From Rhetoric to Practice:

Concrete steps to support the implementation of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda at the country level

Based on lessons learned from Somalia, Sudan, and Mozambique

GPPAC — A Network of People Building Peace

United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations

Introduction

The Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda was formally adopted by the United Nations (UN) Member States in the 2016 dual General Assembly-Security Council Resolution.[1] As unpacked in the 2018 Report of the UN Secretary-General, this agenda sets out **four shifts required to strengthen the UN's ability to sustain peace across the conflict cycle**: (1) leadership, accountability and capacity; (2) operational and policy coherence; (3) partnerships; and (4) financing.[2]

The basic premise of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda is that its implementation requires a whole-of-system approach that incorporates all three pillars of the UN system – human rights, peace and security, and development – to come to a more holistic, long-term, multidimensional approach for preventing armed conflict, mitigating its impact when conflict occurs, and supporting governments and their citizens in achieving lasting peace. In order for the UN to work along the lines of a whole-of-system approach, the Secretary-General has underlined that shifts are required in **operational and policy coherence** to strengthen support to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

The Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda is a long-term vision that requires institutions, norms, attitudes, and capacities to continuously adapt in response to the context changes at the country level. In order for the UN to deliver on this, the Secretary-General has emphasized that a shift is also required in terms of the **UN leadership, accountability, and capacity** in supporting peacebuilding and sustaining peace

The agenda is also a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by national peacebuilding stakeholders in an inclusive manner and with the support of the UN and the donor community. In order for the UN to deliver on this final element of the agenda, the Secretary-General has underlined that shifts are required in terms of **partnerships and financing for peacebuilding and sustaining peace**.

The UN system currently monitors progress on the implementation of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda at a more overarching level via the Secretary-General's reports on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. These reports however do not provide detailed insights on the impact of implementing the agenda on country-level peacebuilding processes and objectives. The 2 July 2020 Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) Chair's letter speaks to this gap and encourages measuring the success of peacebuilding and sustaining peace 'in terms of impact rather than outputs'.[3]

The GPPAC research in Sudan, Somalia, and Mozambique can be seen as a first attempt to provide an initial assessment of the progaress and impact of the implementation of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda at the country level in three countries.

- GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.

- GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia

- GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

This synthesis report summarises the key insights coming out of the three case studies, and is meant to serve as a resource for the representatives of the UN, its Member States, and the donor community to guide stakeholders' policy engagement and to deepen the global support for the impactful implementation of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda at the country level. The recommendations serve to feed into ongoing global policy processes, including on the topics of the Common Agenda, peacebuilding and conflict prevention, and in-country strategic policy dialogues to support a comprehensive shift towards lasting and sustainable peace. These recommendations are designed to be broad and require further contextualised research, consultations, and analysis in order to implement peacebuilding and sustaining peace with meaningful impact at the country level.

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1   United Nations, 'Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 April 2016', Accessible at: https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_262.pdf; United Nations, 'Resolution 2282 (2016) Adopted by the Security Council at its 7680th meeting, on 27 April 2016', Accessible at: https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282(2016).
2   United Nations, 'The 2018 Secretary-General's Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707)', 18 January 2018, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/report-secretary-general-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace.
3   UN, 'Letter dated 2 July 2020 from the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (A/74/935)', 7 July 2020, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/a_74_935-2009035e_1.pdf.

Leadership, Accountability, and Capacity

Sustaining peace requires strong and empowered UN leadership at the country level with a clear peacebuilding focus and adequate capacities in peacebuilding and conflict analysis.

The required shift in UN leadership, accountability and capacity are in part driven by the ongoing processes of repositioning the Resident Coordinator (RC) Offices, strengthening the UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and ensuring collaborative leadership, especially in contexts of transition. These adjustments allow for the UN leadership at the country level to strengthen the linkages between the policy/political and the programming/operational roles of the UN at the country level. Acknowledging that support to peacebuilding and sustaining peace is inevitably influenced by political settings means that UN peacebuilding programming has to be accompanied by engagement from UN leadership in high-level political dialogues.

The findings of the three case studies reveal that despite the ongoing UN reforms, the UN leadership structure at the country level remains complex, with an often ambiguous and unclear division of roles and responsibilities amongst the UN in-country leadership. This holds especially true in transition settings such as in Somalia and Sudan, where the missions' heads (Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, or SRSGs) are traditionally seen as the leading political actors, while the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) position is seen to be leading on the operational side, meaning development and humanitarian action. In this context, it is important to ensure the gradual transfer of the political function to the RC Office, given its long-term presence in the country. In non-mission settings such as Mozambique, peacebuilding leadership is limited to a programming/operational function, with the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy leading on the political track.[4] As such, the linkages between the policy/political and the programming/operational roles are missing in this setting, limiting the opportunity for partners to have a dedicated strategy and capacity for peacebuilding engagement.

In the complex matrix of roles and responsibilities, implementing the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda requires *(1) a clear peacebuilding leadership, (2) a dedicated peacebuilding strategy, and (3) strong peacebuilding capacities.*

PRIORITY AREA 1
Clarify UN peacebuilding leadership at the country level

Based on the three case studies, there is a lack of clarity on who holds peacebuilding leadership at the country level, especially in the mission settings. Research revealed that the current division of roles is more clear in theory than in practice. In Somalia, despite four key leadership positions, no dedicated actor exists to develop and supervise a dedicated peacebuilding strategy and support critical conflict prevention capacities.[5] In Mozambique, the UN leadership is headed by the RC/HC, with the peacebuilding priorities supported by the Peace and Development Advisor, who then reports to the RC/HC.[6] The complex division of roles eliminates clear peacebuilding leadership and holds the potential to generate internal competition and coordination issues among different UN entities carrying out peacebuilding activities.

It is therefore crucial to have a clear leading peacebuilding actor at the country level. This leadership position should ideally be held by *the permanent in-country presence* (i.e., the RC Office) or another entity that has gained a reputation for leadership on peacebuilding. *Trustworthy relationships with national stakeholders* at the country level make an actor in charge of peacebuilding particularly successful. Peacebuilding leadership has to be further *accountable for the delivery of peacebuilding results*. In this, transition missions are not best placed to take the lead on peacebuilding, as their mandate is time-bound.

Strong and accountable UN leadership is based on long-standing and trustworthy relationships: In Somalia, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has earned the reputation of being a platform, convenor, and trusted partner by the national government, other UN actors, and donors. This recognition stems from years of engagement around conflict analysis and conflict prevention in the country and relatively stable performance on peacebuilding. As a result, UNDP enjoys strong partnerships at the local, national, and regional levels – the foundations for building sustainable peace.

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4   *Note that* specifically, the mandate is related to the implementation of the peace agreement between RENAMO and FRELIMO, but formally is removed from the broader political or peacebuilding support (e.g., on the Northern Mozambique and Cabo Delgado contexts).

5   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia.

6   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.

Strong and accountable peacebuilding leadership requires:

- **Identifying one entity in charge of coordinating UN peacebuilding efforts**. Based on the respective country contexts, this entity should have long-term presence and trust developed at the national level. It is preferred that such an entity has an established track record of successful delivery on peacebuilding priorities. In terms of capacity, this entity should feature a combination of peacebuilding expertise and capacities to foster coordination within the UN system. Given its political mandate, a mission, where present, could play this role in the interim; however, it is best if this role is attached to a permanent UN presence in country (i.e., the RC Offices or an entity within the UNCT) to benefit from long-term access and relationships of trust both with the national government and with relevant stakeholders.

- **Clarifying the division of roles within the UN in-country presence**. In mission settings, the mission is expected to take the lead on a political track, while the UNCT focuses on operational mandate. However, the reality is at times different. In non-mission settings, it is critical to ensure that the RC/HC has access to all resources and support to ensure both political and operational activities at the country level. In mission settings, missions (e.g., the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan [UNITAMS] and the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia) should have a clear exit strategy from the outset. In this, some argue that the integrated missions and peace operations more broadly should focus on retaining adequate capacity within the UNCT for political analysis, dialogue, and convening power to plan and implement multi-stakeholder processes and engagement with a wide range of partners. For this, the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) and the UN Department of Peacebuilding and Political Affairs should support a senior actor to facilitate coordination between the mission component, the RC Office, and the UNCT more broadly. The RC Office and the SRSG could jointly engage with the UN field presences to identify such an actor prior to the development of a new Cooperation Framework.

- **Ensuring accountability for peacebuilding action.** The Cooperation Framework, as well as a peacebuilding strategy, has to have specific indicators written in such way that the UN leadership at the country level can be held accountable for peacebuilding progress through regular and inclusive processes of monitoring and evaluation. The lack of immediate results in many peacebuilding activities is a challenge for monitoring the results. This however can be compensated by a commitment to regular reflection processes that

will better inform continuous UN engagement and highlight avenues where more work could be done or where approaches could be adjusted for more impact. Members of the donor community can also strengthen accountability for peacebuilding impact through their respective reporting requirements that encourage UN actors to think about how their activities contribute to peacebuilding impact.

PRIORITY AREA 2:
Develop a dedicated peacebuilding strategy that complements the broader strategic framework guiding UN activities in the country

Adequate peacebuilding action requires a dedicated strategy that identifies the key peacebuilding priorities in a country on the basis of a joint understanding of what the key drivers of conflict and instability are. While ensuring that existing processes and planning documents at the country level (i.e., the Cooperation Frameworks and Common Country Analysis [CCA]) integrate peacebuilding is critical, it is not enough to bring about peacebuilding results, as peacebuilding priorities tend to gradually 'wash away' in planning and implementation. In Sudan, Somalia, and Mozambique, dedicated peacebuilding strategies do not exist. This has reportedly undermined the preventive efforts[7] and led to the duplication of efforts.[8] The only country where a peacebuilding strategy is mandated by the UN Security Council (UNSC) is Sudan.[9] The process of the development of such a strategy – the Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stabilisation Programme (SPPSP) – has been in the works despite the October 2021 military takeover of power; however, it is yet to be revisited and formally adopted after the stabilisation of the current situation.

A dedicated peacebuilding strategy has the potential to bring together all parts of the UN's in-country presence around a shared set of objectives and a clear roadmap to optimise the UN's peacebuilding impact and ensure sustainability. It needs to be underpinned by (1) *deepened and inclusive analysis of the drivers of conflict*, (2) adequate systems of *data collection*, (3) a concrete action plan that prioritises *long-term peacebuilding programming,* and (4) established *monitoring processes*, including through reflective learning. Such a strategy will ensure that the UN's peacebuilding efforts are consolidated and given priority, instead of being spread across a wide range of activities.

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7   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.

8   UNDP, 'Independent Country Programme Evaluation', December 2020, Accessible at: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/adr/somalia.shtml.

9   UN, 'Resolution 2579 (2021) Adopted by the Security Council at its 8784th meeting, on 3 June 2021', p. 4, Accessible at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2579.pdf.

> **The Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stabilisation Programme (SPPSP)**[10] developed by UNITAMS proposed concrete actions such as integrated UNCT data collection and joint analysis to support early warning, conflict prevention, and peace implementation. Finalised in August 2021, the SPPSP intended to be an important mechanism to enhance the coherence of the UN's peacebuilding efforts in Sudan by bringing together UNITAMS and the UNCT under a shared set of objectives and pillars. Further, the SPPSP sought to leverage the comparative advantage of different UN entities to optimise the UN's impact.

Establishing a dedicated peacebuilding strategy for the UNCT or an integrated mission requires:

- **Adopting a context-specific peacebuilding approach.** Such an approach should foresee specific peacebuilding programming that aims to strengthen the capacity of the government and communities to prevent conflict, manage the negative effects of violence, and arrange swift conflict resolution through dialogue. This approach should be directly linked to a national peacebuilding strategy or serve as a joint avenue for peacebuilding engagement. As the UNSC in S/RES/2524 explicitly mandated the UN to conduct a comprehensive assessment to define Sudan's longer term conflict prevention, recovery and peacebuilding needs and develop relevant strategies to address these needs, a similar request could be applied in other mission settings. The PBC could facilitate a space for dialogue to ensure learning and exchange from different contexts to inform the development of a strong peacebuilding approach.

- **Developing a conflict-sensitive results framework** with corresponding conflict-sensitive outputs and outcomes linked to the Cooperation Framework and connected to ongoing conflict and stability risks. The indicators should be both perception-based indicators (i.e, if a respondent feels more or less safe) and objective (i.e., incidents of violence) to capture intangible impacts and should be reviewed regularly against delivery timelines, key performance indicators, or seamless end-to-end workflows. Disaggregation of data by group (i.e., women, indigenous people, youth, among many other groups) can also help to detect conflict sensitivity concerns. This should be underpinned by adequate methods of monitoring and data collection, with consideration given to the conflict- sensitivity challenges (i.e., funding and timing constraints, lack of accountability for failure to incorporate conflict sensitivity, among

others). The DCO and the RC should partner to improve the CCA[11] to be responsive to possibly sensitive and political issues and be developed in an inclusive process, with the participation of national stakeholders, to improve independent, impartial, and shared understanding of problems. A clear results framework could also provide an opportunity for the PBC to better support national governments, including through mobilising the support of various international partners.

- **Advancing long-term and forward-looking peacebuilding action.** Reconciliation, transitional justice, trauma healing, the establishment of economic incentives for peace, as well as localised conflict resolution mechanisms and infrastructures for peace, should take precedence over cessation of hostilities. Long-term and forward-looking peacebuilding action should be supported by the donor community. This serves to enable progressive transfer of responsibility to diverse national actors while gradually downscaling the UN's overall footprint.

- **Integrating reflective and learning processes that inform strategy and action.** The lack of meaningful reflection prevails and leads to missions' mandates being static and Cooperation Frameworks perpetuating the same gaps. For instance, the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility (SDRF) is cited by the UNSC as a good practice of establishing a joint combined governance structure and addressing disconnected financial avenues in country contexts for the implementation of national priorities, while in reality it has been functioning on ad hoc basis and not deemed as a useful platform by partners at the country level.[12] Meaningful reflection requires creating dedicated spaces within existing coordination platforms for regular, informal, and inclusive multi-stakeholder reflection and learning to capture and document ideas, including unspoken rationales, challenges, and insights to continuously adjust peacebuilding action in response to the realities. At the country level, such a reflection should be facilitated by the RC Office, in close partnership with the government, with concrete steps coming from it. Further, the results of this learning should be presented to the PBC to directly feed into the UNSC's consideration of the respective mission mandates.

10   UN, 'Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stablisation Programme', 19 August 2021.
11   Note that CCA is an instrument that provides key data for conflict and context analysis of the drivers of conflict and instability. It currently came under criticism paints a fairly broad and general picture to avoid touching upon possibly sensitive issues in the context of post-conflict settings. Yet, it is precisely these sensitive issues that need to be addressed in order to advance sustainable peace. For further information see GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia.
12   United Nations, 'Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: Report of the Secretary General', 18 January 2018, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/72/707.

Ensure adequate peacebuilding capacities across the UN in-country presence, including in the peripheries

Peacebuilding capacities are required for every agency and in all offices to ensure that UN actors do not have to rely on each other for the integration of conflict analysis but rather implement all activities in a conflict-sensitive manner. Across the three case studies, it is evident that peacebuilding capacities are improving. However, *the progress is not sufficient.* In Sudan, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) grant application process demonstrated that the UN entities at the country level have limited capacities for conflict analysis, and actions have been taken to support internal capacity building. Furthermore, in all three contexts, peacebuilding expertise is generally *centralised around the capital*, where the decisions are made. More UN presence in hard-to-reach areas support the UN's capacity to act effectively across the country. In Somalia, for example, the UN has field offices in 12 cities and towns, which has allowed for increased visibility and trust building between UN leadership and local communities.[13] While generally, the UN supports hiring national actors and those who speak local languages, *the senior staff remains primarily built of foreign nationals.* In Sudan, the UN has come under criticism for staffing these regional hubs with senior officials coming from Khartoum, while employing locals only for lower-level positions.[14] Knowledge of local languages and the presence of local staff is critical to understand the different needs of conflict-affected people and to act effectively and sustainably.

Adequate peacebuilding capacities for the UN's in-country presence include (1) the presence of staff with *conflict analysis capacities or dedicated peacebuilding expertise* in all entities, (2) *empowered national staff* within programme structures, (3) established *joint peacebuilding assessment procedures*, as well as (4) operational *mechanisms for conflict prevention*. These would enable the UN to adequately support the national government in the development of a peacebuilding architecture through proactive conflict mitigation and institutionalisation of peace infrastructure.

> **Country-specific training on conflict analysis in Sudan**: The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in Sudan noticed that proposals from UN in-country agencies, funds, and programmes (AFPs) lack general understanding of peacebuilding and conflict analysis. To address this, the PBF together with UNDP developed a training in conflict analysis specifically tailored to the Sudanese context. The overall goal of the training is to increase the capacity of UN agencies to access PBF funding and implement peacebuilding funding more effectively. This represents a welcome initiative to be followed up on in other contexts.

Ensuring adequate peacebuilding capacities requires:

- Appointing dedicated peacebuilding experts in all UN entities. This should include the appointment of a Peacebuilding Advisor or Peace and Development Advisor with vast knowledge of the local conflict dynamics to the RC Office, and this position should be funded out of core contributions and added to the standard set-up of RC Offices (next to the five standard positions). Peacebuilding experts should similarly be present in all UN entities, including in the field offices. Further, conflict advisors should be present during planning and assessment phases of the relevant strategic framework to facilitate meaningful reflection. While the availability of resources may prevent the appointment of peacebuilding experts in all UN entities, efforts to support peacebuilding capacities and conflict analysis of existing staff can be enhanced, with support from the Peacebuilding Support Office in the form of guidance and strategic support and the PBF in the form of financial resources.

- Strengthening the UN's capacities in regular conflict and context analysis across all in-country UN entities to inform the future footprint of the UN in light of risks and benefits. All UN strategies and programmes should be informed by a robust and action-oriented conflict analysis. Building on the good practice in Sudan, the PBF should collaborate with the UN System Staff College to support the development and roll-out of training in conflict analysis specifically tailored to country contexts. Further, this training should be linked to adaptive programming, taking into consideration the need for regular assessment and flexibility.

- Advancing the diversity of UN leadership and staff. Hiring of national senior staff, including those from outside the capital, can provide the UN adequate understanding of the situation in countries prone to insecurity to better share the UN's strategies on an everyday basis. Alternatively, international peacebuilding experts need to demonstrate established expertise in the respective country-context, including from working in the periphery, and speak local languages.

- Conducting regular peacebuilding assessments to identify the attitudes and behaviours of those involved, as well as the conditions of vulnerability in a given conflict context. In this, the UN-World-EU Bank Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment Methodology is an effective model to adopt. The identified areas from such assessments need to be followed up on and connected to the Cooperation Framework and peacebuilding strategy through dedicated objectives and activities.

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13 GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia.

14 GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

- Establishing inclusive conflict prevention, early warning, and early response mechanisms equipped with a system of community monitors trained to collect data effectively, and with comprehensive and inclusive indicators to measure peace, development, and humanitarian risks. These indicators must be rooted in diverse local realities and supported by adequate response strategies. The UN Department of Peacebuilding and Political Affairs and the African Union must then ensure that the early warning data collected are linked to effective response models at the global, regional, and international levels. The RC or another selected lead on peacebuilding should also play an important role in socialising the benefits of preventive approaches at the field level and engage strategically on these issues with the government.

Operational and Policy Coherence

Sustaining peace requires strong inter-agency collaboration, advancing joint programming (where applicable) and building strong partnership with the national government.

Shifts in operational and policy coherence are driven by the Secretary-General's ambition to decrease fragmentation of efforts and strengthen coherence, at both the strategic and operational levels. A key element in this regard is the ambition to work from a coherent and overarching country strategy (i.e., a Cooperation Framework) that ensures that peacebuilding and prevention components are integrated across the development-humanitarian-peacebuilding nexus (the Triple Nexus). This approach should be underpinned by effective avenues of coordination across the UN system and with the national government, the goals of which the UN is mandated to support at the country level.

The findings in all three case studies revealed that despite the ongoing efforts to coordinate and engage in joint programming, these processes require deep reflection and optimisation. This holds especially true when it comes to *the role of peacebuilding in the Triple Nexus*. Research shows that the UN has robust humanitarian systems in place; however, it is less so for its peacebuilding work. Further, *joint programming* is a preferred method of engagement as it is believed to bring together different streams of the Triple Nexus. However, reflection is required to understand whether and what joint programming is the most effective in specific contexts. Furthermore, the findings also indicate that the existence of numerous different coordination mechanisms in the same country may limit concrete impact.[15] Finally, the UN peacebuilding processes *largely depend on the government's priorities*. Where the government is not interested in peacebuilding, the opportunities for the UN are fairly limited unless the UN works to engage with academia, the private sector, and civil society.[16]

Against this context, the required shifts in UN operational and policy coherence in supporting peacebuilding and sustaining peace are (1) advancing *inter-agency collaboration*, (2) meaningfully employing *joint programming and joint planning*, and (3) building *constructive partnership with the national government*.

PRIORITY AREA 1:
Advancing inter-agency coordination on peacebuilding

The three case studies demonstrate limited inter-agency coordination on peacebuilding within the UN in-country presence. Different UN actors at times run *separate programming*, competing with each other over funding. In Sudan, for example, UN agencies have occasionally conducted separate peacebuilding assessments and reportedly worked independently to create their own COVID-19 response mechanisms.[17] A variety of *coordination mechanisms* exist within the UN system at the country level. However, these mechanisms are not being optimised and realised to their fullest potential. For instance, in Somalia, the UN has established various thematic working groups, including on gender, youth, and durable solutions. Many are operating on an ad hoc basis and new groups are continuously being formed. This creates a problem because too many coordination mechanisms require time and effort by relevant (and often the same) partners to attend. They further hold the risk of duplicating efforts, which in return weakens their well-intended impact. As a result, there is limited exchange of information and data among UN agencies and limited cooperation with the national government, and agencies tend to compete over funding and political power.
Effective operationalisation of the Triple Nexus and the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda requires strong coordination within the UN system at the country level. Such strategic and cross-cutting *coordination mechanisms*, along with *a dedicated peacebuilding coordination platform*, can serve to improve the flow of information across agencies and to avoid certain sectors around peacebuilding being siloed. Practically, such coordination can be led by the RC Office and be integrated into the Cooperation Framework.

Advancing inter-agency coordination on peacebuilding requires:

- Optimising existing coordination mechanisms to understand their added value and potential overlap. The platforms for donor coordination on peacebuilding and the platform for UN coordination need to leverage off each other and could be potentially facilitated by the same actor (i.e., Deputy

15   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

16   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan; *and* GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.

17   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

SRSG/HC/RC). The optimisation could also lead to the creation of dedicated spaces for all existing coordination platforms for regular, informal, and inclusive multi-stakeholder reflection and learning to capture and document ideas, including unspoken rationales, challenges, and insights to continuously adjust peacebuilding action in response to existing realities. The DCO could establish country collaboration teams to allow RC Offices to establish a single collaborative network of support arrangements.

- Establishing an overarching peacebuilding coordination mechanism or enhancing existing mechanisms under the RC Offices to increase mutual trust among AFPs, clarify the roles of different actors, and improve information management. This coordination mechanism may engage in the development of joint peacebuilding assessments and their circulation across UN entities, as well as the (at least temporary) co-location of staff from different entities working on peacebuilding. The coordination would ensure UN entities have a shared understanding of the conflict's root causes and the ensuing peacebuilding needs – an issue that in the past has negatively affected coordination.

PRIORITY AREA 2
Prioritising joint programming and joint planning

Joint programming is an effective tool to decisively move away from an agency-driven approach with the goal of bringing together different work streams of the Triple Nexus. All Cooperation Frameworks reviewed for this project proclaimed that the UN at the country level focuses on joint planning and joint programming to incentivise collective action and system-wide coherence. Mozambique's 2022-2026 Cooperation Framework[18] provides an opportunity for the UN system to come together around Joint Working Plans (JWPs) to implement relevant activities. In Somalia and Sudan, findings were more concrete as joint programming has also successfully brought together different UN actors on a variety of topics relevant to peacebuilding. The research in Somalia, however, revealed that mostly mid- or long-term large projects are best suited for joint programming, as they have the potential to be continuously updated throughout the programme timeline to reflect current realities and major reviews, such as annual reviews.

Joint programming in the context of long-term activities can reduce transaction costs, maximise impact, and increase government participation in programme design, implementation, and evaluation. This requires *clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each implementing partner, and mutual accountability* on the delivery of development results that is being utilised

widely across the three case studies. It is important to note that *joint programming is not always appropriate*, especially when partners have different goals or want to implement short-term small-scale projects. *Area-based approaches* are one way of doing joint programming to achieve cross-sectoral coordination and longer-term programming at the state and local levels.

> **The Cooperation Framework for the UN in Mozambique:** Under the new 2022-2026 Cooperation Framework,[19] the UN agencies in collaboration with partners work to develop, monitor, and report on annual Joint Working Plans (JWPs). These JWPs are meant to 'help to translate outcomes into concrete, measurable and time-bound outputs that provide clear linkages to enable the attribution of the UN contribution to national priorities'. For each of the new strategic priorities a Strategic Priority Group has been established to prepare the JWP on an annual basis (also taking into account the outcomes of the annual CCA). All UNCT members will also be involved in the preparation of JWPs for the strategic priorities they contribute to.

Prioritising joint programming requires:

- Clarifying responsibilities of partners. One avenue to do so is leveraging Memorandums of Understanding that clearly state the roles and responsibilities of each agency within a project and confirm conceptual understanding of the terms defined in the joint plan. The Cooperation Framework has to make clear how the alignment between various joint programmes is ensured. The JWPs can help translate the outcomes of the Cooperation Framework into concrete, measurable, and time-bound outputs. Without such plans, joint engagement may increase partners' burdens in their servicing of various UN-supported initiatives and individual agency work plans.

- Not rushing into joint programming. Joint programmes can be designed not only on the basis of the Cooperation Framework cycle but also following annual reviews and other evaluation processes, followed by potential subsequent revisions to programmes. The joint programmes should not be applied to short-term programmes and low-budget grants, to ensure that most money is not spent on coordination but rather is contributed to activities and impact at the local level. The UN's procedures and parallel systems require significant overhaul through greater harmonisation and closer coordination, with a view to unblocking the delivery of results. For a short-term action, joint planning could be a substitute to joint programming with a view to facilitate informed and more impactful programming.

- Advancing an area-based approach (as one avenue

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18   UN Mozambique, '2022-2026 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Mozambique', 2021.
19   UN Mozambique, '2022-2026 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Mozambique', 2021.

of conducting joint programming) to engage at the subnational and local levels by creating platforms that bring together a range of actors, including peacebuilding experts, to agree and implement collective responses. A success story is the Community Recovery and Extension of State Authority/Accountability (commonly known as CRESTA/A) strategy that brings together humanitarian, development, and peace experts and resulted in the establishment of strong local level relationships between the UN and communities.[20] Such practices can be further capitalised on.

PRIORITY AREA 3:
Strengthen constructive relationships with the government

The UN generally develops its strategies while taking into consideration national priorities. In Mozambique, the former Development Assistance Framework was aligned with the 2015–2019 Government of Mozambique's Five-Year Programme; in Somalia, the Strategic Framework is linked to the Somalian 2020–2024 Ninth National Development Plan. This allows the UN to meaningfully fulfil its role at the country level. When the UN works to support national peacebuilding priorities, it is important to recognise the limitations of what the UN can actually accomplish. Often, limited engagement is a result of political divisions and limited political will to pursue peacebuilding action. In the context of the lack of a stable national partner or the lack of a legitimate government, it is reported that the UN does not provide adequate mechanisms for the UN to sustain peace.[21] Moreover, the UN is often perceived as too dependent on the government and is therefore mistrusted within communities. In turn, this prevents a realistic assessment of the situation and affects the ability of the donors and other international partners to provide adequate support.

Strong relationships between the UN and the government require (1) a constructive *engagement of the government on peacebuilding* that extends beyond merely supporting the government's priorities, but also helping it to understand the broader scope of possible options; and (2) *prioritisation of the inclusive national stakeholders* in the role of implementers, while capitalising on the role of the UN as a convenor and facilitator. The UN should be well equipped to ensure that national stakeholders have access to capacities, skills, and resources to rely on in developing and advancing their national peacebuilding priorities.

The State Liaison Functions in Darfur[22] have reportedly been a particularly interesting success story in terms of promoting cooperation both within the UN system and between the UN and the national government. Specifically, the Joint 5+8 Technical Committee promoted effective UN-government coordination, bringing together representatives from both United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)/UNCT and the government.

Strong relationships between the UN and the government require:

- **Ensuring a constructive dialogue between the national government and the UN on peacebuilding.** This includes recognising the good practises of the government and offering support to overcome persistent deficiencies. This also includes acknowledging the limitations of national peacebuilding capacities, as well as corruption, deficient national responses, and other challenges. The UN can support socialising the global agendas with the government and the society, including on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, conducting training and sharing resources with relevant national institutions. Improved engagement of the national governments in the global and regional policy forums, including the Peacebuilding Commission; the UNSC Annual Open Debates on Women, Peace and Security; and the High-Level Political Forum, among others, can set the stage for reflective internal dialogues, joint reflections, and strategy development.

- **Developing adequate peacebuilding infrastructure at the national level.** The UN's support for peacebuilding is the lowest where the government's political will is lacking. As such, the UN support in the development and implementation of national peacebuilding strategies is key to ensure impactful implementation of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda. This strategy should build on existing and diverse infrastructures for peace and develop synergies between national and grassroots initiatives. Further, the development of effective coordination mechanisms to ensure coherence of peacebuilding efforts between the government, the UN, and other stakeholders is another avenue to align around the common goals. In this, engagement with the national government entails engagement with local governments and state political leaders to ensure national ownership. Such coordination mechanisms should be meaningfully operationalised, beyond their existence on paper or in ad hoc settings.

20   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia.
21   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.
22   Ibid.

- **Ensuring the role of the implementer is filled primarily by national and local actors**, with relevant capacities supported by UN actors. In this, the UN should bolster efforts to strengthen engagement with local governments and community actors, beyond the current focus on engagement with the national government, through the provision of conflict-sensitive guidance, tools, and capacity-building opportunities and creating spaces for and encouraging the meaningful participation of diverse women and youth civil society actors in all aspects of peacebuilding, including the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements and transitional justice processes, among others. Some tools include the UN Community Engagement Guidelines on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace[23] and the UN Sustainable Development Group's Practice Note on Conflict Sensitivity, Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace. There are a number of joint programmes[24] where the government is an equal partner. Such an approach needs to be prioritised to ensure that programming contributes to capacity building and inclusive national ownership.

- **Revising the UN Headquarters approach to supporting the UN in the absence of a functioning government or national commitment to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.** In a situation of military takeover of power like in Sudan, or a general lack of commitment towards a long-term peacebuilding action like in Mozambique, there should be processes, resources, and guidance in place to allow the UN in-country presences to continue with the relevant peacebuilding activities. The UN Peacebuilding Support Office, in partnership with the DCO and other UN AFPs, should develop a guiding resource for the UN in-country offices to engage in complex political settings and develop concrete training to roll out such a resource (following the example of the UN System-Wide Community Engagement Guidelines on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace[25]). The PBC could also provide support in inviting dialogue between UN senior staff and the government concerned.

23   United Nations, 'United Nations Community Engagement Guidelines on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace', August 2020, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/un-community-engagement-guidelines-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-0.
24   Note that funded through the Peacebuilding Fund and the Somalia Multi Partner Trust Fund, WPP partners with the Federal Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (MoWHRD), and implemented by UN Women, the United Nations UND, and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). For further information see UN Somalia, 'UN and Somali Government launch a New Joint Programme To Empower Women', 5 December 2021, Accessible at: https://somalia.un.org/en/161706-un-and-somali-government-launch-new-joint-programme-empower-women.
25   United Nations, 'The UN System-Wide Community Engagement Guidelines on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace', August 2020, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/un-community-engagement-guidelines-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-0.

Partnerships for Peacebuilding

PRIORITY AREA 1:
Harness the UN's convening capacity to bring diverse peacebuilding stakeholders together at the country level

Sustainable peace requires strong and diverse partnerships to ensure peacebuilding stakeholders and communities collaborate effectively at the country level.

Partnerships are essential to strengthen the complementarity between UN peacebuilding efforts and those of the national government, donors, regional organisations, international financial institutions (IFIs), diverse civil society, and other stakeholders. The UN works with a broad ecosystem of peacebuilding partners based on complementary capacities and respective mandates. Such an engagement enables *joint analysis, programming, and information sharing*, improves *financial support*, and promotes *impactful action* at the country level. Partnerships however require ongoing coordination, agreement around roles and responsibilities, as well as effort to reach consensus about common concepts, operational policies, methods, and tools.

The findings of all three case studies revealed that the UN actively engages with various partners. In Somalia, the Cooperation Framework explicitly reflects the role of some partners in its operationalisation. This helps partners to align around common concepts and facilitate cooperation. Such practice can be adapted in other contexts. Improvement could also be made when it comes to the authenticity of such partnerships and their systematic nature. In all three contexts, partnerships with civil society have been described as top-down and ad hoc rather than authentic, meaning that civil society is seen as an implementer rather than a partner. Further, activities between the UN and its other partners continue to be disjointed. For instance, in Sudan, despite the existence of the UN-World Bank partnership on paper, meaningful engagement remains difficult to realise. Mistrust and mandate overlaps among partners are also widespread.

The required shifts partnership for peacebuilding in supporting peacebuilding and sustaining peace are (1) harnessing *the UN's convening capacity* to bring diverse peacebuilding stakeholders together at the country level and (2) developing *institutionalised and systematised strategies for community engagement*.

The UN has a universal convening power that allows diverse stakeholders to advance peacebuilding and sustaining peace.[26] It has generally earned the reputation of being a trusted convening partner for various stakeholders. However, the platform for dialogue is rarely inclusive. The process of establishing institutionalised long-standing and trusted partnerships among a diverse group of stakeholders is not an easy undertaking. For instance, in all three countries, the partnership with regional organisations showcased dynamics of mistrust, tension, and conflict, reportedly hindering effective cooperation between the entities. The partnership with the World Bank faces different challenges. The World Bank supports specific objectives of the Cooperation Framework (in the case of Somalia) and conducts joint activities (in the case of Mozambique's Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment Methodology). However, the UN has not been able to meaningfully engage with the World Bank in Sudan. Generally, the UN's partnerships with regional organisations and the World Bank, as well as with the private sector and IFIs, needs to be further reviewed to meaningfully and jointly reflect on their status and effectiveness.

The convening role of the UN is an opportunity to *share the good practices and lessons learned* and *address the division of roles*, *prevent programmatic repetition*, and support *strong and operational partnerships*, including among non-UN stakeholders. At the global level, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission could be enhanced as a unique platform to convene key partners, such as Member States, relevant UN actors, international financial institutions, regional and sub-regional organisations, and civil society in support of nationally identified peacebuilding priorities, with a view to enhancing coordination of peacebuilding activities. At the country level, the RC Office could take a similar function.

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26   Note that as stated in Our Common Agenda: ''There is no other organization with its legitimacy, convening power and normative impact.'
For further information see UN, 'Our Common Agenda- Report of the Secretary General', September 2021, p. 82,
Accessible at: https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf.

Cafés de Paz e Segurança (Peace and Security Coffees) is a platform that links the sectors of defence and security, academia, and civil society, with a view to addressing issues related to peace in Mozambique.[27] Having one inclusive platform that gives voice to local civil society organisations while providing a space for dialogue between them, international partners, and the government could be fundamental to rebuilding trust between peacebuilding stakeholders. Solutions found through these dialogues could align international, national, and local priorities and pave the way for more effective and sustainable peacebuilding initiatives.

Leveraging the UN's convening capacity to bring diverse peacebuilding stakeholders together at the country level is possible by:

- **Specifying the role of diverse partners in the Cooperation Framework** to address gaps and overlaps in relevant peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities. Each outcome of the Cooperation Framework needs to take into consideration the activities of external partners, including the World Bank, civil society, and regional organisations. Similarly, these partners should play a role in the development and monitoring of the Cooperation Framework to share their experiences and learning from their respective processes. Data that they collect, including on development indicators and early warning, should be used to inform the actions of the UN field presence in the spirit of avoiding repetition and building on each other's experiences. To clarify such relationships, signing Memorandums of Understanding with external partners would address mistrust and clarify division of responsibilities.

- **Establishing a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue**. The UN should not overemphasise its role as an implementer but rather focus on its role as a convenor to facilitate regular (i.e., annual) space for the partners to coordinate joint analysis and peacebuilding strategies, building each other's capacities in conflict analysis and peacebuilding, and ensuring strategic collaboration. For this, it is important to conduct mappings of all relevant stakeholders at both the national and regional levels as the first step, and then work to determine spaces

that will be strategic for all partners to engage in. The Peacebuilding Commission could serve as a sounding board to the government, provide political backing to UN engagement at the country level, and accompany governments in their journeys towards peace. Alternatively, the RC Office can coordinate such a platform at the national level.

The Peacebuilding Commission is also well positioned to support more impactful partnerships of the UN with the African Union and World Bank through its thematic discussions to identify areas where these partnerships can be strategically improved beyond specific country contexts.

- **Supporting the development of partnerships among non-UN stakeholders** that benefit peacebuilding priorities. For example, connecting regional organisations and civil society on early warning, as both parties are already extensively working on such mechanisms.[28] This could avoid repetition and strengthen these mechanisms. In this, the UN could provide political support and a platform for fundraising so that such initiatives can grow stronger.

PRIORITY AREA 2:
Develop institutionalised and systematised strategies for community engagement

Community engagement is at the heart of successful peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.[29] However, while this fact is widely recognised by the international community, partnership with civil society is complex and often relies on access to the relevant civil society organisations. In general, the UN–civil society partnerships across the three case studies have been defined as (1) top-down, (2) neither meaningful nor systematic, (3) dependent on the personal commitment of the UN staff, and (4) extremely selective. The partnership challenges stem from *institutional challenges* as well as *the lack of resources and capacities to meaningfully engage* with local peacebuilders. For instance, no systematic and institutionalised community engagement strategy exists in the three countries considered for this project. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development's National Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit – reported as a good practice of early warning and conflict prevention in Somalia – partnered with civil society; however, it has not been functioning in recent years. Consultative

27   UN Mozambique, 'UN Mozambique 2017–2021 UNDAF Evaluation Final Report', 23 March 2021, p. 44, Accessible at: https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/detail/19225.

28   Please note that in all three case studies, mechanisms exist in theory but are not fully operationalised due to factors such as political will or existing resources. For instance, in Mozambique, both SADC and the civil society organisation PROPAZ are working on early warning, early response structures but not jointly. In Sudan, IGAD's Conflict Early Warning Mechanism (CEWARN) could collaborate with the Khartoum University (KU) that established a Conflict Risk Dashboard in partnership with UNDP. In Somalia, the Somalia Youth Development Network (SOYDEN) and IGAD have partnered for the Somalia Conflict Early Warning Unit (CEWERU); however, this partnership is currently not operational. For further information seeGPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique; GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia; *and* GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at:https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

29   United Nations, 'The 2018 Secretary-General's Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707)', 18 January 2018, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/report-secretary-general-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace.

processes are widespread but also often repetitive, with the same actors answering the same questions, without meaningful depth of discussions, follow-up, and feedback loop. Where the efforts are taking place, there is a lack of *representativeness of diverse national stakeholders*, including indigenous groups, traditional leaders, and actors in the most remote areas, among others. Indeed, the engagement currently rests with the international nongovernmental organisations and their in-country partners, who are generally based in the capitals and major centres. Such limited engagement results in objectives and tools not aligned with local needs and circumstances, with a negative effect on the projects' impact.

The representatives of the UN also highlight that civil society members often demonstrate participation fatigue and rarely coordinate among themselves via a single umbrella civil society network, making it complex for the UN to coordinate engagement. It has been done in Somalia, where the Peacebuilding Working Group in Somalia – a group consisting of civil society member from international nongovernmental organizations, national organisations, and grassroots groups – exists as a strong counterpart to the UN to engage with a great diversity of experiences. However, it does not have a formal channel of systematic engagement with the UN. In polarised societies (i.e., Sudan), the UN is particularly challenged to identify independent partners to work with. In many cases, civil society methods of work are outdated and require additional innovation to reflect policy and programmatic developments.

The UN System-Wide Community Engagement Guidelines[30] outline the key avenues to building strong and operational partnerships with civil society. Building on the need to advance engagement with *diverse actors*, including women and youth, the Guidelines suggest the development of *institutionalised community engagement strategies* for the UNCT, ensuring meaningful (impactful) participation by civil society in the UN's actions, where their *safety and security* is provided for.

> **Network-building that connects local actors across the country:** GPPAC, through its member in Mozambique – PROPAZ – has a vast network of peacebuilders that operates in five provinces, which serves as the foundation for the Mozambique conflict early warning system that facilitates incident and situation reports through its trained CSO field officers. Their five provincial field reporters are based in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambezia, Sofala, and Maputo. Recently, the network has lost funding as a result of a shift in donors' priorities away from peacebuilding. This is a type of initiative that could be better supported through the UN's systematic and institutionalised community engagement, building on the already existing local initiatives and providing them with funding, training, and technical support.

The development of institutionalised and systematised strategies for community engagement requires:

- **Developing institutionalised community engagement strategies.** The UN's country team should undertake a comprehensive stakeholder mapping to better familiarise itself with the local environment and identify pre-existing community structures, including early warning systems. The coordination of such a strategy needs to be undertaken by a civil society liaison based within the RC Office. For expert-level peacebuilding personnel, engagement with civil society should be included in their Terms of Reference to ensure that the partnerships continue beyond a single person. Once relevant actors on both sides are identified, the partnerships can start with the discussion of joint activities, including capacity building, joint dialogues on conflict sensitivity, and supporting conflict analysis, among others. This should be followed by determining particular spaces where civil society can provide meaningful contribution on a regular basis (i.e., in the CCA processes and monitoring of the Cooperation Framework implementation) and where the UN could provide adequate support to civil society (i.e., the development and mobilisation of national early warning systems). The Peacebuilding Fund should consider providing financial support for the development of such initiatives, while the UN Staff College can develop concrete modules for rolling out the Guidelines at the country level.

- **Diversifying the group of local partners,** including by strengthening partnerships with the organisations based in the peripheries and grassroots organisations. Forging new partnerships will support local actors' capacity building, instead of selecting and continuously working with a few organisations that meet the UN expectations already. In these efforts, the UN can rely on the support of peacebuilding networks that exist at the regional or national level. The PBF can support such actions in regular programming and through PBF's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative.

- **Advocating for an enabling environment for a free and open dialogue** by devoting extra attention to providing civil society with a safe environment for engagement. Effective consultations can be achieved by identifying relevant community channels and developing user-friendly communication materials or platforms rooted in local civil society capacities and community contexts. The protection procedures also apply to the engagement of these partners in the work of the UNSC and the Peacebuilding Commission, where the national governments should be held responsible for the prevention of reprisals and where Member States should be invited to provide all possible avenues to ensure the security

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30   United Nations, 'United Nations Community Engagement Guidelines on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace', August 2020, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/un-community-engagement-guidelines-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-0.

and protection of civil society representatives at UN Headquarters, as well as in their respective countries. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights can provide meaningful support to that extent through its respective country offices.

- **Supporting more meaningful (impactful) engagement**. Engagement with civil society should start early on in the processes of strategic and programmatic development with relevant feedback loops and follow-ups. 'Learning by doing' could be an effective avenue to support the capacity building of local actors and develop collaborative partnerships instead of expecting to work with capacitated civil society actors. Such an approach can help move away from needless complexity of the UN processes and build equitable spaces for partnership. The donor community should provide an opportunity for partners to dedicate time and resources to building partnerships that are meaningful instead of requiring tight allocations for coordination and planning.

Financing for Peacebuilding

Sustaining peace requires a strengthened effort from the UN system, its Member States, and the donor community to support both the quality and the quantity of financing in an environment that is conducive to the donors' coordination within and outside of the peacebuilding realm.

Shifts in financing for peacebuilding are driven by the UN Secretary-General's ambition to decrease the significant gap in resources to fulfil the peacebuilding components of the UN's work at the country level. Currently, this work is funded by *a variety of mechanisms*, including pooled funds, direct funding from multilateral entities, bilateral donors, intermediary organisations, IFIs, the private sector, and others. In all three case studies, it was recognised that well-designed pooled funds can promote integrated, cross-cutting initiatives over a long period of time. Donors also contribute to strengthening the impact of peacebuilding programming at the country level, including by supporting infrastructures for peace, providing direct support for civil society, and introducing ways to support traditionally marginalised communities (i.e., gender markers). At the same time, the *resources continue to be insufficient and in need of better 'quality'* – accessibility, sustainability, and flexibility. Transition contexts present a particular challenge. In the context of Sudan, for instance, the drawdown of UNAMID (the largest and most expensive mission) left behind a significant financial gap, as well as ambitious expectations from all relevant stakeholders towards UNITAMS, which has a much smaller footprint and limited programmatic funding at its disposal.[31] Moreover, a heritage of international engagement in conflict settings drives much stronger humanitarian financing structures, where financing for peacebuilding is normally withdrawn following short-term peacebuilding action (i.e., Mozambique) or frozen as a result of military takeover of power (i.e., Sudan).

Adequate, predictable, and sustained financing for peacebuilding depends on the donors' commitment to ensure investment in long-term comprehensive peacebuilding action. For this, donors should consider avenues not only to *increase financing for peacebuilding*, but also to ensure that their investments in other areas of work are also conflict sensitive. The donor community should engage with peacebuilding experts to better understand *the impact of peacebuilding action* and advance avenues to accelerate impact in a way that allows the donor community to meet their respective obligations. As this learning evolves, *coordination among diverse donors*, including at the country level, is required to maximise synergies, minimise potential duplication, and ensure policy harmonisation, and as such contribute to strengthening both quality and quantity of financing for peacebuilding.

PRIORITY AREA 1:
Increase the availability of sustainable financing for peacebuilding

Peacebuilding efforts are *continuously underfunded*. For instance, although the Official Development Assistance (ODA) allocation to conflict-affected countries has increased, the total ODA directed focus towards peacebuilding within those countries declined to 11.4 per cent in 2018.[32] In Mozambique, peacebuilding is generally the least funded pillar of the UN Cooperation Framework.[33] Demand for PBF support is outpacing available resources, especially in non-mission settings. Another challenge of working on peacebuilding in a country where the government is showing a lack of political will to engage on peacebuilding is that the government may refrain from signing a fully developed peacebuilding project document developed in consultation with it over several months.[34] Further, the majority of donors generally do not pursue risks and prefer to withdraw money from crisis settings, rather than reallocating resources where they can be impactfully spent. For example, most of the funding in Sudan remains frozen since the October 2021 military takeover, preventing peacebuilding activities from continuing.[35] At the same time, other donors reallocated their resources to support community-level prevention mechanisms.[36] Finally, peacebuilding is often of lower

31   GPPAC,'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

32   United Nations, 'The 2020 Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding and sustaining peace', 30 July 2020, p. 16–17, Accessible at: https://undocs.org/S/2020/773.

33   For example, 40% ($714,189.664) of the total budget is spent on the human development pillar, the economic diversification and sustainable livelihoods pillar is allocated 22% ($396,883,447), the pillar on climate resilience and sustainable use of natural resources receives 27% ($469,062,085), and lastly, the peacebuilding, human rights and inclusive governance pillar funding accounts for only 11% ($189,744,346). For further information see UN Mozambique, '2022-2026 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Mozambique', 2021, p. 106–113. Further note that in a period where violence and conflict were already a major issue in the country, the resource allocation for peace decreased.

34   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.

35   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

36   Ibid.

priority than humanitarian action.[37] In Mozambique, for instance, the 2017–2021 UNDAF programme allocated the least amount of resources to the peace-related pillar: US $223M for prosperity, US $329M for people, US $105M for planet, and only $51M for peace.[38] It is important to note however that the *exact amount of funding dedicated to peacebuilding is to date unclear*, as many donors do not have a specific peacebuilding marker for their allocations, and display significant differences in their understanding of what constitutes peacebuilding.[39]

Peacebuilding requires a broad set of financing instruments and a variety of channels and sources. This requires dedicated funding streams (beyond the PBF) to ensure the availability of such funds for a larger group of peacebuilding stakeholders, ensuring other financing mechanisms are conflict sensitive, and avoiding withdrawal of money in crisis settings.

The increase in the availability of sustainable financing for peacebuilding requires:

- **Increasing funding streams for peacebuilding.** One avenue is providing dedicated peacebuilding funding through pooled fund mechanisms tightly linked to conflict and context analysis and complementing the implementation of the Cooperation Framework or a dedicated peacebuilding strategy. Beyond the PBF, non-UN pooled funds could serve that purpose (such as the Somalia Stability Fund) as well as existing UN funds (i.e., Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. While the proliferation of funding instruments can be a challenge, the launch of additional pooled peacebuilding funding mechanisms with a dedicated gender and youth marker is required where such support is minimal or non-existent. The PBC can provide support for generating donors' attention to the possibility of developing such funds where they do not exist. These funding streams require decentralised management of the funds through nationally situated and adequately staffed mechanisms that engage directly with the recipients of these grants. Beyond pooled funding mechanisms, the donor community could use a peacebuilding marker while maintaining conflict-sensitivity requirements in all international aid, and the donor countries should allocate at least 30 per cent of ODA to peacebuilding. Member States should also consider allocating a certain percentage of assessed contribution, including its unspent peacekeeping budget, to support medium- to long-term peacebuilding, which would ensure continuity, predictability, and sustainability of

financing for peacebuilding. By finalising the funding dashboard for peacebuilding, with consideration of various financing channels per country and globally, and making it a public resource, the Peacebuilding Support Office will help provide understanding of the current state of peacebuilding financing.

- **Supporting peacebuilding action in complex political settings.** Donors should not freeze resources in the context of relapse in conflict or military takeover of power and reallocate resources to support peacebuilding through alternative strategies that maintain peace across the peace continuum. Instead, the donor community should re-allocate money in a way that contributes to stabilisation and prevention of further escalation of conflict. This stems from the reliance of national constituencies on these resources and the need to apply principles of peacebuilding and sustaining peace across the conflict cycle. Similarly, donors should not withdraw peacebuilding resources following the stabilisation of the situation unless an independent assessment advises them to do so. Withdrawing funding too soon may contribute to relapses into conflict, or to the extinction of many peacebuilding mechanisms and architectures for peace that rely on such funding.

PRIORITY AREA 2:
Prioritise quality of existing and new approaches to financing for peacebuilding

Strengthening adequate, predictable, and sustained peacebuilding financing requires adopting best practices and continuing to test innovative models. Peacebuilding goals are long-term and require substantial flexibility. Among the mechanisms recognised as best practices in ensuring quality financing there are flexible and context-driven pooled funds which benefit from a commitment by the donors to accept required priority shifts and broad trajectories (i.e., the Somalia Stability Fund). There is a notable shift in the PBF towards providing long-term (i.e., three to five years) grants in Sudan,[40] which is a positive development in ensuring sustainability of funding. However, the resources inadequately empower local peacebuilding action. This stems from the PBF's preference for proposals submitted by UN entities, which in practice means that civil society directly receives less resources and ownership in project development. As a result, the PBF mostly funds joint UN-civil society proposals, in which civil society is mostly subcontracted as an implementing partner,

37   UN Somalia, 'Aid Flows in Somalia 2021', 1 June 2021, Accessible at: https://somalia.un.org/en/160002-aid-flows-somalia-2021; *and* Devinit, Dalrymple, Thomas and Hanssen, 'Supporting Longer Term Development in Crisis at the Nexus: Lessons from Somalia Report', February 2021, p. 27, Accessible at: https://devinit.org/documents/903/Supporting_longer_term_development_in_crises_at_the_nexus_Lessons_from_Somalia.pdf.
38   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.
39   Note that during the interviews conducted for this project, peacebuilding was regarded as any process that applies conflict lens to the assessment of outcomes, from the dialogue and mediation processes to food security and infrastructure development.
40   GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

rather than engaged as an 'equal partner'. However, the Gender Youth and Peace Initiative stands as an exception, where the PBF has a target of allocating 40 per cent of the grants to civil society. Moreover, donors tend to ignore context-specific approaches to peacebuilding, overly relying instead on global agendas and their individual priorities, raising the possibility of harmfully impacting prospects for peace at the country level. For example, some approaches to women's empowerment in Somalia have endangered women due to the negative attitudes within communities to the "Westernised" ways of women's empowerment.[41] Furthermore, the 18-month projects supported largely by donors are not enough to allow for effective implementation and real impact.[42]

Ongoing efforts to ensure adequate, predictable, and sustained financing for peacebuilding requires *accessible funding* for a variety of peacebuilding partners that allows for authentic and equitable partnerships among them, *flexible funding* that enables adjustments to the realities of peacebuilding work, *long-term funding* that ensures sustainability of efforts, and *impactful financing* that ensures that peacebuilding action has the most impact at the country level.

> ***The Somalia Stability Fund (SSF)*** is a multi-donor instrument, active since 2013. The SSF provides support to stabilisation, conflict prevention, and peace- and state-building.[43] The Fund has a strong focus on co-creation, where donors are involved in the design of the project but also provide political accompaniment at the end of the project. Reportedly, the SSF has been able to remain a flexible and context-driven pooled fund, resulting from donor commitment to accepting required priority shifts and broad trajectories.

Quality of existing and new approaches to financing for peacebuilding requires:

- **Improving accessibility of funding to diverse national stakeholders** to improve their capacities to engage in the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda. Specific needs that prevent national peacebuilding stakeholders from accessing funds need to be identified and properly addressed by the donor community. The PBF's commitment to expand partnerships with civil society organisations and explore new avenues to make funding available for community-based organisations should be further operationalised, especially where there are in-country PBF offices. This will shorten the long chain of beneficiaries, allowing for a more impactful

response. Where needed, donors should build on existing national financial frameworks to ensure transparency and complementarity. In efforts to fund more diverse and smaller local CSOs to complement existing funding mechanisms in the PBF, the UN Secretariat should consider setting up a separate nimbler and more accessible support facility.

- **Encouraging authentic partnership.** This includes the clear division of roles and responsibilities based on respective mandates and expertise, with equitable distribution of resources. The national partners should not consistently take the role of subcontracted implementer and should be equal partners in developing, implementing and assessing the results of the project, based on comparative capacities of the partners. Where the capacity is limited, the investment could be done through small grants to help entities to grow. The US Agency for International Developent's Office of Transition Initiatives in Mozambique[44] has invested small amounts in short-term grants or even cash transfers to local partners instead of multiple years of multimillion investments, bolstering local peacebuilding capacities. Similar engagements could be undertaken when engaging with non-traditional and unregistered peacebuilding experts.

- **Adapting financing mechanisms to changing contexts.** This includes removing earmarking from donor contributions and launching flexible funding windows. In fact, some donors did show flexibility as a result of COVID-19, as well as during the October 2021 Sudanese military takeover of power. This signals that more flexibility is possible. For instance, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund has channelled rapid and flexible funding to local women peacebuilders to prevent conflict and forge lasting peace in their communities. Such practice can be adapted to other contexts. This could help ensure increased impact.

- **Developing a practice of regular independent assessment systems** to enable best value for money. Where the upgrade of capacities may produce minimal results on peacebuilding, these resources can be reallocated towards actions that bring important results at the community level. For example, the UN in Somalia has reportedly allocated and spent millions of dollars on software programmes which were ultimately inaccessible by UN staff due to unstable internet connections. The donors should reallocate such funds towards initiatives with positive results and peace dividends.

- **Increasing the length of peacebuilding projects.** A solution could be the capitalisation of pooled funds.

41 GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia.
42 LPI and SPL, 'Peace Financing Case Study: Lessons from the first UN Peace Building Fund- Civil Society partnership in Somalia', September 2021, p. 2,
43 *Note that* the major donors for SSF are Denmark, the European Union, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom. *For further information see* Somalia Stability Fund, Donors and Structure, Accessible at: https://stabilityfund.so/donors-and-structure/.
44 GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Mozambique: Making a Case for Peacebuilding Leadership', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-mozambique.

Compared to individual projects from individual institutions which support incremental change, well-designed pooled funds can promote integrated, cross-cutting initiatives over a long period of time. Further, the donors should support three- to five-year projects that enable better assessment of impact.

PRIORITY AREA 3:
Improve coordination among peacebuilding donors

Strong collaboration between donors is required to maximise synergies, minimise potential duplication, and ensure policy coherence. For instance, the Group of Friends of Sudan and the Team Europe approach has enhanced donor coordination when providing COVID-19 pandemic assistance.[45] However, donors rarely coordinate on peacebuilding specifically. Generally, donors obtain critical information either through briefings by UN leadership or through their bilateral engagements and group affiliations. Even more often, donors participating in the study pointed at their internal priorities as a critical determinant for action. Further, existing donor coordination mechanisms – such as the SDRF – also have great potential, but most of them have not been adequately operationalised or do not function as ad hoc mechanisms.

Increasing coordination among the donors working at the country level requires an initiative by UN senior leadership to create a systematic *platform for dialogue and exchange on peacebuilding*, as well as *cross-engagement with humanitarian and development donors*. In Somalia, the PBF donor group and the Friends of Reconciliation are the two platforms that exist to discuss peacebuilding matters. Together with the humanitarian and development donor groups that occasionally hold joint meetings, such a model can serve as a good practice in other contexts.

The Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility (SDRF)[46] established a joint combined governance structure to address the disconnection between different financial streams in support of the implementation of national priorities. The SDRF provides a common governance framework for the Somalia Multi-Partner Trust Fund , the World Bank Multi-Partner Fund , and the African Development Bank's Multi-Partner Somalia Infrastructure Fund, with a goal to pool donor contributions.

Note: At the moment, the SDRF is not fully functional and only 20 per cent of Official Development Assistance goes towards the Facility.[47]

Improve coordination among peacebuilding donors requires:

- **Creating a dedicated platform for donor dialogue on peacebuilding**. Possibly hosted by the RC Office, such a space can be an opportunity for the donors interested in peacebuilding not only to come together around a peacebuilding strategy and/or better understand the peacebuilding component of the Coordination Framework, but also to generally agree on peacebuilding priorities in a specific country context, to avoid duplication and misuse of funds. Such a platform can be supported by a risk management mechanism (such as the Risk Management Unit in Somalia[48]) that could provide guidance on possible investment risks. Such a platform should also take into consideration the diverse coordination mechanisms and help optimise them. Such a platform should utilise the interlinkages and synergies between the financial tools and mechanisms of the UN, the World Bank, regional organisations, and regional development banks to improve coherence and coordination. The PBF should also work with the World Bank's funding instruments on strategies that would enable synergetic interventions and sequencing of activities.

- **Facilitating joint meetings of peacebuilding donors with the humanitarian and development donors' groups** in the process of regular and comprehensive donor coordination that allows all partners to maximise synergies, minimise potential duplication, and ensure policy coherence. This peacebuilding group could also include the chairs of other donor groups to ensure complementarity and ensure optimisation of coordination mechanisms.

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45 GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Sudan: Building Lasting Peace in the Midst of Political Uncertainty', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-sudan.

46 UN, 'The 2018 Secretary-General's Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707)', 18 January 2018, p. 13 para 43, Accessible at: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/report-secretary-general-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace.

47 GPPAC, 'Operationalisation of Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda in Somalia: Progress Towards a Federalisation Agenda as a Foundation of Peace', March 2022, Accessible at: https://gppac.net/resources/operationalising-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-agenda-somalia.

48 *Note that* the Risk management Unit (RMU) aims to build the UN capacity to mitigate risks by delivering workshops and advises the UN on risk management approaches. *For more information see* United Nations Somalia, 'Risk Management Unit: Risk Management Unit at a Glance', 19 January 2020, Accessible at: https://somalia.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/RMU.PDF.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the three case studies, it is clear that the UN field presences require additional support from UN Headquarters, as well as from the donor community, to support their growing efforts to implement the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda to ultimately contribute to a more peaceful world.

If UN in-country actors are meaningfully supported in responding to the four shifts called upon by the UN Secretary-General, and if the donor community adequately supports these efforts through quality and quantity of financing, peace could be sustained long-term at the country level. **As such, UN Headquarters and the donor community need to support the following actions to fully implement the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda:**

- **The shift in UN leadership, accountability, and capacity** requires that (1) a clear peacebuilding leadership, (2) strong peacebuilding capacities, and (3) a dedicated peacebuilding strategy are present in the UN's work at the country level.

- **The shift in UN operational and policy coherence** requires (1) advancing inter-agency collaboration, (2) meaningfully employing joint programming and joint planning, and (3) building a constructive partnership between the UN and the national government.

- **The shift in partnership for peacebuilding** requires (1) harnessing the UN's convening capacity to bring diverse peacebuilding stakeholders together at the country level and (2) developing institutionalised and systematised strategies for community engagement.

- **The shift in financing for peacebuilding** requires (1) increased financing for peacebuilding, (2) better quality of peacebuilding financing, and (3) coordination among diverse donors working at the country level.