggers that can contribute to the outbreak or escalation of tension and violent conflict, and their impacts on stakeholders and on the implementation of programmes. Examples: A marred election, an assassination (or attempted assassination) or instances of hate speech can rapidly escalate tensions at the local level.

6. Peace capacities: These are capacities present within people, groups, institutions, traditions, events, rituals and processes/mechanisms that position and equip these entities to address conflict and build peace. Examples: At the local level, peace capacities can be expressed in mechanisms for alternative dispute resolution, in civil society actions or in inclusive service delivery.

In conducting a conflict analysis, it is important to understand that decentralization and local governance are an inherent part of the overall conflict system. A conflict necessarily affects local governance, and vice versa. For this reason, any local governance intervention either positively or negatively influences conflict dynamics. The interests and motivations of political actors (e.g., mayor, local council members) and administrative actors (e.g., clerks, sector staff) are often overlooked during conflict analysis. Considering decentralization and local governance processes from a conflict-sensitive perspective is therefore essential (see Box 4).



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Box 4: Conflict analysis of decentralization and local governance

Decentralization trajectories and local governance structures are integral features of local-level conflict analysis. The following sets of questions can help determine which aspects of decentralization and local governance influence conflict dynamics.

Understanding actors, incentives and trajectories related to decentralization:⁵⁶

- What are the initial context and motivations for decentralization reform?
- Who are the key actors involved in decentralization and what are the incentives that shape their behaviour with respect to reform design and implementation?
- What is the current stage of decentralization, and what has been its trajectory since the decision was made to decentralize?
- What roles and incentives do key external development partners have related to decentralization?

Understanding actors, structures and processes related to local governance:

- What are the different administrative levels of local governance?
- What kind of administrative, legislative, budgetary and fiscal powers have been decentralized to which local governance actors, including local governments?
- What kind of administrative, legislative, budgetary and fiscal powers do these actors have in practice?
- How is local service delivery organized? Who is responsible for the delivery of various local services? Are there issues around service quality and (inclusive) access? In the event of service delivery failures, are grievance mechanisms in place and accessible?
- What are the chains of accountability (downward and upward)?
- What are the power relations among the different levels of governance? For example, does the mayor belong to the main political party or to the opposition?
- Which are the main governmental, non-governmental and informal stakeholders (including traditional and religious leaders and private sector actors) in local governance processes?
- What are the power relations among these stakeholders at the local level?
- Does local governance produce horizontal inequalities that affect relations among stakeholders, including between groups distinguished by regional, ethnic or sociocultural identity, religious or political beliefs, gender, age, etc.?
- Are there local formal or informal participatory decision-making mechanisms? Which actors are involved in these mechanisms? To what extent do children, youth and their families have access to them? Are any groups excluded from using them?

⁵⁶ Eaton, Kent, Kai Kaiser and Paul Smoke, *The Political Economy of Decentralization Reforms: Implications for aid effectiveness*, World Bank, Washington, D. C., 2011, pp. 8–11. Available at: <<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDSRE/Resources/DecentralizationReforms.pdf>>, accessed 13 February 2019.

Further reading

- UNICEF [Guidance on Conducting a Situation Analysis of Children's and Women's Rights](#)⁵⁷ contains: (1) a role pattern analysis to identify which individuals and institutions have the duty to reduce risks; and (2) a capacity gap analysis to identify the capacities needed to address the most critical risks.
- UNICEF [Guide to Conflict Analysis](#) sets out in detail the steps involved in a conflict analysis.⁵⁸
- Module 2 of UNICEF's [Guidance on Risk-informed Programming](#) includes practical guidance and examples of how UNICEF conducts risk assessments, including those related to conflict, and provides step-by-step instructions for conducting a child-centred risk analysis.⁵⁹
- The Rapid Local Governance Diagnostic Tool proposed in the UNDP publication [Building a Resilient Foundation for Peace and Development – Local governance in fragile and conflict-affected settings](#) provides a conceptual framework and checklist to help programming teams customize and conduct context-specific assessments of local governance.⁶⁰
- The United Nations/World Bank publication [\(Re\) Building Core Government Functions in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings](#) provides an overview of the main priorities and actions needed to re-establish core government functions in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Chapter 6 includes specific diagnostic questions related to local governance.⁶¹
- Political economy analysis, for example, using a generic tool such as that described in the '[Political Economy Analysis: How to note](#)' issued by the Department for International Development (United Kingdom), or using a tool specific to decentralization such as that described in the World Bank publication [The Political Economy of Decentralization Reforms](#).^{62, 63}
- Various tools for power analysis, for example, those described in Oxfam's '[Quick Guide to Power Analysis](#)' and Sida's [Power Analysis: A practical guide](#).^{64, 65} These tools explain how to analyse the various forms of power in a local system, from the visible and formal to the invisible and informal.

4.2 PROGRAMME DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

After conflict analysis has illuminated contextual issues and conflict dimensions, it is time to address programme design and implementation. The design elements presented here should be considered holistically rather than in a linear fashion. In dynamic conflict situations, it is important to respond to the changing context and adapt interventions accordingly, rather than hold onto predetermined activities and milestones that may no longer be appropriate. This flexibility allows programmes to capitalize on emerging opportunities. Determine design elements in collaboration with key stakeholders, particularly communities and local governance actors. Consider conflict sensitivity and the 'do no harm' principle throughout the programme design and implementation process.

Theory of change

Developing a theory of change on how a programme contributes to peacebuilding positively influences peacebuilding activities.⁶⁶ A theory of change clarifies an intervention's purpose and scope and its expected impact. The process of writing a theory of change helps programming teams identify gaps in programme logic and clarify assumptions about how a particular change will happen, especially in light of specific local conflict dynamics. A theory of change can be summarized visually or through a logical statement to show how programme activities and assumptions connect to the desired change or goal of the project (see Table 4). A strong theory of change is a testable hypothesis that reflects the conflict analysis and establishes a foundation for project M&E.

⁵⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, *Guidance on Conducting a Situation Analysis of Children's and Women's Rights: Taking a rights-based, equity-focused approach to situation analysis*, UNICEF, March 2012. Available at: <www.unicef.org/emergencies/downloads/eresource/docs/rights%20based%20equity%20focused%20situation%20analysis%20guidance.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁵⁸ *Guide to Conflict Analysis*. Available at: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/ineeq-assets/resources/Guide_to_Conflict_Analysis_-_UNICEF_Nov_2016.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁵⁹ *Guidance on Risk-informed Programming*. Available at: <www.unicef.org/emergencies/downloads/eresource/docs/risk-informed%20programming/GRIP%20COMPLETE_ALL%20MODULES.pdf>, accessed 13 February 2019.

⁶⁰ Garrigue, *Building a Resilient Foundation for Peace and Development*. Available at: <www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/local_governance/local-governance-in-fragile-and-conflict-affected-settings.html>, accessed 12 February 2019.

⁶¹ United Nations and World Bank, *(Re)Building Core Government Functions in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings: Joint principles for assessing key issues and priorities*, United Nations and The World Bank, New York and Washington, D. C., May 2017. Available at: <[www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/core-government-](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/core-government-functions/re-building-core-government-functions-in-fragile-and-conflict-affected-settings.html)

[functions/re-building-core-government-functions-in-fragile-and-conflict-affected-settings.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/core-government-functions/re-building-core-government-functions-in-fragile-and-conflict-affected-settings.html)>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁶² Department for International Development (United Kingdom), 'Political Economy Analysis: How to Note', DFID practice paper, DFID, July 2009. Available at: <www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/3797.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁶³ Eaton, Kaiser and Smoke, *The Political Economy of Decentralization Reforms: Implications for aid effectiveness*. Available at: <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2336?show=full>>, accessed 13 February 2019.

⁶⁴ Oxfam, 'Quick Guide to Power Analysis', Oxfam, 21 February 2014. Available at: <<https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/quick-guide-to-power-analysis-313950>>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁶⁵ Pettit, Jethro, *Power Analysis: A practical guide*, Sida, Stockholm, December 2013. Available at: <www.sida.se/contentassets/83f0232c5404440082c9762ba3107d55/power-analysis-a-practical-guide_3704.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁶⁶ United Nations Children's Fund, *Evaluation of UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA): Outcome evaluation, evaluation report*, UNICEF, New York, November 2015. Available at: <www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/PBEA_Outcome_Evaluation_Full_Report.pdf>, accessed 2 February 2019.



Table 4. Steps in creating a theory of change⁶⁷

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Identify the desired state	Conduct a backwards mapping to identify the conditions necessary for achieving that desired change	Identify the pathway or hypothesis to be followed to reach the desired state	Bring it all together , create a visual of the desired change and continue to further refine this theory of change	Write a narrative that summarizes the various parts of the theory of change

Developing a theory of change is can be messy, but it should be jargon-free. This process is even messier in such complex contexts as fragile and conflict-affected settings, where general assumptions about local governance may not apply. Various hypotheses and scenarios should therefore be explored during the conflict analysis and included in the theory of change. The process involves working out the ‘if ... then’ logic in phases: first for the current situation and then taking into consideration the most likely scenarios to unfold; this tests which results chains remain solid and which require adjustments.

When developing a theory of change for a programme or project on peacebuilding through local governance, consider the desired changes

to the local governance system and processes, and also the consequences these changes would have in terms of peacebuilding goals. UNICEF’s sphere of influence will also condition the theory of change, for example, by considering whether UNICEF has a voice in decentralization policy dialogue with the government (see Box 5).

Because conflict dynamics and formal and informal local governance mechanisms are highly context-specific, it is important to assess the extent to which the theory of change is replicable to other contexts. Challenges to peace, social cohesion and inclusive governance vary by context. Structures and processes of local governance can also differ substantially, especially in contexts of federalism or high levels of decentralization.

⁶⁷ United Nations Children’s Fund, *Results-based Management Handbook: Working together for children*, UNICEF, 2017, p. 34.

Box 5. Theory of change for UNICEF Somalia's service delivery model⁶⁸

- **If** a strong enabling environment for district-led service delivery is established through clarification of roles and responsibilities at different levels of government, better collaboration and coordination around service provision, and strong community engagement and oversight;
- **If** districts' capacity to effectively support service delivery is demonstrated by stronger technical, management and oversight capacities and rigorous testing of their planning, procurement and financial management systems; and
- **If** tangible evidence is provided of the value-add of district engagement in local service delivery, in terms of improving service accessibility, quality and consistency;
- **Then** districts will have greater ownership of and investment in their service delivery role, and there will be greater support for district-led service delivery by citizens, state and central governments, implementing partners and donors.
- **If** districts secure sustained multi-stakeholder support and investment in their service delivery role, they will be able to effectively, consistently and equitably deliver services, thus contributing to community well-being;
- **Then** the social contract will be strengthened and there will be increased government legitimacy and improved resilience and social cohesion, which will contribute to more sustainable human development outcomes for children, women and men.

... (→ **Key assumptions**)

- **Because** local governments' delivery of basic services contributes to their legitimacy.
- **Because** by being responsible for implementing service delivery functions, local governments will be more engaged in resolving service delivery challenges in their localities, and makes them better equipped and more likely to take action to resolve service delivery bottlenecks and grievances.

Replication and scale-up

To avoid isolated peacebuilding initiatives, UNICEF must consider, from the outset, strategies to replicate, sustain and scale up local programming. Peer-to-peer learning can help local governments learn from one another's experiences. Local government associations or civil society actors can support replication of effective programmes and strategies from other areas. These are examples of horizontal links that can propagate successful strategies. Vertical linkages are also important and can be fostered by engaging national and regional governments; UNICEF also has a role to play advocating at the national level that effective pilot programs and programme strategies be institutionalized within the national policy framework. The conflict analysis identifies potential partners, opportunities for institutionalization and ways to ensure the long-term sustainability of interventions (see Box 6).

⁶⁸ A major precondition is that local governments – through the United Nations Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery (JPLG) and similar programmes – receive the necessary legislative and capacity-building investments needed to support their service delivery role. These include broader decentralization policy reforms and strengthened district planning, human resources, procurement and financial management systems.

Box 6. Potential partners in peacebuilding

National level

- Presidential/prime ministerial committees
- Parliament
- Ministry in charge of territorial administration, urban development, planning or local governance
- Sector ministries
- Bilateral and multilateral agencies, including United Nations agencies
- International and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Local government associations
- National civil service academies or training institutes
- Universities
- Private sector actors

Regional/provincial level

- Departments or ministries at the state, provincial or district level
- Regional civil service academies or training institutes
- Local NGOs
- Private sector actors

Local level

- Metropolitan authorities
- Legislative and executive branches of local governments
- Civil society organizations and local NGOs
- Youth organizations
- Non-state actors, including traditional and religious leaders
- Private sector actors
- Land and property developers
- Local utilities/service providers

Partnerships within the United Nations system

Coordination and partnership with other agencies in the United Nations system is also important.⁶⁹ A concerted and holistic response to conflict drivers and causes has greater potential to help prevent crises and building lasting peace than isolated efforts. Coordination is important in all project phases – strategy development, design, implementation and monitoring – so that initiatives by individual agencies form a mutually reinforcing response and leverage comparative advantages. The UNICEF Somalia case study shows that programmatic partnerships among United Nations agencies maximize each agency's contribution to peacebuilding through local governance.⁷⁰

Internal coordination

The cross-sectoral nature of peacebuilding and local governance work means that it is particularly important to ensure implementation coordination across UNICEF sections and between the UNICEF country office and field offices. Internal coordination mechanisms vary depending on who leads the work. In many country offices, the deputy representative takes a leading role and supports internal coordination. The overall commitment of the country office leadership is essential, and coordination during analysis and planning as well as joint reflection and monitoring are instrumental to a coherent and cohesive approach.

⁶⁹ The report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, for instance, calls for a more integrated, comprehensive, strategic and coherent approach across the United Nations system. See United Nations General Assembly and

Security Council, Peacebuilding and sustaining peace, Report of the Secretary-General, A/72/707–S/2018/43, 18 January 2018.

⁷⁰ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Local Governance and Sustaining Peace –Country office case studies', UNICEF, New York, 2019.

Conflict sensitivity in programme design and implementation

Conflict sensitivity should be thoroughly considered at every stage of programme design and implementation. Failure to design programmes in a conflict-sensitive manner can lead to unintended negative consequences, such as:⁷¹

- A distribution effect – the perception that programmes are biased in favour of or against a specific group due to the way in which resources are distributed;
- A legitimization effect – the perception that resources are used to support a political or governing authority;
- A market effect – the perception that a programme (e.g., social protection, cash transfers) affects wages, profits and prices, creating economic ‘winners’ and ‘losers’;

- A substitution effect – this occurs when external aid takes over from local capacity, reducing or replacing local efforts;
- Theft – this occurs when groups or individuals simply take resources that are not intended for them; and
- Negative ethical messages – these arise when programmes do not live up to behaviours and messages that promote respect, accountability, fairness and transparency.

Conflict sensitivity involves considering, firstly, how UNICEF operations (e.g., procurement, recruitment processes) potentially affect the conflict and, secondly, how UNICEF programming potentially affects the conflict (see Table 5).⁷²

Table 5. Assessment questions for internal and external conflict sensitivity

Questions to assess internal conflict sensitivity

- Are UNICEF staff representative of the population with whom they work? Are there sensitivities vis-à-vis certain population groups, regions or localities?
- Do our staff and partners have the capacity to act in a conflict-sensitive manner?
- Do our hiring or procurement policies and practices unintentionally favour certain groups over others?
- Are our systems flexible enough to accommodate the reality on the ground?
- Are our hiring, human resources and other systems gender-sensitive and equitable?
- During changes in leadership, is there continuity in policy and programme implementation?

Questions to assess external conflict sensitivity

- Are services being delivered in an equitable and inclusive way (for groups distinguished by regional, ethnic or sociocultural identity, religious or political belief, gender, age, etc.)? And are programmes adjusted to address the dynamics between different groups?
- Are geographical locations being chosen in a conflict-sensitive way?
- Who are our partners and what groups do they have links with?
- Are we working with a range of ‘connectors’ (i.e., partners who can contribute to constructive engagement with conflict)?
- What messages (explicit and implicit) are we sending out to members of the communities in which we work?
- How do we manage the communication of sensitive information and data?
- Are we seen as fair and unbiased?
- Do programmes incorporate gender perspectives and strive to increase gender equity?
- How do we maintain an impartial stance in the face of the conflict dynamics?

⁷¹ Wallace, Marshall, *From Principle to Practice: A user's guide to do no harm*, revised by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Cambridge, MA, October 2015. Available at: <www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/2015-cda-from-principle-to-practice.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁷² Adapted from the *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide*.

Conflict sensitivity must be mainstreamed in UNICEF programming and can also be integrated into and reflected in local governance processes more broadly. This is particularly relevant where local governance contributes to conflict dynamics. Programmatic approaches that can contribute to greater conflict sensitivity include:

- Involving local governments, the central government and other stakeholders in conflict analysis, and, in particular, in seeking to understand horizontal inequalities and drivers of marginalization;
- Avoiding programmes having unintended negative consequences, through improved data collection (e.g., investing in local governments' capacities to collect and analyse data and in central statistical capacity to disaggregate data to the local level and conduct analyses); and
- Providing training for local decision makers and local civil servants on conflict sensitivity and helping them understand their role in building social cohesion.

Tools and further reading

- The UNICEF [Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide](#) is a tool to help field staff and leadership understand and implement conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding through their existing work or new initiatives.⁷³
- The GSDRC (Governance and Social Development Resource Centre) [Conflict Sensitivity Topic Guide](#) discusses the origin, evolution and applicability of conflict sensitivity.⁷⁴ It highlights two key conflict-sensitive approaches – 'do no harm' and 'aid for peace' – and one important tool, the peace and conflict impact assessment.
- [From Principle to Practice: A user's guide to do no harm](#) reflects on how people use this important principle and translates it into new approaches, tools and techniques for others to try.⁷⁵
- The goal of [Reflective Peacebuilding: A planning, monitoring, and learning toolkit](#) is to improve the ability of peacebuilders to be reflective practitioners who can look back on and learn from what they have done; this involves enhancing their capacity to design and effect transformative change – and track and improve upon those changes over time – in unpredictable conflict contexts.⁷⁶

4.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring is the process of gathering information for systematic and purposeful observation. UNICEF works with two types of monitoring:

- Context monitoring, which measures the change (or lack of change) in the condition of children, women and the wider environment – this includes contextual risks for children and changes in conflict dynamics; and
- Programme monitoring, which provides information about *how much* progress is being made towards achieving programme results (results monitoring) and *how* that progress is being achieved (implementation monitoring).

Monitoring the context means remaining aware of changing conflict dynamics. This has a number of benefits: "Monitoring the context helps peacebuilding practitioners anticipate changes, make proactive programmatic shifts, and ensure the safety of participants, partners, and staff."⁷⁷ Practically, this can be implemented in the form of weekly context updates that may include details of news stories, information from formal early warning mechanisms, reports from various provinces/villages/communities, posts from social media sources and debriefs on any larger changes in the country that may have an impact at a later date. Communicating such updates at weekly meetings or, where applicable, through email blasts can create better awareness of shifting contexts. More deliberate and well-planned light 'conflict scans' at regular intervals throughout the project cycle present a more robust situation monitoring tool. The situation analysis should embed contextual risk analysis in the UNICEF planning cycle, as outlined in UNICEF's *Guidance on Risk-informed Programming*, which focuses on hazards (natural and man-made), exposure, vulnerability and capacity.

⁷³ *Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide*. Available at: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/Programming_Guide_-_Conflict_Sensitivity_and_Peacebuilding_UNICEF_Nov_2016.pdf>, accessed 12 February 2019.

⁷⁴ Haider, Huma, *Conflict Sensitivity Topic Guide*, Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, 2014. Available at: <http://gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/GSDRC_CS_topic_guide.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁷⁵ Wallace, *From Principle to Practice*. Available at: <www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/2015-cda-from-principle-to-practice.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁷⁶ Lederach, John Paul, Reina Neufeldt and Hal Culbertson, *Reflective Peacebuilding: A planning, monitoring, and learning toolkit*, Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame/Catholic Relief Services Southeast, East Asia Regional Office, 2007. Available at: <https://ndigd.nd.edu/assets/172927/reflective_peacebuilding_a_planning_monitoring_and_learning_toolkit.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁷⁷ Church, Cheyanne, and Mark M. Rogers, *Designing for Results: Integrating monitoring and evaluation in conflict transformation programs*, Search For Common Ground, Washington, D. C., 2006, p. 84. Available at: <www.sfcg.org/Documents/manualpart1.pdf>, accessed 2 February 2019.

Monitoring progress towards results includes the measurement of outputs and outcomes and – if possible – the overall impact of a programme.⁷⁸ It is best to use a combination of global and context-specific quantitative and qualitative indicators. This makes indicators more globally relevant, where possible, but also provides much-needed understanding of the nuances of context-specific variables.⁷⁹ Participatory forms of M&E, such as the most significant change technique, are valuable opportunities to engage local actors in deciding the sorts of change to be recorded and in analysing the data. They enable performance assessment that does not rely on predefined indicators.⁸⁰

When developing indicators, the following points should be considered:

- Indicators should be developed for: (1) the conflict context (in order to monitor it); (2) conflict sensitivity; and, most importantly, (3) local governance contributions to peacebuilding.
- There are no standard global indicators for peacebuilding and local governance. There have been attempts, however, to provide methodologies for developing more standardized quantitative data for these areas, e.g., the *Indicators Framework for Peacebuilding, Education and Social Cohesion*,⁸¹ PeacebuildingData.org;⁸² and the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index.⁸³

- Indicators should be derived from conflict and local governance analyses. These identify the entry points for peacebuilding through local governance and hence the data contained within them constitute the baselines for indicators.

Results monitoring of peacebuilding through local governance activities is often more complex than standard quantitative results-based management procedures used for purely socio-economic interventions in sectoral areas like education, health, nutrition and WASH. Peacebuilding and local governance programmes usually rely on political processes and long-term trust building, for instance. Both of these, however, are difficult to measure using quantitative methods alone. In such situations, programmes should apply a mixed-methods approach that includes qualitative measures like most significant change and perception indicators that adapt to the changes in the overall context (see Table 5).⁸⁴ Despite the challenges involved in evaluating peacebuilding and local governance interventions, there have been recent attempts to use experimental methods such as randomized controlled trials for this purpose, e.g., to evaluate community development or election programmes.⁸⁵ Field experiments may prove useful in generating evidence for impact evaluation at the local level.⁸⁶

⁷⁸ *Results-based Management Handbook*.

⁷⁹ Herrington, Rebecca, *Emerging Practices in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Education for Peacebuilding Programming: Practice guide*, Search for Common Ground, Washington, D. C., October 2015. Available at: <www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Emerging-Practice-Guide.pdf>, accessed 2 February 2019.

⁸⁰ See: Overseas Development Institute, 'Strategy Development: Most significant change (MSC)', Toolkits, ODI, January 2009, <www.odi.org/publications/5211-msc-most-significant-change-monitoring-evaluation>, accessed 3 February 2019; Flower, Emilie, 'Case study: Peace clubs. Participatory Video and Most Significant Change Evaluation, Côte d'Ivoire 2015', 2015.

⁸¹ Pham, Phuong, and Patrick Vinck, *Indicators Framework for Peacebuilding, Education and Social Cohesion*, United Nations Children's Fund/Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, January 2017. Available at: <[http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/Social_Cohesion_Assessment_Framework_20170420_\(HHI\).pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/Social_Cohesion_Assessment_Framework_20170420_(HHI).pdf)>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁸² Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, PeacebuildingData.org, <www.peacebuildingdata.org>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁸³ Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index, 'Welcome to SCORE', <www.scoreforpeace.org>, accessed 3 February 2019.

⁸⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Compilation of Tools for Measuring Social Cohesion, Resilience, and Peacebuilding', Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy in Conflict-affected Contexts Programme, UNICEF, New York, April 2014. Available at: <www.dme4peace.org/educateforpeace/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/052814_UNICEF-PBEACCompilationOfTools_UNICEF_English.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁸⁵ White, Howard, Shagun Sabarwal and Thomas de Hoop, 'Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs)', Methodological Briefs, Impact Evaluation No. 7, UNICEF, Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence, 2014. Available at: <www.unicef-irc.org/publications/752-randomized-controlled-trials-rcts-methodological-briefs-impact-evaluation-no-7.html>, accessed 2 February 2019; Innovations for Poverty Action, 'Randomized Control Trials', IPA, <www.poverty-action.org/about/randomized-control-trials>, accessed 3 February 2019.

⁸⁶ McLoughlin, Claire, and Oliver Walton, *Topic Guide on Measuring Results, Governance and Social Development Resource Centre*, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, January 2012. Available at: <www.gsdr.org/docs/open/me5.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

Table 6. Examples of quantitative and qualitative peacebuilding indicators⁸⁷

Outcome	Indicator type	Indicator	What it measures
Example 1: Increase social cohesion between 450 children formerly associated with armed forces or groups and their communities in five municipalities over three years	Quantitative	Proportion of children formerly associated with armed forces or groups who participate in community-building activities or organizations at the end of year one	Measures one aspect of interaction between the children formerly associated with armed forces or groups and their communities
	Qualitative	Proportion of children formerly associated with armed forces or groups who, at the end of year one, routinely identify themselves as members of the larger community rather than as belonging to one particular group or faction	Measures the change in how children formerly associated with armed forces or groups describe themselves and their integration into the communal identity
	Qualitative	Proportion of community members who report positive interactions and feelings towards the children formerly associated with armed forces or groups in their community	Measures the change in community members' perceptions of children formerly associated with armed forces or groups
Example 2: Within two years, enhance the capacity of regional and local government authorities and communities in three provinces to monitor, report and manage conflict	Quantitative	Proportion of conflicts reported through government systems out of total incidents reported (by the media and in third-party data sources)	Measures the reliability of government reporting structures and monitoring
	Qualitative	Proportion of staff of the relevant government authority who believe that submitting monitoring reports leads to timely intervention and prevents of escalation	Measures the opinion of authorities on how monitoring contributes to conflict prevention and resolution

⁸⁷ Herrington, *Emerging Practices in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Education for Peacebuilding Programming*.

In fragile and conflict-affected settings, M&E – especially at the subnational level – is frequently problematic due to:

- Lack of security, both for the researchers and for the individuals who talk to them;
- Individuals' distrust of outsiders and reluctance to talk to them for fear of reprisals;
- Individuals' shame in acknowledging victimization;
- A rapidly changing, complex and unpredictable context (and the consequent difficulties in attributing change);
- Lack of adequate and reliable data;
- Operational challenges such as erratic field access or high staff turnover; and
- The unwillingness of governments/organizations to acknowledge violence or programme failures.

Despite these challenges, it is important to establish adequate strategies for M&E information systems. Two such strategies involve:⁸⁸

- Moving M&E beyond the programme level to the sector and strategic level – this strategy involves conducting joint evaluations and using mutually agreed objectives to assess the overall impact of interventions on peace and social cohesion; and
- Using common M&E principles that can be applied to different types of peacebuilding and local governance interventions – e.g., inclusiveness; testing underlying theories of change; using both qualitative and quantitative methods; testing assumptions and learning; and applying ethical standards for approaching informants and handling the reporting of findings.

Tools and further reading

- The Design, Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace (DM&E for Peace) network was set up to find solutions for M&E in the context of peacebuilding. Numerous tools and resources are available via the [DM&E for Peace website](#).⁸⁹
- The UNICEF [Compilation of Tools for Measuring Social Cohesion, Resilience, and Peacebuilding](#)⁹⁰ contains a list of sample survey questions for reference when developing data collection tools to measure programme outcomes linked to social cohesion, resilience and peacebuilding.
- The Search for Common Ground [Emerging Practices in Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation for Education for Peacebuilding Programming: Practice guide](#)⁹¹ answers common questions about the design of peacebuilding programmes and accompanying M&E systems, outcome-oriented M&E planning and relevant M&E tools and resources.
- ['Measuring Social Capital: An integrated questionnaire'](#),⁹² a World Bank working paper, provides a core set of survey questions developed by the World Bank for integration into household surveys to explore various dimensions of social capital. Designed for those who conduct poverty assessments or national social capital surveys, the tool supports strategy setting (e.g., identifying conflict drivers and peace engines), programme design (e.g., setting baseline data) and evaluation.
- [Indicators Framework for Peacebuilding, Education and Social Cohesion](#),⁹³ published by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and UNICEF, provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the challenges and opportunities in peacebuilding and the role of social service providers in peacebuilding. The assessment framework focuses on education services but is equally relevant to other sectors such as health and WASH.
- The [Topic Guide on Measuring Results](#), published by GSDRC, lists a number of M&E frameworks and tools for peacebuilding and local governance programmes and in fragile settings.⁹⁴ These can be used to measure conflict prevention and peacebuilding; empowerment and accountability; policy influence; institutional change; human rights; justice; climate change adaptation; and social protection.
- Search for Common Ground's [Conflict Scan Methodology](#) has methods for capturing a quick scan or snapshot of changing conflict dynamics and key conflict drivers and peace engines.⁹⁵

⁸⁸ For a list of a number of M&E frameworks, tools and recommendations for fragile contexts, see Mcloughlin and Walton, *Topic Guide on Measuring Results*.

⁸⁹ Design, Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace, 'DM&E for Peace', <www.dme4peace.org>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁹⁰ 'Compilation of Tools for Measuring Social Cohesion, Resilience, and Peacebuilding'. Available at: <www.dme4peace.org/educateforpeace/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/052814_UNICEF-PBEACompilationOfTools_UNICEF_English.pdf>, accessed 11 February 2019.

⁹¹ Herrington, *Emerging Practices in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Education for Peacebuilding Programming*. Available at: <www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Emerging-Practice-Guide.pdf>, accessed 2 February 2019.

⁹² Grootaert, Christiaan, et al., 'Measuring Social Capital: An integrated

questionnaire', World Bank Working Paper No. 18, World Bank, Washington, D. C., 2004. Available at: <<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/515261468740392133/pdf/281100PAPER0Measuring0social0capital.pdf>>, accessed 11 February 2019.

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5. CONCLUSION



There is growing evidence that both peacebuilding and sustaining peace require a local approach. UNICEF must understand the potential for peacebuilding through local governance and engage in related local processes to achieve its broader programme objectives. In light of the Sustainable Development Goals and also wider policy development within the United Nations focused on crisis prevention, UNICEF should harness the transformative potential of those local governance processes that allow for participation and empower communities to shape their own local development decisions. This will help local governments ensure that local public policies are more responsive to children and their communities. UNICEF can strengthen its rights-based, equity-focused

approach by working with local governments to ensure that local public policies are more responsive to children and their communities.

For UNICEF to include local governance activities aimed at peacebuilding in fragile or conflict-affected settings, a strategic approach should be developed based on: (1) a thorough analysis of local governance and conflict dynamics; (2) explicit theories of change about peacebuilding and local governance interventions in sectoral and cross-sectoral programming; (3) conflict sensitivity throughout the project management cycle; and (4) strong partnerships and coordination to successfully implement sustainable programmes that build peace through local engagement.

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