



Interpeace

<https://www.interpeace.org/>

Elina Mariutsa

Policy Officer – Finance for Peace, [mariutsa@interpeace.org](mailto:mariutsa@interpeace.org)

### **Chapeau**

Interpeace is an international organisation for peacebuilding that supports locally led peacebuilding initiatives around the world. Interpeace tailors its approach to each society and ensures that the work is locally driven. Together with local partners and local teams, Interpeace jointly develops peacebuilding programmes and helps establish processes of change that connect local communities, civil society, government and the international community. As a strategic partner of the United Nations, Interpeace is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, and has offices around the world.

Interpeace has also incubated a multistakeholder Finance for Peace initiative that seeks systemic change in how private and public investment supports peace in developing, fragile and conflict-affected contexts. It brings together investors, industry, norm-setting entities, Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), governments, peacebuilding and development actors, civil society and local communities to further peace-positive investment.

## **Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development**

### ***On Peace Finance:***

Finance for Peace proposes the embedding of *peace finance* concept in the Pact for the Future. Without peace and stability there can be no sustainable development or the SDGs. More specifically:

- The United Nations Secretariat should commence a process with existing peace finance partners to specify how different UN agencies can play different roles in growing the Peace Finance market, leveraging their distinct mandates and capacities.
- UN agencies with a specific mandate to mobilize finance in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), like the UN Capital Development Fund, should ensure that the capital deployed for development is conflict-sensitive and does not exacerbate existing tensions. This can start through simple modifications to investment approaches that are aligned or informed by the Peace Finance Impact Framework (PFIF).
- UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) can more actively participate in partnership-building, awareness, and convening toward the local ownership of peace finance approaches that can create more sustainable and resilience-oriented strategies that involve the private sector.

### ***On Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):***

The 2020/2022 UNSG's reports on peacebuilding have importantly recognized MHPSS for communities affected by violent conflicts. Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are fundamental for both post conflict recovery and prevention of future cycles of violence. The Pact thus provides a unique opportunity to build on the momentum to further integrate MHPSS and peacebuilding, as in humanitarian response.

This integration must be aimed at building individual/community/societal resilience, leveraging complementary MHPSS and peacebuilding approaches to foster the development of transformative skills, capacities and collaborative actions for positive peace that increase social trust.

The Pact must therefore emphasize integrating MHPSS and peacebuilding, through:

- Evidence-based identification of local resilience and collaboratively designing locally informed, actionable guidance and practical tools for implementation. This means identifying population needs and existing practices, capacities and infrastructures in a participatory, bottom up and representative way informed by clinical knowledge and mapping of informal actors and approaches using a mixed methods approach. Much more investment needs to occur in field building and evidence generation to guide future scaled up approaches that are contextualized and responsive to the needs of those affected.
- Building trust and understanding across sectors and actors and equipping a variety of stakeholders at multiple levels with the capacities to implement those integrated initiatives. This requires knowledge and practice transfers that bridge traditional silos and areas of 'expertise' as well as traditional power structures. This means linking individual to community, community to county or sub-regional and community to national as well as international approaches acknowledging they all have important capacity and knowledge deficits and strengths in relation to each other.
- Integrating economic development and livelihoods into MHPSS-Peacebuilding as a vital component for sustainability and long-term prevention. In many cases, at the nexus of MHPSS and peacebuilding challenges are livelihood issues that undermine dignity, a sense of justice, meaning and purpose and/or reinforce cycles of despair and depression that are an entangled part of peace and conflict dynamics as well as individual and community mental health wellbeing.
- Building the capacity and infrastructure for integrative approaches that can be sustained financially and institutionally. Improving mental well-being, establishing long term conditions for peace and improving performance against development indicators in health, education, and livelihoods, etc. are all long-term transformational processes.

## **Chapter II. International peace and security**

### ***On Peace Finance:***

**The international community should broaden its understanding of what investing for prevention means** by looking more intentionally at private and public sector investment and championing the development of a market for Peace Finance. This entails looking beyond the current modalities for allocating peacebuilding resources, adequately providing alternative sources of funding, whether public, private, or blended, in addition to the Peacebuilding Fund. **To facilitate the creation of a market for Peace Finance, the international community has to agree on standards and frameworks**

- The United Nations and its Member States could ensure: (1) engagement, adoption and uptake of new frameworks and standards, such as the Peace Finance Impact Framework and related Peace Finance Standards; (2) Development of market intelligence and pipeline of Peace Finance structures and approaches; and (3) Embedment of Peace Finance principles, standards and guidance in national level regulation and standards.

- Standards and frameworks also play a crucial role in bridging the discursive gap between public and private actors. The UN thus could support existing collaborative initiatives (i.e., Finance for Peace) in convening key public and private stakeholders and aligning them in high-level discussions on Peace Finance.

### ***On Stabilization***

Stabilisation and Peacekeeping efforts regularly achieve short term periods of respite from conflict, but have typically struggled to support long term sustainable and inclusive peace. As missions end in Mali, DRC and Somalia, we can begin to discern what happened and what can be improved. It is clear that missions have suffered from financial lopsidedness, with vast resources subsumed by ineffective Counter-Terror, Countering Violent Extremism, or military assistance work and diverted away from approaches more attuned to the fundamental objective of building trust and addressing the underlying structural drivers of violence. This can result in top-down, securitised stabilisation approaches distrusted by local populations and exclusive of the voices of those they purport to help. Far from building peace or stability, these approaches risk reinforcing experiences of political, social and economic exclusion that contribute to cycles of violence.

In response, and despite disagreements over what stabilisation is and how to do it, we suggest a new focus for peacekeeping and stabilisation actions that builds on three central tenets on which most actors can agree:

- Activities ought to **improve the stability and peace of communities experiencing active armed conflict**;
- **Stabilisation is fundamentally a political process** rather than an end-state;
- **Efforts should be temporary and transitional in nature**, intended to bring about the Peace Conditions necessary for longer-term, self-sustaining stability, so that international actors can transition away from securitised roles and other functions that should be the preserve of host governments.
- **Jointly define and work towards local and national Peace Conditions**, encouraging stabilisation actors to coalesce around strategic visions and activities that understand and respond to the deep political and social challenges driving instability in each context.

### **Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation**

- Implementation of digitized structures of innovative financial instruments can be key to disseminating and synthesizing knowledge of peacebuilding work world-wide, as well as grounding access to larger peacebuilding infrastructures, as envisioned by Finance for Peace, for local communities
  - The UN secretariat could mobilize the resources of its agencies and supported entities involved in developing programmes and policies for innovative financial structures to facilitate the integration of technology in global peacebuilding efforts. A concrete example includes Finance for Peace's development of the *Peace Token*, a blockchain method of valuing peacebuilding activities.

### **Chapter IV. Youth and future generations**

The Pact provides a unique opportunity to practically develop and advance the YPS Agenda, and prioritize investment in the positive role of youth in building and sustaining peace. This demands moving beyond

rhetorical global commitments, to the meaningful multilateral investment in the role of young women and men in building sustainable peace. The Pact must avoid the pitfalls:

- Rhetorical commitments to youth are not simply synonymous with investment in the future. There is a real danger that the focus on future generations can eclipse the attention which must be paid to young people *in the present*. It is the agency and leadership of youth *in the present*, as well as the durable and cyclical commitment to *successive youth cohorts*, that will determine the shape of the future. As young people age out, the multilateral system must be capable of reflective learning and co-creation through including successive youth cohorts, if it is to *translate this demographic dividend into a transgenerational peace dividend*.
- Young people cannot continue to be stereotyped and treated primarily as potential spoilers or security risks. Instead of being either patronized, romanticized or demonized – the voice, agency and leadership of young people must be framed as indispensable to the durability and legitimacy of peace in *all* societies.

The Pact must therefore:

- Move beyond rhetorical aspirations, to the reality of fully funding and investing in a resilience-based approach to youth, peace and security, in which young people are fully included in the design, implementation and evaluation of national and international peacebuilding programs.
- Recognize youth-based peacebuilding as the key to both shorter-term and transgenerational prevention of violent conflict.
- Concretely foster youth-centered approaches to those policy arenas and institutional changes, that most directly impact the lives and young people, including but not limited to youth-centered: security and justice sector reform; DDR programs; transitional justice approaches; education (and peace education) and meaningful livelihoods; approaches which recognize their primary roles as guardians of the future in addressing the relationship between climate change and conflict; and the meaningful inclusion of youth in *all* aspects and phases of peacebuilding.
- Ensure that the multilateral system builds a more institutionalized engagement with youth-led social movements for peace, climate justice, indigenous rights, gender justice, racial justice and broad-based disarmament.
- Considering the aspirations of UNSCR 2535, the YPS agenda must be mainstreamed through youth markers in the goals, planning, budgeting, and evaluation of all UN agencies, entities and funds, so as to best reflect the cross-cutting reality of young people's lives.

## **Chapter V. Transforming global governance**

If the Pact is to transform global governance, then it must prioritize building and reinvigorating trust, in order to honestly and address the trust deficits in multilateralism that currently exist, in the wake of the impacts of a global health pandemic, as well as the inability of the UN (and the UNSC) to effectively prevent multiple conflicts involving systematic violations, and where a rules-based order has been undermined both in national conflicts and in the proxy wars.

The Pact must therefore prioritize the building of 'civic trust' – within and between societies. In the context of global governance, this trust-building objective cannot be based on goodwill alone, but must be premised on the demonstration and proof of trustworthiness – both horizontally (between states) and vertically (between these states and multilateral institutions). Trust and trustworthiness also demand

cultivating trust in economic systems which include rather than marginalize, and pre-emptively address and prevent corruption and state capture.

It is only through reasserting and mainstreaming a people-centered, rights-based, and rights-respecting approach within and by all nations, that trust in- and trustworthiness of- global institutions can be rebuilt. The Pact must therefore reclaim the central role of a rights-based system in building sustainable peace through the transformative power of addressing experiences of injustice as indispensable to the prevention of cyclical or new forms of violent conflict.

If UN-based multilateralism is to effectively minister to the needs of future generations, then there needs to be a significant shift to supplement inter-governmental collaboration and cooperation, by meaningfully including the roles and relationships with diverse civil society organizations and networks. This must include national and international civil society organizations and networks, as well as other non-state actors, such as private sector and worker organizations, indigenous, women's, youth, and climate movements.