



Putting Sustainable Peace and Safe Societies at the Heart of the Development Agenda: Priorities for post-2015

Key messages

Sustainable peace and safe societies are essential to development for all

1. A succession of major reports have affirmed that development depends on societies that are peaceful and safe. This applies to all countries, not only countries currently affected by conflict.
2. Many people living in stable, peaceful and even prosperous countries still face insecurity and fear in their daily lives, stemming for example from crime. Freedom from fear is both a universal agenda for protecting development gains and a universal development outcome.
3. The absence of violence is not the same as sustainable peace. To create societies that are resilient to violent conflict over the long-term, the new framework must focus on addressing the most important drivers of conflict and insecurity – not only their symptoms. This often includes issues of relationships between state and society and between societal groups, alongside horizontal inequalities.
4. Responsibility for promoting sustainable peace and safe societies lies not only with individual states and societies but also with developed and middle-income countries. Each is responsible for conflict prevention while transnational drivers of conflict must be collectively addressed.

Sustainable peace and safe societies should be integrated across a global development framework

5. Alongside other inputs, the structure and approach of the UN High Level Panel (HLP) Report forms a strong foundation for further refinement of targets and the development of indicators.
6. Greater attention needs to be focused on mainstreaming peace and people's safety across the whole framework. This would respond to the strong policy consensus over the last decade that a range of factors underpin sustainable peace and that all development practice must be conflict sensitive. This can be done with moderate adaptations and additions to existing targets of the HLP report and requisite indicators, as highlighted in Annex One of this briefing.
7. The international community should adopt a framework that sets shared targets, applicable to all countries. However it must fully respect sovereignty. Each country should retain full autonomy to plan and sequence its own development process with context-specific baselines and benchmarks.
8. A new framework need not be restricted by existing gaps in the indicators; as happened with the MDGs, it should explicitly seek to address these gaps by building further capacity. There is also more data to measure progress in peace, security, justice, and state-society relations than is often assumed.
9. No single type of indicator can in every context tell a full, fair story about progress towards sustainable peace and safer societies. A basket of 'capacity', 'objective situation' and 'public perception' indicators can tell a more accurate story when taken together.
10. Indicators used to measure progress towards peace and violence reduction should be disaggregated to the maximum extent possible, so that horizontal inequalities and unequal levels of progress between different social groups can be recognised and tackled.

An international consensus is emerging

At UNGA 68 the world is rightly focusing on accelerating progress to meeting the MDGs by 2015. At the same time, our track record since 2000 should inform the global debate on what comes next. It is now widely accepted by UN member states, civil society organisations and business groups that meeting the MDGs has been, and will remain, most challenging in countries badly affected by conflict and violence. A succession of major reports – including that of the UN Secretary General – have affirmed this. It is welcome that the UNGA is expected to establish an international consensus around this agenda in its MDG Special Event Outcome Document.

“... conflict and post conflict countries are the most challenged in achieving any of the Goals by 2015.”

UN General Assembly Draft MDG Special Event Outcome Document, September 2013

Conflict, violence and insecurity have severely affected MDG achievement: the evidence

1.5 billion people live in conflict-affected countries. Many more reside in more stable countries but still face violence in their everyday lives. None of them have the opportunity to speak for themselves in the conference rooms, side-meetings and receptions of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The growing evidence, however, speaks for them.

The World Bank has suggested that ‘a country that experienced major violence over the period from 1981 to 2005 has a poverty rate 21 percentage points higher than a country that saw no violence.’ⁱ Only about 20 percent of the countries that it categorises as ‘fragile or conflict-affected’ are on track to meet the basic poverty target and they are four times more likely to be off track than they are to have met MDG targets or be on track to do so.ⁱⁱ Globally, countries affected by violence are home to 43 percent of persons living with HIV/ AIDS. Half of all child deaths occur in conflict-affected areas.ⁱⁱⁱ The Economic Commission on Africa reports of the 40 countries classified as having a high maternal mortality ratio in 2010, 36 are in Africa, and that the majority of these countries are either experiencing or recovering from conflict.^{iv} As the African Development Bank argues, ‘armed conflicts have been the single most important determinant of poverty and human misery in Africa affecting more than half the continent’s countries during the 1980s and 1990s’^v

However, many people living in stable, peaceful and even prosperous countries around the world still face fear in their daily lives: one in four of the world’s people – especially the poor and most marginalised – live in areas affected by repeated cycles of political and criminal violence.^{vi} Such environments of uncertainty are not places where individuals, communities and societies can collectively make the investments necessary for development without attending to the factors that drive violence. Improved security goes hand in hand with higher levels of development everywhere. For example, countries exhibiting low homicide rates achieve more rapid human development than countries registering higher homicide rates.^{vii} This universal vulnerability calls for a more systematic agenda to prevent violence and protect development gains in all countries.

While these statistics can never tell the whole story or easily demonstrate cause and effect in such complex contexts, they do make a compelling case that demands attention.

“Conflicts and instability have halted or reversed progress in many countries, affecting primarily women and children ... There can be no peace without development and no development without peace.”

Report of the UN Secretary-General, September 2013

Sustainable peace is the foundation for development in all countries

Countries badly affected by conflict and insecurity are not lost causes. The World Bank recently noted that 20 such countries have met one or more targets under the MDGs and an additional six countries are on track to meet individual targets by the 2015 deadline.^{viii} Today, Nepal and Bosnia and Herzegovina stand out as countries slowly meeting MDGs. In the past, Indonesia, South Africa, Mozambique and Chile offer lasting evidence of progress that has been more or less sustained.

Countries making progress still, however, risk being derailed by a resumption of instability. For example, Yemen was on track to meet targets related to maternal mortality before the violence of the Arab Spring. At the same time, and as the Arab Spring illustrated, even seemingly stable countries can be suddenly be thrown into crisis from violent conflict. The underlying foundations that allow countries to successfully transition out of conflict and remain sustainably peaceful should be what guides the global vision for a more peaceful and prosperous world post-2015. This vision must apply to all countries – not just a special sub-set of those currently affected by conflict.

“Poverty will never be eradicated if people remain burdened by fear, insecurity and vulnerability.”

Report of the UN Development Group World We Want consultation, September 2013

Freedom from fear is a universal development outcome

By 2030 the majority of the world’s poorest will live in countries and regions affected by chronic violence and political instability.^x A 2013 survey of by the UN Development Group included hundreds of thousands of respondents and found ‘protection against crime and violence’ to be among the top priorities across different contexts.^x Safety is not an aspiration restricted to those in conflict-affected states.

Freedom from fear is a declared aspiration for all peoples around the world, guaranteed by Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, combined with the right to life and liberty. The physical and psychological harm from insecurity and the fear of being impacted by it prevents people from living healthy and fulfilling lives. This suggests that freedom from fear and safer societies should be understood as universal development outcomes in and of themselves.

“Freedom from fear, conflict and violence is the most fundamental human right, and the essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies... Conflict – a condition that has been called development in reverse – must be tackled head-on, even within a universal agenda.”

Report of the UN High Level Panel, May 2013

Fostering sustainable peace means addressing the underlying drivers of violence

Although the post-2015 framework must support lasting reductions in violence, the absence of violence does not equate to a sustainable peace. It can often mask latent instability that results in political crises, humanitarian emergencies, costly interventions and the derailment of development gains. To create societies that are resilient to violent conflict, the new framework must focus on addressing the most important drivers of conflict and insecurity – not only their symptoms.

Several drivers stand out for attention with targeted responses. These include ending impunity and ensuring equal and open access to security, justice and the rule of law, making the provision of social services and resources fair and accessible to all groups of people, creating economic growth and opportunities for decent livelihoods that are shared and open to all groups, promoting transparency and addressing corruption, managing natural and national resources effectively, promoting reconciliation and tolerance between different social groups and addressing the external stresses on conflict. Horizontal inequalities between social groups – whether economic, political, social or other – need to be addressed across the framework through active commitments in targets as well as through disaggregation (see below).

There is also evidence that healthy state-society relations, which peacefully manage social conflicts and prevent them from becoming violent, are correlated with a lasting reduction of violence.^{xi} Building lasting peace takes more than simply reinforcing state capacities: state and society need to be able to move forward together to overcome collective action problems. Ultimately, the world’s new development framework should encourage and enable states to become more inclusive, responsive, fair and accountable to all of their people.

Sustainable peace and safe societies need to be supported across the framework

Recent reports have identified matters of peace, security and stability as crosscutting themes that should be integrated across any future framework – not confined to specific goals related to peace and safety.^{xii} This is the only way to address effectively and meaningfully the full range of underlying drivers of violence. It also builds upon the growing policy consensus over the last decade that the very nature and practice of development can be a driver of conflict, and as such, all development practice must be conflict and peace sensitive.

As a specific example, an individual target on reducing violence targeted against women should sit under a goal on gender equality rather than under a goal on reducing violence. No less importantly, ‘development’ goals related to basic services, jobs, sustainable livelihoods, economic opportunity or the effective management of natural resources also have implications for sustainable peace and safe societies (see Annex One).

We need to build upon the High Level Panel Report

We urge Member States and civil society to build on the various inputs that have been submitted into the process thus far, many of which have directly reflected the views of people across the globe. The model for integrating peace and stability into the post-2015 framework set out by the HLP May 2013 report is especially welcome: both by having a specific goal devoted to this issue (i.e. Goal 11) and by mainstreaming these concerns across the development framework. The work by the HLP should serve as a basis for further technical discussions around targets and indicators. With this in mind, Annex One includes suggestions that have been refined from the HLP to capture more outcome-orientated targets and address several gaps.

These suggestions are also intended to demonstrate how support for sustainable peace and safe societies can be integrated across the framework. They are neither comprehensive nor finalised. Indeed we recognise the need for further discussion on how best to integrate peace and safety across the framework and fully intend to continue to contribute to such deliberations.

“Violence and fragility have become the largest obstacles to the MDGs.”

Report of the UN Task Team, June 2012

A universal framework must motivate states to define their own path ...

While the new framework will need to allow for the differences between contexts, a shared commitment to make progress on these targets is also required so that societies and social groups that are vulnerable to violence are not left behind once more. We therefore encourage the international community to adopt a framework that sets shared targets for achieving progress towards sustainable peace that is applicable to all countries.

However the new framework should fully respect sovereignty and context specificity. Even if global targets and indicators are adopted, each country should retain full autonomy to plan and sequence its own development process, and use context-specific baselines and benchmarks to project an appropriate aspiration for progress at the national level.

... but also commit all states to contribute

Responsibility for overcoming conflict, violence and insecurity does not only lie with individual states and societies. Developed and middle-income countries need to step up to their responsibilities for conflict prevention. Transnational factors like a worsening climate, the illicit movement of drugs, arms, money and commodities, the legal export of weapons and licit extraction of resources can frustrate the most committed efforts by national actors. These external stresses were put firmly on the agenda by the HLP, and now need more discussion so that all countries are ready to make specific commitments to address them together from 2015.

“Countries with severe economic and social challenges tend to be those that are sliding into, immersed in or emerging from war or severe conflict.”

Report of the UN Global Compact, June 2013

Peace and safety can be measured

There is much more data to measure progress in areas such as peace, security, justice, and state-society relations than is often assumed. For example:

- The African Union is piloting an initiative to monitor peace, security and governance through 15 national statistics offices.
- Saferworld has identified over 160 existing multinational metrics on peace issues that have potential to be developed within a global accountability framework.^{xiii}
- UN-led technical consultations on indicators with individuals drawn from varied countries and areas of expertise are producing tangible results.^{xiv}
- Other organisations across the developing world are rapidly developing new methods of capturing data, including on issues related to security.^{xv}

There remain gaps in existing indicators, especially in the countries worst affected by conflict. However, through engagement and consultation with states and civil society from conflict-affected states in the New Deal process, the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) has started to identify effective indicators. As the HLP has argued, a wider data revolution is needed to further address these gaps. However, this can be achieved in conflict-affected contexts and the new framework need not be restricted by what indicators currently exist. As capacities for measuring indicators are built, linked to sustainable country-level capacities, they also need to be standardised and legitimised under the auspices of the UN and other international organisations.

Use a basket of indicators...

No single indicator can in every context tell a full, fair story about progress: changes in capacity are not the same as better outcomes – and better outcomes are not enough unless they generate confidence among all social groups. A more accurate picture of peace and safety progress can be shown if each relevant target is underpinned by a basket of ‘capacity, ‘objective situation’ and ‘public perception’ indicators.

... and disaggregate them

To ensure that horizontal inequalities within societies are visible, indicators to measure progress towards peace and violence reduction should be disaggregated to the maximum extent possible, so that unequal levels of progress between different social groups can be recognised and tackled. Addressing horizontal inequalities through disaggregation is a crucial way in which the entire framework can contribute towards sustainable peace and safe societies.

“Conflict especially is a mortal threat to development, and development cannot thrive without safety from personal and psychological violence, which are all too often directed against women and girls. Even in peaceful countries, interpersonal, criminal, and gang-related armed violence can be a barrier to development.”

Report of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, June 2013

Annex One: Suggestions for further discussion

These illustrative targets follow the structure laid out by the HLP but include adaptations and additions (in *italics*). They draw and build upon those developed at a UN sponsored experts meeting, which included members of our CSPPS.^{xvi} They also are intended to demonstrate how peace and safety can be addressed throughout the framework in a conflict-sensitive way.

End Poverty (Goal 1)

- Bring the number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day to zero; reduce by x% the share of people living below their country's 2015 national poverty line, *and reduce inequalities across social groups and regions within countries* (adapted from HLP 1a)
- Increase by x% the share of women and men, communities and businesses who have secured rights, *including customary rights*, to land, property and other natural resources (adapted from HLP 1a)

Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality (Goal 2)

- *Prevent all forms of violence against girls and women* (adapted from HLP 2a)

Providing Quality Education and Life Long Learning (Goal 3)

- *Ensure citizens have access to safe education, free from discrimination and violence* (new target)

Ensure Healthy Lives (Goal 4)

- *Ensure universal, affordable, and safe access to health, including mental and physical wellbeing, with a focus on the most disadvantaged and excluded citizens* (new target)

Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Equitable Growth (Goal 8)

- Increase the number of good, decent, and safe jobs and livelihoods by x, *with a focus on the most disadvantaged and excluded* (adapted from HLP 8a)
- *Increase the number of young people in education, employment, training, and/or service* by x% (adapted from HLP 8b)

Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainably (Goal 9)

- *Ensure fair, transparent, and sustainable management of natural resources, including land, at the community and national levels* (new target)

Ensure good governance and effective institutions (Goal 10)

- Ensure people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest and access to independent media and information (HLP 10b)
- Increase public participation in political processes and civic engagement at all levels (HLP 10c)
- Guarantee the public's right to information and access to government data (HLP 10d)
- Reduce bribery and corruption and ensure officials can be held accountable (HLP 10e)

Ensure stable and peaceful societies (Goal 11)

- Reduce violent deaths per 100,000 by x and eliminate all forms of violence against children (HLP 11a)
- *Ensure all social groups have access to justice institutions that are independent, well-resourced and respect due-process rights* (adapted from HLP 11b)

- *Ensure that all social groups are protected and served by professional and accountable security services, police and judiciaries* (adapted from HLP 11d)
- *Support efforts to peacefully resolve divisions between social groups* (new target)

Create a Global Enabling Environment and Catalyse Long-Term Finance (Goal 12)

- Stem the external stressors that lead to conflict, *including those related to organised crime and illicit flows of drugs, precious minerals, arms and finance* (adapted from HLP 11c)
- Implement reforms to ensure stability of the global financial system and encourage stable, long-term private investment *that is conflict-sensitive* (adapted from HLP 12b)
- Hold the increase in global average temperature below 2C above pre-industrial levels, in line with international agreements (HLP 12c)
- Reduce illicit financial flows and tax evasion and increase stolen-asset recovery by \$x (adapted from HLP 12e)
- *Provide enhanced support for vulnerable states and LDCs to address structural challenges* (new target)

ABOUT: The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) is a Southern-Northern non-governmental coalition of peacebuilding organizations that helps coordinate civil society participation in international policy processes.

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ⁱ World Bank (2011) *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development* Washington DC: World Bank, p 61.

ⁱⁱ World Bank (2013) 'Twenty Fragile States Make Progress on Millennium Development Goals' *Press Release* 1 May 2013

ⁱⁱⁱ World Bank (2011), p 62.

^{iv} United Nations Economic Commission on Africa and African Union Commission (2012) *Overview of economic and social conditions in Africa in 2012* United Nations Economic and Social Council

^v African Development Bank et al (2013) *Assessing Progress in Africa towards the Millennium Development Goals, 2013* African Development Bank Group, African Union, United Nations Economic Council for Africa, UNDP, p 4.

^{vi} World Bank (2011)

^{vii} United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2011) *Global Study on Homicide 2011* Vienna: United Nations

^{viii} World Bank (2013)

^{ix} OECD (2013) *Building Peaceful Societies and Effective States: Putting Peace at the Heart of the Post-2015 Agenda* – Briefing note, p 1.

^x My World (2013) *How the World Voted*, available at <http://www.myworld2015.org/?page=results>

^{xi} See for example International Alert (2013) *Post 2015: Business as usual is not an option* (Online) Saferworld (2013) *Issue Paper Two: What are the key challenges? What works in addressing them?* (Online)

^{xii} See for example, "Report of the Expert Meeting on an Accountability Framework for Conflict, Violence and Disaster in the post 2015 Development Agenda", UNICEF, PBSO, UNDP, June 2013.

^{xiii} Saferworld (2013) *Addressing conflict and violence from 2015: a vision of goals, targets and Indicators* London: Saferworld, p 3.

^{xiv} See for example UN (2013) 'Report of the Expert Meeting on Accountability Framework for Conflict, Violence and Disaster in the Post-2015 Development Agenda', Glen Cove, New York, 18-19 June 2013

^{xv} See for example the Ushahidi Platform. Also see Small Arms Survey (2013) 'Armed Violence Monitoring Systems' *Research Notes No.23*

^{xvi} A fuller set of recommendations for mainstreaming these concerns are present in the noted experts meeting report, which members of the CSPPS broadly support.