

Funding the “P” in the Nexus – an essential step for building peace

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Everyday, we see the world moving towards more, and increasingly complex, crisis situations. One only needs to look to the impact of migration and displacement, the global climate and environmental crises, the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine. In its 2022 Global Humanitarian Overview, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that 274 million people would need humanitarian assistance and protection, with extreme poverty rising so high it will reverse a two-decade long decline. Within this context, humanitarian response is lasting longer and requiring greater funding to support the needs of people. While these facts point to the importance of investing in prevention, it is also clear that policy makers and practitioners leading responses in crisis situations are central for and key in building peace. Using peacebuilding approaches and tools can contribute to connecting short-term crisis response and long-term peace and development needs, and can be of great service to those working in these environments. Additionally, there is the urgent need for better coordination and alignment across the peacebuilding, humanitarian and development fields. As the UN Secretary-General stated in his 2022 report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, *“The extent to which international humanitarian and development responses are conflict-sensitive and contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace (...) will be critical in determining their effectiveness.”*

This year provides an opportunity for Member States to take action to address the widely known peacebuilding funding gaps. During the 27 April High-Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Financing for Peacebuilding, it will be essential to move beyond rhetoric, with diplomats and the UN system identifying and committing to clear action to invest in peace, including across the peace continuum. Throughout 2021, the Quaker UN Office carried out research exploring the interface between peace approaches and crisis response, culminating in our report, [Building Peace in Times of Crisis](#). Through over 50 conversations with UN colleagues, diplomats and fellow NGO partners a reoccurring message came through loud and clear – **there is an urgent need for sustained and flexible funding of the “P” in the humanitarian-development-peace nexus** to strengthen UN capacities to contribute to peace in crisis situations, and to work across these fields.

Ensuring sustainable and flexible capacities is central to enhancing system-wide coherence. This is especially the case when it comes to ensuring collaborative and joined up context analysis and program planning across the nexus to contribute to building and sustaining peace in complex crisis environments. The upcoming High-Level Meeting must provide a space to bring attention to how current funding systems influence HDP program development, both when it comes to funding challenges and opportunities to support peace contributions. Additionally, Member States should share the thinking and good practices from their own funding experience as some countries have begun to take a more flexible approach with the funding models that they use in emergency situations.



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In addition to the need to finance efforts across the UN system, speakers should use their interventions to illustrate the impact and value add of investing across these fields, and **how to incentivize increased funding to meet the needs of communities**. At the heart of all UN efforts must be addressing and enhancing the capacities and resilience of those affected by conflict and crisis – this is certainly the case for cross-nexus programming and funding. Illustrations drawn from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) offer real-life examples of funding for innovative nexus programming. This includes projects spanning borders, carried out in situations of extreme fragility or complexity, and developed in a manner that is informed by and includes community participation. Such an inclusive approach can contribute to more impactful and sustainable programming because UN staff will learn from and have the support of those affected by crisis and conflict. However, the ongoing challenge of funding remains for PBF initiatives, particularly for scaling up and sustaining successful peacebuilding projects. Participants in the High-Level Meeting should uplift positive examples of cross-nexus work to support the immediate and longer-term needs of people affected by crises, and use their interventions to commit to sustainably financing such peace efforts for the long-term.

But smarter, sustainable and agile funding of the “P” in the nexus needs to go beyond program support to also include **flexibility for personnel to adjust to context needs in fragile and conflict affected situations, and to promote innovative thinking and programming**. Having sustainable resources also means insuring there are the human capacities needed to meet the demands of a dynamic and changing environment. Investment must be given to develop and strengthen the skills and program development of personnel to further enhance their skills and knowledge to contribute to peace. Funding streams need to be adaptable so that staff can adjust their analysis and programming to the changing nature of a situation and carry out innovative and responsive program development. Additionally, increased flexibility will allow personnel to include peacebuilding within their program design from the start, leading to the identification of peacebuilding contributions from the project’s inception and then throughout its lifecycle. Flexible and sustainable funding streams can contribute to these changes.

In this year’s report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, the Secretary-General brings attention to how *“the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach allows for concrete action on the ground with peacebuilding initiatives integrated into the United Nations system.”* While many steps are needed and actors involved, the UN’s capacity to carry out this work and truly meet the needs of communities can only come to be if there is a financial commitment that puts peace first, a commitment that can be made at the High-Level Meeting on peacebuilding financing.

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