

UNDP-Spain MDG Achievement Fund

Terms of Reference for Thematic Window on Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

This document provides policy guidance to UN Country Teams applying for funding under the UNDP-Spain MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Thematic Window for **Conflict Prevention and Peace-building**. The framework elaborated below aims to set out the policy goals of the Fund in this area and illustrate the types of interventions the Fund will support. This guidance will also be applied by the technical assessment process that will review applications. These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with the Fund’s “**Framework Document**” which sets out the overarching strategy for the MDG-F and the “**Concept Note Format**” which provides the format for submissions. These can be viewed at the Fund’s home page at www.undp.org/mdgf. Kindly note that MDG-F Thematic Windows will only accept applications from UN Resident Coordinators in eligible countries, applying on behalf of their UN Country Team.

1. Background and rationale

One of the major obstacles to achieving MDGs in developing countries is the frequent and large scale eruption of violent conflict. More than 40 countries have suffered violent conflicts since the turn of the century, resulting in over 25 million internally displaced persons and an estimated additional 12 million refugees. At the same time, violence has continued to ravage communities in both urban and rural areas in countries otherwise at peace. In 2000, an estimated 1.6 million people lost their lives in violence. Around one third of these deaths were homicides and one fifth were casualties of armed conflicts. A large share of these homicides is concentrated in the metropolis of the developing world.

While violent conflicts tend to reverse development gains, their effects on countries with high levels of poverty and inequality have been to compound pre-existing problems. This is particularly pronounced in countries suffering protracted conflicts. These countries are often characterized by a low HDI, acute deprivations in basic social services, low national income and limited employment opportunities. Many countries find themselves caught in a vicious cycle of crisis, poverty and violence, which can fuel instability at all levels. They often lack the capacity to deal with these challenges by themselves, possessing insufficient resources or being caught in cross-border, regional or global dynamics. International assistance in support of national peace-building initiatives can help countries restore the foundations required to attain the MDGs, reduce human suffering and improve living conditions for the poor. To support coherence in UN thinking about peacebuilding, the following 2007 working definition of peacebuilding is used in relation to the work of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO):

Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objective.

Conflict prevention - whether in ‘normal’ or post-conflict situations - is an inextricable part of peacebuilding. The development process may generate conflicts as resources are reallocated, national priorities redefined, and new actors empowered. When well managed, competition can present opportunities for social change, leading to more open and cohesive societies, more democratic governance processes, and hence a better chance of achieving the MDGs. The complex challenges of poverty, socio-economic inequality and competition over scarce natural resources that many developing

societies face, tend to be made even more challenging in divided societies, where communities have little or no connection amongst each other or with government structures. Within these divided societies and within countries lacking local and national capacities for managing the consequences of rapid change or protracted exclusion, conflicts can lead to violent tension or instability, and endanger or impede development gains. Working with national actors to develop national capacities for resolving tensions without violence is to be addressed in a comprehensive way, supporting inclusive local and national systems for the management of rapid change and conflict.

Promoting a conflict-sensitive approach to development and post-conflict recovery requires that programmes address both the symptoms and causes of conflict. On the one hand, it requires that planning frameworks, policies and programmes do not unintentionally exacerbate tensions. On the other hand, conflict sensitive frameworks for planning and programming should ensure that responses address root causes of conflict in governance, economic, security and/or social arenas, assisting national partners to lay the required foundations for progress towards the MDGs. Civilians are often subjected to systematic violations of their rights under international human rights and humanitarian law, as well as under domestic law. A rule of law vacuum can lead to abuse, displacement, and impunity, further eroding confidence in government and the institutions of the state. The lack of effective law-enforcement and justice mechanisms is frequently accompanied by the destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods, a breakdown in basic social service delivery systems, disrupted social fabric, and prevailing gender discrimination. Early recovery, therefore, calls for interventions that focus on early development of capacities of governance institutions and the strengthening of local development processes so as to generate self-sustaining, nationally owned and resilient development processes that are both preventive and restorative.

Conflict-prevention and peacebuilding have, until recently, focused primarily on countries in or emerging from armed conflict. However, there is increasing recognition that high levels of inter-personal violence, public insecurity and violent tensions or competition over scarce resources are observed in countries that are otherwise politically stable and in countries far advanced in post-conflict transition processes. These situations merit greater attention by relevant national actors due to the negative impact that such violence and tensions have on stability, development and on the achievement of the MDGs.

2. Key challenges and opportunities in this thematic area

Key challenges and opportunities in successfully implementing conflict-prevention and peacebuilding measures include the following:

- i. Conflict-sensitivity means that programmes are developed and implemented in a manner that fully takes into account past or potential conflicts. In practice, it implies that assistance takes into account the interests of various stakeholders, anticipating tensions, conflicts, and unintended consequences (such as for vulnerable populations). National and local institutions often require support in carrying out analyses and consultations with stakeholders - including women and youth - that ensure their development plans and policies are conflict-sensitive. This is especially urgent in societies characterized by ethnic or other forms of diversity. In those situations, plans and policies should include concrete measures for management of tensions and the equitable distribution of resources. Policies should also address patterns of spatial change and land use, since those often frame the context for safety and security issues.
- ii. Peacebuilding requires investing in the rule of law, through engagement and equitable treatment of all stakeholders. This implies the promotion of accountability of all stakeholders, including the government and the justice and security sectors, to laws which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. The restoration of rule of law also requires measures to ensure

adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and procedural and legal transparency.

- iii. Special efforts must be made to assure the empowerment of women as dynamic participants in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, to strengthen women's security and gender justice, to open new space for women's leadership roles, and to ensure that government delivers for women.
- iv. To be fully conflict-sensitive in increasingly complex conflict situations, a wide range of competencies is required. Beyond the traditional diplomatic and developmental skills, there is increasing demand for experts trained in techniques of institutional and conflict transformation. Conflict sensitivity also needs collection and analysis of data. This is a particular challenge in both low-intensity conflict and post-conflict settings, where updated and reliable data are often scarce. Besides expertise and data, these situations need long-term engagement to produce sustainable results. Many efforts require a significant transformation of societal relationships and attitudes in highly fragile, complex and rapidly changing environments. This is particularly true of efforts to build multi-stakeholder consensus around critical peacebuilding issues. It is also true of efforts to impart constructive negotiation and consensus-building skills that can be applied to prevent or settle disputes.
- v. Conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies and programmes should avoid fragmented approaches. Instead, an integrated multi-sector approach is required, built on a comprehensive needs assessment, on strategic planning, with coordinated engagement of national expertise and capacities with those of the UN. This requires that the UN reach out and work closely with all relevant national and local stakeholders. These include governments at all levels, political actors, the security sector, civil society including women's groups, the private sector, and the international (donor) community.
- vi. To escape a downward spiral of insecurity, criminalization and under-development, socio-economic, justice and security dimensions must be tackled simultaneously. Democratically run, accountable and efficient justice and security systems help reduce the risk of conflict, thus creating an enabling environment for socio-economic activity and development. The challenge for the UN is to support sustainable improvements in the delivery of justice and security to individuals and communities.
- vii. Programmes must reach out to both the urban and rural environments. The development needs of local populations are often not given enough priority, making it hard to address tensions where they arise and deliver tangible 'peace dividends'. Limited local capacities, weak decentralization policies and frameworks as well as a lack of exchange of knowledge, hinder local actors' and governments' abilities to contribute to prevention and peacebuilding efforts.
- viii. The restoration of social cohesion and the building of collaborative capacities among key leaders are fundamental to effective conflict prevention and sustainable peacebuilding. In societies where individuals or communities have weak connections amongst each other or with local and national government structures, the ability to mediate competing interests and the sustainability of assistance will be at risk.
- ix. Although many countries facing high levels of inter-personal violence and public insecurity do receive development assistance, this assistance may not be targeted towards building capacities for managing tensions or towards addressing the root causes of armed violence. This type of assistance requires an understanding of the role and impact of violence, its burden on local

- x. The establishment of a sound macro-economic framework and viable economic policies is a major challenge in post-conflict settings. It may require consensus among different groups and elements that may have hitherto been engaged in violent conflict. To reverse the impacts of conflicts driven by economic gain and the exploitation of natural and human resources, neutralizing economic spoilers may be required, coupled with rebuilding of fair, open and transparent market systems. Employment generation helps mitigate the risk of conflict which is often linked to meagre economic prospects for under-employed youths. Employment creation is not only important in the short-term for relief and stabilization, but is a crucial conflict prevention measure and a critical contributor to sustainable return of displaced populations and the reintegration of former combatants and other conflict-affected groups.
- xi. Peacebuilding implies balancing high priority concerns with considerations of equity. Sequencing is important. Singling out specific target groups is often a necessity for the immediate stabilization of post-conflict situations. However, if this targeting is prolonged, it can fuel resentment in communities where, for instance, reintegration is taking place. Ethnic, religious and regional tensions can be aggravated if programs appear to consistently favour one group or region, urban or rural. Inequitable access to resources and inequitable distribution of revenues are frequent drivers of conflict.
- xii. Starting recovery early in post-conflict settings poses special challenges for capacity development. Early recovery implies building the foundations for longer term local and national capacities from the earliest stages of crisis. A key challenge is how to apply the appropriate capacity building response to the most critical sectors and functions to instil attitudes and practices that are both preventive and restorative, and engaging key local and national actors in that process. Measures to address capacity gaps need to be tailored: needs and priorities will vary for different countries, and across time and geography for the same countries. The aim is to generate self-sustaining, nationally owned and resilient processes for prevention and recovery that are accompanied by capacities to mediate competing interests and find solutions that are conflict sensitive, sustainable and inclusive.

The MDG Achievement Fund seeks to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into violent conflict by strengthening national and local capacities and institutions in eligible countries to develop, implement and monitor effective prevention and peacebuilding policies and programmes through targeted interventions in high risk environments.

3. Illustrative Interventions for Priority Areas of Support

This section outlines the key outcomes sought by the Fund in four priority areas, and identifies illustrative interventions or activities to consider in preparing applications.

The selection of the four priority areas has been informed by a range of policy and operational frameworks including OECD/DAC policies and guidelines; governing body resolutions and decisions on the work of the UN System; UN agency mandates, programmes and capacities; and trends in demand from programme countries affected by conflict. In determining the four areas where this fund will focus, preference was given to interventions that are most likely to be responsive to country demand, lend themselves to inter-agency action, can reap particular catalytic benefit from funding from this source, and, to the extent relevant, cut across development, political, security and humanitarian imperatives. These TOR recognize that many interventions in conflict-affected settings that form part of the existing

international response - such as mine clearance, stockpile management and destruction, private sector development, aid management systems – are equally critical but better served through other mechanisms.

All proposed interventions should be explicitly conflict sensitive and give evidence that they are based on conflict analysis and needs assessment at country and, where relevant, regional level. All interventions must build in capacity for monitoring not just programme results but also continuing causes, risks and patterns of conflict and violence; give evidence of capacity development at local and national levels, as relevant; assure a participatory approach in design and implementation; and build in explicit measures to promote gender equality through both substantive and budgetary provisions. UNCTs are encouraged to allocate specific programme budget amounts (indicatively, in the order of 15% of programme resources) to gender dimensions. Every application should give full consideration to the different roles, behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men. Proposals should specify how proposed initiatives will address traditional patterns of gender-based discrimination; what differential impacts these initiatives will have on men and women and how potential adverse impacts will be addressed.

Country teams are encouraged to develop multi-year proposals covering one or more of the four areas identified below, depending on relevance in the country setting. Recognizing that the area of enhancing systems and capacities for conflict prevention and management (I) has been a neglected area of peacebuilding, proposals in any of these areas that incorporate the development of capacities for conflict-prevention and management will be given priority. Country teams are encouraged to deal with this issue as either a cross-cutting or a dedicated area of intervention, depending on country needs. In designing and implementing these conflict-prevention and management programmes, country teams should aim to build in measures that will enhance the collaborative capacities of national and local actors, both state and non-state.

I. Enhancing systems and capacities for conflict prevention and management

In this area, the MDG-F will welcome funding applications that support countries to:

- Build multi-stakeholder participation and consensus in the articulation of national plans and priorities, especially where lack of consensus may generate tensions that block the achievement of the MDGs;
- Establish sustainable national and local institutional capacities and systems, as appropriate and requested, for managing and resolving ongoing or emerging conflict and tensions.

To achieve these kinds of outcomes, applications could contain some or all of the following illustrative elements:

- Assisting national and local actors in developing processes of multi-stakeholder dialogue, with a view to building consensus on critical economic and social issues, and supporting the participation of youth and women's organizations in these processes;
- Supporting the establishment of national processes and systems for the consensual and transparent management of revenues from natural resources;
- Assisting national and local stakeholders to acquire communications and negotiations skills and other technical resources for the management of conflict or for the resolution of disputes (e.g., conflicts involving land, natural resources, the location and allocation of critical infrastructure and shelter, the allocation of wealth from mineral resources or oil, and the distribution of power and resources);
- Building the capacity of local and national governments to develop and implement plans that take into account possible drivers of conflict and ensure sufficient inclusion and participation of groups (such as women, youth, minorities) in key national processes;

- Supporting long-term initiatives to build collaborative capacities, such as training in collaborative decision-making, activities to re-build trust and consensus about the local and national “rules of the game”, strengthening of communication and negotiations skills for relevant decision makers;
- Strengthening national institutions and processes such as parliamentary committees and independent commissions for instance, with the ability or mandate to forge consensus, promote reconciliation or mediate on specific conflicts;
- Undertaking initiatives to enhance the role of women in efforts to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts;
- Helping build the capacities of representative civic organizations including trade unions, religious organizations, women’s organisations and chambers of commerce, to play constructive roles in consensus around critical issues and to promote dialogue and reconciliation within the society at large;
- Assisting national, state and local governments in developing and implementing programmes in a conflict-sensitive manner, with due regard for the diversity of societies and communities and in a participatory and transparent manner that takes into account the views and contributions of all stakeholders.

II. Supporting systems and capacities for armed violence prevention and reduction.

In this area, the MDG-F will welcome funding applications that support countries to:

- Mainstream the issue of armed violence prevention within national development frameworks
- Enhance or develop policies to prevent armed violence and reduce risk for groups to be involved in violence;
- Establish sustainable national and local institutional capacities and systems, as appropriate and requested, to understand, monitor, prevent and manage armed violence reduction and prevention;
- Engage multi-stakeholder participation and consensus in the development of these frameworks, policies and capacities, so that they are conflict-sensitive and address concerns and risk factors of the groups in society most vulnerable to violence (women, children, slum dwellers, minorities).

To achieve these kinds of outcomes, applications should capture the differential impact of armed violence on men and women and could contain the following illustrative elements

- Building capacities at the local and national level to understand and monitor armed violence and to implement these specific measures, programmes and policies;
- Supporting multi-sector (governance/socio-economic/security/rights) and comprehensive (urban/rural, local/national) approaches for addressing armed societal violence;
- Assisting national and local governments to integrate specific measures into their national development programmes and policies to prevent or reduce levels of armed violence;
- Supporting multi-stakeholder local crime and violence prevention processes and strategies, addressing institutional, social, physical and economic causes of violence;
- Supporting analysis and knowledge acquisition about the causes and dimensions of violence and crime at the local level, including the collection of data on small arms and armed violence;
- Supporting the establishment of sustainable monitoring mechanisms (such as violence observatories);
- Supporting the establishment of policy linkages between armed violence and youth development, including promoting education, employment, etc.;
- Supporting activities that address the links between the proliferation of small arms and illicit substances;
- Supporting activities that bring in cross-border aspects of armed violence;
- Supporting activities that directly address the dynamics of women and armed violence;

- Supporting training in collaborative decision-making activities to re-build trust and consensus about the “rules of the game”, strengthening of communication and negotiations skills for relevant decision makers.

III. Supporting the reform of the security sector and strengthening of the rule of law

In this area, the MDG-F will welcome funding applications that support countries to:

- Promote community security and peaceful conflict resolution;
- Contribute to nationally-owned frameworks on justice and security sector reform to strengthen the rule of law;
- Contribute to effective civilian oversight of armed forces and uniformed security providers;
- Strengthen the capacities of justice and security service providers – both civilian and uniformed – to respect and promote human rights and deliver justice and security on the basis of accountability, transparency, predictability and equality before the law;
- Improve the performance of rule of law institutions (ministry of justice judiciary, ministry of the interior, correctional facilities) and the capacity of civil society to enhance access to justice for all;
- Engage multi-stakeholder participation in security decision-making and consensus, particularly women, in the development of these frameworks, policies and capacities, so that they are sustainable and conflict- and gender-sensitive.

To achieve these kinds of outcomes, applications could contain some or all of the following illustrative elements:

- Facilitating and supporting multi-stakeholder dialogue on justice, security and related rule of law issues, including the participation of legal professionals, civil society and communities;
- Supporting justice and security sector reform processes throughout assessment, design and implementation of nationally owned programmes;
- Supporting national capacity in developing force reduction programmes including the reintegration of ex-combatants or exceeding forces;
- Training and awareness raising on rule of law of a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, traditional leaders, civil society, community representatives, youth, women’s groups;
- Supporting the design and implementation (through technical advice, training, legal reform, budgetary processes, etc.) of structural reforms to strengthen civilian oversight of uniformed forces;
- Supporting community security and peaceful conflict-resolution, including through legal aid and strengthening of customary and statutory law mechanisms;
- Supporting programmes focusing on community policing, transitional justice, legal aid, promotion of human rights, including gender justice;
- Supporting educational reforms of justice and security sector service providers, ensuring incorporation of gender-based violence, human rights and international standards of achievement;
- Supporting gender equality in employment opportunities within the rule of law and security sector, including a minimum percentage as lawyers, judges, prosecutors, police, etc.;
- Supporting confidence building measures, including dialogue with communities and between various stakeholders such as youth, women, government officials, civil and uniformed rule of law institutions;
- Supporting activities that establish links between rule of law programmes and other dimensions of peacebuilding such as DDR, return, local governance, public administration, etc;
- Supporting strengthening of conflict prevention and management mechanisms within these programmes, such as training in collaborative decision-making, activities to re-build trust and consensus about the “rules of the game”, strengthening of communication and negotiations skills for relevant decision makers.

IV. Supporting sustainable recovery and reintegration at the local level

In this area, the MDG-F will welcome funding applications that support countries to:

- Deliver an early, lasting and tangible post-conflict “peace dividend” to communities at risk in post-conflict settings, by supporting participatory approaches to addressing local conflicts and development needs and promoting responsibility of communities;
- Foster self-reliance of conflict-affected populations and reduce dependency at the local level to humanitarian aid, through support to local level recovery initiatives and livelihood re-generation;
- Contribute to an enabling security environment for recovery at the local level by focusing on strengthening of local capacities, livelihoods, rule of law, basic services and longer-term investments in the economic infrastructure;
- Support the reconciliation and effective reintegration of ex-combatants with their receiving communities by promoting social cohesion and building of collaborative capacities at the local level; supporting social and economic reintegration; support the durable return for displaced groups including IDPs, refugees and returnees;
- Assist multi-stakeholder participation and consensus in the development of local level recovery frameworks, policies and capacities, so that they are sustainable and conflict-sensitive.

To achieve these kinds of outcomes, applications could contain some or all of the following illustrative elements:

- Supporting area based programming with an emphasis on (early) delivery of tangible results for war-affected communities, displaced populations, ex-combatants and child-soldiers;
- Supporting income generating opportunities for conflict affected communities, thereby strengthening return and reintegration programmes;
- Supporting the rehabilitation of primary community infrastructure for conflict-affected communities;
- Capacity building or capacity resuscitation support of local government authorities to enable the delivery of basic services and the coordination of the humanitarian and (early) recovery effort;
- Capacity building support to local communities for enhanced access and support to livelihood opportunities;
- Supporting the design, implementation and/or scaling up of social cohesion programmes at the local level, that will include the wide participation of all groups including women and youth;
- Supporting sustainable peacebuilding initiatives addressing the root causes of crisis and promoting and participating in local and national level reconciliation processes;
- Activities that support an enabling environment for private sector participation in local level recovery initiatives;
- Supporting strengthening of conflict prevention and management mechanisms within these programmes, such as training in collaborative decision-making at the local level, activities to re-build trust and consensus about the local “rules of the game”, strengthening of communication and negotiations skills for relevant decision makers at the local level, and dialogue between local populations and government.

4. Additional operational guidance for Concept Note development

All applications under this window are encouraged to take the following operational guidelines into account in developing their strategies:

- Build on the strengths of the UN-system at the country level, through joint analysis and strategies, as well as integrated, multi-year programmes;

- Develop an outreach strategy that enables effective communication of intentions and management of expectations, and ensures stakeholders' equitable access to information on all programme related issues and decisions that affect their lives;
- Be designed in a results-based manner with clear and measurable outcomes, targets, and benchmarks (disaggregating for men and women) so as to facilitate as much as possible the systematic monitoring and evaluation of results. Focus should be on achieving credible, measurable results on the lives of excluded, disadvantaged, at risk and/or vulnerable target groups;
- Applications should be explicit as to where and how the operational and implementation modalities have been informed by operational 'do-no-harm' principles, including with regard to engagement of counterparts and stakeholders, hiring of local staff, sourcing of programme supplies, selection of geographic areas of intervention, etc.;
- Applications should make specific reference to past lessons learned and good practices and indicate where these have influenced and been incorporated in the programme design. Innovative approaches based on aforementioned are particularly encouraged;
- Applications should be explicit as to how knowledge building on conflict-prevention and peacebuilding will be supported and shared through the UN system;
- Where necessary, applications should budget for support requirements for programme design and implementation, including for hiring of external capacities and/or expertise (particularly, if needed, in areas like conflict prevention and building collaborative capacities among national actors).

5. How will we know we are having an impact?

Programmes financed by the MDG-F will need to demonstrate credible, measurable results (articulated in SMART format – Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Relevant, Timely) disaggregated by sex. Applications to the Fund will therefore need to identify the key indicators that can be used to measure and monitor such success and the means to collect that data during and after the proposed programme period. The Monitoring and Evaluation function will include a participatory component including national stakeholders and beneficiaries.

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