



Joint UNDP-DPPA Programme
on Building National Capacities
for Conflict Prevention

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National Capacities for Conflict Prevention

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FOREWORD —

a year of reforms, new beginnings, and impact in conflict prevention

2018 was a transformative year for us at the United Nations. A year filled with repositioning and reforms aimed at enhancing our capacities to work more coherently and collaboratively. The reforms of the UN development system and the peace and security pillar were ambitious and comprehensive.

The move towards a single, integrated peace and security pillar¹ points to a clearer, system-wide prioritization of prevention and sustaining peace, as well as a move to more closely align with the development and human rights pillars. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are no longer new concepts around which we should orient ourselves; instead, they are instruments we must closely align to and mainstream across our organizations to ensure that we are delivering upon their bold promises. Similarly, the development system reform empowers Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams to better engage with and support the 2030 Agenda at country level.

It is in this context that the *Joint UNDP-DPPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention* enters its 15th year with a proven record of enhancing UN collaboration on conflict prevention and delivering impactful results at the country level. In 2018, the Joint Programme supported 49 Peace and Development Advisor (PDA) positions, with a reach of over 70 countries across the globe. PDAs work in a variety of different complex settings to support Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams and national stakeholders in consolidating local capacities for dialogue, mediation, social cohesion, and national infrastructures for peace.

Through a unique skillset that bridges political and development, PDAs supported national stakeholders on a wide array of thematic issues. They accompanied key preventive diplomacy initiatives and social cohesion efforts in countries such as **Guinea**, **Guyana**, the **Maldives** and **Moldova**. They led reconciliation initiatives in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, **El Salvador**, and **Sri Lanka** and strengthened national peace architectures in **Nigeria**, **Uganda** and **Zimbabwe**. In **Liberia** and the **Solomon Islands**, PDAs supported dialogue and mediation efforts in land conflicts. Furthermore, PDAs enabled joint conflict analysis, conflict sensitive programming, and strategic leadership on conflict prevention within UN Country Teams.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) are fully committed to this exceptional partnership. We believe that PDAs are some of our best assets to effectively lead and support conflict prevention initiatives at the country level. With their political acumen, and conflict sensitive background, PDAs bring an integral multifaceted skill-set to Resident Coordinator Offices and UN Country Teams. Furthermore, an important part of our partnership is the highly valued contribution of the Peacebuilding Support Office. This relationship enables PDAs to support the design and accompaniment of projects funded by the Peacebuilding Fund in 27 countries, and successfully translate their analysis into programming. In some countries, PDAs have also demonstrated their added value by supporting enhanced collaboration between the UN and the World Bank, a key priority for the years to come.

¹ Composed by the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) with the peacebuilding responsibilities of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and Department of Peace Operations (DPO).

In addition to broader UN reforms, the Joint Programme has also embarked on a new phase as of December 2018. The new five-year programme (2018-2023) builds on the reforms to make meaningful contributions to policy and programme coherence at the country and global levels. This new phase will focus on enhanced results-based monitoring and evaluation, and provide a more targeted and structured support framework to enable the Programme to better work with national stakeholders in strengthening their unique capacities for peace. This includes PDAs receiving additional support to better implement their mandates through setting up Peace and Development teams and having access to support from a cadre of six regional programme specialists to be deployed to Addis Ababa, Amman, Bangkok, Dakar, Istanbul and Panama.

The continued and unwavering support from our donor partners, the European Union, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom, and the growing partnership with UN Volunteers and the Folke Bernadotte Academy have and will continue to be critical to the success of these efforts. We are pleased to present this report of our joint efforts in strengthening national capacities for conflict prevention. We look forward to working together on a new phase of the Joint Programme. We are now in year four of the 2030 Agenda and remain as committed as ever to realising the goals that we have set as the international community. As UN Secretary-General, António Guterres has said, “We don’t have a moment to lose.”²



Asako Okai

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² Remarks to the General Assembly at the Adoption of the Resolution on Repositioning the UN Development System; <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2018-05-31/repositioning-un-development-system-ga-remarks>

“The Programme builds on the strengths of the reformed peace and security pillar to ensure that joined-up support is provided to the new resident coordinator system. Currently, the Programme supports 49 peace and development positions in resident coordinator offices, promoting national efforts to prevent conflict, advance sustainable development and sustain peace while assisting the United Nations system in identifying entry points for engagement. [...]Peace and development advisers play a key role in ensuring that United Nations country team programmes are conflict-sensitive and informed by high-quality analysis.”³

—*UN Secretary-General, António Guterres*

“But building resilient societies is not an easy task...Strong national capacities for conflict prevention are also essential, and it is important that the multilateral organizations are willing and equipped to support such national efforts. For this reason, the United Kingdom supports the UNDP-DPA joint programme on building national capacities for conflict prevention. The deployment of UN Peace and Development Advisors has assisted Member States to generate the analysis that allows for early identification of conflict risks and the ability to devise de-escalation strategies.”

—*Ambassador Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN Statement at the Security Council Open Debate, December 6, 2018*

³(A/73/890-S/2019/448), “Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Report of the Secretary-General”, 2019 p. 5, 7.

“PDAs are a crucial asset in the new generation Resident Coordinators Offices and provide essential support to national stakeholders to build and strengthen their own capacities for sustaining peace. The unique skillset that the PDAs possess, including their analytical skills and ability to promote conflict sensitive UN approaches in our partner countries, will help us all deliver shared results and support Member States fulfill the 2030 Agenda.”

*—Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General,
United Nations Development Coordination Office*



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