

MAIN MESSAGES  
AND EMERGING  
POLICY DIRECTIONS

# PATHWAYS FOR PEACE

INCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT



WORLD BANK GROUP



UNITED NATIONS



# **Pathways for Peace** **Inclusive Approaches** **to Preventing** **Violent Conflict**

**Main Messages and  
Emerging Policy Directions**



This booklet contains the main messages for, as well as front matter drawn from, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648-1162-3. A PDF of the final, full-length book, once published, will be available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/> and print copies can be ordered at <http://Amazon.com>. Please use the final version of the book for citation, reproduction, and adaptation purposes.

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# Foreword

In 2015, the United Nations Member States set ambitious goals for the world with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which offers a unique framework to come together around a renewed effort at preventing human suffering. The Agenda, which is universal, integrated and indivisible in nature, not only aims to end poverty and hunger, to ensure healthy lives and quality education and to protect the environment—but also to reduce inequalities and promote peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

Violent conflict is increasingly recognized as one of the big obstacles to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Its dramatic resurgence over the last few years has caused immense human suffering and has enormous global impact. Violent conflicts have also become more complex and protracted, involving more non-state groups and regional and international actors. And they are increasingly linked to global challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, cyber security and transnational organized crime. It is projected that more than half of the people living in poverty will be found in countries affected by high levels of violence by 2030. This is utterly contrary to the promise contained in the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind.

As the human, social and financial costs and complexity of violent conflict and its global impact grow, we must ask

ourselves: how can the global community more effectively prevent violent conflict?

At the United Nations, we believe that prevention means doing everything we can to help countries avert the outbreak of crises that take a high toll on humanity, undermining institutions and capacities to achieve peace and development. We mean rededicating ourselves to the United Nations Charter, the mandate of Agenda 2030, protecting and respecting human rights, and ensuring that our assistance goes to those who need it the most. Prevention should permeate everything we do. It should cut across all pillars of the United Nations' work, and unite us for more effective delivery. This study is a contribution to our internal reflection on the broader challenges of prevention.

At the World Bank Group, we believe that preventing fragility, conflict and violence is central to reducing poverty and achieving shared prosperity. Social and economic development have important roles to play in this effort, so we are doubling the amount of resources to address issues of fragility, conflict and violence as part of the 18th replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA), our fund for the poorest countries. We are ensuring that all of our operations can contribute to this effort in several ways: by introducing more flexibility and adaptability in our programs; by increasing our focus on the risks of fragility, conflict and violence, and on various crises faced by our clients; by

improving our regional efforts; and by addressing some of the worst consequences of conflict such as forced displacement.

Each of our institutions brings a unique and complementary set of expertise and tools to the table in accordance with its mandate. We can already see the results of our intensified collaboration around conflict, violence and fragility in several countries. But we can achieve more together. We need to better harness our institutions' instruments and resources to support this shared agenda.

This joint study on the prevention of violent conflict—a first in the history of our institutions—was initiated in 2016 and conducted by a team of staff members from the United Nations and the World Bank Group, in a spirit of fostering closer collaboration to deliver at the country level. It reflects a process of research and intense global consultation aimed at providing ideas on how development approaches can

better interact with other tools to prevent violent conflict.

This study, principally based on academic research, benefited immensely from consultations with a variety of actors including Governments. It is therefore our hope that some of the findings will usefully inform global policy making.

This study is one element of a much broader partnership and a first step in working jointly to address the immense challenges of our time. We look forward to continuing the pursuit of knowledge together, and to applying that knowledge together in support of the people we serve.

*António Guterres*  
Secretary-General  
United Nations

*Jim Yong Kim*  
President  
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# Main Messages and Emerging Policy Directions

## I. Introduction

Since 2010, the number of major violent conflicts has tripled, and fighting in a growing number of lower intensity conflicts has escalated.<sup>1</sup> In 2016, more countries experienced violent conflict than at any time in nearly 30 years.<sup>2</sup> Much of this violence remains entrenched in low-income countries, yet some of today's deadliest conflicts are occurring in countries at higher income levels with stronger institutions. At the same time, more conflicts are internationalized, as countries intervene in support of a party or parties in another country's conflict.<sup>3</sup>

This upsurge in violence occurs in a volatile global context where the balance of geopolitical power is in flux, and transnational factors like advances in information and communications technology, population movements, and climate change create risks and opportunities to be managed at multiple levels.

Taken together, these trends challenge the long-standing assumption that peace will accompany income growth,<sup>4</sup> and the expectations of steady social, economic, and political advancement that defined the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> By 2030, the horizon set by the international community for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), more than half of the world's poor could be living in countries affected by high levels of violence.<sup>6</sup>

Because violent conflict tends to persist once it takes root,<sup>7</sup> its impacts accumulate.

Infrastructure and institutions are quickly destroyed and take decades to rebuild.<sup>8</sup> Exposure to violence can have devastating, lifelong impacts on psychosocial well-being.<sup>9</sup> When basic service delivery is halted or quality is diminished, the generations that do not receive those services carry the impacts for the rest of their lives in detriments to physical and psychosocial health, forgone education, and limited job opportunities. Drops in investment, together with the cost of responding to violence, put intense strain on state capacity. Countries at war lose an average 8.5 percentage points in economic growth in the first year of civil war and 4.5 percent in subsequent years. These effects persist for several years following the end of hostilities.<sup>10</sup>

Conflict and dispute are inherent in development and social progress. Any change may disrupt the status quo and create perceived winners and losers, be it the construction of a road, an election, or a shock like the collapse of foreign exchange revenues. Navigating conflict peacefully is the cardinal challenge of every society. Most countries manage it successfully most of the time. The same is true to some extent of the international system. Since the end of World War II, a global multilateral system has contributed to a decline in violent conflicts and helped manage the risks of nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare.

Preventing entry and relapse into a cycle of conflict holds the potential to save lives and avoid the immense losses in human and economic capital that accompany

conflict—and safeguard considerable development gains. It is also cost-effective: according to a background paper commissioned for this report, targeting resources toward just four countries at high risk of conflict each year could prevent \$34 billion<sup>11</sup> in losses (see box 1).<sup>12</sup> In comparison, spending on peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in 2016 was \$8.2 billion and \$22.1 billion, respectively.<sup>13</sup>

Currently, spending on prevention amounts to a fraction of the quantity spent responding to crisis or on rebuilding afterward.<sup>14</sup> To some extent, this reflects the difficulty of predicting violent conflict onset—even the most sophisticated early warning systems offer only short time frames for averting crisis, and by then windows of opportunity for preventing the worst have already narrowed. Prevention requires a shift in approach to address risk factors long before violence starts. Yet, to a much greater degree, the problem is one of incentives. Actors, at all levels, do not always have the incentives to act effectively, efficiently, and collectively to prevent conflict from becoming violent.

This report presents some of the early findings of a broader study prepared jointly by staff of the World Bank and United Nations (UN).<sup>15</sup> The study originated from the conviction on the part of both institutions that the attention of the international community needed to be urgently refocused on prevention. While the two institutions are governed by different, and complementary, mandates, they share a commitment to prevention of conflict, as is expressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the recent commitments expressed in the UN General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions on Sustaining Peace,<sup>16</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> replenishment of the World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA).

This study recognizes that the two institutions bring separate comparative advantages to approach conflict prevention, and that they do not have the same role and responsibility in the international architecture. Therefore, while a holistic framework is essential to implement prevention, the findings and recommendations that

will be further developed in the full study do not apply to all organizations in the same way.

Through the 2030 Agenda, the UN Member States committed themselves to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies that are free from fear and violence; to eradicate poverty and hunger; to combat inequalities; and to protect and respect human rights.<sup>17</sup> In terms of peace, the Agenda states that “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.”<sup>18</sup> The 17 SDGs and 169 targets are seen as “integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.”<sup>19</sup> This Agenda provides an overarching framework for action for States and actors to work together toward conflict prevention and peace. The SDGs contained in the 2030 Agenda offer entry points for the implementation of the recommendations of this study.<sup>20</sup>

This study focuses on conflict prevention consistent with the activities outlined in the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on Sustaining Peace, that is, as “activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development.”<sup>21</sup> Its objective is to improve the way in which domestic development processes interact with security, diplomatic, justice, and human rights efforts to prevent conflicts from becoming violent. Its key audiences are national policy makers and staff of multilateral, bilateral, and regional institutions.

The sustainable development challenge goes well beyond conflict, and thus the scope of this report. But the fundamental premise of this report is that the SDGs simply cannot be attained without due attention to the effects of conflict. In turn, the SDGs provide a blueprint to address the root causes of conflict.

The prevention challenge also goes well beyond conflict, encompassing all manner of avoidable artificial and natural crises that cause significant human suffering and undermine development. The sources of vulnerability to crisis are complex and interrelated. While this study focuses specifically on conflict, many of its insights have broader applicability.

The study follows eight key messages:

- Violent conflict is surging after decades of relative decline. Direct deaths in war, refugee numbers, military spending, and terrorist incidents, *inter alia*, have all reached historic highs in recent years. A rapidly evolving global context presents risks that transcend national borders and add to the complexity of conflict. This places the onus on policy makers at levels—from local to global—to make a more concerted effort to bring their tools and instruments to bear in an effective and complementary way.
- The human and economic cost of conflicts around the world requires us to work more collaboratively. The SDGs should be at the core of this approach. Development actors need to provide more support to national and regional prevention agendas, through targeted, flexible, and sustained engagement. Prevention agendas, in turn, should be integrated in development policies and efforts as prevention is cost effective, saves lives, and safeguards development gains.
- The best way to prevent societies from descending into crisis—including but not limited to conflict—is to ensure they are resilient through investment in inclusive and sustainable development. For all countries, addressing inequalities and exclusion, making institutions more inclusive, and ensuring that development strategies are risk-informed are central to preventing the fraying of the social fabric that could erupt into crisis.
- States are central to efforts to prevent conflict, but, in today's shifting global landscape, they are one actor among many. The primary responsibility for prevention rests with states, and they

can call upon other actors to assist their efforts to keep their countries on the pathway to peace.

- Exclusion from access to power, opportunity, and security creates fertile ground for mobilization to violence, especially in areas with weak state capacity or legitimacy or contexts of human rights abuses. The report points to specific ways in which state and other actors can seek to avert violence, including through more inclusive policies.
- Growth and poverty alleviation are crucial but alone will not suffice. Preventing violence requires departing from traditional economic and social policies when risks are building up, or are high, and seeking inclusive solutions through dialogue, adapted macro-economic policies, institutional reform in core state functions, and redistributive policies.
- Enhancing the meaningful participation of women and youth in decision making, as well as long-term policies to address the economic, social, and political aspirations of women and young people are fundamental to sustaining peace at all levels in a very fast-changing world.
- In order to achieve more effective prevention, new mechanisms need to be established that will allow the various tools and instruments of prevention, in particular diplomacy and mediation, security, and development, to work in much greater synergy, and much earlier on.

In the following sections, this report presents a framework for understanding how societies forge pathways toward peace, or violence, and highlights key arenas of contestation where sustained, targeted, and flexible intervention can have a significant impact. It then reviews the experience of conflict prevention across different countries and institutions to highlight elements that have contributed to peace. Finally, it presents guiding principles and an agenda for action to frame a shift toward prevention, and discusses the changes in incentives that are needed to get there.

## BOX 1 The Business Case for Prevention

The expected returns on prevention will be positive so long as the costs of prevention are less than the damages and/or losses due to violence. War is so destructive that this is almost always the case, provided that prevention is minimally effective. Table 1 below demonstrates the returns on prevention for optimistic, pessimistic, and neutral scenarios. It compares, on one side, the negative growth effects of war, expenditures on post-conflict aid, and peacekeeping to, on the other side, expected costs and efficacy of the three scenarios for prevention (following Mueller 2017). This analysis shows that everyone benefits from prevention.

The analysis highlights four points:

- Prevention is economically beneficial. Even in the most pessimistic scenario (expensive interventions, minimally effective) the average net savings is close to \$5 billion per year. (The lost growth from a year of conflict means that every subsequent year's economic growth starts from a lower base, leading to compounded savings over time.)
- The bulk of the savings is at the national level where the direct costs of conflict in terms of casualties and forgone economic growth are greatest. In the neutral scenario, over \$34 billion in damages would be prevented per year in countries that avoid war.
- Prevention is good for the international community. It saves on post-conflict humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping interventions, which are much more expensive than prevention. In the neutral scenario, yearly savings for the international community would be at least \$1.2 billion per year.
- The benefits of prevention increase over time whereas the costs fall. This means that the net savings displayed in table 1 are much lower than the benefits reached after 15 years. For example, according to the neutral scenario, prevented damage annually reaches over \$140 billion after 15 years.

In addition, yearly cost savings would be almost as high as the additional costs due to prevention.

Preventing conflict before it starts also has a profound, lasting impact on the future of a country. Conflict is persistent and leads to high post-conflict risks. Every country that enters a war today is effectively sidelined from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and unlikely to make any progress on development, poverty reduction, health, or education for a generation. In particular, a country caught up in violent conflict today is unlikely to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16 for “peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels.”

Table 1 shows the business case under different assumptions regarding effectiveness and the growth damage caused by conflict and the cost of prevention. The three scenarios in table 1 are based on assumptions regarding lost gross domestic product (GDP) growth due to conflict (see Mueller 2017, Lomborg 2013), the costs of prevention, and the effectiveness of prevention (see Dunne 2012). **The optimistic scenario** assumes that costs of prevention are low (\$100 million per intervention, per year); prevention is highly effective (succeeds in avoiding a conflict 75 percent of the time); and prevention avoids very high losses due to conflict (GDP growth is 5.2 percent lower during conflict). **The pessimistic scenario**, which uses the most conservative assumptions, assumes that prevention is rarely effective (25 percent of the time); very expensive (\$1 billion per intervention, per year); and war affects GDP with lower growth of 2.5 percent per year. **The neutral scenario** uses assumptions between these two extremes: prevention is effective 50 percent of the time; it is moderately expensive (\$500 million per intervention, per year); and war affects

*(Box continued next page)*



## BOX 1 The Business Case for Prevention (continued)

GDP by –3.9 percent per year of active conflict.

The effects of prevention for each scenario are described in terms of economic damages and loss of life avoided (prevented damage) and in terms of saved post-conflict reconstruction and peacekeeping (saved costs). For example, in the neutral scenario, prevented damage is \$34 billion and saved costs are \$1.18 billion. The costs of prevention in the neutral scenario are \$2.1 billion on average per year over 15 years. This scenario assumes an estimated seven prevention efforts in the first year, declining in later years to four preventions per year as the number of high-risk countries decreases, thanks to prevention. Under the neutral scenario,

the net returns from prevention are \$33 billion per year, or the sum of prevented damage plus saved costs minus costs of prevention.

The numbers in table 1, however, are conservative estimates. They do not include many additional costs of wars such as displacement. Military expenditure to fight civil wars (Collier and Hoeffler 2006) also diverts from productive activities in developing countries. Additionally, “ungoverned spaces” can contribute to opportunities for violent extremism, organized crime, and trafficking. The numbers in the table also do not include some of the persistent legacy effects of conflict (box 5) and spillover effects across countries due to refugees, interrupted trade, illicit trade, and conflict, among others.

**TABLE 1 Modeling the Returns on Prevention under Three Scenarios**

	Scenarios		
	Optimistic	Neutral	Pessimistic
<b>Assumptions:</b>			
Lost GDP growth per conflict year (percent)	5.2	3.9	2.5
Cost of prevention (US\$, millions)	100	500	1,000
Effectiveness of prevention (percent)	75	50	25
Prevented damage (US\$, millions)	68,736	34,251	9,377
Saved costs (US\$, millions)	1,523	1,176	698
Additional cost (US\$, millions)	–352	–2,118	–5,247
<b>Net savings per year (US\$, millions)</b>	<b>69,907</b>	<b>33,309</b>	<b>4,828</b>

Sources: Collier and Hoeffler 2006; Dunne 2012; Lomborg 2013.

Note: *Prevented damage* is the prevented economic damage and deaths; *saved costs* are the saved costs from late intervention costs related to peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance that become unnecessary with prevention; and *additional costs* are the additional costs needed for prevention efforts.

## II. A Surge and Expansion of Violent Conflict

Following the end of the Cold War, the number and intensity of most types of violent conflict have declined (see figure 1).<sup>22</sup> In particular, conflict between states is rare, though it has not disappeared completely and the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction remains real.

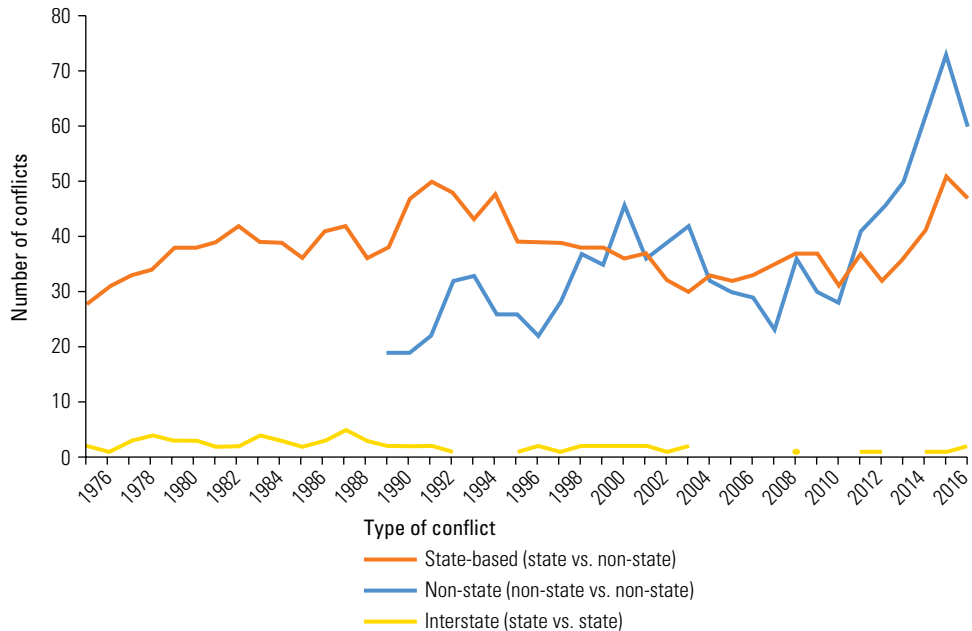
Since 2010, there has been a reversal of this trend. Battle-related deaths,<sup>23</sup> the number of armed conflicts, civilian casualties, and the number of refugees and people displaced by violence have all increased.<sup>24</sup> The increase in battle-related deaths and displacement is largely due to a handful of high-intensity conflicts. Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria accounted for 76 percent of all fatalities in 2016.<sup>25</sup>

This rapid increase in the number of conflicts and related deaths occurs alongside a proliferation of armed groups, technological advances, and the direct targeting

of civilians. In 1950, there were an average of eight armed groups in a civil war; by 2010 the average had jumped to 14.<sup>26</sup> In 2014, more than 1,000 active armed groups were estimated in Syria alone.<sup>27</sup> Many of today's armed groups have no (or little) formal connection to a state, and are categorized loosely as non-state armed groups.<sup>28</sup>

This proliferation of non-state armed groups challenges state-based models of conflict prevention, mediation, and peacekeeping. Many of today's armed actors operate in areas where state presence is limited, and they are too fragmented or diffuse for traditional, leader-based approaches to negotiated political solutions.<sup>29</sup> Others explicitly reject international humanitarian law as well as the international institutions established to uphold it,<sup>30</sup> placing themselves outside the ambit of traditional

**FIGURE 1 Conflict Trends**



Source: UCDP 2017.

peacemaking processes. Many thrive in environments of weak rule of law or profit from illicit economies, meaning they have little incentive to engage in processes to end violence.<sup>31</sup>

## II.a. Violent conflict is increasingly a regional phenomenon

Conflict today is fluid, spreading across borders to affect broader regions.<sup>32</sup> In part, this is a deliberate strategy,<sup>33</sup> but it is also a result of the greater interconnectivity of countries; the same networks that allow for increased trade and information flow can be exploited by organized crime and conflict entrepreneurs to spread violence.<sup>34</sup> The regional impact of conflict and the flow of refugees from conflict situations<sup>35</sup> add another international dimension.

The Middle East and North Africa have seen the most rapid expansion and escalation of violent conflict. Although home to only 5 percent of the world's population, in 2014 the region accounted for 45 percent of the world's terrorist incidents, 68 percent of battle-related deaths, 47 percent of internally displaced people, and 58 percent of refugees.<sup>36</sup> By 2020, it is estimated that almost three out of four Arabs could be "living in countries vulnerable" to violent conflict.<sup>37</sup>

Violent conflicts in many contexts in the Middle East and North Africa take place against a background of domestic grievances, particularly a breakdown in the prevailing social contract in these countries in which citizens had access to jobs in a large public sector, free education and health care, and subsidized food and fuel, while experiencing limits on free expression and a certain degree of elite capture of the economy.<sup>38</sup> These bargains began to break down in the early 2000s, aggravated by persistent fiscal imbalances that made them difficult for states to sustain. Mass protests provoked a political transition in Tunisia; quickly spread to the rest of the region, enabled by shared grievances, a common language, and technology; and turned into violent conflict in a number of

countries.<sup>39</sup> These conflicts have been intensely exploited by extremist groups,<sup>40</sup> and have drawn in regional and global powers, who may "influence or support—but rarely fully control—those fighting on the ground."<sup>41</sup>

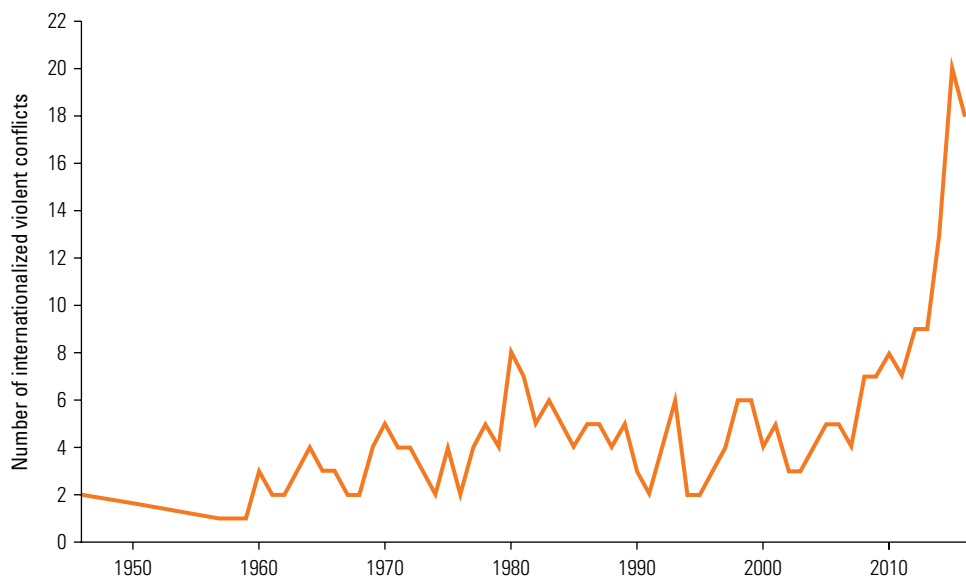
Violent conflict in Africa has also increased against the backdrop of the continent's rapid economic and political changes.<sup>42</sup> Poverty, and to some extent inequality, is decreasing and economic growth has enabled a number of countries to reach middle-income status.<sup>43</sup> Many countries have adopted more open political systems, although with some reversals in 2015.<sup>44</sup> In some countries, tensions have risen around competition for political power, sometimes deepening inter-group divisions and contributing to the eruption of open violence.<sup>45</sup>

Some of the most virulent extremist groups in the region have exploited these divisions, connecting them to transnational ideologies. Localized conflicts have fed into regional conflict systems, facilitated by common ethnic, linguistic, commercial, and cultural relationships,<sup>46</sup> as in the Lake Chad Basin and in the fringes of the Sahara.<sup>47</sup>

The *internationalization* of many intra-state conflicts, in which an outside state intervenes on behalf of a party to the conflict, also aids the spread of violence. In 2015, more conflicts (20) were internationalized than in any year since 1946.<sup>48</sup> Internationalized conflicts declined slightly, to 18, in 2016 (figure 2).<sup>49</sup>

The increased complexity and reach of today's violent conflict contribute to its intractability. While conflicts that ended in 1970 tended to last an average of 9.6 years, conflicts that ended in 2014 had lasted an average 26 years, and those that ended in 2015 lasted 14.5 years.<sup>50</sup> On their way out of conflict, most societies experience periods of peace punctuated by episodes of recurring violence. In a global study of 259 conflicts involving at least 25 battle deaths per year, 61 percent of violent conflicts between 1946 and 2015 involving state forces have stopped and started again, and over 38 percent of them "dragged in a new disputant or quarrel."<sup>51</sup>

**FIGURE 2** Number of Internationalized Intrastate Violent Conflicts, 1946–2016



Source: UCDP 2017.

## II.b. The impacts of violent conflict are vast, long lasting, and fall heaviest on civilians

Civilians overwhelmingly bear the brunt of today's violent conflict (box 2). Much of the violence occurs in urban areas<sup>52</sup> often targeting civilian spaces, including those considered sanctuaries under international humanitarian law, such as schools, hospitals, and places of worship.<sup>53</sup> This is facilitated by the increasing use of “remote violence”<sup>54</sup> both in civil wars and in acts of terrorism in countries far from conflict. Between 2010 and 2016 alone, the number of civilian deaths in violent conflicts doubled.<sup>55</sup> Many more civilian deaths result from indirect effects of conflict,<sup>56</sup> such as unmet medical needs, food insecurity, inadequate shelter, or contamination of water.<sup>57</sup>

An estimated 65.6 million people are now forcibly displaced from their homes, driven primarily by violence.<sup>58</sup> Between 2005 and 2016, the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) increased more than five-fold.<sup>59</sup> The number of refugees nearly doubled over the same period, with the majority (55 percent) of refugees coming from just Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Syria.<sup>60</sup> Over half of the world's

refugees are children, many of whom have been separated from family.<sup>61</sup> Extreme poverty is now increasingly concentrated in vulnerable groups displaced by violent conflict.<sup>62</sup>

The impacts of conflict are gendered, and affect people differently throughout the life cycle. While men make up the majority of combatants during conflict and are more likely to die from the direct effects of violence, women also face a continuum of insecurity before, during, and after conflict.<sup>63</sup> Sexual and gender-based violence tends to be higher in conflict and post-conflict settings, as does recruitment of girls into trafficking, sexual slavery, and forced marriage.<sup>64</sup> Girls' mobility is often highly restricted, limiting their access to school, employment, and other opportunities.<sup>65</sup> For children and youth, the long-term effects of exposure to violence, combined with the adversities of daily life in a high-violence context, are associated with a range of challenges.<sup>66</sup> These include increased risk of perpetrating or being a victim of violence later in life, psychological trauma, and negative effects on cognitive and social development.<sup>67</sup>

On a macro level, the cost of responding to conflict, and the economic losses that accompany conflict, put incredible strain

## BOX 2 The Impact of the Syrian War

The Syrian war is one of the defining crises of the contemporary era. At least 400,000 have been killed, about 5 million have fled the country,<sup>a</sup> and according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 6.3 million are internally displaced.<sup>b</sup> Many individuals cannot access the help they need, as more than 50 percent of hospitals have been partially or completely destroyed, and the country has few doctors, nurses, and medical supplies.<sup>a</sup> Children have been intensely affected: the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported over 1,500 grave human rights violations against children in 2015 alone, of which more than a third occurred while children were in or on their way to school.<sup>c</sup> The proportion of children under 15 being recruited by armed groups has increased from 20 percent in 2014 to over 50 percent in 2015, and there has been alarming increase in child marriage: a 2017 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) survey estimates the number of child brides (under 18 years of age) in Syria has quadrupled since the war began.<sup>d</sup> Women have taken on a large burden not only of dealing with the impacts of

conflict—caring for injured or orphaned family members—but also of providing humanitarian assistance and participating in processes to resist and transform the conflict.

The economic impacts of the conflict are enormous. In real terms, Syria's GDP was estimated to have contracted by 63 percent between 2011 and 2016. In cumulative terms, the loss in GDP amounted to an estimated \$226 billion between 2011 and 2016—approximately four times the 2010 GDP. According to World Bank (2017c), even if the conflict ends this year, the cumulative losses in GDP will reach 7.6 times the pre-conflict GDP by the 20th year after the beginning of the conflict. With a continued conflict, this loss will stand at 13.2 times the pre-conflict GDP.<sup>a</sup>

The impacts of the war spread to neighboring countries, which feel the brunt of the crisis acutely. Jordan, for example, has registered 659,593 Syrian refugees, while Lebanon has registered 1,001,051.<sup>e</sup> Neighboring Turkey has registered 3,106,932 Syrian refugees.<sup>f</sup> Quality of care for basic public services in healthcare and education has also decreased, for both refugee and host communities.

### Notes:

- a. World Bank 2017c.
- b. OCHA 2017.
- c. UNICEF 2015c.
- d. UNFPA 2017a.
- e. As of June 2017; UNHCR 2017.
- f. As of July 2017; UNHCR 2017.

on state capacity. Afghanistan's per capita income has remained at its 1970s level due to continued war, and Somalia's per capita income dropped by more than 40 percent over the same period.<sup>68</sup> Such effects can spread to surrounding countries in the region. On average, countries bordering

a high-intensity conflict experience an annual decline of 1.4 percentage points in GDP and an increase of 1.7 points in inflation.<sup>69</sup> These losses, coupled with the direct costs of responding to security challenges, drain the resources available for basic service delivery.

### III. The Need for Prevention in an Interdependent World

*Greater interdependence* in today's world, facilitated by greater connectivity, contributes to volatility across several dimensions. The massive levels of international flows of capital, information, and people across borders that accompany globalization bring immense benefits, and present important opportunities for the prevention of violent conflict. They also create additional realms of stress that aggravate the vulnerabilities societies face, and make it harder to manage conflict constructively. At the international level, systemic challenges require global coalitions to collectively manage the associated risks (see box 3).<sup>70</sup>

*Political openness* creates opportunities and risks. A general and progressive shift across the world toward more open political systems opens new avenues for expressing grievances, demanding inclusion, and dealing with conflict, at all levels of governance, which has helped reduce the risk of civil wars and military coups.<sup>71</sup> In under-resourced or nascent democracies, the new openness of the political and economic environment can raise expectations. If these remain unmet due to constrained resources, and/or lack of political will, they can

contribute to increased tensions across groups and/or with the state.<sup>72</sup>

*Slow and uneven economic growth* will also have an impact. Substantial growth in world trade value, merchandise exports, and commercial trade services in the past 70 years has contributed to consolidating peace in the aftermath of World War II. Yet slower, uneven growth today will be insufficient to create jobs at the scale needed to absorb the estimated 600 million new workers entering the market in the next 10 years.<sup>73</sup> Lower levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and advances in technology such as automation aggravate these challenges and, unless appropriately managed, may perpetuate unequal distributions of wealth and exacerbate inequality.<sup>74</sup>

*Advancements in information and communications technology (ICT)* both enable and inhibit the spread of violent conflict. While more people are connected to ICT than ever before—with 3.2 billion people now estimated to be using the Internet<sup>75</sup>—access remains uneven, exacerbating tensions around exclusion.<sup>76</sup> ICT tools for monitoring and managing conflict—for example, early warning systems and

#### BOX 3 The Centrality of Systemic Prevention

Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan defined *systemic prevention* as “measures to address global risk of conflict that transcend particular states.”<sup>a</sup> Systemic prevention addresses transnational risks that can contribute to violent conflict, and can be dealt with effectively only by global partnerships. It includes, for example, measures to deal with illicit economies, including trafficking and the use and trade of arms

and weapons of mass destruction; address war crimes and crimes against humanity; respond to health epidemics such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola; and create broad coalitions to address climate change. System-level norms and institutions play a crucial but often overlooked role in conflict prevention, especially insofar as they legitimize national and local peacemaking efforts.

Notes:

a. UN General Assembly. A/60/891, 18 July 2006.

crowdsourcing technologies—can improve the flow of information and, in some ways, bring the state closer to the people.<sup>77</sup> Social media offers new platforms for expressing grievances and finding common ground.<sup>78</sup> Yet these tools and platforms also create new mediums where grievances can be channeled toward violence. By lowering the cost of collective action, advances in ICT enable armed groups, and in particular violent extremist groups, to recruit globally on an unprecedented scale.<sup>79</sup>

*Demographic changes* create potential opportunities, as well as vulnerabilities. From 1993 to 2015, the world's population increased by 2 billion.<sup>80</sup> Half of global population growth during 2015-50 will be concentrated in just nine countries, including several conflict-affected countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria.<sup>81</sup> Already there are more young people than at any other time in history—1.8 billion people between the ages of 10 and 24.<sup>82</sup> The proportion of youth to the national population is the highest in some of the poorest countries with the least resources, such as in the Sahel.<sup>83</sup> Recognizing and supporting young women and men's contributions to peace, security, and development is a critical challenge.<sup>84</sup>

*Migration* can yield significant economic benefits for migrants and countries of origin and destination. Today many factors drive increased international migration flows (which reached 244 million in 2015, up from 173 million in 2000),<sup>85</sup> including lack of decent jobs, poverty, demographics, unregulated labor markets, inequality, and conflict. Most of the 65.6 million forcibly displaced people have moved to other regions within the same country or to neighboring countries.<sup>86</sup> Unregulated migration is an important source of tension;<sup>87</sup> violent conflicts in various countries have been associated with competition for natural resources.<sup>88</sup>

*Climate change* contributes to tensions that can provoke violent conflict, especially around drought, food insecurity, and migration.<sup>89</sup> Direct resource competition from relative scarcity or abundance of a specific natural resource—arable land, for example—can create tensions within and among groups.<sup>90</sup> This may be particularly

poignant in ethnically fractionalized countries, for which data from 1980 to 2010 suggest climate-related disaster coinciding with approximately 23 percent of armed conflict outbreaks.<sup>91</sup>

*Trafficking and organized crime* contribute both directly and indirectly to violence. Armed groups often rely on illicit economies for direct financing, which can prolong conflict; a study of 128 conflict-affected countries found that conflicts financed at least partially by illicit trafficking (primarily in drugs and diamonds) lasted six times longer, on average, than conflicts without these factors. Illicit trafficking indirectly contributes to violent conflict by undermining governance, both through the disincentives it creates for law and order and by facilitating corruption.<sup>92</sup> The growth in illicit markets can enable the creation of parallel economies and governance structures that supplant the state, further undermining governance.<sup>93</sup> Illicit financial flows also drain state resources: developing countries lost an estimated \$7.8 trillion to illicit financial outflows from 2004 to 2013.<sup>94</sup> Increased mobility and interconnectedness mean that the impacts of trafficking are global and can threaten the stability of many countries.<sup>95</sup>

### **New global risks and opportunities put pressure on the multilateral architecture to adapt**

The framework of global multilateralism, international law, and treaties dedicated to managing peace and security has weathered many storms over the past 70 years, and global institutions continue to adapt to new challenges.

At the same time, the global balance of power is shifting. Today, growing economic power for emerging economies, and the achievement by many countries of middle-income status, brings demand for redistribution of global political influence. Long-standing alliances, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), are increasingly being questioned and many countries seek a renegotiation of power sharing in multilateral fora, such as the UN and international financial institutions.<sup>96</sup> States that gained independence in the years following the

establishment of the UN took part directly in the development of its core documents and norms; some have since pushed to see that their values and interest are reflected in the foundations of the multilateral system. Some of these states, and some others, are increasingly seeking to redraw normative boundaries in key areas, (such as human rights or the status of women). It is widely argued that a transition to a multipolar world is under way, with new centers of military and economic power emerging.<sup>97</sup> In the face of such geopolitical fluidity, tensions inevitably arise and risks can be difficult to manage.

Violent conflict has regional dimensions, and there has been enhanced regional

action in response. However, regional responses have been uneven in their ability to sustain peace. In some cases, regional competition fuels unilateral action, prolonging and aggravating conflicts and weakening the capacity of regional organizations to play a role in prevention of violent conflicts.

In this challenging global framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (box 4) provides an organizing framework for achieving global development goals that are sustainable in part because they recognize the deep complexity and interconnectedness on the path to peace and progress.

#### **BOX 4 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

In September 2015, UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a new set of development goals as successors to the Millennium Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda which commits all countries to work toward a peaceful and resilient world through inclusive and shared prosperity and upholding human rights. It puts people at the center and pledges to leave no one behind, to empower women special attention to countries in protracted crisis.

The 2030 Agenda emphasizes that peace, development, human rights, and humanitarian responses are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. It includes a focus on building peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, not only as an enabler but also as a fundamental component of development outcomes. SDG 16 is dedicated to ensuring equal access to justice; reducing corruption; combatting illicit financial flows and organized crime; creating effective,

accountable, inclusive, and transparent institutions; and ensuring inclusive, participatory, and representative decision making.

The 17 SDGs are integrated and indivisible in nature. Efforts to achieve one goal should also help achieve other goals. For example, actions to address goals such as eradicating poverty (SDG1), reducing inequalities (SDG10), promoting quality education (SDG4), achieving gender equality (SDG5), addressing climate change (SDG13), strengthening institutions (SDG16), and promoting partnerships (SDG17) can have mutually reinforcing effects.

The SDGs provide a blueprint for scaling up investments to transform economies, build resilience and strengthen institutions, and bolster capacities. By integrating sustainability in all activities and promoting inclusivity, partnerships, and accountability, it contributes to peace, stability, human rights, and development.

*Source:* UN General Assembly. A/RES/70/1, September 25, 2015.



## IV. Pathways to Peace

Much of the focus on conflict prevention has traditionally been on building and strengthening state institutions, or intervening to manage immediate crises; yet entry points can be limited, and many violent conflicts today transcend state territories and are resilient to negotiated settlement. Increasing interdependence means that local and global risks are linked. Societies evolve rapidly under the pressure of economic and technological change; and, in a very connected world, aspirations often become global and very difficult to satisfy by institutions that tend to evolve much less rapidly.

The increase in violence in middle-income countries shows that while economic development and capable institutions are important in managing these risks, they are not at all a guarantee against violent conflicts. To improve prevention of violent conflict, it is important to better map what leads societies toward peace or toward violence. Each country or regional situation is extremely context specific, but pathways to

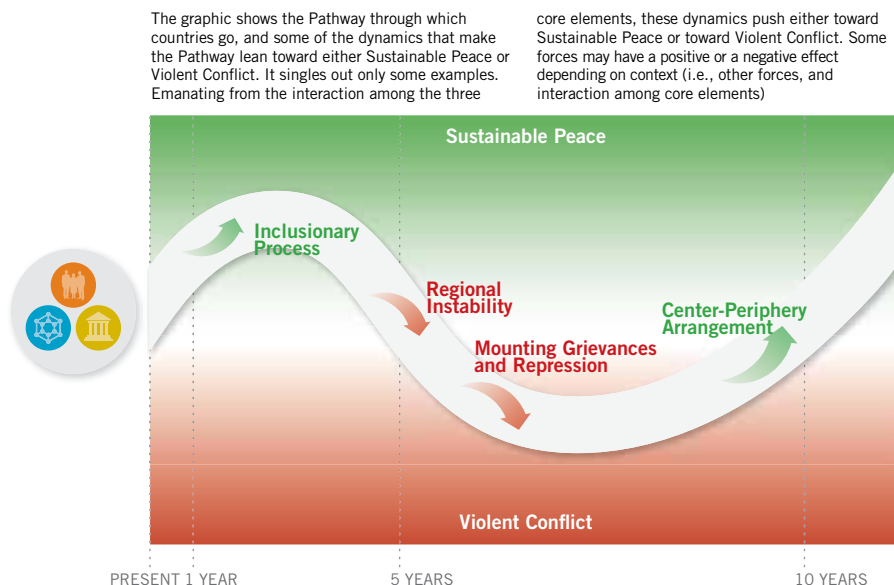
peace and violence in today's world also share common elements.

### IV.a. Societies forge pathways as they negotiate risks and opportunities

A society's ability to manage conflict constructively is tested continuously by risks that "push" toward violence, and opportunities to "pull" a society on a pathway toward peace. Risks and opportunities exist at various levels and can reinforce one another. The majority of violent conflicts today originate from instability within states, either as a result of tensions across groups, or between groups and the state.<sup>98</sup> However, geopolitical dynamics and global factors have a strong influence, particularly on major violent conflicts, and violence and instability locally can impact international or regional stability.

Pathways for peace and violence are not linear (see figure 3). Societies follow virtuous or vicious cycles over long periods

**FIGURE 3** Pathway between Sustainable Peace and Violent Conflict



of time. In almost all societies, large-scale outbreaks or escalations of violence are rare. Societies will often move in and out of violence as long as underlying grievances remain unaddressed. As a result, in some countries, violence is recurrent and somewhat predictable, taking place, for example, seasonally during cattle migrations over access to water points<sup>99</sup> or around elections in countries with a history of political violence.<sup>100</sup> However, in some societies, pressure could build up over long periods of time without violence and can erupt suddenly into major episodes of violence.

Outbreaks of violence are slower to escalate than often assumed, tending to evolve over a period of months, years, or even decades (box 5). Once violence has taken root within a society, incentives are in most cases reconfigured in ways that sustain violence. Many actors—the state, private sector, and communities—then start to organize themselves with the view that violence will be sustained. Self-defense militias may appear. Illicit economies that finance armed groups or contribute to instability may become more entrenched. External actors may intervene directly or through financing.

The pathway that a society takes at any given time is a product of the interaction of the decisions of actors, whose behavior, in turn, is influenced by the institutions and structural factors that define the environment for their decision making (see figure 4).

Structural factors shape the environment in which institutions operate and actors make decisions. Societies that possess more cohesion, higher income levels, more inclusive economic and political regimes, a more diversified economy, and a history of peaceful cooperation across groups, and that are located in more stable regions, experience less violence.<sup>101</sup> Institutions can incentivize peaceful collaboration, while sanctioning violence,<sup>102</sup> to channel conflict onto more constructive pathways.

Capable institutions and favorable structural factors can make peaceful pathways more likely and easier to maintain. But at the end of the day, it is actors—working together or individually—who determine the direction a society will take.<sup>103</sup> Actors can put in place mechanisms that can help prevent conflict from escalating to violence by resolving disputes over structural factors or reforming institutions. For example,

### **BOX 5 Violent Conflict Escalates Slowly, Is Persistent, and Is Path Dependent**

An analysis was commissioned for this study to look at the dynamics of violent conflict (Mueller 2017).<sup>a</sup> Assuming that future likelihoods follow past incidence, a brief summary of main findings is presented in this box.

From sustainable peace, the likelihood of a country moving into lower-intensity armed conflict is 2.3 percent per year.

Of countries experiencing low-intensity armed conflict, 4.2 percent will move into high-intensity conflict (civil war).

After the first year of civil war, 57 percent of countries will remain

in civil war. For countries that remain in civil war after the first year, the chance of ending the civil war is only 22 percent per year.

Once the civil war ends, the likelihood of relapse into civil war following the first year of recovery is almost 18 percent.

As risks increase and violence increases, the probability of high-intensity conflict increases but not as quickly or discretely as often assumed. Violence often escalates over a period of months or years rather than weeks before it becomes persistent.

*Source:* Mueller 2017.

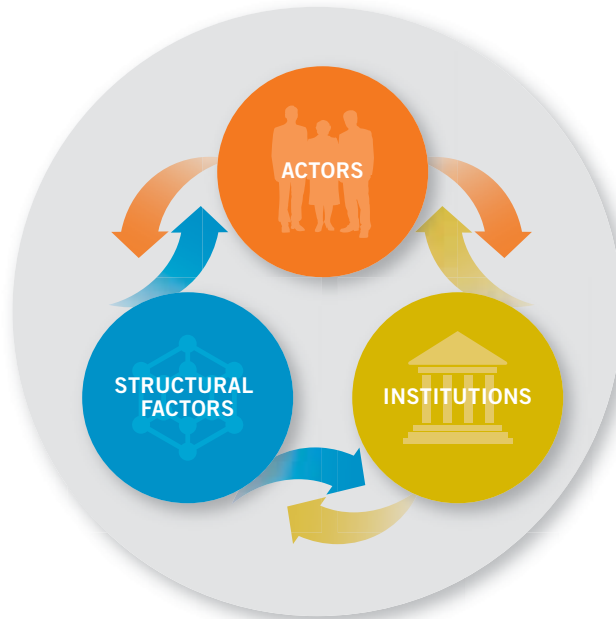
*Notes:*

a. The analysis is based on UCDP data from 1975 to 2014. Low-intensity conflict is more than 25 battle-related deaths a year, high-intensity (civil war) is more than 0.08 battle-related deaths per 1,000 population.

**FIGURE 4 Three Core Elements of the Pathway**

**ACTORS** are leaders or social groups who make decisions, in competition or cooperation with one another, that determine how a society moves forward.

**STRUCTURAL FACTORS** are elements that are hard to change except in the long term and that affect the fundamental nature of the sociopolitical system.



**INSTITUTIONS** comprise political and institutional rules that can change only in the medium term, and that strongly shape actors' behavior, incentives, and capacity to work together.

actors can enable power sharing (including subnational arrangements); resource redistribution (including service delivery and extractives); and dispute settlement (including justice, land issues, mediation, and negotiation/diplomacy); and put in place sanctions and deterrence to the use of violence (including the security sector).<sup>104</sup>

Institutions can be reformed on the basis of new agreements by actors. Often grievances mount where institutions produce public or private goods that are not addressing populations' needs. Bargaining failures between individuals and groups, and the exclusion of individuals and groups from vital resources and from political influence, can reinforce grievances. The use of repression against populations with grievances is one predictor of the outbreak or escalation of violence, as it risks creating a cycle of violence.<sup>105</sup>

The state remains a critical actor in influencing the pathway a society takes. The

state's role is not always a positive one; history is full of examples of states perpetrating violence directly through state forces, or failing to quell violence within their borders.<sup>106</sup> However, in today's shifting global climate, the state is only one among a broad range of actors, and in some cases it is not the most influential one.<sup>107</sup> Where state presence and influence are limited, other actors may step in. Some of these may have the objective of taking over state power, while others may be more interested in maintaining territorial control and economic networks. As one example, with the growth in illicit networks in recent years, some drug cartels now command financial flows that rival those of national governments, capture political processes and institutions,<sup>108</sup> and control the provision of basic services.<sup>109</sup>

All three of these elements—actors, institutions, and structures—are determinant in the pathway a society takes to peace or conflict. As this report will show, therefore,

a successful strategy for prevention must holistically address all three of them.

#### **IV.b. Risk factors and opportunities for prevention influence trajectories on the pathways**

Certain risk factors increase the vulnerability of a society to conflict. Understanding these factors and how they interact is key to shaping and reinforcing the pathways toward peace. But these defy easy measurement and probably always will.

*Horizontal inequalities* are differences in access and opportunities across culturally defined (or constructed) groups based on identities such as ethnicity, region, and religion. They create fertile ground for grievances, especially when they accumulate across different realms (economic and political, for example).<sup>110</sup>

The path from grievance to violence is not direct or automatic. Some societies coexist relatively peacefully even with striking levels of horizontal inequality, while others that are comparatively more egalitarian experience violence.

Perceptions around exclusion appear to be central for building up grievances, even when these perceptions do not align with objective inequalities.<sup>111</sup> Frustrated aspirations—due to the impossibility of reaching an economic or social status that individuals or groups feel they deserve—can fuel a strong sense of exclusion, especially in today's world where technology gives people more information than ever about how other people live. Some groups, especially extremist groups, have been able to construct global narratives and identities within which local perceptions of exclusion can be understood in order to expand their reach.<sup>112</sup>

If leaders in a group can propagate a narrative that frames inter-group inequality as unfair, and they can assign blame to another actor that is usually a different identity group or the state, the chances of violence are higher.<sup>113</sup> Narratives that foment resentment, especially around perceptions of status reversal (e.g. a better off group that might see its position contested or even reversed) or exclusion, are especially

powerful. These narratives tend to resonate most deeply with those who already feel the strongest affiliation with the group.<sup>114</sup>

Some youth feel these perceptions acutely (see box 6). Resentments related to frustrated ambitions for social and economic mobility, and experiences of discrimination and humiliation in many countries that are struggling with rapid demographic changes, emerge as key push factors toward violence. Charismatic leaders know how to exploit these unmet needs. At the same time, youth are making immense contributions to peacebuilding, oftentimes despite narrow space for their participation.<sup>115</sup>

In today's evolving conflict terrain, a multiplicity of actors and competing global and regional dynamics shape grievances and their mobilization. In some cases, non-state actors have been highly successful in defining narratives and actions that have collectively mobilized local grievances. A focus on grievances, perceptions of exclusion, and narratives is a crucial element in a shift toward a more holistic approach to prevention, as this report discusses.

#### **IV.c. Inclusive approaches help prevent violence, but options vary with the degree of risk present**

Measures to prevent violent conflict can take two main directions. First, they can address the *sources* of grievance directly, acting to correct horizontal inequalities and perception of exclusion. The second option is to address the *process* by which grievances are mobilized to violence.

The state bears responsibility for addressing these grievances and in ensuring that resultant conflicts are managed within the constraints of the law. Simultaneously, however, the state's own development trajectory is closely related to the management of these arenas of contestation—development pathways in all countries have involved not just patterns of growth, but equally attempts to resolve key issues related to the distribution of public and private goods, which affect development progress.

Economic reforms that increase opportunity and redistribute resources in an

## BOX 6 Youth Aspirations and Exclusion

Half of the global population is aged 24 years or under.<sup>a</sup> Young people face a wide array of development challenges. They are often victims of multiple and interlocking forms of discrimination that sometimes lead to an imbalance of power that excludes young people from being recognized socially as adults, undermining their needs and aspirations. Intergenerational inequality, youth perception of a lower status and less opportunity than their parents at the same age, can also contribute to important frustration.<sup>b</sup>

Youth exclusion is often highlighted as a key factor in violent conflict.<sup>c</sup> Programs around the world have focused on increasing employment opportunities for youth, but they have had mixed results. Evidence shows that employment can in some cases contribute to protecting youth against mobilization to violence, but that the motivations for joining armed groups are not limited to economics. They often stem from frustration with the rigidity of intergenerational social structures;<sup>d</sup> frustrated aspirations for social and economic mobility; discrimination; and unmet needs for recognition and respect.<sup>e</sup> While it is true that the majority of fighters in all types of

armed groups are young men, these only ever represent a minority of the youth population in any given country. At the same time, youth groups are important parts of civil society and forces for effective prevention of violent conflict.

Empowering youth is essential for prevention and peacebuilding efforts. In 2015, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted its Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, recognizing the important and positive contribution of young people in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. The Security Council called for active engagement of youth as they represent “a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and prosperity” if inclusive policies are put in place. These policies include, for example, those related to youth employment, vocational training, and education opportunities, and to promoting youth entrepreneurship and meaningful participation in decision making. The Security Council highlighted that the disruption of young people’s access to education and economic opportunities has a dramatic impact on durable peace and reconciliation.

### Notes:

a. UNFPA 2017b; UN DESA 2015b.

b. Honwana 2013; Idris 2016; Höhne 2013; Ginges et al. 2007; Atran and Ginges 2012; UNDP 2016b.

c. Hilker and Fraser 2009.

d. Idris 2016; Höhne 2013; Ginges et al. 2007; Atran and Ginges 2012.

e. Idris 2016; Devarajan and Ianchovichina 2017.

inclusive way are key entry points, since exclusion from access to resources and economic opportunities often underlies strong grievances.<sup>116</sup> In societies where economic activity is heavily penetrated by illicit and criminal networks, such as trafficking in drugs or illegal exploitation of natural resources, measures to curb illicit activities are needed to avoid undermining the State and legal private sector activities.<sup>117</sup>

Addressing grievances is rarely straightforward. While greater equality across groups is a worthwhile goal, a society’s

pathway to reach that goal is often fraught with setbacks and backlashes that must be managed. For example, measures to promote economic inclusion of certain groups may provoke a backlash against that group from those who perceive themselves to be losing out.<sup>118</sup>

One clear lesson is that overly coercive tactics carry a high risk of compounding grievances.<sup>119</sup> Experiences of humiliation and human rights abuses by security actors are one of the strongest motivating factors for engaging in violence,<sup>120</sup> and can lead

social and economic groups that feel excluded to violent action.

Similarly, high levels of gender inequality and gender-based violence in a society can be associated with increased vulnerability to civil war and interstate war,<sup>121</sup> with more severe forms of violence used in conflict.<sup>122</sup> Acknowledging this, and recognizing gender equality as a worthwhile end in itself, an increasing number of development programs focus on gender equality and interventions in various sectors that involve gender targets. Yet most of the focus remains on achieving the target rather than the messy and contentious process of addressing the “sticky”<sup>123</sup> social structures and norms needed to get there. Norms do not change quickly, or easily. When they are in flux, those who step outside the older, more rigid norms into new roles—women who leave their households or communities to study or work in the city, for example, or men taking on more domestic responsibilities—face a heightened risk of violence if their communities persist in enforcing more traditional norms.<sup>124</sup> This underscores the importance of focusing not only on the objective of equality but also on the processes that lead there.

At different points in time on the pathway and according to the risks present, the range of options available to prevent violence changes.

In environments of *emerging risks*, the greatest number of options is still on the table, and medium- to long-term policies can have an important impact. Institutional reform and change are possible, and various forms of dialogue are still available among the population and with the state. In these moments, conflict-sensitive development policies will have the most impact.<sup>125</sup> However, prevention may be more difficult to sell politically

because actors see the risk often as relatively low.

In *high-risk* contexts, a failure to prevent will lead to permanent losses in social and economic development. In these contexts, the prevention challenges are high. Often by the time violence is visible, short-term incentives to reverse course are hard to perceive and diffusely spread among a population while incentives for violence are often tangible and specific. This is where diplomatic efforts and local-level mediation are central, and where development intervention can also play a strong role by signaling the state’s willingness to change its stance and restore confidence among the population. This is also where do-no-harm efforts are extremely important.

Once violence is present, preventing *escalation of violence* takes priority. In many cases, efforts are focused on mitigating the impact of violence on civilians, the economy, and institutions, noting that once a state has collapsed or atrocities have been committed violence is often irreversible in the short term. It is also the time when action to protect civilian and essential institutions from an escalation is necessary. Development actors have a big role to play in keeping essential institutions working and creating incentives to reduce the risk of escalation.

Finally, once violence is halted, preventing *recurrence* is paramount. This is the time when the window of opportunity reopens so that more structural risk factors can be addressed. During this time, restoring trust and confidence, rebuilding the core functions of the state, and taking on illicit economies that can fuel the resurgence of conflict are essential. At this moment, it is also essential to start addressing relatively quickly the deep-seated grievances that are at the origin of the conflict.

## V. Managing Conflict to Reinforce Pathways to Peace

Each conflict is unique, rooted in local grievances and resentments. Yet the conflicts that have the greatest risk of escalating to violence tend to play out in arenas where access to power, resources, justice, and security are negotiated. These arenas represent spaces where livelihoods and well-being are determined.

The unique structural factors, institutions, and actors in society define the arenas of access to power, security, services, and resources. The state manages many of these arenas. This does not mean, in practice, that the state must be active and present in all the arenas. In many cases, community structures, traditional leadership, civil society, and the private sector are better placed than the state to mediate and address risks in these arenas.

### V.a. Access to justice and security

Justice and security are interdependent arenas of risk and societal contest. While institutional support is critical in this arena, security and justice reforms require bottom-up approaches. Such approaches, owned locally and aligned with community and cultural practices, are more likely to be sustained over the long term and address the challenge of security and justice for communities. These have many advantages: quicker identification of risks; more direct and visible results; building on existing capability; improving trust and legitimacy of local governance; and improving responsiveness in security and justice provision to different groups, especially women.<sup>126</sup>

Ensuring inclusive representation of identity groups in security forces and justice processes helps address grievances rooted in discriminatory experiences with law enforcement, and it helps bolster the legitimacy of security forces.<sup>127</sup> One study of 40 countries showed a positive relationship between the proportion of female police

officers and reporting rates for sexual assault.<sup>128</sup> For example, greater inclusion of women in the police force in Bougainville (Papua New Guinea) aligned with women's traditional conflict resolution role and strengthened trust in the police.<sup>129</sup> In Nigeria and Kyrgyzstan, local security accountability fora representative of social groups, civil society, non-state and customary actors, and the police improved community-level conflict resolution as well as police accountability to communities.<sup>130</sup>

Like any structural change, reform of security institutions can take time before significant improvements are evident—between 5 and 10 years, according to some estimates.<sup>131</sup> Sensitive justice processes, such as those addressing conflict-related abuses, require effective and accountable institutions regarding all conflict parties involved.<sup>132</sup> Otherwise, transitional justice processes could fuel further conflict antagonisms, deepen grievances, and jeopardize security.<sup>133</sup> Inconsistent financial support can set efforts back, as in the Central African Republic (CAR), where the uneven approach from both government and donors contributed to conflict escalation.<sup>134</sup>

### V.b. Access to power

Arrangements that foster political inclusion can help to ensure a durable peace by offering different groups a stake in governance (see box 7).<sup>135</sup> In both the long and the short term, inclusive arrangements that give voice and access to power to different groups can defuse tensions and create space for dialogue.<sup>136</sup> Over time, these changes help transform and build trust in institutions, including the police and security forces.<sup>137</sup>

In societies transitioning from authoritarian regimes to more inclusive and open systems, violence can flare up around elections or constitutional changes because some groups fear being excluded and

## **BOX 7 Incentives, Means, and Opportunity for Political Inclusion: Northern Ireland**

**Improving political inclusion:** Northern Ireland's path away from decades of conflict and related armed violence has gradual political inclusion at its core. The Anglo-Irish Agreement struck in 1985 gave the Republic of Ireland input into the administration of Northern Ireland, pending the development of devolved institutions accepted by both Catholic and Protestant communities. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 saw the Republic of Ireland deleting its territorial claim to Northern Ireland from its constitution, and the British government acknowledged it would "stay out of the way" if both parties were for Irish unity and the creation of those devolved entities. An elected assembly was established in Northern Ireland with a power-sharing executive chosen on the basis of on proportional allocation of seats. In addition, a North-South ministerial council was established to promote cross-border cooperation.

**Incentives for more inclusive politics:** Arriving at an eventual power-sharing arrangement was motivated to a large degree by the mutual experience of trying other avenues for influence and control, for example by using ongoing violent tactics and internationalizing the struggle. Over time, resources on both sides were being drained, the military conflict had reached a deadlock, and the international community was not going to take sides to resolve it. Inclusion in realistic settlement talks was a powerful incentive to consider abandoning violence since exclusion from power or self-determination in fact was a cause of conflict. Once realization of the need for alternative approaches eventually took hold at government and non-government levels, enough momentum for change was created to consider compromise.

At the community level, one critical example of important trust-building opportunities came through the newly formed Police Service of Northern Ireland. A policy of equal recruitment and a completely new identity—including a new name and uniforms—helped balance

power institutionally and symbolically and opened doors for overcoming divisions.

**International resources substantially strengthened means for prevention.** The EU's commitment over recent decades of some €2 billion, made through investments of money and time, created shared incentives. The first EU program, PEACE I, was an investment over five years (1994–99); PEACE II was a seven-year investment (2000–07); and PEACE III was a 13-year investment (2007–20). These programs reflect the gradual strengthening over two and half decades—the minimum timeframe in which transition toward sustainable peace can be expected, according to analysis conducted for the 2011 World Development Report.

**Short-term change with long-term vision:** Both the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the EU support combined near-term changes with a vision for longer-term change, leading from greater political and social inclusion toward devolving power and resources. Education and community development projects created visible, relevant, and tangible changes that strengthened incentives to support ceasefires. Interim bodies were established not only to manage certain governance functions but also to enable transfer of responsibilities over time. Transitioning away from EU funding will still have its challenges into the future. Dependency on aid funds instead of the government for certain areas of social spending is heavy. Deep divisions remain, especially on housing and education. The United Kingdom vote in June 2016 to leave the EU is a further test of political and economic dynamics. Reestablishing a hard border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland could undermine a key pillar of the Good Friday Agreement and would bring into question funding Northern Ireland receives from the U.K. government.

**Trade-offs:** Improving political inclusion necessitated trade-offs for both sides. Once incentives were strong enough, a key compromise to

*(Box continued next page)*



### **BOX 7 Incentives, Means, and Opportunity for Political Inclusion: Northern Ireland (continued)**

achieve non-violent progress was the British conceding on principle to include “terrorists” in negotiations. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) had to relinquish use of violence and, therefore, their main source of power. Early demands for decommissioning weapons, however, proved a step too far, resulting in a further brief resurgence of IRA violence. Progress became possible again once decommissioning was renegotiated as a gradual process, rather than a prerequisite to talks. This aligned better with the time necessary to gradually build trust and establish alternative institutions for conflict resolution.

**Global norms** were powerful in both propelling the conflict early on and helping improve political inclusion to prevent further violence later. The original protests against Unionist rule

*Source:* Walsh 2017.

from which the Troubles emerged drew inspiration from the U.S. civil rights movement. Global events such as the political and social changes that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 caused a rethink of dogmatism. Peace negotiations in other major conflicts such as South Africa and the Middle East in the 1990s, and the terrorist attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, also delegitimized revolutionary violence. This in turn lent legitimacy to Nationalists moving away from violence toward peace talks, retaining the support of their base for the cause and avoiding major splits in the movement. In the Good Friday Agreement, the parties opted to let electoral processes determine Irish unity. It stated that only a vote by the majority would change the situation.

grievances around existing exclusion may intensify. Embedding inclusive arrangements into constitutions, and ensuring balance of power across branches of government, can help reduce the risk of violence.<sup>138</sup> In addition, measures to prevent intimidation and violence against particular groups is critical; one global study using data compiled from 2006 to 2010 shows that female voters were four times as likely as men to be targeted for intimidation in elections in fragile and transitional states.<sup>139</sup>

Subnational governance arrangements include decentralization, devolution, local self-governance, and federation, to name but a few. They are widely adopted in political settlements in intrastate conflicts, particularly where groups strive for greater self-governance or when political power is overly concentrated at the center.<sup>140</sup> Despite the danger of possible fragmentation and power capture,<sup>141</sup> the more provisions anchoring inclusive access to power that are included in an agreement, the better the chances that peace after a negotiated settlement will last.<sup>142</sup>

### **V.c. Access to land and natural resources**

Land is deeply connected to economic well-being and livelihoods, and is often woven into the social fabric of communities. Unequal access is a key area of exclusion in conflict-affected countries, especially for women.

Efforts to manage and prevent violent conflict related to land and natural resources tend to be most effective where they combine the reform of land ownership with more immediate conflict-resolution and mitigation measures. Some countries pursue shorter-term measures to buy time for longer-term reforms, such as increasing autonomy of communities in governing land ownership, improving administration of land titling, and strengthening dispute-resolution mechanisms.<sup>143</sup>

Access to water, described as the “petroleum of the next century,”<sup>144</sup> has become an increased risk both for intra- and interstate conflict.<sup>145</sup> Water in itself has rarely acted as a sole source of violent conflict,

and indeed can be an impetus for international cooperation.<sup>146</sup> However, population growth, climate change, and environmental deterioration are increasing the stakes for disputes around access.<sup>147</sup> At the local level, water disputes have been most effectively managed by dialogue between stakeholders, often with the facilitation of civil society groups.<sup>148</sup> National-level disputes between riparian states can be best managed via international treaties.<sup>149</sup>

Discovery and management of extractives, especially hydrocarbons, is another significant arena of contestation.<sup>150</sup> Research suggests that 40–60 percent of civil wars over the past 60 years have been triggered, funded, or sustained by extractives.<sup>151</sup> If developed and managed appropriately, a country's oil, gas, and mineral resources can fund government programs and transform natural assets into human, social, and physical capital, helping to drive sustainable development. However, the misappropriation of resource revenues and exacerbation of inequalities can also occur, especially when government capacity is low and divisions between communities are deep.<sup>152</sup> A wide range of international agreements and instruments have been developed in recent years to increase transparency and accountability in extractives industries, and have had important successes.<sup>153</sup> However, there are challenges in assessing their impact, and as voluntary arrangements they are by nature non-binding.

#### **V.d. Access to basic services**

The quality of service delivery can be an indirect conflict risk through its relationship with state legitimacy.<sup>154</sup> Supporting core state functions such as transparency and fiscal management to ensure equitable and quality

service delivery is critical, especially in conflict-affected environments. Grievances can accumulate where service provision is poor and/or inequitable or where state budgets and their management are not transparent.<sup>155</sup> However, there is an important balance to be struck between, on the one hand, the quick wins of supporting service delivery where the state is unable or unwilling and, on the other hand, contributing to parallel delivery systems that can undermine state capacity and legitimacy.<sup>156</sup>

How basic services are delivered matters at least as much as, if not more than, what is delivered. It especially matters whether the population regards service delivery as fair, and whether accountability mechanisms are in place. Mechanisms that provide a platform for inclusion, participation, and voice to citizens play a significant role in improving perceptions of the state. In Nepal, Pakistan, and Uganda, including citizens in the process of service delivery through grievance mechanisms reinforced feelings that both local and national government actors care about citizens' opinions. In Sri Lanka, community meetings have had the same effect.<sup>157</sup>

Partnerships with the private sector for the delivery and development of services are also important in the context of low government capacity and complex societal divisions. In education, for example, the private sector can act as an enabler through public-private partnerships in a broad spectrum of activities including infrastructure maintenance, learning materials, and software. In challenging environments where the state is not able to provide services, it can support the full delivery of education services, including to minorities and ethnic communities, which can prevent perceptions of exclusion from escalating.

## VI. What Works to Prevent Conflict

Just as the causes of violence are complex and interrelated, so too are the pathways that steer societies toward peace. There is no prescription for prevention. Rather than an intervention or an action, preventing violent conflict for countries is the process of managing short-term imperatives while mitigating longer-term risks (see box 8).

Through analysis of 20 case studies,<sup>158</sup> this report identifies patterns in the experience of countries that have addressed risks early, prevented violence escalation, and/or avoided recurrence. While the strategies vary by context, three overarching elements emerge as important:

- First, prevention efforts were generally ***nationally led and addressed some critical, immediate risks***. National actors may be state or non-state actors, groups or individuals, and formal or informal leaders.<sup>159</sup> It is national actors who can make meaningful changes that address underlying grievances, though international support can also be critical.

- Second, whether before or after violence, all countries ***addressed grievances*** related to power, services, security, and resources. They directly addressed grievances through changing incentives of actors, investments, and medium-term and longer-term institutional reforms.
- Third, effective prevention involved the ***formation of coalitions***—local to global, government and nongovernmental, public and private—to ensure that prevention, like conflict, was a collective effort.

All of these actions took leadership. Preventive actions were not always popular in situations where short-term, concrete incentives prioritized security-driven approaches over addressing grievances or working out political settlements. Preventing violence required that leaders personally supported peaceful settlement and compromise, and committed to manage the associated political and resource trade-offs (see box 9).

### BOX 8 Prediction and Early Warning: Act Early or Act Quickly

In search of improved forecasting models that have sufficient levels of accuracy and reliability, scholars and practitioners have introduced over the last decade a number of technical tools and models in developing new predictive systems.

Converging qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests that both can provide fairly accurate information of impending violent conflict in the short term to medium term. Short-term prediction works relatively well through local-level qualitative reporting and political economy analysis.

Over longer time scales, however, errors and false alarms reduce the value of either system in determining when or

why a conflict would break out. Unlike other types of political, economic, or environmental event forecasting (e.g., macroeconomic, election, or meteorological forecasts), the relative rarity and nonlinearity of violent crises make it inevitably and continuously challenging to predict them.

Early warning is an important component of prevention. But in most cases, the lack of timely and coordinated action, not the lack of knowledge and early warning, has affected effective prevention. As shown, early action to address the risk factors of conflict is key. Once there is early warning of impending crisis, it is also imperative to act quickly.

Sources: Mueller 2017; Yi 2017a, 2017c; Brandt et al. 2011.

### BOX 9 Windows of Opportunity

While changing the underlining causes of conflict requires long-term investments, decisive action at critical moments is critical to changing incentives. Windows of opportunity are difficult to identify in advance, and take many different forms. From elections, political agreements, and economic shocks to natural disasters, they are moments when coalitions can be formed, leadership demonstrated, and reforms launched, thus harnessing or consolidating pathways for peace.

## VI.a. Addressing risks and grievances, and mobilizing coalitions

### Nationally led processes that address critical immediate risks

The decisions of national actors, including whether or how to engage international support, have the most influence on long-term peace and development.<sup>160</sup> Negotiations were most successful when focused on a roadmap for parties to a conflict to address grievances without violence. In some cases, the mere existence of a mediation process was sufficient to limit the escalation of violence.<sup>161</sup>

When risky situations involve high levels of polarization between social groups, *maintaining macroeconomic stability and avoiding shocks* were critical to mitigating these immediate risks. Much like the period following violent conflict, the lead-up to violent conflict often saw predictable macroeconomic trends, particularly with respect to inflation and vulnerability to external developments.<sup>162</sup> A fiscal shock in these environments—for example linked to terms of trade adjustments, a collapse in commodity prices, or a fall in tax revenues—can lead to rapid depletion of budgets and force the government to make unexpected fiscal adjustments, cut consumption subsidies, or reduce the civil service wage bill.

In unstable environments, where state resources may be constrained and external sources of financing either dry up or move slowly, these adjustments need to be carried out very carefully. Cuts in subsidies, for example, need to be done progressively, if possible, with clear explanation to the population and the business community. Adequate safety net programs to target the most vulnerable, and compensatory actions like increasing transparency in budget expenditures, should accompany adjustments. At the same time, reluctance to adjust in the face of external shocks may accelerate the onset of the fiscal and financial dimensions of the crisis, or raise their eventual cost.<sup>163</sup>

The timing of cuts also needs to be carefully chosen, for example when prices are already low, and the country should receive adequate support from the international community and multilateral institutions to be able to do these adjustments with sufficient flexibility. Maintaining stability in civil service wages, especially in the justice and security sectors, is also crucial. Improvements in management of payroll and timing of payments can sometimes compensate for the impact of short-term wage adjustments.

Analysis of the country case studies shows that, once violence was used, the voices of security actors became more prominent in decision making, and it was important to promote balance in the structure of power (see box 10). Key to the direction of this process was *ensuring the accountability, cohesion, and integrity of the security sector*. In many countries, the immediate cause for the escalation of violence was the perceived use of force by state security forces without any accountability accepted by political or other leaders.<sup>164</sup> In countries where security institutions subsequently fragmented, escalations of violence were often unavoidable. Where security sectors remained intact and accountable they represented a potentially stabilizing force, particularly when they ensured the space for political dialogue. This reinforces the lessons on ensuring stability of critical government functions while managing a crisis.

## **BOX 10 Indonesia: Prevention in Practice**

Indonesia is a prevention story of settling four secessionist conflicts between 1999 and 2004, as well as transitioning from decades of authoritarian rule and deep economic crisis toward democracy, economic recovery, and political stability. The conflicts were due to an array of long-standing historical issues. Each was intensified by Indonesia's deep economic crisis in the late 1990s and widespread political uncertainty following President Suharto's sudden resignation. The highest-profile of these secessionist conflicts, Timor Leste, involved a violence-scarred referendum, some military miscalculation, temporary UN administration, and independence in 2002. The other three—Aceh, Maluku, and Central Sulawesi—are considered relatively successful negotiated peace processes, although not without violence. At the same time, Indonesia faces continuing challenges of communal violence, including in Papua and criminal and other violence in "post-conflict" areas.

***Political and fiscal decentralization, especially in Aceh.*** Simultaneously with a broader decentralization effort in the country, Aceh enacted political and fiscal autonomy provisions as part of the peace agreements, including laws for "balanced formulae for previously marginalized areas, direct election of regional heads, and high levels of local discretion in managing regional budgets." The decentralization measures were implemented in districts instead of ethnically bounded provinces to mitigate the chance of separatist sentiment and ethnic politics. Maluku and Central Sulawesi were given recovery aid of an estimated \$300 million from the central government that was placed outside the government's regular disbursement mechanism. This allowed for local-district heads to allocate resources at their discretion.

Source: Jaffrey 2017.

***Reform of security forces.*** As part of democratization, Indonesia took the important step of ensuring political impartiality of the armed forces by splitting the police and military and establishing independent parliamentary oversight. In exchange for conceding domestic security tasks to the newly formed police force, the military was allowed to retain its territorial command structure. At first this was further destabilizing. However, follow-through on the changes and eventual institutional clarity were critical to the government's subsequent ability to form and enforce peace deals in other areas over the longer term, and to leveling the balance of power between the military and the government. Together, these pushed violence as a tactic further down the line of options for conflict resolution.

***Decisive action by political elites*** to tackle difficult constitutional issues upfront to restore confidence (especially investor confidence) was key. The Aceh Memorandum of Understanding granted combatants general amnesty if they complied with disarmament protocols. Although this made the deal more attractive for rebel groups, it also undermined truth and reconciliation efforts that would investigate excesses committed by either side and provide closure to traumatized communities and survivors. Similar instances occurred in the Malino Accords, where most leaders of communal violence have not been brought to trial. International support was also relatively limited in Indonesia, mostly because the government limited the international community's involvement to mediation in Aceh and Timor Leste and to the financing of community-based programs around the country to support decentralization.

## **Addressing grievances and their mobilization**

In almost all country cases reviewed for this study, government efforts went beyond simply averting violence. Sooner or later, governments stepped in to *address grievances*. In some countries, these reforms were undertaken before violence had escalated; in others, these reforms were undertaken following violence. As seen in the previous sections, the most common strategies have focused on land issues, on devolution and decentralization as means to share power, and on the reform of security forces to improve accountability.

The technical aspects of these strategies differ by context, but the common theme is the willingness to engage competing interests, transform institutions, restore trust, and sustain this engagement over time.<sup>165</sup> Interventions in the arenas described in section V were key in many cases.

*Redistributive policies* tended to be important for addressing the sources of grievance. Specifically, three measures seem to matter in implementing these policies. First is establishment of a formula for redistribution that is viewed as fair by different groups. Second, mechanisms are needed to ensure funds are distributed as the state says they will be. Third, mechanisms are needed to ensure that the funds or services are delivered in an inclusive way that the local population views as appropriate. These are complex mechanisms that represent major challenges for countries with limited fiscal space and with limited capacities. They also require political will from the top level down to the local level. Some countries such as Indonesia have found ways to mobilize political will as the reforms were being implemented,<sup>166</sup> and some of the opponents progressively have seen the benefit of implementing them.

Some actors had important successes by *empowering local mechanisms for conflict management*. Local peace committees have been highly successful at lowering conflict vulnerability, and in particular in reducing the risk that localized insecurity could escalate.<sup>167</sup> Such committees “have provided an alternative institutional framework for mediating local disputes, responding to

crises, harnessing a range of local capacities through peacebuilding networks,”<sup>168</sup> mapping resources and issues, and linking local and national contexts and processes. For such programs, civil society and the private sector have proven indispensable as interlocutors and mediators, particularly where there is a high degree of political corruption, organized crime, and dysfunctional state institutions.

*Inclusive national peace and development plans were used to facilitate prioritization and clarification of roles*. These processes were used to determine outcomes and budgets, as well as to generate consensus or ensure buy-in. But given the obvious difficulties in forming such plans, they have often proven elusive. Peace and security plans have been adopted in Nepal, Niger, Philippines, and Sierra Leone, to cite only a few, with varying degrees of effectiveness.<sup>169</sup>

*Promoting norms against violence*. Norms are one of the most powerful tools of conflict prevention. Whether enshrined in law or followed as societal practice, they provide a framework that can mitigate risks throughout a conflict cycle, including managing grievances equitably to avoid conflict in the first place, reducing the risks that conflicts will become violent, and acting as a limiting factor on violence. Societal tolerance for violence appears in several cases where prevention has proven difficult, due to either collapsed legal or societal institutions. Reflexively rights and protection of citizens have appeared to be important in cases where prevention was successful. For example, the restraint shown by the military force in Burkina Faso contributed to the perception that the dispute had not undermined the country’s civic culture and social cohesion.<sup>170</sup> This helped reverse a situation from deteriorating, despite high risk factors being present. Space, therefore, was maintained for relatively peaceful progress.

## **Mobilizing coalitions**

Because the risks for violence span multiple levels of governance, mitigating them requires coalitions that bring together actors at the local, national, regional, and international levels. In the case studies reviewed for this study, states that managed to avoid or

recover from violence often made meaningful efforts to forge partnerships with groups across society and externally, drawing on the comparative advantages each brings to the table.

**More inclusive processes and coalitions** contribute to lasting solutions. Given the strong role that perceptions of exclusion play in increasing the risk of violence, bringing excluded groups into decision-making processes goes a long way toward cementing peaceful pathways. When *women* take leadership roles, and are able to participate meaningfully in decision making, peace agreements tend to last longer, and there is greater satisfaction with the outcomes (see box 11).<sup>171</sup> Many peace negotiations are not only still missing women at the table but are also still missing the meaningful participation of women needed to create change. Nevertheless, there has been some progress: in 2015 senior women were present in the delegations of 13 negotiating parties, in 9 out of 11 active processes, compared with 4 out of 14 processes in 2011, that the United Nations led or co-led. At the same time, consultations with women's civil society organizations were conducted in all processes.<sup>172</sup>

Coalitions that involve a range of *civil society*<sup>173</sup> actors also have positive impacts on every point in the conflict arc, from mediating disputes to fostering environments for sustainable peace.<sup>174</sup> While their roles and degree of accountability vary immensely, in the best-case scenario civil society groups play a critical role in supporting communities as they engage with the state,<sup>175</sup> including in facilitating peace processes.<sup>176</sup> More important, a number of cases highlight that in confrontations with states, it often falls on civil society to prevent escalation of violence, with social movements actively attempting to prevent confrontations of violence and de-escalating within movements following violence.<sup>177</sup> A global study of transitions from authoritarianism between 1972 and 2005 illustrates that nonviolent civil resistance was a key factor in driving 50 of 67 transitions; it finds that transitions driven by civic resistance led to more and greater increases in political rights and civil liberties than did transitions that were elite-driven or transitions in which the political opposition engaged in violence.<sup>178</sup> In Tunisia, the National Dialogue Quartet—comprising the Tunisian General Labor

### **BOX 11 Mobilizing Women's Leadership for Peacebuilding**

The United Nations recognized, and therefore, in October 2000 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325. Recognizing women's important role in peace and the disproportionate effects of violence on women during conflict, Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security urges states to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional, and international institutions as well as in mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts. Empirical studies have documented the positive role women can play:

- Paffenholz (2015) established that meaningful participation of women in

peace negotiations results in participants being more satisfied with the outcomes, and thus the agreement tends to be longer lasting.

- Stone (2015) shows that the inclusion of women as negotiators, mediators, signatories, and witnesses increases the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years by 20 percent, and the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years by 35 percent.
- Increasing the number of women at the negotiation table, although necessary and helpful, is not enough; rather increasing number of women with quality participation should be the target (Paffenholz 2015; Anderlini 2007).

Union; Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade, and Handicrafts; Tunisian Order of Lawyers; and Tunisian Human Rights League—helped negotiate a political settlement among the political parties during some of the most tense moments of the Arab Spring.<sup>179</sup>

Inclusive coalitions also mobilized the comparative advantages of the *private sector* in supporting stability and addressing grievances. Small and medium-sized companies, formal and informal, have the flexibility to provide services and jobs to the population, and can be collectively powerful in shaping peace incentives in local communities. If adequately supported, they are essential to restoring confidence among the population and ensuring normalization of everyday life even during violent conflict.<sup>180</sup> In Kenya, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), together with other civil society groups, played an important role in stopping electoral violence in 2007 and preventing it in 2013.<sup>181</sup>

Still, it is the large domestic and multinational firms that can drive major progress, as well as significant setbacks, in societies at risk. Leadership from businesses—setting examples of conduct, developing standards, negotiating concessions, and consolidating international partnerships—can go a long way toward mitigating tensions. New global partnerships such as the IDA Private Sector Window and the European Commission’s External Investment Plan are catalyzing these efforts.<sup>182</sup>

Conflict-sensitive business practices have been particularly relevant for international firms engaging in markets at high risk of conflict. Adopting Conflict-Sensitive Business Practices (CSBP), and acknowledging that the impact of private sector involvement is rarely neutral in conflict settings, “enables companies to carry out their legitimate activities in a manner that prevents conflict and promotes peace.”<sup>183</sup> These are practices that require firms to desist from contributing to conflict dynamics, human rights violations, and corruption or any other type of criminal activity. Application of these practices is mutually beneficial because, through CSBP, multinational firms manage risk better by securing

social as well as a political license to operate; they also lower their operational costs, engage with other stakeholders in a more constructive manner, and enhance their reputation, credibility, and social good will. However, many smaller firms and firms from emerging economies do not apply conflict sensitive practices yet.<sup>184</sup>

## VI.b. The international architecture for prevention

Prevention as a purpose is at the heart of the international global order. Following World War II, the foundations for a global platform for prevention were put in place through a framework of international law instruments and multilateral institutions rooted in the UN Charter and customary international law. These were established to “to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.”<sup>185</sup> The UN Security Council was the most visible of these institutional forums (see box 12).<sup>186</sup>

Since the creation of this platform, however, the world has changed. Global governance is increasingly fragmented.<sup>187</sup> There are four times as many state actors and a much larger number of non-state actors as compared to 1945.<sup>188</sup> In 1951, there were only 123 intergovernmental organizations. By 2013, the number had grown to 7,710.<sup>189</sup> Meanwhile, the prevention of violent conflict has evolved to accommodate actors other than states and state-based organizations. Private individuals and other non-government actors, local and national mediators, civil society organizations, and the private sector all may be engaged.<sup>190</sup>

This fragmentation shapes how risks to stability are managed. Preventive platforms have evolved significantly to reflect this increasingly diverse governance at the national, regional, and global levels. Successful efforts have managed an array of cross-sector partnerships that extend across multilateral organizations, regional actors, women’s groups and other NGOs, and the private sector. Frequently, national governments and stakeholders draw on global and regional organizations and depend on a growing diversity of expertise.<sup>191</sup> If a national



## **BOX 12 The Contribution of the Main United Nations Intergovernmental Bodies to Preventing Conflict**

As the primary organ of the UN responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has a critical role in offering support to preventive action. The Council has at its disposal an important set of tools, among them, peace operations. The Council mandates a wide range of UN peace operations—including peacekeeping operations, special political missions, and, among the latter, regional offices. All these serve a variety of preventive functions.

The General Assembly has broad authority to consider conflict prevention within the framework of the UN Charter. The Assembly has a dedicated item on peace and has held special sessions or emergency special

sessions on a wide range of prevention-related thematic and geographic issues. It has also adopted declarations on peace, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and international cooperation. In debating and adopting Agenda 2030, the General Assembly provided a universal agenda for prevention.

As the lead intergovernmental body guiding specialized agencies and for policy and coordination on economic, social, and environmental issues, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the central UN platform for reflection, debate, and innovative thinking on sustainable development. It has made particularly notable contributions through its country-specific Advisory Groups.

parliament is in place whose legitimacy and mandate are widely respected, there may exist a ready-made forum for national dialogue with established procedures for open debate and the public dissemination of deliberation and conclusions.

### **The state-, regional-, and global-level foundations of prevention**

#### ***The centrality of states***

The foundation and point of reference for prevention lie with the state, which is recognized as holding primary responsibility for conflict prevention and sustaining peace.<sup>192</sup> National governments have the authority and capacity to establish the institutions and allocate the resources necessary to tackle the causes of violence and to address the processes by which the risks of violence become manifest. When successful, prevention enhances sovereignty, demonstrating national capacities to address grievances and averting international interventions to halt or exploit conflicts.

Third-party states influence prevention both through their direct bilateral relations and aid and through multilateral

architecture, which reflects principally state interests and decisions. Yet while the state remains foundational in managing conflict, the governance of key risks for violent conflict is increasingly multilevel and networked.<sup>193</sup> States are increasingly expected to respond to security threats that are simultaneously subnational and transnational, such as international terrorist and rebel groups, piracy, cybersecurity risks, and pandemics.<sup>194</sup> In other contexts, states are asked to respond to grievances mobilized by cross-border or global narratives and identities over which they have limited influence or control. As a result, the role of regional and global actors has grown significantly (see box 13).

#### ***Regional arrangements***

Chapter VIII of the UN Charter recognizes the importance of regional arrangements in support of the maintenance of international peace and security, and stresses that “no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council.”<sup>195</sup>

While long recognized as key partners to global institutions, in the last 30 years, many

### **BOX 13 Preventing Violent Extremism in the Context of the United Nations Plan of Action and the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**

Prevention of violent extremism is increasingly a priority of many governments, donors, and multilateral organizations, and it is challenging. No violent extremist profile is the same. Multiple push and pull factors in terms of psychology and the environment play roles in motivating individuals toward violence and extremism. In addition, the empirical evidence base is small: most programs are relatively new and were conducted in high-income countries. This means they are not directly applicable in lower-income countries experiencing violent extremism. There is a growing recognition that security-focused interventions may have limited effect in countering the grievances that often aid in recruitment and fuel expansion of violent extremist groups, especially because such groups can be adept at embedding themselves in local social networks. By exploiting development challenges, such as inequalities, poverty, and poor governance, violent extremism further exacerbates these grievances and thereby creates a vicious cycle of decline, which affects marginalized groups in particular.

Both the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council have acknowledged that violent extremism has reached a level of threat and sophistication that requires a comprehensive approach encompassing not only military or security measures, but also preventive measures that directly address development, good governance, human rights, and humanitarian concerns. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the establishment of just, inclusive, and peaceful societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all, represent therefore the most meaningful alternative to violent extremism.

The UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674) reinforces the first Pillar of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288), which focuses on addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The Plan recognizes that the risk of violent extremism often increases in the same conditions that lead to heightened risk of conflict. Where conflict already exists, efforts must be redoubled to promote and sustain dialogue between warring parties, since persistent, unresolved conflict is proving to be a major driver of violent extremism. Therefore, the first of the seven strategic priority areas for action of the Plan is focused on dialogue and conflict prevention.

The UN General Assembly in Resolution 70/291 adopted on July 1, 2016, recommends that “Member States consider the implementation of relevant recommendations of the Plan of Action, as applicable to the national context” and invites “Member States and regional and subregional organizations to consider developing national and regional plans of action to prevent violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, in accordance with their priorities and taking into account, as appropriate, the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action.” A growing number of Member States and regional and sub-regional organizations are now developing national and regional plans to address the drivers of violent extremism, drawing on the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE) and are requesting UN support in their efforts. A High Level PVE Action Group, chaired by the Secretary-General and consisting of the heads of 21 UN agencies, funds, and programs, is taking the lead in implementing the PVE Plan of Action in support of Member States, at their request.

*Source:* Rosand 2016; UNDP 2016a; World Bank 2015; ICG 2016a.

#### **BOX 14 Regional Organizations and Prevention: The Success of ECOWAS**

Among the regional organizations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) stands out for its successes in conflict mitigation and peacekeeping in West Africa. In the post-Cold War era, ECOWAS expanded its institutional structures to respond to the security threats emanating from the intrastate conflicts in the region. Under the 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and the 2001 Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, ECOWAS became engaged in conflict prevention and

management in West Africa. In 2002, the Observation and Monitoring Centre (OMC) of ECOWAS partnered with the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), a civil society organization established in 1998 in Ghana, to implement a regional early-warning and early-response system (ECOWARN). Since 2006, ECOWAS has maintained a standby force, a 6,500-strong rapid-response brigade known as ECOBRIG. In 2008, the organization also established the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) aimed at addressing the structural causes of violent conflict.

regional organizations have advanced legal frameworks, explicitly building capacities for preventive action at the regional level (see, for example, box 14). In particular, the emergence of regional economic organizations has brought a unity between economic frameworks of cooperation, on one hand, and peace and security frameworks on the other—a unity that rarely exists at the global level. Approximately 33 regional economic organizations have been founded since 1989, and 29 regionally based intergovernmental organizations have an established agenda related to international peace and security.<sup>196</sup>

A number of regional organizations, such as the African Union (AU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), are very important actors in peace and security and have become lynchpins of stability and security in their regions. In many cases, the preventive capacities of regional organizations remain tightly linked to security and military solutions. In some cases, regional organizations work across the fields of economic cooperation, conflict prevention, and peace operations. In other cases, regional competition and the absence of institutional and legal frameworks and capacity have hamstrung regional preventive efforts.

#### **Global arrangements**

Traditionally, systemic prevention includes the legal frameworks and institutions that regulate the tools and conduct of war, *inter alia* the use and trade of arms, including weapons of mass destruction.<sup>197</sup> The UN Security Council, the General Assembly, the UN Secretariat, and specialized agencies like the International Atomic Energy Agency have all played a central role in systemic conflict prevention as has the emergence of the international human rights regime, regulating how states treat their citizens (see box 15). Treaties, multilateral institutions, and transnational advocacy networks have created a global infrastructure that transmits and promotes norms against violence.<sup>198</sup>

Increasingly, the global fora of prevention are recognizing the importance of broader systemic issues in areas as diverse as financial markets, infectious diseases, food supply, and ecosystem resources. The emergence of global fora such as the Group of Twenty (G-20) speaks to the need for wider global steering groups, while, among others, the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission (see box 16) and the UN Security Council debates highlight the recognition of the connection between risks.<sup>199</sup>

The SDGs encapsulate the increased emphasis on systemic prevention. The SDGs

### **BOX 15 Human Rights as a Basis for Normative Change**

The universal, inter-related, and interdependent rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the universal treaties that derive from it, as well as a range of regional human rights instruments, have been used by many countries as a shared foundation for normative and legal change. All 193 UN Member States have ratified at least two of the nine core human rights treaties and over 80 percent of States have ratified seven. The primary responsibility for respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights rests with States, who translate the

international norms into laws, policies, and programs. In many states, human rights have also underpinned institutional reforms—for example, constitutional reforms, creation of national human rights institutions (NHRIs), or transitional justice mechanisms. NHRIs serve as mechanisms, independent from government, for monitoring respect for human rights nationally. Civil society organizations have made vital contributions to human rights instruments and their implementation.

*Source:* OHCHR 2010 ; Payne et al. 2017.

### **BOX 16 Peacebuilding Commission**

The Peacebuilding Commission was established on December 20, 2005, by resolution 60/180 of the UN General Assembly and resolutions 1645 of the UN Security Council. Its mandate is to:

- Bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.
- Focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development.
- Provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the UN, develop best practices, help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities, and extend the period of attention given by the

international community to post-conflict recovery.

In resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282, the General Assembly and Security Council also stress the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission to fulfill the following functions in this regard:

- Bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace and to provide political accompaniment and advocacy to countries affected by conflict, with their consent.
- Promote an integrated, strategic, and coherent approach to peacebuilding, noting that security, development, and human rights are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing.
- Serve a bridging role among the principal organs and relevant entities of the UN by sharing advice on peacebuilding needs and priorities, in line with the respective competencies and responsibilities of these bodies.

*(Box continued next page)*

## BOX 16 Peacebuilding Commission (continued)

- Serve as a platform to convene all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, including from Member States; national authorities; United Nations missions and country teams; international, regional, and sub-regional organizations; international financial institutions; civil society; women's groups; youth

organizations; and, where relevant, the private sector and national human rights institutions, in order to provide recommendations and information to improve their coordination, to develop and share good practices in peacebuilding, including on institution-building, and to ensure predictable financing to peacebuilding.

call for integrated solutions extending across development, peace, environment, and humanitarian realms<sup>200</sup>—and so require the mobilization of substantially greater resources from domestic, external, public, and private sources—and recognize the importance of investing in global (and regional) public goods.<sup>201</sup> The SDGs also confirm that building resilience through investment in inclusive and sustainable development—including addressing inequalities, strengthening institutions, and ensuring that development strategies are risk informed—is the best means of prevention.

### *The tools for international prevention*

Since the 1990s, the international order has evolved to provide support to a growing diversity of conflict-prevention efforts, providing support when domestic actors are too fractured, inclined by their own interests or history, or incapable of acting.<sup>202</sup> A significant role for external actors has been to reshape incentives and create space or provide critical international support as a “safety net,” whether in fiscal/economic, security, or human/social capacity terms, with the consent of the state concerned, which can help different domestic actors step forward and exercise leadership.

The greatest concern for this system is the growing resistance of today's conflicts to resolution through traditional tools. The number of new onsets in the 1990s was twice that of the 1980s. The overall drop came about because many more wars ended than started.

Today a rapid upsurge in the number of new conflicts has not been met with a corresponding surge in conflict cessation.<sup>203</sup>

*Preventive diplomacy and mediation* have significant roles to play in altering the incentives and calculations of key actors who make decisions that propel societies toward violence. They can help identify and advocate for alternatives to violence, bridge divides, de-escalate actions and rhetoric, promote confidence, and help parties work toward lasting political settlements.<sup>204</sup>

Preventive diplomacy has been a central practice of the UN for many decades.<sup>205</sup> It refers to diplomatic action taken at the earliest possible moment “to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.”<sup>206</sup> It relies on both the long-term cultivation of relationships against future need and the more crisis-oriented and visible engagements of the UN Secretary-General and his special representatives and special envoys.<sup>207</sup> Building diplomatic coalitions, whether informally or through identified structures such as groups of Friends or Contact Groups, is one particularly effective conflict-prevention tool.<sup>208</sup>

Mediation is usually more formal and involves bringing third-party confidence building and technical support to bear to try to bridge between disputing parties at the negotiating table (see box 17). The explosion of mediation efforts since 1990 has resulted in an accumulation of experience across a wide range of prior cases and experiments, increasing knowledge about

### BOX 17 Multi-Actor Mediation

Mediation increasingly involves a number of mediators and facilitators and to greatest effect when they are working in tandem.

In Kenya in 2008, Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, mediated the end of post-election ethnic violence on behalf of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities of the African Union (AU). However, that body had limited capacity, so most of its staffing was provided by experts from the UN with support from the non-governmental Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.<sup>a</sup>

In Kyrgyzstan in 2010, after President Kurmanbek Bakiev's ouster, a triple mediation initiative of the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the

UN provided considerable leverage and legitimacy to the effort to ensure stability during the transition.<sup>b</sup>

In Guinea in 2009–10, the UN, the AU, and the International Contact Group supported the ECOWAS-led mediation that persuaded a military coup regime to support a transition to civilian rule and constitutional order.<sup>c</sup>

In Colombia, the negotiations that led to the peace agreement between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels were facilitated by the Norwegian and Cuban governments, with technical assistance on thematic agreements and confidence building provided by various UN entities and other actors.<sup>d</sup>

#### Notes:

a. Lindenmayer and Kaye 2009.

b. Call 2011.

c. Mancini 2011.

d. Colombia desk officer, UN DPA, June 2017; Aguirre 2015.

the ingredients for successful peace processes. Mediation is frequently conducted, or dialogue and negotiations facilitated, by a cadre of experienced envoys or mediators from the UN, regional and sub-regional organizations, individual states, and a wide range of nongovernmental actors.<sup>209</sup> Private individuals and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the Helsinki-based Crisis Management Initiative, or the Community of Sant'Egidio, a worldwide movement established in Rome in 1968, are the principal mediators in 11 percent of cases reported in the press.<sup>210</sup> In many processes multiple mediators may be engaged, at times in a coordinated fashion in support of the lead mediator, at other times working at cross purposes.<sup>211</sup>

Despite considerable adaptation, preventive diplomacy faces important challenges, including first and foremost the identification of entry points. Mediation's effectiveness has been tested by the emergence of non-state actors uninterested in state-based power, transnational ideologies whose goals

are less negotiable, and the increased sponsorship of proxy warfare by global and regional powers. Diplomacy suffers from a bias toward the national level, and underuse of dialogue processes at the subnational level, involving local actors including trusted mediators.<sup>212</sup> In addition, international third-party contributions tend to come too late once a pathway to violence is inevitable. Sometimes this is due to inaction at the international level. Sometimes it is due to reluctance at the national one. Mediators, meanwhile, need a broader range of skills than ever. Success depends on more inclusive peace processes that encompass women, all relevant social forces, youth, and civil society organizations.

*Peacekeeping:* The vast majority of quantitative studies, drawing on different statistical models and definitions of peacekeeping, conclude that peacekeeping has a large and statistically significant positive effect on containing the spread of civil war, the negotiated resolution of civil wars, and the duration of post-war peace.<sup>213</sup> Studies have also shown that robust mandates and larger

missions, in terms of budget and troop strength, perform better in preventing renewed civil war, preventing the spillover of conflict, and minimizing civilian deaths.<sup>214</sup> Peacekeeping successes are numerous, including Bosnia, El Salvador, Kosovo,<sup>215</sup> the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mozambique, Namibia, and Nicaragua, and more recently Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Timor Leste.

Despite the scholarly evidence of its impact, peacekeeping faces significant challenges. While they arguably prevented regional spillovers and continuing escalation of violence in the Central African Republic in 2013 and South Sudan in 2014, some peacekeeping missions have been unable to halt the rapid escalation of subnational conflict.

The UN has enhanced peacekeeping tools, including investing in improved information and analysis capacities, creating a dedicated Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, and improving guidance and training for civilian and uniformed peacekeepers to protect civilians more effectively. A more robust posture and mandates have helped reduce armed violence and deter spoilers in a number of missions. Time and again, however, experience has shown that violence can only be reduced sustainably—and legitimate institutions built effectively—through nationally driven processes in which a political strategy is associated with development plans, development programs, and participatory approaches to resolving underlying causes of tensions and conflict. Peacekeeping also requires adapting to context-specific community security needs. One example is the increased use of Community Violence Reduction programs in places like Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, and Mali. These bottom-up programs have had success in removing violent spoilers from urban and rural communities while offering targeted development initiatives to create job opportunities.<sup>216</sup>

*Humanitarian assistance:* The primary purpose of humanitarian assistance is to save lives, reduce suffering, and respect human dignity. Since 2013, however, 97 percent of humanitarian needs, resources, and operations have gone to

complex emergencies<sup>217</sup> involving both conflict and natural disasters. With humanitarian appeals lasting an average of seven years, and reaching \$22 billion requested for 2017, humanitarian actors have been present in many crises for over two decades (e.g. the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC], Somalia, and Sudan).<sup>218</sup> As highlighted by the World Humanitarian Summit, this funding is unsustainable, but in the absence of successful prevention of conflicts it is often essential to mitigate the impact of conflict on the most vulnerable. Humanitarian actors need to “do no harm” and ensure their interventions are conflict sensitive and informed by risk and conflict analysis.<sup>219</sup>

#### *Intersection with development processes*

No single policy realm alone is adequate to manage the risks of conflict.<sup>220</sup> Instead, successful conflict prevention tends to involve cross-cutting approaches that bring together security, development, and political/diplomatic tools over the long term, as discussed in the previous section. This has been reflected in a rapid evolution of approaches. In recent decades, the international efforts at prevention have developed more integrated and effective responses across sectors and have built bridges with developmental approaches and expertise.

First, development actors have improved their conflict analysis to promote conflict sensitivity; however, in most cases these analyses remain internal and are rarely applied toward engaging government on sensitive issues. Development actors have also not come very far in harmonizing their operations with diplomatic actors in upstream prevention. They could also be used more effectively to support do-no-harm mechanisms that remain in many cases underdeveloped in projects taking place in areas with high risk of violence.<sup>221</sup> Meanwhile, some development programs have invested significant resources in supporting national institutions and actors in violent conflict prevention. In most settings, these interventions aim to build capacities and empower citizens at national and local levels to prevent conflicts from turning violent or are focusing on

community development programs and service delivery in areas at risk of conflict. Evaluations show that such projects have had some success, particularly when bridging state and civic actors but that they tend to be fragmented and under-resourced, often lacking a clear theory of change.<sup>222</sup> Furthermore, qualitative studies highlight that, where institutions and mechanisms focus only on the triggers and risk factors of violence, and are not linked to initiatives that tangibly affect political and socioeconomic drivers, actors lose interest in engaging with them.<sup>223</sup> This has led to a growing commitment by the international community to consider scaling up programs that seek to foster linkages between development interventions and peace in conflict-affected countries.

Second, improvements in preventive diplomacy efforts have included the expansion of technical services far beyond the traditional advisory support, and are integrated more and more among development activities.<sup>224</sup> In some cases, development expertise has been lent to both national and subnational mediation exercises, often at government request. Simultaneously, there has been an effort at planning and coordination processes that have bridged developmental and diplomatic efforts to open policy dialogue over economic and fiscal considerations related to peace. For example, in the 2015 Bangui Forum in the Central African Republic there was a concerted effort to include community consultations in preparation for a National Dialogue on the roots of crisis in the country. At this Forum, in addition to government officials, rebel group leaders, and local NGO presidents, there were a number of more or less “regular people,” with armed group leaders sitting next to community members to discuss themes such as justice and peace.<sup>225</sup> In Lebanon, development, humanitarian, and political streams were brought together in a Crisis Response Plan (CRP) aimed at

supporting Lebanese institutions affected by the Syria crisis, including the military, while also providing livelihood and humanitarian assistance to the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. This was supported by an International Support Group for Lebanon, composed of P-5 members, the League of Arab States, the UN, the EU, the World Bank, and select other states.<sup>226</sup>

Third, peacekeeping and bilateral security sector support programs have broadened to more inclusive and professional institution building while also working on oversight of security institutions with development actors. Security sector reform programs have evolved to emphasize accountability and inclusiveness in the composition of forces and in their doctrine and approaches. However, an emphasis on operational skills often clouds the preventive aspect of security programs that hold the potential for building security institutions in which excluded populations see themselves represented.

Challenges to these cross-cutting approaches are many. Generally, the incentives for state consent to act early and proactively are not always present. International unity, crucial to creating the leverage needed to tip the balance toward prevention or resolution, is increasingly difficult to achieve, particularly in geopolitically salient conflicts. Consequently, international third-party contributions to conflict prevention too frequently come too late, once violence is inevitable or has broken out. Finally, time and again experience has shown that, in the absence of nationally driven processes to resolve underlying causes of tensions and conflict, international support alone cannot reduce violence. If international tools are not linked coherently to national reforms, development plans, budgets, and strategies providing overarching objectives and designing relevant indicators, their results are often unsustainable.<sup>227</sup>



## VII. Realizing a Culture of Peace

The case for prevention is clear and urgent. Preventing violent conflict saves lives, and it is critical to ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity. The fact that most countries prevent violent conflict most of the time shows that prevention is a viable possibility.

However, the conflict-prevention agenda must also adapt to respond to the changing demands of prevention in a dynamic world. The global consensus on the SDGs provides a catalyzing moment for this change, while the Sustaining Peace resolutions have created a shared, comprehensive understanding of how conflict prevention should work in practice. More technical tools and programs than ever are available for use and deployment at all points along the conflict cycle. Still, for the most part sectoral divisions persist and barriers to working together remain deeply embedded in organizational mandates, internal incentives, funding streams, and planning cycles. Overcoming them requires a hard look at the incentives that sustain these divisions. Many countries continue to ignore early risks or adopt highly security-oriented responses. National ownership and buy-in for prevention is often lacking.

Prevention must become a universal agenda. It should be seen as a responsibility of all countries and all actors. States need to improve collaboration in the development of multilateral solutions when unilateral solutions will not suffice. This requires significant engagement in systemic prevention—addressing those risks that no country can address alone and that are in nature global—as well as committing to revitalizing cooperation and collaboration in the development tools in support to collective preventive action in countries and regions at risk of violence. In the model proposed, prevention enhances sovereignty by relying on national capacity and ensuring that international support is based on a dialogue and engagement with states and national actors.

### VII.a. Guiding principles

Overall, prevention should be guided by three principles that should equally influence the use of the full range of prevention tools identified in this report, including both appropriate diplomatic and development interventions. First, prevention must actively and directly **target** patterns of polarization and institutional failure that fuel the risk of conflict. Prevention must be **inclusive**, both to build broader partnerships across sectors and as a response to the grievances that fuel conflict. Above all, prevention must be **sustained** over the time needed to build more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. This long-term view is critically lacking in present approaches.




### VII.b. Implementing the new paradigm

The principles—targeted, inclusive, and sustained—mark a shift in thinking about prevention (see table 2); to have greatest impact they must be applied at all levels from the global, through the national, to the local. Action needs to be led by national actors and supported by the international community to be effective.

The paradigm shift proposed here is an attempt to depart from the old model of prevention and moves from a sequentially differentiated approach of different actors to an integrated approach (see figures 5 and 6). The graphics below illustrate this shift, albeit in a simplified manner that cannot represent the nuanced application of different tools in any integrated approach.

On the basis of recognition that prevention needs to begin far in advance of any outbreak of conflict, risk profiles can be identified before, during, and after conflict. The following sections identify the emerging findings of the main study regarding preventive interventions to be made in

**TABLE 2 Approaches to Prevention**

Today's challenges		A new paradigm
<p><b>Delayed</b></p> <p>Dominated by crisis response, with prevention focused only on the most immediate risks</p>	 <p><b>Targeted</b></p>	<p><b>Proactive</b></p> <p>Early and urgent action to directly tackle and manage the full range of risks that could lead to conflict</p>
<p><b>Weakens leadership</b></p> <p>Prevention seen as undermining national sovereignty</p>		<p><b>Strengthens leadership</b></p> <p>Prevention enhances national sovereignty and expands the scope of action for governments</p>
<p><b>Top-down</b></p> <p>Risks identified and direction set by a small group of specialists</p>	 <p><b>Inclusive</b></p>	<p><b>People-centered</b></p> <p>Partnerships at all levels identify risks and develop solutions</p>
<p><b>Fragmented</b></p> <p>Highly technical, isolated in silos</p>		<p><b>Integrated</b></p> <p>Solutions increase resilience to multiple forms of risk, with effective prevention tools often in the hands of actors for whom conflict is not a primary focus</p>
<p><b>Short-term</b></p> <p>Aspires to be long term, but the short term dominates</p>	 <p><b>Sustained</b></p>	<p><b>Short- and long-term</b></p> <p>Shorter-term results increase the attractiveness of sustained and strategic approaches to prevention</p>
<p><b>Slow and inflexible</b></p> <p>Lacks flexibility and agility to support windows of opportunity</p>		<p><b>Adaptive</b></p> <p>More agile approaches that adapt in the face of changing risks and opportunities</p>

situations of emerging risks, high-risk situations once violence has started, and in order to prevent its recurrence.

**Prevention in situations of emerging risks**

Prevention in situations of emerging risks should focus on addressing sources of the grievances that contribute to perceptions of exclusion; the processes by which grievances are mobilized for violence; and global and regional risks such as spillover from violent conflicts from neighboring countries, illicit trafficking, and the influence of violent extremist global ideology. These efforts would be supported by the building of relationships—within countries, across countries, and at regional levels—in order to address early risk of violent conflict and better anticipate outbreak, and open channels of communication to facilitate early engagement or response.

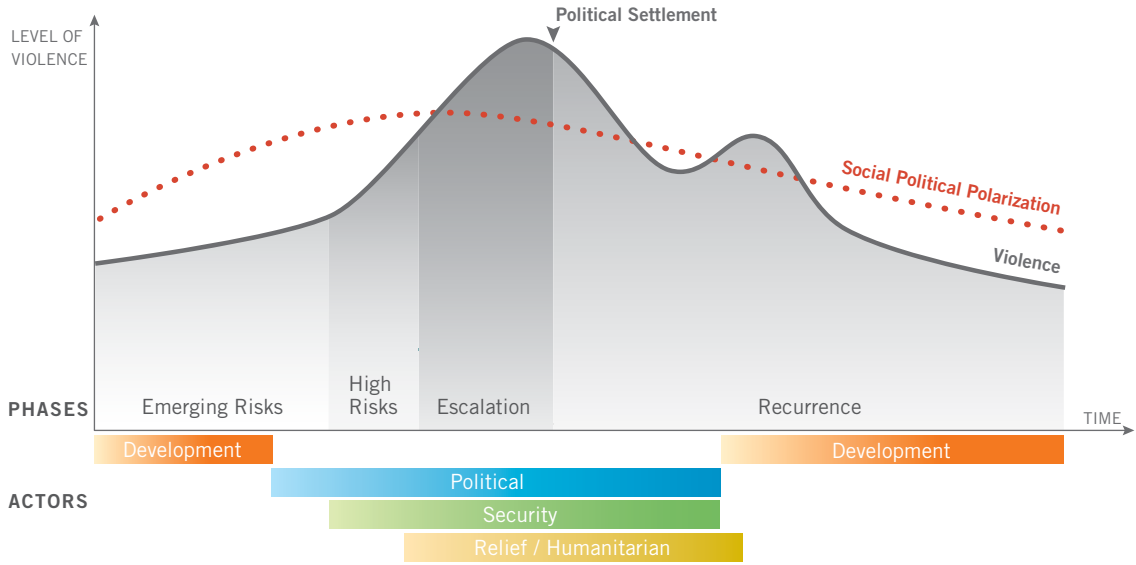
Interventions to address grievances will have most impact in the *arenas of contestation* where access to power, resources, services, security, and justice are negotiated. The comparative importance of these different arenas will vary with context, but they are usually all present. Group-based

exclusion from power and resources, land issues, abuse by security forces, limited or low quality of basic services, and lack of redress mechanisms very often compound to increase risks of violence.

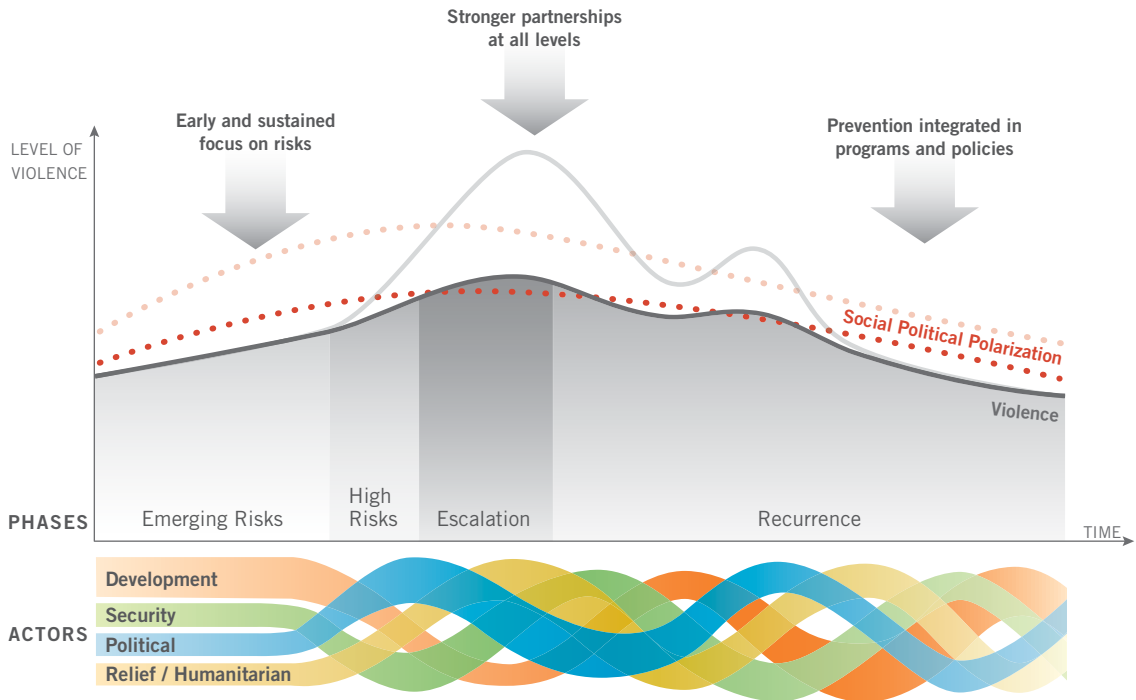
Addressing risks in these arenas may require reform of state institutions or legal structures, and often changes in the terms of the social contract. These will usually take a very long time. Meanwhile, more immediate responses to risks need to be established that draw on mechanisms for local-level mediation and conflict resolution, and address narratives that could be contributing to violence mobilization at the central and local levels.

National governments need frameworks that allow for *proactive, systematic, and integrated risk identification, and translation into policy and programs*. Risk assessment should be based on a joint prioritization of risks, with national and local ownership, and include agreed-upon indicators that allow trends to be monitored over time. Specific approaches can take the form of monthly risk updates that combine longitudinal tracking of quantitative indicators with qualitative assessment of how risks are evolving. Indicators and

**FIGURE 5 Siloed Approach to Prevention**



**FIGURE 6 Integrated Approach to Prevention**



polling techniques to monitor horizontal inequalities and perceptions of exclusion related to power, security, and resources should be improved for this purpose.

***Peacebuilding objectives need to be prioritized in national, regional and local***

***peace and development plans.*** Common frameworks for risk assessment provide the basis for joint platforms that prioritize risks and agree on strategies to respond to them. At present, most development strategies are designed to meet goals of growth

and poverty reduction. They should also explicitly address grievances and other factors that can lead to instability. Achieving the right balance of growth, poverty reduction, and addressing grievances often requires a redefinition of priorities. Groups that experience grievances might not be the poorest, might not be in areas of high potential for economic growth, and might require interventions that will divert budget from potentially high return on investment areas. This is also the time to focus on improving gender equality and youth inclusion; leaving this for a later stage, when risks are high, will make it more difficult. A focus on border areas and areas where state presence is weak and state legitimacy is contested should be a component of development strategies to address early risks.

**In situations of emerging risks, national actors need to build and mobilize inclusive coalitions.** Successful prevention strategies have leveraged the comparative advantage of different groups and platforms, including civil society, the media, and the private sector, and been more inclusive of groups that have not traditionally been part of development or diplomacy. Valuing women's leadership and including the contributions of youth are essential in consolidating peace. Mobilizing local mediation and conflict resolution fora is also important, with careful attention to the risks of capture at the local level.

**International actors also need to strengthen their relationships,** including at the subnational level, with various national political and non-state groups, as well as with regional stakeholders, in order to have access and influence when a crisis breaks out. While investing in these relationships takes time, they yield access to timely information, strengthen sensitivity to context, and enhance the credibility of an envoy or mediator among the stakeholders whose buy-in is essential for conflict to be dampened. Development actors should be ready to finance national or local peace and development plans in their integrity, through budgetary support or financing mechanisms that avoid the fragmentation of the plan and leave important

components unfunded. Joint assessments of the peace and development plan should be undertaken collectively by all donors to avoid fragmentation of support and priorities.

### **Prevention in high-risk situations**

When immediate outbreaks of violence are threatened, it is important to prioritize the most urgent risks while establishing measures to build confidence, especially in the security realm. These measures help to mitigate immediate risks, but also serve to demonstrate a commitment to address grievances over the medium and long term. In many contexts, a critical challenge will be the disposition of the state in question to take action or to countenance the engagement of external actors.

In high-risk environments, *decisive action* by states, with significant, rapid, and flexible international support, may be essential to halt the outbreak of violence. Economic measures should be targeted at coping with the impacts of instability, for example through liquidity guarantees to purchase essential imports or address foreign exchange imbalances. Surveillance and enforcement to prevent financial flows linked to conflict financing are also important.

*Diplomacy can play a constructive role* at moments of rising tension and escalation, and should be supporting local mediation efforts. As conflict becomes imminent and institutions and mechanisms fail, the focus of prevention efforts shifts toward influencing the decision making of key actors on whether or not to engage in or escalate violence. Diplomacy can typically be mobilized more quickly than programmatic interventions and has the potential to affect change in the short term, so it may often be the only approach, short of military intervention, that can help avert violence in these stages.

It is important to *shift monitoring toward potential conflict triggers* in high-risk situations. The space for economic and social policy change tends to narrow as risks increase. National actors may make decisions that render violence more likely in the absence of better options. As a result, even

second-best adjustments can be critical to avoiding macroeconomic or security shocks that could spark an outbreak of violence. Monitoring of violent conflict triggers such as commodity price decline and indicators of expectations such as capital flight, banking system stress, and exchange rate depreciation is essential.

**Ensuring both accountability and core functioning of the security sector** is also critical to managing risks. The focus should be on core functions such as salary payments and maintaining command and control structures. There should also be some efforts to ensure that security actors do not alienate groups' confidence in them. The behavior of security actors is one of the most important factors in precipitating a highly volatile situation. While maintaining law and order, these actors should nonetheless contribute to diffusing tensions rather than heightening them.

In high-risk environments, **states need to build confidence** with the population. Signaling a direction of change and taking visible actions to show that grievances experienced by social or economic groups will be addressed in the future are central to confidence building. Holding transparent dialogue on areas of tension and meaningfully engaging with excluded groups through programs such as job creation, improving key services, and ensuring their security also help to restore confidence. It is critical that national leadership is both visible and decisive at this time, demonstrating a commitment to peaceful change, inclusion, and collaboration, and holding actors, particularly security actors, accountable to the population.

**Prioritize macro-fiscal stability**, particularly with respect to inflation and fiscal balance. Macroeconomic instability can increase exclusionary processes and can make governments lose legitimacy very rapidly. Price shocks and tightening of budgetary spending can dramatically increase the risk of violence: any effort at controlling budget and inflation needs to be done with particular attention to the political economy implication. It is also critical to compensate for the impact of shocks when possible, such as by promoting safety net

programs and improving communication of economic policy decisions to the population.

In most situations, fulfilling the above commitments will require the establishment of **a clear and agreed-upon process and roadmap by which contentious issues will be discussed**. Such a process and roadmap can be national or internationally brokered, and it should define the forum and participants for dialogue. In many cases, dialogue can be held through formal institutionalized channels such as parliamentary debate. In cases where formal institutions are deemed biased or illegitimate, extra-institutional channels, national dialogues, or formal peace talks may be required. It is often important to bring in neighboring countries and regional organizations to prevent regionalization of tensions, and to strengthen resilience of local communities in border areas. The role of civil society is fundamental in this context. The involvement of actors like large business associations and advocacy groups, among others, enhances the perception of a wide and horizontal dialogue between state and society, rather than a top-down one.

### **Preventing escalation after violence has started**

In environments where violence is present, attention shifts to **monitoring decision points** (the "Rubicon moment") when actors are on the verge of deciding for or against a certain use of violence.<sup>228</sup> Throughout violent conflict, periods of escalation occur when fighting intensifies. Each period also signifies the passing of a threshold, beyond which it becomes more difficult to stop or reverse further escalation of a conflict. For example, mass atrocities or war crimes committed by one or more parties make settlements vastly more difficult. Similarly, the collapse or seizure of the central state apparatus by a party can render power sharing, the most widely accepted framework for negotiated settlement, less obtainable. Some of these thresholds are national and some are enshrined in international or regional law, for example the edicts against unconstitutional changes of government maintained by the AU and ECOWAS.

Humanitarian, development, peace, and security actors are often working in the same context. The nexus between them presents an opportunity to improve the international system's working methods, efficiency and effectiveness. The deployment of peacekeepers can reduce levels of violence while space is created for political engagement at the national and local levels; rapid and flexible development support creates additional confidence. It is also critical to **address and reduce humanitarian needs**. At the same time, longer-term approaches should be undertaken simultaneously to focus on reducing risks and vulnerabilities, building resilience, and strengthening capacities and institutions. Joint analysis bringing together political, security, development, humanitarian, human rights, and other relevant actors can ensure that humanitarian action fits into a broader strategy for reducing needs, risks, and vulnerabilities

Conflict damages institutions. Therefore, preventing escalation requires measures to **prevent institutional failure**. Where possible, it is important to preserve the fiscal, physical, and political integrity of the state as a platform for political negotiation and service delivery. While budget support and even direct capacity support may no longer be feasible at this time, support during conflict may consist of establishing parallel delivery mechanisms able to complement humanitarian assistance and reach insecure areas. This support may also consist of continuing development investments in areas not affected by conflict. International development, peace, and security actors should focus on developing lighter and more flexible arrangements to allow for reprioritization and targeting of interventions and programming, given the highly fluid nature of such contexts.

Escalation from initial incidents to full-blown conflict may take considerably longer than expected. Often the shift from outbreak of violence to violent conflict can take months rather than weeks. During this time, economic structures, organizations, and military forces are mobilized to sustain violence. In many situations, it is essential to **de-escalate conflict** by ensuring that dialogue and decision making remain focused

on preventing further conflict and atrocity rather than sustaining violence. This requires keeping open spaces for dialogue and reinforcing do-no-harm approaches for development projects and private sector investments. This is the time for setting up interventions that can rapidly change the incentives of actors.

When efforts to halt escalation fail, prevention may be limited to **“good enough” approaches**. Such situations may require significant, protracted international support simply to guarantee minimum international standards and to prevent spillovers of violence.

### **Prevention of recurrence**

**Integrated planning** across political, security, humanitarian, and development areas of engagement and the political accompaniment, is critical to preventing recurrence. Internationally sanctioned tools such as Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments (RPBA) offer countries a standardized approach to identify the underlying causes and impacts of conflict and crisis, and to help governments develop a strategy for how to prioritize recovery and peacebuilding activities over time. Such planning processes should include both the assessment of needs and the national prioritization and costing of these needs.

Evidence suggests that **providing security** is important for avoiding relapse, in consideration of the high predisposition for recurrence in post-conflict societies. This support may require engaging regional or international partners to provide direct support. It often also requires national reform of the security sector, a lengthy endeavor that can only succeed with strong and sustained political support.

**Peacebuilding programming** is critical to restoring confidence in state leadership, and communicating a sense of progress and confidence to citizens. Programming can be both upstream and downstream. It can be focused on ensuring macro-fiscal stability and the viability of core government functions, and/or providing support to public works, light infrastructure, livelihoods, and restoration of basic state capacities. The aim of peacebuilding interventions should be

to provide a foundation for longer-term social, economic, and political evolution. Development investments should shift as quickly as possible to favor multi-year long-term sustainable development projects over quick impact projects. However, all these investments need to keep a strong focus on risk of relapse over the long term.

### **VII.c. Organizing for prevention**

The agenda for action can only be implemented through stronger partnership at all levels. New and more effective ways of organizing for prevention must target the incentives that often keep national, regional, and international actors from working together for prevention and from acting early and decisively when crisis occurs.

The case for earlier action in high-risk settings is clear. Yet the multilateral system's current incentives for honest dialogue with national governments that would facilitate a greater and earlier focus on risks remain weak. Since the 1990s, the development focus among important bilateral and multilateral agencies has started to shift toward supporting national institutions and actors in conflict prevention.

However, international development actors, and multilateral development banks in particular, are still highly constrained from engaging on sensitive issues with governments by mandates, by incentives that do not always align, and by internal culture. At early signs of risk and in pre-crisis contexts, these constraints often have limited the scope for development programming to address causes of tension and for integrating themes such as security and justice that are important for prevention.

Prevention will generate savings and safeguard development gains, and reallocation of financing could pay for many of the suggested engagements in the recommendations below. Nevertheless, prevention in low-income countries could still require important additional resources. In middle-income countries, prevention could require flexible financing in areas where governments might not always be willing or able to commit the necessary resources. Financial instruments are therefore an important component of prevention strategy, and should avoid silos and fragmentation of various programs and approaches. Table 3 summarizes recommendations to improve the organization of prevention.

**TABLE 3 Organizing and Changing Incentives for Prevention**

<b>Goal for organizing more effectively</b>	<b>Suggested actions needed to change current incentives to meet the goal</b>
<p><b>Focus early and in a sustained way on risks, and scale up inclusive policy dialogue</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop collective approaches to monitoring, prioritization, and management of risks; develop a common language and framework for assessing and discussing risks</i></li> <li>• <i>Share results of risk assessments with all partners</i></li> <li>• <i>Build platforms for responding to escalating risk at subnational, national, and regional levels</i></li> <li>• <i>Support governments in improving monitoring of risks</i></li> <li>• <i>Pursue joint international engagements of different actors (security, diplomatic and development) with national leaders and frame sensitive issues in the context of development risks</i></li> <li>• <i>Address internal organizational disincentives for development actors to raise sensitive risks in dialogue with partners and governments</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Stronger partnerships at all levels: local, national, regional, and international</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Build platforms that broaden the range of actors and deepen their operational and normative commitment to prevention through open dialogue; at global, regional, national, local levels. Include strong involvement of private sector, civil society, and women and youth organizations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Support the integration of national and regional peace and security frameworks with development planning</i></li> <li>• <i>Use joint assessments that bring external actors together with governments in discussing critical issues</i></li> <li>• <i>Enhance platform for regular information exchange</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Prevention integrated in programs and policies</b></p> <p><b>Investment, with rewards during windows of opportunity, but benefits sustained over time</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop financing solutions that can sustain support for prevention policies and programs across long transitions;</i></li> <li>• <i>Scale up regional financing to soften spillovers;</i></li> <li>• <i>Pool risk through more shared investments;</i></li> <li>• <i>Retain investment during periods of heightened risk and crisis;</i></li> <li>• <i>Set up financing mechanisms that avoid fragmentation of programs and activities such as budget support for support of national development that integrate mediation, security, and development efforts</i></li> <li>• <i>Scale up practice of do-no-harm and do good for development actors and private sector in situation of heighten risk</i></li> <li>• <i>Support solid national and regional plans for peace and development</i></li> <li>• <i>Develop and implement Risk Prevention Assessment on the model of RPBA</i></li> </ul>

RPBA = Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment.



## Notes

1. UCDP 2017. Conflicts are inherent in all societies and are managed, mitigated, and resolved in nonviolent manners through, for example, political processes (see, e.g., UN resolution A/RES/59/201), formal and informal judicial systems, local dispute mechanisms or dialogue. But sometimes conflict may turn violent, causing enormous human and economic loss. Violent conflict can take various forms, including interstate war, armed conflict, civil war, political and electoral violence, and communal violence, and can include many actors, including states and non-state actors, such as militias, insurgents, terrorist groups, and violent extremists. The study—while looking at conflict in general—focuses on conflicts that are becoming violent and explores pathways for prevention which seek to ensure that conflicts do not escalate into violence.
2. UCDP 2017. The specific UCDP dataset used here covers the years 1989 to 2016.
3. UCDP 2017. In 2015 the number (20) of internationalized armed conflicts were the highest of any year since 1946.
4. Fearon 2010; Humphreys and Varshney 2003.
5. World Economic Forum 2016.
6. OECD 2015.
7. Mueller 2017.
8. World Bank 2011b.
9. Shonkoff 2011; Betancourt et al. 2012; Miller and Rasmussen 2010.
10. Mueller 2017.
11. All dollar amounts are U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated.
12. Prevented losses are calculated as the sum of the prevented monetary value of lives lost plus the prevented loss to the economy (GDP) from conflict. This amount accounts for the inherent uncertainty over whether an actual outbreak would occur or not occur in the absence of prevention, and the fact that conflicts could occur anyway in countries not targeted for prevention interventions. Mueller 2017.
13. Mueller 2017.
14. For example, official development assistance to countries with high risk of conflict averages \$250 million per year, only slightly higher than that to countries at peace, but increases to \$700 million during open conflict and \$400 million during recovery years. Similarly, peacekeeping support averages \$30 million a year for countries at high risk, compared to \$100 million for countries in open conflict and \$300 during recovery. See Mueller 2017.
15. The background research and literature reviews, including 20 case studies, were prepared in partnership with leading think tanks and academic institutions. The broader study is forthcoming in 2018. See the appendix for methodology note and list of background research and case studies.
16. UN General Assembly A/RES/262; UN Security Council Resolution 2282.
17. UN General Assembly A/RES/70/1, including the preamble, para. 3 and SDGs 10 and 16.
18. A/Res/70/1, preamble.
19. A/Res/70/1, preamble.
20. UN General Assembly A/RES/70/1, including SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16.
21. UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/262; UN Security Council Resolution 2282.
22. Pinker and Mack 2014.
23. From a post–Cold War low in 2005 to 2014, battle-related deaths increased tenfold. This includes only deaths in conflicts with more than 25 battle-related deaths per year. Low intensity conflicts are defined as those with between 25 and 999 battle deaths per year, and these have doubled since 2007 and major conflicts as those with more than 1,000 annual battle deaths (UCDP 2017).
24. UCDP 2017; UNHCR 2017.
25. UCDP 2017. This includes reported fatalities stemming from state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence. It also includes only deaths resulting from violence that has resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths.
26. UCDP 2017.
27. Carter Center 2015.

28. The term “non-state armed groups” encompasses an immense range of actors with varying motivations, membership, levels of organization, resources, and reach. The label is slightly misleading since some groups operate in relationship with the state, such as paramilitaries, or on behalf of political elites, as in election-related violence. Others are local security actors who fill the vacuum left by an absent state, such as militias, and may or may not engage with the formal state. The category also includes more traditionally organized rebel groups fighting the state for territory or political representation, and violent extremist groups.
29. Raleigh and Dowd 2013.
30. Walter 2017.
31. Raleigh 2016.
32. ICRC 2016.
33. Walter 2017.
34. Marc et al. 2015.
35. World Bank 2016b, 2017a; UNHCR 2017; UNDP 2016a.
36. UNDP 2016a.
37. UNDP 2016a.
38. Devarajan and Ianchovichina 2017.
39. Toska 2017.
40. ICG 2016a.
41. Guéhenno 2016.
42. Williams 2017.
43. World Bank Group 2016.
44. Mogaka 2017.
45. Williams 2017.
46. Marc et al. 2015.
47. UCDP 2017; ACLED 2016.
48. UCDP 2017.
49. UCDP 2017.
50. UCDP 2017. UCDP does not report any violent conflicts involving state forces ending in 2016. As this report was being prepared, it was too early to say which conflicts that were active in 2016 might or might not be active in 2017.
51. Gates et al. 2016. This only includes violent conflicts that have resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths.
52. ICRC 2017a.
53. ICRC 2017a. Attacks in schools and hospitals are considered one of the six grave violations under the August 1999 UN Security Council Resolution (S/Res/1261) on Children and Armed Conflict. See also Sassolli 2004; ICRC 2017b.
54. See ACLED for definitions and discussion at <http://www.crisis.acleddata.com/category/remote-violence/>.
55. UCDP 2017.
56. UNESCWA 2017.
57. Small Arms Survey 2011.
58. UNHCR 2017.
59. World Bank 2016a; UNHCR 2017; UNDP 2016a.
60. UNHCR 2017.
61. UNHCR 2017.
62. World Bank 2016a.
63. Crespo-Sancho 2017.
64. Kelly 2017; Crespo-Sancho 2017; UN Secretary-General 2015; UN Women 2015; UNFPA 2017a; UNESCWA 2015.
65. UN Women 2015.
66. Miller and Rasmussen 2010.
67. Leckman et al. 2014; Betancourt et al. 2012; Huesmann and Kirwil 2007; Blattman 2006; Bauer et al. 2016; Shonkoff 2011; Weaver et al. 2008; Calvete and Orue 2011.
68. Mueller and Tobias 2016; IEP 2015.
69. Rother et al. 2016.
70. Coolidge et al. 2013.
71. Fearon 2010; Norris 2008; Jarstad and Sisk 2008; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003, 2007.
72. Devarajan and Ianchovichina 2017.
73. ILO 2016.
74. World Bank Group 2016; Sayer 2016.
75. UN ITU 2015.
76. World Economic Forum 2015.
77. World Economic Forum 2015.
78. Mor et al. 2016.
79. Smith 2015.
80. UN DESA 2017.
81. UN DESA 2015a.
82. UNFPA 2014.
83. UN DESA 2015b.
84. UN Security Council Resolution 2250.
85. UN DESA 2016.
86. UNHCR 2017.
87. United Nations 2017.
88. For example, Nigeria (see IRIN 2017); and Ivory Coast (see Ogwang 2011; McGovern 2011; UNDP 2011)
89. National Intelligence Council 2017.
90. USAID 2014.
91. Schleussner et al. 2016.
92. Fearon 2004; UNODC 2011; World Bank 2011b.
93. Kemp et al. 2013.

94. Spanjers and Salomon 2017. Illicit financial flows of \$1.1 trillion in 2013 in developing countries exceeded the sum of foreign direct investment and official development assistance that those countries received in 2013.
95. UNODC 2010; UNODC 2008.
96. Haass 2017; Griffin, forthcoming.
97. Guterres 2017.
98. UCDP 2017.
99. FAO 2016.
100. Malik 2017.
101. For instance, see Stewart 2004, 2008, 2010; Ostby 2007; Parks et al. 2013; Collier et al. 2003; Easterly et al. 2006.
102. North 1990; World Bank 2011b.
103. For example, see Faustino and Booth 2014; Mac Ginty 2010; Chesterman et al. 2004.
104. World Bank Group 2017.
105. World Bank Group 2017; Benford and Snow 2000; Fearon 2010.
106. Elias 1982; Tilly 1985, 2003.
107. World Bank Group 2017; Andrews et al. 2017; Marc et al. 2013.
108. On Latin America, see International IDEA 2014; on Afghanistan, see Felbab-Brown 2017 and UN Security Council 2012, 2014.
109. UNODC 2013; UN Security Council 2014.
110. Justino 2017; Ostby 2008; on education, see UNICEF 2015a; on infant mortality (for Indonesia only), see Ostby et al. 2011; Cederman et al. 2013.
111. Horowitz 2001; Petersen 2002; Sargsyan 2017; Gurr 1970.
112. Nixon and Mallett 2017; ICG 2016a; World Bank 2015; Atran and Ginges 2012; Khosrokhavar 2017.
113. Cederman et al. 2013.
114. Sargsyan 2017; Petersen 2002, 2011.
115. Mercy Corps 2015.
116. Beall and Piron 2004; Vogt et al. 2015.
117. Kemp et al. 2013.
118. See Mitra and Ray 2014 for examples from India; Gurr 2000 on Sri Lanka.
119. Benford and Snow 2000; Fearon 2010.
120. See, for example, cross-country study by Mercy Corps 2015; Hafez 2003.
121. Herbert 2017; Caprioli et al. 2007; Caprioli and Tumbore 2003.
122. Caprioli and Boyer 2001.
123. Petesch 2012.
124. Boudot et al. 2012.
125. World Bank 2011b; de Greiff 2013.
126. UNDP 2012b.
127. DCAF 2017.
128. UN Women 2012.
129. DCAF 2017.
130. DCAF 2017.
131. DCAF 2017.
132. Mahony 2013.
133. Cross-national data find prosecutions of high-level actors for atrocity crimes are associated with a 65 percent increase in conflict recurrence whereas middle- and low-level prosecutions are associated with 70 percent decrease. Payne et al. 2017.
134. DCAF 2017; Lombard 2017.
135. Putzel and Di John 2012; World Bank 2011b; World Bank Group 2017.
136. Norris 2008, Jarstad and Sisk 2008, Hartzell and Hoddie 2003, 2007.
137. World Bank 2011b; DCAF 2017.
138. Fjelde and Höglund 2016; Payne et al. 2017.
139. Bardall 2011.
140. Wolff et al. 2017.
141. PRIO 2017; Wolff et al. 2017; Brancati 2006, 2009.
142. Fiedler 2017.
143. Bruce 2017.
144. Ferguson 2015.
145. World Bank 2017b.
146. Gleick 1993.
147. UNDP 2003.
148. OECD and USAID 2015.
149. Strategic Foresight Group 2013.
150. Ross 2015. The context, however, matters. Many countries, such as Australia, Botswana, Canada, and Norway, have abundant natural resource reserves that have never been regarded as destabilizing factors.
151. Brack and Hayman 2006.
152. Lohde 2015.
153. See, for example, Kimberly Process 2017 and Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (2017).
154. Rotberg 2004; Millikin and Krause 2002.
155. Brixi et al. 2015.
156. World Bank Group 2017.
157. Nixon and Mallett 2017.
158. Case studies include Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Tunisia.

159. This is a broad categorization that includes religious actors, traditional leaders, private sector actors including business associations, and non-state armed groups, among others, that are local to, party to, or directly affected by violent conflict.
160. Fiedler 2017.
161. Fong 2017.
162. Carey and Harake 2017.
163. Carey and Harake 2017.
164. Gates et al. 2016.
165. World Bank 2011b.
166. Jaffrey 2017.
167. Van Tongeren 2013.
168. Rakotomalala 2017.
169. von Einsiedel and Salih 2017; Pérouse de Montclos 2017; Hearn 2017.
170. Fong 2017.
171. UN Women 2015; Paffenholz 2015; O'Reilly et al. 2015; Stone 2015.
172. This is data from a report of the Secretary-General on women, peace, and security. UN Security Council S/2016/822, 29 September 2016.
173. "Civil society" is populated by organizations such as registered charities, development NGOs organizations, community groups, women's organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions, and advocacy groups. See Marc et al. 2013.
174. Barnes 2009.
175. Marc et al. 2013.
176. O'Reilly et al. 2015; Stone 2015.
177. Dahl et al. 2017.
178. Karatnycky and Ackerman 2005; Zunes et al. 2010; Binnendijk and Marovic 2006.
179. Toska 2017.
180. Hoffman and Lange 2016.
181. Goldstein and Rotich 2008.
182. IDA 2017; European Commission 2017.
183. Ballentine and Haufler 2009; Ganson and Achim 2016.
184. UN Global Compact 2017.
185. United Nations Charter, Article 1.
186. von Einsiedel et al. 2015.
187. Koskenniemi and Leino 2002; Biermann et al. 2009.
188. Thakur 2011.
189. Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2017.
190. Harland 2016.
191. Call 2017.
192. See A/RES/70/262 and Articles 2 and 3 of the UN Charter. The Sustaining Peace resolutions reaffirmed this principle, recognizing "the primary responsibility of national Governments and authorities in identifying, driving and directing priorities, strategies and activities for sustaining peace. . . emphasizing that sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the Government and all other national stakeholders." UN Security Council Resolution 2282.
193. Slaughter 2009.
194. Harland 2016.
195. UN Charter, Chapter VIII, Article 53.
196. Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2017; Hale et al. 2013; Wallenstein and Bjuner 2015.
197. Rubin and Jones 2007; Call 2017.
198. Risse et al. 1999; Keck and Sikkink 1999.
199. Thakur 2011.
200. Jenks and Kharas 2016.
201. Uppdrag Framtid 2015.
202. Stedman 1999.
203. UCDP 2015.
204. Call 2017; on the effectiveness of mediation, see DeRouen and Chowdhury 2016; Joshi and Quinn 2016.
205. UN Secretary-General 2011.
206. UN Secretary-General 1992.
207. Jones et al. 2009.
208. Whitfield 2007; International Crisis Group 2016b.
209. Since 2008 the UN's Mediation Support Unit, with a Standby Team of experts, has provided tailored advice to national negotiators and international mediators. See UN Peacemaker 2017.
210. Svensson and Lundgren 2015.
211. Whitfield 2010; UN 2012.
212. Harland 2016.
213. Walter 1997, 2002; Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 2006; Hartzell et al. 2001; Fortna 2004, 2008; Gilligan and Sergenti 2008.
214. Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 2006; Beardsley 2011; Hultman et al. 2013.
215. All references to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244.
216. Muggah 2017.
217. OCHA 2017.

218. OCHA 2015.
219. OECD 2007; UN General Assembly A/67 /775-S/2013/110.
220. Griffin, forthcoming.
221. Result of field consultations
222. Cramer and Morris 2016.
223. Giessmann et al. 2017 Background Paper.
224. Gibbs and Hugi 2017.
225. Lombard 2017.
226. Fong and Day 2017.
227. Giessmann et al. 2017.
228. Gowan 2011.

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## Appendix. Methodology, Background Papers, and Case Studies

*Main Messages and Emerging Policy Directions* serves as a companion report to a forthcoming broader study entitled “Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict.” This piece aims to disseminate synthesized findings from the larger study, currently in progress, to encourage the exchange of ideas about development issues. Given its nature as a synthesis of a broader, in-depth study, the companion report does not fully reflect the comprehensive list of references utilized for this research.

The “Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict” report is based on a comprehensive review of the available knowledge on the critical nexus between development and conflict. In addition, it represents a very strong effort of collecting new evidence, particularly on how different development efforts address violent conflict. The study combines comprehensive literature reviews, a series of country case studies, and a number of in-depth, new thematic papers, including: a report on the relationship between inequality and conflict (PRIO), an empirical analysis of the role of inclusion in the prevention of violent conflict (IPTI, Graduate Institute Geneva), and an innovative examination of the effectiveness of risk analysis in forecasting conflicts (ESOC, Princeton University). In addition, a wide range of literature reviews and analyses on existing data have been commissioned to ensure that the most advanced knowledge from the academic, policy, and practitioners’ world is adequately reflected in the study. The complete list of thematic papers produced for the study is provided below.

Among the most valuable pieces of original research commissioned for this report are 20 country case studies, aimed

at understanding how prevention strategies and approaches have succeeded in avoiding violent conflict. The case studies—conducted by leading specialists with deep knowledge of the relevant countries—have looked at political dynamics, social and economic policies, as well as the role of donors. They provide a wealth of data and information on the role of endogenous dynamics and the impact of external actors in shaping pathways to conflict and peace. The list of country case studies informing the report is provided below.

The study, finally, is critically grounded in an extensive process of consultations that the core team has conducted both internally—within the World Bank and the UN system, both at HQ and in the field—and externally—engaging donors, policy makers in national government and local authorities, regional multilateral organizations, leading research centers, and experts in Europe, Africa, Middle East and North Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. As the main report is a work in progress, a full list of consultations and events will be made available with its publication.

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