

CHAPTER ONE

# PREVENT AND END CONFLICT AND INVEST IN STABILITY



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Photo on previous page:

A group of women flee from violence in Bambara, Central African Republic.

OCHA/Eve Sabbagh

As conflicts around the world create massive human suffering, displacement and protracted humanitarian need, the need for stronger global leadership on prevention and conflict resolution, and for investment in peaceful, resilient societies, is more urgent than ever. The World Humanitarian Summit reaffirmed this call for political leadership in Core Responsibility One, in line with the global effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707–S/2018/43).

The Agenda for Humanity called for five transformations to prevent and end conflict and invest in stability:

**1A:** Human suffering is reduced because world leaders act quickly and decisively on behalf of humanity to prevent and end violent conflict.

**1B:** Looming crises are detected and averted because governments and their partners act upon improved early warning and risk analysis.

**1C:** Resilience is strengthened because the international community sustains engagement before, during and after a crisis, and is able to strengthen institutions and capacities while working on more than one crisis at a time.

**1D:** Political solutions are sustainable, because all of civil society, in particular women, young people, faith-based groups and the private sector, participate in developing them.

**5C:** More fragile situations are stabilized by 2030 through greater and sustained investment in national and local inclusive institutions, and in conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding.



## #1 PREVENT AND END CONFLICTS



## #5 INVEST IN HUMANITY

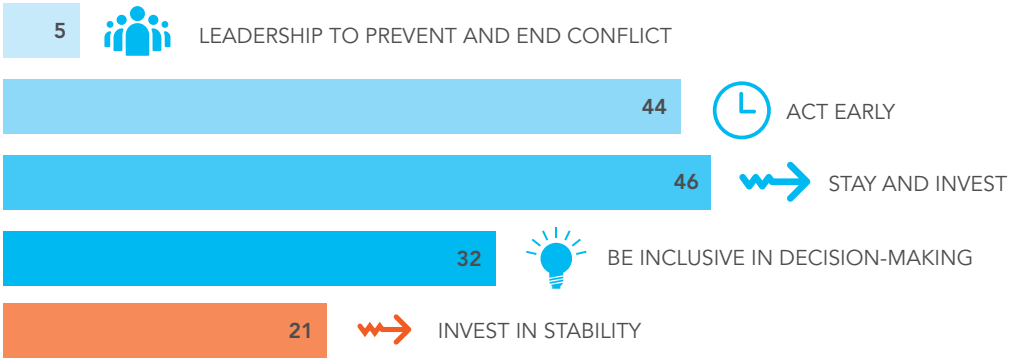


FIGURE 1.1 - BREAKDOWN OF REPORTING COVERED IN CHAPTER 1

## Stakeholders

In 2017, 66 stakeholders reported on one or more of the transformations under Core Responsibility One, while 21 reported on the corresponding transformation under Core Responsibility Five: Invest in Stability—as shown in Figure 1.1. Reflecting the lower level of initial commitments, Core Responsibility One again received the fewest reports.

## Progress in 2017

In the second year of implementing commitments, progress across all the transformations of Core Responsibility One and Transformation 5C can be categorized into seven areas. First, stakeholders made individual and collective

efforts towards the Secretary-General’s call to make conflict prevention a priority. Member States and civil society organizations also worked to improve coherence and coordination across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, consistent with the SDGs. They took steps to improve conflict analysis and tools, while boosting their capacities to prevent and respond to crises. And while governments have primary responsibility for building and sustaining peace, stakeholders engaged civil society, women, youth and faith communities, in recognition of the crucial role they play in building peaceful, resilient societies. Stakeholders made particular efforts to recognize and enhance the role of women in peace and security. Finally, 19 Member States reported on progress in funding and financing conflict prevention and resolution.

A grandfather gazes at his granddaughter in Sinjar, Iraq. Since being displaced by conflict, they live with some 70 other families in an abandoned school building. OCHA/Giles Clarke



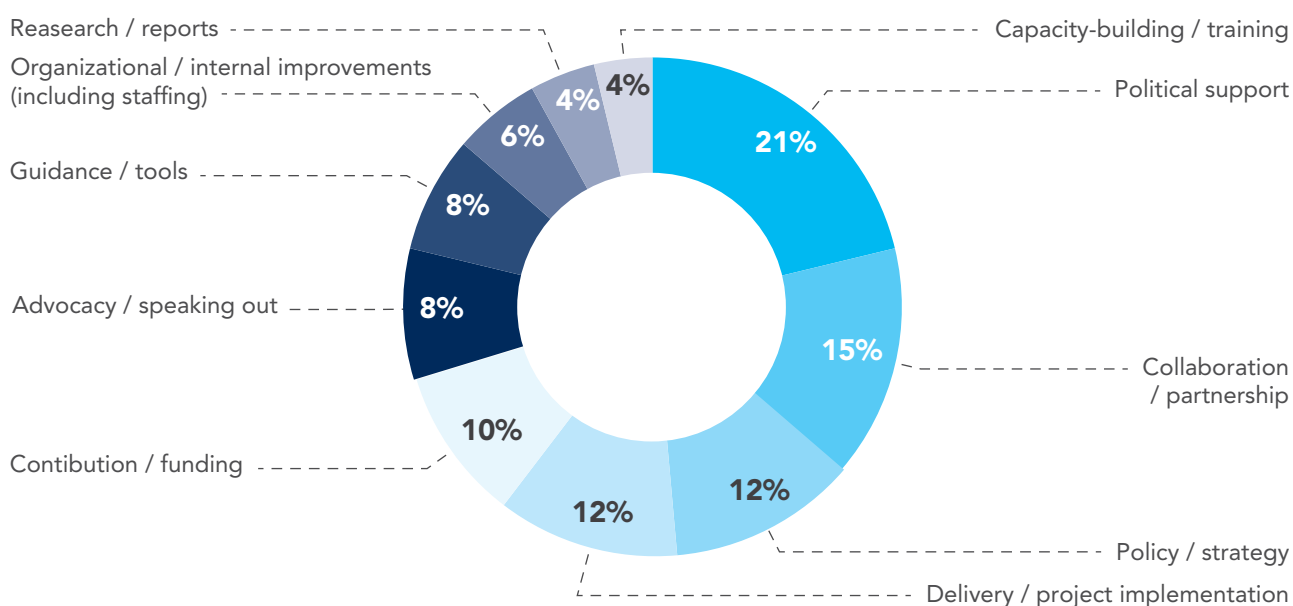
## Challenges and next steps

The Secretary-General, in his report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707–S/2018/43), stressed the need to sustain peace at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions, as well as the need to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict. Echoing his call for greater coherence and complementarity across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, many stakeholders noted the challenge that fragmented analysis, planning and programming, siloed funding, and lack of buy-in for preventive actions pose to operational and policy coherence in conflict environments. Stakeholders identified the lack of sustained, predictable financing for conflict prevention and related initiatives as their primary challenge to operationalizing this vision, and echoed the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General’s call to direct more financing to prevention and peacebuilding efforts. In particular, humanitarian actors called for greater investments in tools and capacities for conflict analysis, data collection, early warning and capacity-building, to contend with the growing operational challenges as conflicts grow more prolonged and complex. Such tools can lay the groundwork for a shift from relying on humanitarian responses to providing flexible and sustained financing and programming across the



humanitarian-development-peace continuum. Stakeholders also highlighted the need for such investments in stability to be accompanied by political will and leadership to drive peace initiatives forward.

FIGURE 1.2 TYPES OF ACTIONS REPORTED UNDER CORE RESPONSIBILITY 1



# Prevent and end conflict and invest in stability

## Progress in 2017

### Prioritizing conflict prevention

Stakeholders recognized the importance of prioritizing conflict prevention and incorporating it into broader policies and approaches. For example, the European Union (EU) adopted both a Joint Communication and Council Conclusions on the Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action, acknowledging the need to move from crisis response to a longer-term, non-linear approach to vulnerabilities, with an emphasis on anticipation, prevention and preparedness. Noting the importance of preventive diplomacy, Member States engaged in political advocacy through the UN Security Council and multilateral mechanisms such as the International Network on Conflict and Fragility. Member States and civil society organizations also organized or participated in conferences and workshops to strengthen conflict prevention. Sweden hosted the Stockholm Forum in May 2017 on 'Sustaining Peace – What Works?', and Spain hosted an International Conference on Victims of Ethnic and Religious Violence in the Middle East in May 2017. The Netherlands joined the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, which identifies prevention as a key pillar for achieving SDG 16. Finally, a number of stakeholders supported the UN–World Bank report, *Pathways for Peace*, which advocates for the international community to urgently focus on prevention.

### Bridging the nexus to promote peace

Stakeholders emphasized the need to respond to crises and promote stability in ways that are coherent with the SDGs. Member States supported joint initiatives to span the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, including the UN–World Bank Humanitarian-Development-Peace Initiative and the United Nations Development Programme–Department of Political Affairs Joint Programme on Conflict Prevention. Stakeholders also continued efforts to improve internal coordination and coherence. World Vision International launched a global strategy that bridges peace, humanitarian and development work, focusing on resilience-based outcomes, and committed to increasing funding to fragile contexts from 16 per cent

to 21 per cent by 2020. At a national level, Canada and Denmark strengthened whole-of-government approaches to conflicts and crises, while Germany and Sweden adopted national guidelines and strategies on coherence. Bulgaria, Japan and Lithuania integrated efforts to identify and address root causes of conflict into development assistance. At a regional level, the EU, in January 2018, adopted conclusions on an integrated approach to external conflicts and

### The Peace Promise

A number of stakeholders cited the Peace Promise as a tool to strengthen their capacities to address the root causes of violent conflict, enhance peacebuilding and resilience, and advocate for prevention.

The Peace Promise is a set of five commitments to develop more effective synergies among peace, humanitarian and development actions in complex humanitarian situations in order to end human suffering by addressing the drivers of conflict. The five commitments call on actors to:

1. focus on the alignment and coherence of collective short-, medium- and long-term objectives simultaneously
2. conduct context, risk or conflict analysis regularly
3. develop capacities, tools and partnerships, ensure institutional learning and innovation, and share information
4. do no harm and ensure conflict-sensitive programming
5. provide adequate, sustained and risk-tolerant financing

Stakeholders have responded to this call by working differently. Human Appeal, for example, is trying to align its humanitarian programming with the aims of the Agenda 2030, providing a combination of humanitarian, resilience, recovery and development programming, working with and through local communities.



Waves of fighting have displaced millions of families in South Sudan, including these women. UNICEF/Phil Moore

crises, committing Member States to address conflict prevention at a ministerial level.

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### Improving conflict analysis tools and early warning

Stakeholders made important efforts to strengthen conflict prevention capacity. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) piloted its multi-hazard Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming in Bosnia and Herzegovina, India, Malawi and Vietnam. INTERSOS consolidated its Emergency Unit, improving its capacity to analyse and monitor emerging crises, while Plan International created a conflict sensitivity analysis package to train field staff. Mercy Corps began using a new analytical tool for field teams to identify root causes of conflict, enabling development programming that proactively addresses risks and vulnerabilities, while Germany continued to work on designing a qualitative data analysis system (PreView) to improve early

warning and risk assessment. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched a partnership with Interpeace's International Peacebuilding Advisory Team to develop conflict-sensitive programming tools to pilot in FAO country offices. Several stakeholders, including CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, the Danish Refugee Council and Mercy Corps, worked on guidelines to ensure programme design includes conflict analysis, based on best practices. Many stakeholders also strengthened monitoring and early warning systems, and improved their linkages with early funding and action, including Denmark, France, Germany, FAO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Food Programme (WFP) and Act for Human Rights. In 2017, the EU's Early Warning System identified eight countries that require priority attention, resulting in specific conflict prevention actions.

### Bolstering conflict prevention and crisis resolution capacities

Stakeholders reinforced conflict prevention and crisis resolution capacity in a variety of ways. Bulgaria, Canada, Italy, Norway and Spain supported mediation capacities, through the United Nations as well as national or regional networks of mediators, while the United Nations

Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) developed a guide on peer mediation and peaceful conflict resolution for schools. Many Member States also demonstrated their ongoing support for United Nations peacekeeping operations. Canada hosted the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Conference in November 2017 and a number of States, including Estonia, France, Latvia, Spain and Turkey, reported on their contributions to funding and personnel for peacekeeping operations.

### **Inclusiveness and community-building in preventing conflict**

Emphasizing the centrality of civil society in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts, stakeholders engaged with and built the capacities of faith communities, youth and women to address the root causes of conflict. Health Works rolled out a community strengthening methodology for post-conflict areas in Burundi and Colombia. World Vision International co-convened a forum on Localizing Response to Humanitarian Need with faith-based and non-governmental organizations, including ACT Alliance, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Muslim Aid, Partnership for Faith and Development, World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance, and Soka Gakkai International. Stakeholders also emphasized the role of youth in peace and security efforts. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office supported an independent study to define a strategy for implementing Security Council resolution 2250 (2015)—which urges Member States to increase representation of youth in decision-making at all levels. Finally, to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity, the United Nations celebrated the first International Day for Living Together in Peace on 16 May, as reported by AISA ONG Internationale.

### **Women, Peace and Security**

Acknowledging the critical role played by women in conflict prevention and resolution, Chile, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan and New Zealand were among the Member States who reported updating and implementing their national action plans on the UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. Canada launched the Elsie Initiative for Women

in Peace Operations, which aims to double the number of women participating in military and police peacekeeping deployments by 2020. Italy launched the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, while Germany, the African Union and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) partnered to launch the African Women Leaders Network to enhance women's leadership in the region, with a focus on governance, peace and stability. Stakeholders also reported strengthening their internal capacities to empower women and girls in peace work. Romania created a gender equality expert position in its civil service, with the aim that by 2020, 70 per cent of public institutions will have similar expertise. The UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) developed a methodology to track gender-specific financial allocations, reporting in 2017 that 36 per cent of funding supported gender equality and women's empowerment. For the first time, the PBF's new strategic plan also establishes gender equality and women's empowerment as one of four priority funding windows.

### **Investing in peace and stability**

Nineteen of the 21 stakeholders reporting under Transformation 5C: Invest in Stability were Member States, and most reported funding United Nations instruments for conflict prevention, resolution and stability, as well as those of other multilateral organizations (such as the World Bank's International Development Association). As a result, in 2017, the PBF received USD 97 million, reversing recent trends and placing it on course to meet its USD 500 million approval target for the current three-year strategic plan. The PBF approved around USD 157 million—a record amount—for 31 countries in 2017. Member States also reported increasing investments in overseas development assistance budgets or bilateral funds. Ireland increased allocations to its Stability Fund from EUR 4.4 million in 2016 to EUR 5.2 million, and the UK committed to increase funding for its Conflict Stability and Security Fund from GBP 1.033 billion in 2015/16 to over GBP 1.3 billion by 2019/20.

Nonetheless, lack of funding was identified as the greatest challenge to progress, hindering efforts on crisis response as well as longer-term prevention.

## Achieving the transformation

Sustainable, predictable financing remains a major challenge to incentivizing and implementing preventive action. Pointing out that peacebuilding accounts for a small fraction of overseas development assistance, stakeholders called for a more holistic approach that includes longer-term investments with transformative potential. Many advocated for improved coordination and coherence of funding across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, with greater flexibility to adapt to evolving and volatile contexts, and more support to simultaneously address immediate drivers of conflict and root causes. Some Member States observed the limited impact of unilateral investments and emphasized the need for greater consensus, political will and leadership to drive forward progress.

At the operational level, stakeholders identified volatile and insecure field conditions as the main challenges. They highlighted lack of access, breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law, and the complexities of remote implementation as further difficulties. Because these conditions make it harder to gather reliable data, impeding political analysis and timely decision-making, stakeholders emphasized the importance of joint assessments, open-source data and mechanisms to coordinate and share analysis.

Although the reporting reflects efforts by a core group of stakeholders to advance conflict prevention on the global agenda, resources and incentives remain inadequate. To shift from a culture of reacting to conflict to one of conflict prevention and sustaining peace will require stakeholders to:

- **Ensure continued, sustainable, multi-year funding:** Following the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707–S/2018/43), and in line with the analysis laid out in *Pathways for Peace*, there is a need for scaled-up support to multilateral instruments that focus on prevention and sustaining peace. Such instruments should foster incentives for early preventive action.

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“Crises are becoming increasingly complex. Increased investments in stability need to be accompanied by political will and leadership to drive peace initiatives forward.”

– Canada, self-report 1C

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- **Implement a people-centred approach to prevention:** Prevention often requires new coalitions that reflect the importance of young people, women and representatives from the private sector, civil society and community-based organizations. The focus of preventive action should go beyond elites and concentrate instead on understanding people and their communities and providing incentives for civic engagement. Non-state actors should also have opportunities to engage in peacebuilding platforms.

- **Promote integrated programmatic collaborations:** Recognition of the multi-faceted dimensions of humanitarian or conflict-related issues is critical to effective and sustainable solutions. Humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors should focus more on joint programming that addresses issues common to all three areas.

- **Monitor and address multidimensional risks by aligning political, security, development and humanitarian efforts:** Preventive action should take place earlier, based on key risks across the UN’s development, humanitarian, human rights, and peace and security activities. This will help ensure coherent action based on joined up analysis and planning.

- **Sustain prevention across levels of risks:** Actions should move beyond crisis management to address various levels of risk. Prevention must stretch beyond time horizons of humanitarian needs, political attention and investment cycles. Development planning and budgeting exercises should include adequate fiscal space<sup>1</sup> to mitigate shocks. Enhanced national capacities to finance preventive measures should ensure actions are sustainable, and nationally led and owned.

<sup>1</sup> Fiscal space refers to flexibility within budgets that allows governments to provide resources for public purposes without undermining fiscal sustainability ([http://www.who.int/health\\_financing/topics/fiscal-space/why-it-matter/en/](http://www.who.int/health_financing/topics/fiscal-space/why-it-matter/en/)).