

Meeting Summary: Reflecting peaceful societies in national reviews 2016

Convened by the Quaker UN Office (QUNO) and the International Peace Institute (IPI)

3 May, 2016

Background

The International Peace Institute and the Quaker UN Office are working together on a project to support member states involved in the first round of National Reviews for the High Level Political Forum in 2016 – particularly in regards to issues that relate to the 2030 Agenda’s emphasis on peace, including fostering peaceful and inclusive societies.

Member states have confirmed the integrated and indivisible nature of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, peace has been characterized as the “on-ramp” to sustainable development, with the issues of governance, inclusive institutions and participatory decision-making being a necessary condition and a cross-cutting theme across the entire Agenda.

How are member states planning to integrate the peace components in the 2030 Agenda in their first national review? On 3 May, QUNO and IPI convened experts from among the first 22 states reporting, while still in the process of writing their reviews, providing an opportunity for them to hear from one another and share insights and strategies.

The meeting also included input from those member states that have been working with UNDP on the illustrative work to pilot governance in the context of the SDGs.

Scope

- The 2030 Agenda identifies 5 areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet: peace is one of the five. The Declaration presents a vision for a just, equitable and inclusive world in which the needs of the poor and most vulnerable are met and no one is left behind. Compared to the MDGs, the SDGs differ in their universal application and their broader scope.
- To achieve peaceful and inclusive societies at a national level, the 2030 Agenda includes these basic approaches across the goal framework:
 - *Access to basic services*: including freedom from violence and access to justice among the basic services to be made available to the poor and vulnerable on an equal basis;
 - *End violence*: reducing all forms of violence, including against women and girls, children and minorities;
 - *Governance*: fostering more effective and inclusive governance, including the justice system;
 - *Inclusion and inequalities*: eliminating all forms of discrimination, reducing inequalities and promoting social, economic and political inclusion.
- At a regional and global level, to achieve a peaceful world:
 - *Global governance*: ensuring more inclusive global governance;
 - *Illicit flows*: reducing illicit flows (including financial and arms flows)
 - *Organized crime*: combating all forms of organized crime
 - *Migration and refugees*: if we are to leave no one behind, the 2030 Agenda applies to people desperately seeking refuge.

UNDP Governance Pilot

UNDP Governance pilot lessons learned:

- National approaches to implementing governance targets can be tailored to local circumstances and needs and rooted in national priorities, culture and values;
- Planning and budgeting for the implementation of the SDGs is essential
- The experience of the pilot countries was that governance and Rule of Law issues were indeed measurable, and that inclusive country-wide consultations engaging all members of society are essential for this process.
- There was flexibility at a national level to use a variety of governance indicators, including those from non-government sources;
- By strengthening public institutions, the risk of instability was reduced;

Peaceful Societies in the National Reviews

- Many countries are seeing the National Reviews as an opportunity to note national implementation issues at domestic, regional and global levels;
- This upcoming HLPF will set a precedent for the forthcoming sessions. If the reports presented contain a holistic approach to peace and to sustainable development, as envisioned in the 2030 Agenda, it can help ensure continued attention and follow-up on the peace elements.
- The format of the first set of National Reviews may vary considerably from country to country – over time, best practices will emerge. Many countries will be highlighting peaceful societies issues in their reviews, although the content and focus will vary according to national circumstances.
- The approach being used by developed and developing countries in creating these national reviews varies. Many developed countries are using some form of gap analysis (in some cases carried out by an independent third party) to identify focus areas for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For developing countries, the challenge is less about identifying gaps, and more about finding consensus around a manageable number of national priorities, which in many cases include peaceful societies.
- Analysis of 16.1 is already increasing understanding of patterns of violence in some countries, allowing for more effective policy approaches
- The exponential rise of migrants and refugees is a critical issue and will likely figure prominently in many national reviews.
- A number of countries are looking at implementing the peaceful societies mandate through putting in place national institutions (institutions for peace) and adapting domestic legislation to better provide for inclusion, non-discrimination and freedom of information. In some countries, this also includes reforms of the justice, security and public sectors.
- Some countries view economic resilience as a particularly powerful tool for peaceful societies, and have established skill-training programs aimed at reducing unemployment levels.
- For countries impacted by conflict, the new framing upholds their existing work on reconciliation and reintegration, and holds out the prospect of additional resources for this work. A number of such countries already have developed measures of reconciliation.

- Domestic political organization adds a layer of complexity– for example, under a federal system some issues like policing may be managed at a sub-national level.
- Some countries have observed that technology, transparency, and access to public information can be enablers of good governance.

Next steps

- Possible panel discussions on key issues and lessons learned in preparation of the National Reviews ahead of or at the time of the July HLPF meeting

Resources mentioned

- DESA report of retreats convened by Germany with the 22 countries (summary will be posted soon on DESA's website)
- [UNDP governance pilot report](#)
- [TAP G16 Toolkit](#)
- [Bertelsmann survey of OECD countries](#)