

A decorative graphic consisting of a grid of dots in various shades of gray and red, arranged in a pattern that suggests a world map or a network of connections.

How to Achieve Sustainable Peace

The Radical Potential of Implementing UN Sustainable Development Goal 16

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- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 16, offer a set of potentially radical solutions to billions of people's fears and insecurities by articulating a people-centered agenda for sustainable peace. Achieving them, however, will require a significant change in mind-sets and approaches along with global and local action.
- SDG 16 will only be achieved with political leadership from governments and societies. It cannot be relegated to technical development projects. At the universal level, the UN can identify norm and implementation entrepreneurs who have devised solutions for achieving SDG 16 and related goals. The UN can also instigate government-to-government and society-to-society cooperation, convene global partnerships for SDG 16, and fill crucial gaps in partnerships to address the dark side of globalization. To make the UN fit for peace, institutional reform must take priority, as must upstream analysis and prevention, and greater investment in the resilience of communities.
- Leaving no-one behind will require the international community to keep to its commitments to the poorest and most conflict-affected countries. The G7+ and other Least Developed Countries should be in the driver's seat, leading a revamped and more inclusive global partnership for leaving no country behind under SDG 17.
- This perspective piece offers ideas on a roadmap for implementing SDG 16 that could be discussed by the UN High-Level Political Forum and the Economic and Social Council in 2016, and revisited in 2019.



1. Introduction

While the UN had numerous successes in preventing *interstate* conflict since 1945, in recent years, however, successive multilateral reviews and negotiations have assessed a new global challenge to peace: how to build and sustain peace *within* societies. That challenge not only applies to violent conflict, but also to all societies where exclusion, discrimination, injustice, inequality and violence perpetuate one-another. This problem holds back sustainable development and erodes political legitimacy. In the most extreme scenarios, it gives rise to armed resistance, civil war, extremism and terrorism, involvement in which is increasingly cheap because of the widespread availability of communications, weapons, illicit finance and globalized shadow economies.

In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all UN Member States in September 2015, present a potentially radical set of long-term solutions to the challenges of violence and injustice. This is most prominently articulated in SDG 16, which commits countries to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Why is SDG 16 potentially radical? Three reasons. First, the goal is universal. It has the potential to replace the »failed« and »fragile« states paradigms, which categorized low-income and conflict-affected countries as a problem that posed a threat to international order, with a paradigm that recognizes that conflict and violence are transnational and global phenomena. Rich countries also have to deal with violence, injustice and flawed institutions at home, and are also subjects of development. Moreover, they can act as drivers of violence in other parts of the world through arms transfers or the provision of safe havens for illicit finance and other activities. SDG 16, therefore, reminds them of their international responsibility for peace and justice. Second, the goal is people-centered. Drawing on the UN human rights and citizen security tradition, it places the safety and access to justice of the individual above the state. Sustainable peace is achieved through human rights over state coercion. Third, in development norms, the goal reflects the objective of conflict-affected and transitional countries to pursue nationally-owned and led plans to build institu-

tions and resolve crises, a principle long demanded by the g7+ group of countries.¹

Under an ambitious implementation scenario, governments and societies would embrace the goal's emphasis on people, inclusion, participation, non-discrimination and justice to devise global and local plans for leaving no-one behind anywhere. But in the real world, a fear of terrorism, growing humanitarian crises, feelings of insecurity, frustration with multilateralism and nationalist populism are on the rise. This may encourage a more conservative implementation scenario, in which many governments continue with business as usual, for example, by diverting more aid to counter terrorism and national security, or firefighting immediate humanitarian crises.

Norms are constantly being negotiated and challenged, and implementation differs across countries. SDG 16 was hotly contested during the UN negotiations, and so too will be its implementation. A number of countries and civil society groups fear that SDG 16 will be subordinated to rich countries' international peace and security goals and the »militarized« development practices that have dominated the post-9/11 era. The lack of a roadmap for achieving SDG 16 is therefore not surprising. But a roadmap of sorts is needed to galvanize change towards a people-centered agenda for sustainable peace. To build international confidence and support, it must be grounded in the voluntary human rights and development cooperation system, not subordinated to international humanitarian law and the UN Security Council.

The UN General Assembly has agreed that SDG 16 will be discussed at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2016, in the dialogue on »Leaving no-one behind«, and again in 2019 at the HLPF on »Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness.« This perspective piece offers ideas on a roadmap for SDG 16 that could be discussed in 2016, and revisited in 2019 by the HLPF and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

1. The g7+ is a voluntary coalition of 20 countries affected by conflict and transition. The secretariat is in Dili, Timor-Leste, and the current chair is Sierra Leone. The members are Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo and Yemen.

2. Universal Sustainable Peace: Global and Local Collaboration

The challenges facing all countries to achieve the SDGs, and SDG 16 in particular, are huge. The interconnected nature of the SDGs means that a failure to address the significant challenges posed by SDG 16 will have negative effects on the prospects for achieving all the other SDGs

■ **Justice:** The Open Societies Foundation estimates that 4 billion people — almost 60 % of humanity — do not have access to justice, leaving them open to exploitation, violence and persecution.²

■ **Violence:** While violent conflict is experiencing an up-tick, the Geneva Declaration estimates that homicide still accounts for three-quarters of all violent deaths.³ Violence kills a child somewhere around the world every five minutes.⁴ More than 10 % of women are victims of domestic violence.⁵ Much of the world is on a downward trajectory for violent deaths, but the human, political and economic costs remain high. For example, the World Health Organization estimates that homicide costs the United States economy 3.3 % in gross domestic product (GDP) per year.⁶

■ **Institutions:** If conflict-affected and post-conflict countries cannot develop institutions, they will likely never reach the SDGs. If they can accelerate their rates of institutional development by 2020 to those experienced by Latin America and Asia in the twentieth century, they can achieve many of the SDGs by 2030.⁷

■ **Legal identity:** Plan International estimates that more than half of all countries do not have a functioning system for registering births.⁸ The absence of systems to register births, deaths, marriages and property and for issuing identify cards excludes people from accessing rights and entitlements.

■ **Discrimination and exclusion:** The negative effects of discrimination and exclusion on development are vast. The World Bank estimates that 20 % of the world's poorest people have disabilities.⁹ In rich countries, disability rates are higher among groups with the lowest education and higher poverty levels.¹⁰ The UN estimates that 70 % of the world's poorest people are women, and has acknowledged that discrimination and exclusion based on race, gender and ethnicity are root causes of illegal migration and human trafficking.¹¹

■ **Small Arms and Light Weapons:** The Small Arms Survey estimates that 875 million small arms and light weapons are in circulation around the world and likely responsible for around half a million violent deaths every year.¹²

■ **Corruption, tax evasion and illicit financial flows:** Global Financial Integrity estimates that illicit financial flows, tax evasion and organized crime cost developing countries some \$1 trillion a year.¹³ Most of that money ends up in tax havens and in industrialized countries, whose development aid, ironically, adds up to less than

2. Open Societies Foundation, »What Does Justice Have To Do with Overcoming Poverty?«, August 2015, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/what-does-justice-have-do-overcoming-poverty>.

3. Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, »Lethal Violence Update«, *Global Burden of Armed Violence, 2015: Every Body Counts*, 2015, <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/gbav-2015/chapter-2.html>.

4. UNICEF United Kingdom, »Children in Danger: Act to End Violence against Children«, 2015, p. 4, http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publications/Unicef_ChildreninDanger_ViolencereportV.pdf.

5. Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, »Lethal Violence Update.«

6. World Health Organization, »The Economic Dimensions of Interpersonal Violence«, Geneva, 2004, p. x, <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/42944/1/9241591609.pdf>.

7. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *States of Fragility, 2015: Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2015), p. 50, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-2015-9789264227699-en.htm>.

8. Plan International, »Birth Registration«, 2016, <https://plan-international.org/birth-registration>.

9. Jeanine Braithwaite and Daniel Mont, »Disability and Poverty: A Survey of World Bank Poverty Assessments and Implications«, Social Protection Discussion Paper no. 0805, World Bank, Washington, DC, 2008, p. 1., <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/280658-1172608138489/WBPovertyAssessments.pdf>.

10. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, »Sickness, Disability and Work: Improving Social and Labour-Market Integration of People with Disability«, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2010, <https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/46488022.pdf>.

11. The 70 % figure is disputed, but illustrative of the scale of the challenge. See United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, 1995: Gender and Human Development* (New York, 1995), and *Human Development Report, 1997: Human Development to Eradicate Poverty* (New York, 1997).

12. Small Arms Survey, »Weapons and Markets«, 2016, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/weapons-and-markets.html>, and the Graduate Institute of Geneva, interview with Keith Krause and Eric Berman, Small Arms Survey, 2010, http://graduateinstitute.ch/files/live/sites/iheid/files/shared/news/2010/2010_06_15_news/sas_transcript.pdf.

13. Dev Kar and Joseph Spanjers, »Illicit Flows from Developing Countries, 2004–2013«, Global Financial Integrity, Washington, DC, 2015, p. iv, http://www.gfintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/IFF-Update_2015-Final-1.pdf.

they receive from developing countries. The World Economic Forum estimates that the cost of corruption to the world economy is about 5 % of global GDP (or \$2.6 trillion).¹⁴ Recuperating these losses would plug a big hole in the budgets needed to finance the SDGs.

Sustainable peace will not be achieved if it is relegated to technical development projects. Political leadership in governments and societies will be the key driver of change. Putting people at the center of achieving sustainable peace will require every country to devise its own plans based on an understanding of root causes and solutions in each context. Whole societies and communities must be involved in advocating for and formulating people-centered approaches. Achieving sustainable peace will not only require drawing on SDG 16, but also interconnected SDGs in areas of social justice and equal opportunity, such as SDGs 1 (ending extreme poverty), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (jobs and growth), 10 (reducing inequality), 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 13 (climate action).

To accelerate national learning and implementation of the SDG agenda, global collaboration is needed in two key ways. First, government-to-government and society-to-society collaboration is needed to develop new strategies and exchange lessons. Some countries, including Mexico, have already developed a national, multi-sectoral plan for reducing violence. Brazil's Ministry of Justice introduced an index that ranks access to justice across the country and to different parts of the justice system. It promotes community and government cooperation to achieve violence reduction and development targets by jointly identifying and resolving the root causes of violence. While traditional development agencies lack experience and expertise in these areas, these countries, and many more like them, have important lessons to share about the innovations that work in building more sustainable peace. The HLPF and ECOSOC are ideal fora to highlight major political lessons from governments and civil society, and to instigate deeper exchanges between governments and societies. Prominence could be given to identifying national norm and implementation entrepreneurs from

government and society who devise new strategies and approaches for achieving SDG 16.

Second, there is a serious fragmentation among the global partnerships needed for achieving sustainable peace. A survey by Saferworld found thirteen global partnerships relevant to SDG 16, covering open government and transparency, institution building, peace-building and statebuilding, violence prevention, ending violence against children, stolen asset recovery, global legal empowerment, social accountability, corporate tax reform, democracy promotion and governance data.¹⁵ To these, at least could be added partnerships that cover extractive industries transparency, financial management of national mining concessions, tax inspectors without borders and the intergovernmental Financial Action Task Force (an inter-governmental body).

Despite the diversity of these partnerships, they do not cover all SDG 16 targets. There is no global partnership for legal identity, small arms and light weapons control, organized crime or police reform, although UN mandates and international organizations cover some of these areas. There is no process directly addressing participation of developing countries in global governance. There are also legal loopholes that undercut the impact of these partnerships, such as off-shore financial centers and tax havens. The partnerships do not involve all countries. For example, some are initiatives of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or the G7. They also do not yet all directly address achieving the SDGs.

Merging partnerships is not likely to be desirable or feasible, as it would confront opposition, bureaucratic obstacles and time-delays. Partners at the UN could, however, create a platform for the existing partnerships and UN-mandated organizations and inter-governmental bodies to coalesce, coordinate, find efficiencies, and report around SDG 16. And partners at the UN could fill gaps. In one 2015 survey of policy-makers, think tanks and civil society, the majority of respondents thought that tackling illicit flows in all its forms — finance, arms, drugs, conflict resources, human trafficking — was the most important normative and implementation priority

14. CleanGovBiz, »The Rationale for Fighting Corruption,« Background Brief, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, 2014, <https://www.oecd.org/cleangovbiz/49693613.pdf>. Corruption estimates are disputed. See, for example, Matthew Stephenson, »It's Time To Abandon the »\$2.6 Trillion/5 % of Global GDP« Corruption Cost Estimate,« *Global Anticorruption Blog*, 5 January 2016, <https://globalanticorruptionblog.com/2016/01/05/its-time-to-abandon-the-2-6-trillion5-of-global-gdp-corruption-cost-estimate/>.

15. Saferworld, »Greater than the Sum of Our Parts: Global Partnerships for Goal 16,« Briefing, London, 2016, <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/1057-greater-than-the-sum-of-our-parts-global-partnerships-for-goal-16>.

for the UN and for the next Secretary-General.¹⁶ The UN is lacking norms and cooperation mechanisms that address these contemporary drivers of instability and human insecurity on the dark side of globalization. The next Secretary-General could commission a high-level expert panel to make recommendations on actions. The process should be inclusive of all regions and regional organizations, international financial institutions and the G20. It must collaborate closely with the OECD and G7, because northern organizations have a particular responsibility to close such loopholes as tax havens and arms flows. The panel's recommendations should not only cover enforcement, but regulatory economics, development and anti-discrimination policies.

Global and national monitoring and accountability for progress will be a double-edged sword. If it draws on development methods to inspire national and transnational actors to achieve targets and aid learning on initiatives, it will be beneficial. If it is used to rank and «name and shame» countries, it will be demotivating and divisive. Realistically, the HLPF should adopt a motivational, not punitive approach to monitoring.

3. Fit for Peace: UN Reform and Prevention of Conflict

Multiple panel reviews in 2015 and 2016 have added to the collective realization that the UN order has reached its limits for maintaining international peace and security and sustaining a life-line to people in crisis. These reviews include the UN High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the High-level Review on Women, Peace and Security 15 years after Security Council resolution 1325, the Secretary-General's Advisory Group of Experts Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, and the High-Level Panel Report on Humanitarian Financing. None of these reviews are revolutionary in their recommendations. What they do is synthesize known problems and deficits.

The reviews underline the «gaping hole» in the UN for sustaining peace. They call for: building greater coherence between the UN's political, financial and capacity

support to countries exiting conflict across; for the UN to make greater use of partnerships with development actors; for more coherence and investment across the human rights, humanitarian, peace and security and development arms to prevent conflict in the first place; and for ownership by societies and governments of the peace to be built. All the reviews recognize that politics is not favorable to reform of the UN and that only tactical progress may be possible in the near term towards reform of the Security Council. Indeed, many of these reviews' recommendations have been circulating for years, but they have usually not been implemented for political reasons.

SDG 16 offers a practical opportunity for the UN to coalesce substantively and institutionally towards its attainment. Given the political challenges to reform, the UN will need to adopt short and long-term strategies to make itself fit for sustaining peace.

In the short-term, SDG 16 opens up a significant global opportunity to align peace agreements, national development and peacebuilding priorities, and international assistance, and to conduct better monitoring and prevention of risks to development. SDG 16's emphasis on development and on people draws in a wide range of pivotal actors for building and sustaining peace on the national level, including rising and regional powers, new multilateral development banks, civil society and the private sector. The UN must mandate and empower its leadership on the ground to work with all actors and resources to sustain the peace. To accelerate learning and change, the Secretary-General could identify pilot countries in 2016 for rolling out a new, more inclusive UN approach to building and sustaining peace that draws on SDG 16 and its related goals to support national actors to build a people-centered and sustainable peace.

The Security Council too, could invite the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to advise it on supporting SDG 16 in mission mandates by proposing mission transition benchmarks that reflect the people-centered targets of national SDG strategies. The PBC has already been mandated to work with the UN's inter-governmental bodies on sustaining the peace. A range of ad hoc working practices could pull together the whole UN system's analysis and support for conflict-affected countries. The reviews themselves, however, and the General Assembly thematic debate on «A New Commitment for Peace» in

16. Sarah Hearn, Alison Burt, and Jeffrey Strew, «Updating the Rules and Infrastructure for Globalization,» Meeting Summary, New York University, Center on International Cooperation, 2015, http://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/publication Updating_rules_meeting_summary_may7_1.pdf.



2016 have also called for a larger gap to be filled in the UN's upstream strategic analysis and prevention capacities. This is a normative and institutional gap that cannot be filled by the Security Council given its humanitarian legal mandate. The PBC could become a more proactive body in the SDG era. Drawing on SDG indicators, it could periodically convene countries, UN human rights, development, peacebuilding and political entities and civil society to monitor global risks and support national and regional actors to devise solutions to risks.

Member State discussions are on-going about making the UN Development System (UNDS) fit for purpose for the SDGs. The UNDS is confronted with a stark choice from many of its funders: It can pursue upstream strategic reforms to improve its coherence and efficiency and reduce duplication aligned with more tightly defined SDGs functions. Or it can be driven by donors' country-level voluntary funding, which has become increasingly concentrated in conflict-affected and low-income countries.

There are benefits to the latter scenario, as countries have committed through the 2015 Financing for Development (FfD) Outcome Document to increasing the overall percentage of aid that goes to Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The problem with this scenario is that it corners the UN into responses to conflict, rather than investing in global prevention. And it stifles UN support for necessary global innovations to achieve SDG 16, such as enabling government-to-government and society-to-society collaboration and new global partnerships. Achieving a significant impact on sustainable peace requires greater upstream coherence by the UN in data collection, analysis and resource allocation to support sustaining the peace. It will also need to update its specializations and skills for the ambitions of the SDG era and provide up-to-date knowledge and technical support to Member States until countries can develop their own universities and think tanks. In the context of wider reforms to the UNDS, merging executive boards or creating a body where all executive boards meet to ensure coherence across the system would be highly beneficial for improving the UNDS' impact on achieving all of the SDGs, not least in promoting sustainable peace.

As for the UN's humanitarian machinery, the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 was an important first step in bringing together stakeholders around a collective concern for growing humanitarian needs and costs in the

world. It stopped short of political solutions to the causes of conflict and instability in the world, and it stopped short of renewed political commitment to burden sharing for the current refugee crisis.

It did, however, make technical progress on the use of aid in a new so-called »Grand Bargain«. If implemented, many aspects of the »Grand Bargain« would go a long way towards empowering communities and governments to build resilience and prevent crisis in the long-term. The bargain commits donor signatories to spending 25 % of humanitarian aid through local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and national responders. If achieved, this would be a massive leap from 0.4 % and help to build local and national capacities for humanitarian response and crisis prevention. It commits to increasing the use of cash-based programming, which has definitively been shown to improve choice and empowerment for families in crisis.

By 2017, the grand bargain commits to involving communities in the design and implementation of all response plans. It commits the humanitarian system to multiyear planning, funding and programs that build local capacities and better connect with longer-term development plans. Finally, the bargain commits to better linking humanitarian and development resources to shrink humanitarian needs for the long-term. This is important because it commits donors to investing more in building resilience through social protection programs. (The FfD Outcome Document set a spending target of \$300 per capita on social protection, which would be more than 30 % of GDP in the Central African Republic.) It also opens a window for humanitarian and development actors to pool, or at least coordinate, humanitarian, peacebuilding and development programs to provide more durable solutions and support self-reliance among forced migrants and other people affected by crisis.

4. Leave No Country Behind – Empowering Countries In Transition

SDG 16 is especially relevant to the countries most affected by conflict, crisis and instability. One estimate is that by 2030, 62 % of the world's extreme poor will be concentrated in countries affected by conflict.¹⁷ This

17. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *States of Fragility*, p. 13.



trend underscores the adverse effects of violence and crisis on sustainable development and the effects that deficits in sustainable development have on perpetuating violence. Resolving crisis, building accountable, inclusive and effective institutions and delivering basic services could, on the other hand, reduce the number of people in absolute poverty, currently 1.5 billion, to 350 million by 2030. Retreat by national and international leaders from commitments to the poorest and most conflict-affected countries should be inconceivable.

As an alliance of countries in transition and affected by conflict, the g7+ can make a unique contribution to attainment of the SDGs. The g7+ New Deal was launched in 2011. The New Deal has three pillars: (1) Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) for politics, security, justice, institutions and economic opportunities are the foundations of peace and development. (2) Political principles commit to identifying the causes and solutions to conflict and crisis, to nationally-owned and led plans and to mutual accountability through compacts between government, society and the international community for making progress. (3) Aid principles reaffirm aid effectiveness and commitments to national capacity development.

In 2016, New Deal stakeholders commissioned an independent review. It found that the g7+ was an important and increasingly influential group of international norm entrepreneurs, having advocated for their needs in the SDGs and FfD negotiations. A new platform for fragile-to-fragile cooperation promises to be an increasingly important forum for exchanging lessons and providing support between conflict-affected countries, as Timor-Leste's experience in supporting Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic demonstrates.

Thus far, however, country-level implementation of the New Deal has not been easy. The New Deal has been frequently criticized for being too technical, too bureaucratic and too donor-dominated. This is especially true for the need for political processes that bind all relevant national actors into a shared vision for »what« needs to be achieved and »how« to build peaceful and inclusive societies. There is also a need for political leaders to recommit to the principles of the New Deal, and for all national stakeholders to be involved.

International partners, for their part, could also do much more to fulfill their side of the bargain. The g7+ needs

coherent, predictable and timely assistance to develop national capacities and institutions and to fill financing gaps left by low foreign direct investment, national revenues and the glut in commodities prices. Yet many g7+ and conflict-affected LDCs remain underfunded, including the Central African Republic, Guinea and Sierra Leone. The fragmentation of aid and development partners across the SDGs, and growing pressures on humanitarian aid, could make matters worse for the poorest countries in the SDG era. Donor behavior has barely changed despite signing up to the New Deal in 2011. Risk aversion has intensified since the 2008 financial crisis, with donors preferring to stick to traditional development project designs. Thus, there is no evidence that aid has been realigned to the PSGs, and many areas relevant to building peaceful and inclusive societies are seriously underfunded in aid-dependent countries. Justice sectors and access to justice, for example, receive less than 2 % of aid, which actually reflects a downward trajectory.

Despite the challenges involved, national leadership and ownership of policies and plans must be respected and solutions to the root causes of conflict and crisis pursued. This is why the New Deal principles remain highly relevant to achieving the SDGs in g7+ countries. The g7+ has made a political commitment going forward to aligning the SDGs, the PSGs and national plans through nationally-owned and led processes to identify »what« needs to happen and »how.« The g7+ have already agreed on a common set of SDG goals and targets against which to measure collective progress. These include, but also go beyond, SDG 16. The g7+ could also take the opportunity of the SDGs' launch to convene national dialogues on priorities. These could give rise to a new generation of strategies, policies and programs for leaving no-one behind.

Making inroads into extreme poverty in the SDG era will require all international governmental, civil society and private sector partners to rally to the institutional development priorities of the g7+ and other conflict-affected LDCs. The g7+ already has an enormous amount of experience to share with the world, and it could benefit from an expanded range of partners in the South who have already made major inroads into building sustainable peace.

Northern civil society organizations have been highly supportive of the New Deal, but much more could be done



to include Southern civil society on an equal footing in the global partnership and in national dialogues, ensuring that conflict-affected countries are able to pursue a people-centered agenda for building sustainable peace. Southern civil society could receive more support for exchange across countries and experimentation at home about what works and what does not to build sustainable peace.

Led by the g7+, an international dialogue on peacebuilding and statebuilding should reposition itself as a global partnership for leaving no country behind under SDG 17 — which commits to partnerships for the SDG Agenda. The g7+ and other LDCs should lead the dialogue and partnership with a set of international partners, including the UN, the G20, middle-income countries, regional organizations, and civil society.

5. Conclusion

The aspirations of SDG 16 speak to the concerns of billions of people. It is a potential antidote to the current skepticism surrounding multilateralism and nationalist populism. Achieving SDG 16 will not be easy, however. All actors must shift their mind-sets, strategies and resources towards a people-centered and universal agenda for sustaining peace. In this, the UN has a unique role to play. A roadmap of actions could be pursued to channel energy and resources, starting in 2016 and reviewed again in 2019. This includes to:

- Identify norm and implementation entrepreneurs who can share lessons and instigate government-to-government and society-to-society collaboration on what works to advance SDG 16 and related goals and targets.
- Create a platform to convene all global partnerships relevant to SDG 16 to coalesce, coordinate, refine and monitor partnerships towards attainment of SDG 16.
- Fill major gaps in global partnerships and norms for SDG 16, most especially in the area of illicit flows, starting with a high-level panel of experts on countering the dark side of globalization.
- Task UN leaders in pilot countries to work with national actors to align peace agreements, development and humanitarian plans.

- Empower the UN Peacebuilding Commission to build synergies across all arms of the UN, and to devise a system of upstream monitoring and prevention.
- Merge or coordinate UNDS Executive Boards and align and update the specializations of the UNDS to its core functions, one of which must be sustainable peace.
- Hold donors and the humanitarian system to account for implementing the »Grand Bargain,« especially as it relates to empowering communities and linking with development.
- Expand the number of countries that commit to investing in community resilience.
- Empower the g7+ and other conflict-affected countries through expanding the global partnership to leave no country behind.
- Align assistance and cooperation to national priorities, invest in national institutions and prevention and ensure no country is underfunded.
- Give voice to Southern civil society by including them on an equal footing in dialogue.



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