

THE PEACE PROMISE

COMMITMENTS TO MORE EFFECTIVE SYNERGIES AMONG PEACE, HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS IN COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN SITUATIONS

The international community has in recent years been in a state of crisis management, reacting to events rather than proactively addressing root causes and supporting the long-term capacities and institutions that are required for sustainable peace and development. Several recent reports, agreements and resolutions¹ have emphasized the need to focus on preventing crises and addressing the drivers of conflict and subsequent human suffering. Prevention and peacebuilding is generally underfunded, initiated too late, not prioritized, or insufficiently sustained. The international community has a responsibility to address the root causes of violent conflict and implement measures aimed at peacebuilding and strengthening resilience, which can also support a shift from providing humanitarian assistance to those in need to reduce those needs sustainably.

The nature and scale of humanitarian crises has changed, displaying increasingly complex interactions among social, economic, environmental, geographical, human rights, political and security drivers and consequences. Currently, 125 million people require humanitarian assistance – most of them affected by violent conflict – and displacement has reached record levels. One in ten children lives in areas affected by armed conflict and violence. Between 2002 and 2013, 86 per cent of resources requested through United Nations humanitarian appeals were destined to humanitarian action in conflict situations. Such complex humanitarian emergencies have been intractable and protracted with an average length of displacement due to war and persecution of 17 years. Moreover, the funding requirements of inter-agency humanitarian appeals have increased six-fold from \$3.4 billion in 2004 to \$19.5 billion in 2015. This is not sustainable.

Humanitarian action cannot prevent violent conflict, nor can it end humanitarian needs in the absence of political solutions to conflict. Humanitarian assistance can have both positive and negative impacts on conflict dynamics. Where not carefully calibrated, whether in the targeting of beneficiaries, procurement, distribution of resources or service delivery, or (re-)settlement of displaced people, it can have negative impact. The provision of assistance can have a positive impact by reducing tensions and prevent competition over resources. Awareness of the context into which humanitarian assistance is delivered is therefore at the heart of the principle of “do no harm.” While humanitarian action can contribute to a reduction in the risk of violence and to sustaining peace, its purpose remains to address life-saving needs and alleviate suffering. Improved context-specific coordination and coherence among peacebuilding, development and humanitarian action presents opportunities for mitigating the risks and fostering more sustainable outcomes. At the same time, humanitarian organizations must ensure, and others must respect, that humanitarian action remains guided by the principles of humanity and impartiality; that humanitarian priorities are defined on the basis of needs and that assistance and protection is given as a matter of priority to the most vulnerable.

In short, the international community has a responsibility to work together across silos and at the peace-humanitarian-development nexus in addressing the drivers of violent conflict, delivering humanitarian assistance and developing institutions, resilience and capacities simultaneously in a complementary and synergetic way in order to end humanitarian needs, in a context-specific manner that safeguards humanitarian principles.

ULTIMATE COLLECTIVE OUTCOME

ENDING HUMAN SUFFERING BY ADDRESSING THE DRIVERS OF CONFLICT AND VULNERABILITY, AND REDUCING SUBSEQUENT HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

To achieve this, the international community and all humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors, consistent with, and acting within their mandate and comparative advantages, should:

COMMITMENT 1

FOCUS ON THE ALIGNMENT AND COHERENCE OF COLLECTIVE SHORT-, MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES SIMULTANEOUSLY

- ▶ Commit to shared responsibility and collective outcomes in alignment with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in an effort to transcend the humanitarian-development divide.
- ▶ Commit to focusing on the context-specific alignment of short-, medium- and long-term objectives, working towards collective outcomes, which include addressing humanitarian needs, addressing the drivers of violent conflict and developing institutions, resilience and capacities simultaneously in a complementary and synergetic manner based on respective mandates and comparative advantage.
- ▶ Commit to an inclusive process involving the local population, communities and civil society in the design and monitoring of activities, including through the establishment of participatory mechanisms to express feedback and grievances, and respond to feedback.
- ▶ Commit to promoting the empowerment and participation of women, youth, minorities and marginalized or vulnerable people.
- ▶ Commit to monitoring short-term outputs and longer-term outcomes related to peace, institutions, capacities and resilience, even if they are harder to measure.

COMMITMENT 2

CONDUCT CONTEXT, RISK OR CONFLICT ANALYSIS REGULARLY

- ▶ Commit to using regular context, risk or conflict analysis to ensure common and shared understandings of the contexts to inform our work, inter alia, responsible and principled humanitarian action, contributing to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, fostering social cohesion, gender equality and respect for human rights and strengthening institutions and resilience at the household, local, national and regional levels, inclusive of local actors.
- ▶ Commit to undertake joint analysis with other entities working in the same context and space to enable system-wide response to address the most critical risks for conflict and human rights violations, using local knowledge and engaging local actors as much as possible.
- ▶ Commit to support integrated analysis of, and complementary and cohesive programming around, the interconnected risks of violent conflict, disasters and climate change.

COMMITMENT 3

DEVELOP CAPACITIES,
TOOLS AND
PARTNERSHIPS,
ENSURE
INSTITUTIONAL
LEARNING AND
INNOVATION AND
SHARE INFORMATION

- ▶ Commit to developing the capacities and tools to identify multi-dimensional and interconnected risks and drivers of conflict through a context, risk or conflict analysis, at all levels, in partnership among local, national and international stakeholders.
- ▶ Commit to developing the capacities to translate analysis into conflict-sensitive programmes and/or responses, at all levels, including among local and national partners, by ensuring personnel are competent in conflict-sensitive good practices.
- ▶ Commit to focusing on people and putting local actors, including young people and women, at the fore and investing in supporting and strengthening national and local systems and capacities.
- ▶ Commit to learning and transparency, including regarding failures and adjust activities accordingly, and sharing of information, data, lessons learned, good practices and tools for context, risk or conflict analysis, early warning and emergency preparedness through common platforms and coalitions.
- ▶ Commit to building and communicating the evidence-base for prevention approaches.

COMMITMENT 4

DO NO HARM AND
ENSURE CONFLICT-
SENSITIVE
PROGRAMMING

- ▶ Commit to doing no harm and applying a conflict-sensitive approach in the design and delivery of programmes while involving local stakeholders.
- ▶ Commit to further developing policies, good practices and guidance to reach this objective, while building on existing guidance, such as the Sphere standards, and engaging local stakeholders.
- ▶ Commit to leveraging opportunities for positive impact (“Do More Good”) by developing capacities and institutions, enhancing social cohesion and trust, strengthening resilience, promoting and protecting human rights and reducing the risk of violence, while engaging local stakeholders.

COMMITMENT 5

PROVIDE ADEQUATE,
SUSTAINED AND RISK-
TOLERANT FINANCING

- ▶ Commit to provide adequate, multi-year and sustained financing of collective outcomes on peace, humanitarian action and development.²
- ▶ Commit to tolerate, mitigate and share risks.
- ▶ Commit to seeking more flexible use of resources in more effective and integrated ways.

WE, THE ORGANIZATIONS LISTED BELOW, SUPPORT THE ABOVE-LISTED COMMITMENTS AND COMMIT TO CREATE THE SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES AMONG PEACE, HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS THAT ARE REQUIRED TO REDUCE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS, GUIDED BY THE AGENDA FOR HUMANITY.

- ✓ Alliance for Peacebuilding
- ✓ American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
- ✓ CARE
- ✓ Catholic Relief Services
- ✓ Conciliation Resources
- ✓ Cord
- ✓ Human Appeal
- ✓ International Alert
- ✓ Interpeace
- ✓ MercyCorps
- ✓ Peace Direct
- ✓ Saferworld
- ✓ Search for Common Ground
- ✓ Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth
- ✓ Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
- ✓ Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
- ✓ UNICEF
- ✓ United Nations Department of Political Affairs
- ✓ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- ✓ United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)
- ✓ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- ✓ UN Women
- ✓ World Bank
- ✓ World Food Programme
- ✓ World Vision International

RELATED INITIATIVES:

- ▶ WHS High-level Leaders' Roundtables: Core Commitments on Political Leadership to Prevent and End Conflicts"
- ▶ Upholding the Norms that Safeguard Humanity"
- ▶ Changing People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need"
- ▶ Women and Girls: Catalysing Action to Achieve Gender Equality"
- ▶ WHS Special Session on "Risk and Vulnerability Analysis"
- ▶ WHS Side event on "Reducing Humanitarian Needs: Peacebuilding and the Prevention of Violent Conflicts," 23 May 2016, 17:00-18:30, Rumeli Hall 7 (200 - Theater), Lüfti Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Center.
- ▶ WHS Side event on "Our Collective Contribution to Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Sustainable Development in the 2030 era," 24-May, 9:00-10:30, Galata (120 - Theater), Lüfti Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Center.
- ▶ "Stockholm Declaration: Addressing Fragility and Building Peace in a Changing World," adopted by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, on 5 April 2016.
- ▶ UN-World Bank initiative on "Operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus - Preventing Conflict, Reducing Need and Sustaining Peace in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States."
- ▶ UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, "Declaration of Commitment on Bringing the UN System Together to Support Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding within the Broader 2030 Agenda" adopted on 27 April 2016.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See, for example, Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit, One Humanity: Shared Responsibility (A/70/709); the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015); the reaction of the Secretary-General to the Panel's report, i.e. The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015); the review of the peacebuilding architecture, which include a General Assembly resolution (A/RES/70/262) and a Security Council resolution (S/RES/2282 (2016)), adopted on 27 April 2016, and a report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (A/69/968-S/2015/490, 30 June 2015); the Global Study on the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security; and the Secretary-General's report on the issue (S/2015/716, 16 September 2015).
2. This commitment is understood to apply only to entities recognized as providers of primary funding.

For information and additional endorsements, please contact Mr. Henk-Jan Brinkman, UN Peacebuilding Support Office at brinkman@un.org