



# EMERGING PROMISING PRACTICES IN CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING

The Peace and Development Advisors and the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme on  
Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention

Practice Note

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CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY



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## LIST OF ACTORS AND ROLES WITHIN UN THAT RELATE TO A PDA'S WORK

**Joint UNDP/DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention:** The partnership, established in 2004, which supports and manages the deployment of PDAs, while also serving as a forum to link UNDP and DPA on issues pertaining to conflict prevention.

**UNDP Conflict Prevention Group:** The technical expertise housed within the CPG represent a primary focal point for a PDA, able to provide technical and programmatic guidance and support, while also linking closely with relevant stakeholders at the UNDP Regional Bureaux and the DPA Regional Divisions.

**UNDP Regional Bureau:** The primary point of contact for UNDP Country Offices, UNDP Regional Bureaux complement support to UNDP Country Offices on daily policy and administrative support, through the Country Operations Division, and on policy advice and technical assistance through the Regional Centers.

**DPA Regional Divisions:** Primarily through the work of its regional divisions, DPA monitors developments and provides the Secretary-General with analytical reports and briefing notes to inform his decisions and shape his continuous diplomacy with U.N. Member States, regional and non-governmental organizations and other actors.

**DPA Mediation Support Unit:** Established in 2006, works closely with the DPA's regional divisions to plan and support mediation efforts in the field. Among its functions, MSU provides advisory, financial and logistical support to peace processes; works to strengthen the mediation capacity of regional and sub-regional organizations; and serves as a repository of mediation knowledge, policy and guidance, lessons learned and best practices.

**DPA Electoral Assistance Division:** Exercises key functions to ensure coherence and consistency within a broad array of UN entities working to provide United Nations electoral assistance in the field. The Division works to: ensure consistency in the handling of requests of Member States; ensure careful coordination and consideration of requests for electoral assistance and channel such requests to the appropriate office or programme; and maintain contact with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to ensure appropriate working arrangements with them.

**UN Interagency Framework for Preventive Action:** An inter-agency mechanism created to support Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams develop strategies for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Responsible for the management of the UN Conflict Prevention Community of Practice, which includes PDAs, while also providing different types of support to PDAs and other conflict prevention specialists.

**Peacebuilding Support Office:** Established in 2005, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) helps to sustain peace in conflict-affected countries by garnering international support for nationally owned and led peacebuilding efforts. The office assists and supports the Peacebuilding Commission, administers the Peacebuilding Fund, and supports the Secretary General's efforts to coordinate the UN System in its peacebuilding efforts. Increasingly, connections are being sought between the PBF and the work of PDA's.

**Resident Coordinator:** In most country contexts, the most senior UN official, and the direct supervisor of the PDA. PDAs are expected to provide political/conflict analytical support to Resident Coordinators as well as the UNCT, while also supporting the RC's engagements with government, opposition, and civil society actors, making use of the entry points available to advance the UN's support to conflict prevention.

**United Nations Country Team:** The configuration of UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes that operate within a given country context, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, with whom the PDA is to engage in providing updated political/conflict analysis and provide strategic advice and guidance on conflict prevention programming, while also supporting the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity across the gamut of a UNCT's programming.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As awareness of the need to prevent violent conflict and build resilience across a range of fragile and crisis-affected settings grows, the United Nations system is developing and enhancing its strategic tools and human resources to serve its mandate in these areas. The changing nature of conflicts, and the shifting roles of international development actors, requires that staff possess a range of skills that go beyond traditional programme management functions. The ability to facilitate dialogue between different national and local actors to address deeply rooted conflict and violence, and to support national efforts in developing strategic responses to possible disputes and tensions that may arise, for example, is paramount. Amongst the experts and advisors working across UNDP Country Offices specifically on crisis prevention and recovery in these settings is an emerging cadre of senior staff – the Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs). Deployed under the auspices of a partnership between UNDP and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the PDAs are playing a unique role of guiding UN initiatives at the field level to support the development and strengthening of national capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. This Practice Note profiles the work of PDAs, identifying areas of promising practice and the factors that are driving them. The note is part of a growing effort by UNDP and DPA to document, reflect upon, and share the work of PDAs – ultimately towards promoting better quality and coherence on these issues across the UN system and in support of national partners.

The Practice Note begins by discussing the institutional context of PDA operation. It then identifies and investigates a number of emerging areas of promising practice from PDA work globally, exploring both challenges and innovative practical responses, and general factors that are driving these. An Annex provides a greater level of detail on three particular case studies of PDA experience in Ghana, Guyana, and Kyrgyzstan, in greater depth.<sup>1</sup>

Three main umbrella areas of PDA efforts examined in this note, and the sub-areas that fall within them are summed here:

- 1. Political and conflict analysis:** Conducting and/or facilitating political and conflict analysis lies at the heart of a PDA's work. While the purpose and audience of such analysis can vary across country contexts, PDAs typically facilitate the use of such analysis to inform the UN's engagements in-country and, oftentimes, the wider UN Country Team and national actors. As the report highlights, there are numerous types and forms of analysis that manifest in different country settings. First, all PDAs conduct **political and conflict analysis** to inform the UN's positioning both in-country and at HQ level. This support is primarily geared towards, and produced for, the Resident Coordinator of the UN system in-country. By-products of this support are also shared with relevant DPA and UNDP counterparts in headquarters to facilitate greater awareness of local political context to inform strategic decision-making. Second, and on the basis of such analysis, PDAs **undertake and/or facilitate conflict analysis to support the identification of entry points for programming, planning and strategy across the UNCT**. PDAs also **support participatory or stakeholder-led conflict and context analysis with national actors, to build consensus around the drivers of conflict and appropriate responses**.
- 2. Conflict prevention strategy and programming:** A key function of PDAs is linking analysis to strategy and programming. In this area PDAs undertake various functions, including: **facilitating processes to develop joint strategic frameworks and programmes**, ideally through highly participatory processes; **supporting conflict sensitive programming**, and; **supporting the design of specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding programming and support to the evaluation and assessment of such activities**. PDAs are also often influential in the development and facilitation of strategic processes around politically sensitive issues, given their backgrounds and unique role in supporting the UN system as a whole (rather than one particular agency, fund or programme). In situations where the UN enjoys a productive relationship with the government, the PDA can play a valuable role in linking government and UN efforts in supporting national actors in developing strategies and frameworks for national dialogue and infrastructures for peace, often supporting alignment and /or complementarity with UN wide UNDAF and Country Programme planning processes. The inclusion of a "conflict sensitive lens" into UNDAF programming can be particularly catalytic in ensuring the UN Country Team pays heed to conflict dynamics and entry points for support conflict prevention and/or peacebuilding.

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<sup>1</sup> The main body of the report was researched and authored by Erin McCandless, and the Annex, by Kwaku Nuamah.

**3. Catalysing and facilitating conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives:** PDAs can help to identify specific, strategic initiatives that respond to the needs of the particular contexts they are working within and as identified through robust analysis and mapping of strategic efforts and entry points. This Practice Note focuses on three areas that increasingly appear across settings where PDAs are deployed as core building blocks of UN support to build capacities of national actors for conflict prevention and peacebuilding:

- **Dialogue and mediation support:** PDAs work with national and local stakeholders to develop a common understanding of problems and to collaborate on resolving them, ideally working towards preventing the risk of violence and conflict from occurring or re-occurring. PDAs can also play a central role in the UN's support to developing national capacities in conflict prevention broadly speaking, including in areas pertaining to dialogue, mediation and facilitation. By working to build the capacities of civil society actors and government and opposition stakeholders, while also facilitating the development of a conducive environment, dialogue processes are supported at all levels, bringing together government and societal stakeholders to address the issues at hand. When attached to the RC's office, PDAs can benefit from the perceived neutrality of this office and are able to leverage the in-country networks of actors built up over time by the UN system and UNDP in particular, and the convening power it holds with national actors. PDAs are often able to create space for effective civil society engagement in these processes, and they work to build capacities to enable inclusion and participation in them.
- **Reconciliation and social cohesion:** PDAs catalyse and facilitate initiatives that bring divided communities and societies together at different levels. These efforts endeavour to build social cohesion through political, economic and social processes and build relationships, as they support communities in tackling livelihood and other challenges and in mapping more peaceful, co-existent futures. These efforts take different guises in different country contexts, with some PDAs supporting reconciliation and social cohesion at the community level, with others supporting UN engagements at national levels, or a combination of both. Here it is important to note that the nature of a PDA's support to reconciliation and social cohesion activities largely flows from the conflict/political analysis, and the appropriate entry points for engagement that it reveals.
- **Infrastructures for peace:** Emerging as one of UNDP's flagship areas of work, infrastructures for peace are networks of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values, and skills that, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in a society. In the vast majority of countries where PDAs work, infrastructures for peace are being developed as they meet the logic of the overarching mission of the PDA – and the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme and wider UN work in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding – *that of supporting national actors to take the lead in, and sustain, these efforts*. PDAs are facilitating the development and strengthening of infrastructures for peace, commonly, around several areas: *early warning, particularly around election related violence prevention; conflict management, social cohesion and reconciliation; and targeting specific conflict drivers and/or key stakeholder groups*, to encourage and/or support their peace efforts.

Regardless of the specific activity or area in which a PDA is engaging, PDA efforts are geared towards building national capacity, or laying foundations for national actors to build peace and prevent conflict. Depending on context, this may involve support to institutions, community stakeholders, political actors, or civil society organisations. Many of the examples cited in this Practice Note and the accompanying annexed Case Studies highlight the different ways PDAs have been able to engage with a range of national stakeholders in this regard.

Understanding what drives promising practice requires attention to the risks and challenges that accompany a PDA's role and the operating environments they are working within that affect the UNCT as a whole. These include:

- Political instability and/or an unstable security context, which can limit the PDA's ability to move beyond the capital city and understand the broader conflict/ political dynamics;
- Not having sufficient political will, openness or support of national actors. It is important to note that the level of support may vary at different levels of society and amongst different actors;
- Deteriorating or challenging relationships and openness to engagement, particularly in the context of supporting change that some national actors may not support;
- Limited entry points within the UN system for the PDA to engage in the development of programming or provide other types of support;

- Managing expectations and the difficulties of showing results in short time frames, and balancing the relatively short term nature of a PDA's deployment with the need to embed certain capacities within the UNCT and amongst national stakeholders to support a measure of sustainability; and,
- Attracting PDAs and developing UN staff both in country and at HQ with the appropriate mix of substantive and process skills required.

The context specific nature of the demands placed on a PDA mean that there is no blueprint that creates a 'successful' PDA. What works in one context may result in abject failure in a different context. However, in reflecting on almost a decade of PDA deployments, and in particular on the exponential growth seen in PDA deployments in the last few years, there is growing evidence across cases where PDAs operate that points to a number of issues and strategies driving the emergence of promising practice. These factors can provide useful insights for current and future PDAs and other conflict prevention specialists about possible 'tricks of the trade' to keep in mind when undertaking an assignment. The following factors are discussed in the Note:

#### Strategic factors:

- Building relationships, partnerships, and trust, and identifying entry points;
- Gathering robust information and conflict analysis and involving as wide an array of stakeholders as possible in the development and interpretation of that information and analysis;
- Drawing on that analysis to develop strategies and frameworks for coordinated, coherent action;
- Prioritising the development of national capacities across all areas;
- Informing the UN's engagement with national stakeholders and programming with a rich understanding of contextual factors.

#### Operating environment factors:

- Openness and support of government to conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related work;
- Openness and support of a PDA role within the United Nations (both at UN Country Team level and at HQ);
- Ensuring PDAs possess the appropriate skill-set and are encouraged to learn new skills;
- Sufficient funding to sustain PDA posts; and,
- Ability to engage with a broad range of stakeholders – across geographical and social, political, and economic spheres of the country.

There are various efforts underway within and through the Joint Programme, and with the support of the United Nations Interagency Framework Team for Coordination on Preventive Action, to address the challenges that PDAs face and to strengthen improved practice. By spotlighting promising practices and the factors driving them, this note contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen clarity and consensus around PDA roles and comparative advantages, to support national partners in preventing conflict and building resilient and peaceful societies.

## 1.0 BACKGROUND, CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Over the last two decades the awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the UN in conflict prevention and peacebuilding has grown, alongside the need for integrated “One UN” approaches to address the evermore complex and less predictable challenges that emerge across contexts of UN operations. Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs) are a growing cadre of UN staff deployed at the field level to strategically guide the United Nations in fostering this “One UN” approach, to ultimately support and develop national efforts and capacities in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Growing in a manner largely independent to, and separate from, peacekeeping and Special Political Missions, the growing number of PDAs reflects increasing recognition of the convergence of politics, conflict, and development.

As a key instrument of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention, PDAs are typically deployed in areas where there is not a UN Security Council mandate. This is largely due to the Joint Programme’s focus on upstream conflict prevention, though the delineation between post-conflict contexts and those where a PDA has been traditionally deployed are increasingly blurred. PDAs are soon to be deployed in Timor-Leste, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, with the PDA capacity explicitly referred to in relevant Security Council Resolutions for the former two countries. Nearly a decade on, there are some 25 to 30 PDAs deployed, in addition to a number of other conflict prevention specialists supported by UNDP/BCPR, DPA, or Country Offices. While the PDA’s roles vary country by country, there are three broad areas of work that characterise the post: *provision of political and conflict analysis, connection of this analysis to specific conflict prevention programming* and, finally, *catalysing and facilitating strategic conflict prevention initiatives*. There is broad agreement and growing recognition within the system over the PDA added value in these three general goal areas, and that PDAs indeed are producing results.

At the field level the demand for PDAs is growing, with Resident Coordinators (RCs) requesting PDAs to support the work of country offices as they have increasingly come to recognise the capacity gaps in crisis and post-crisis settings, including politically complex situations, and the types of options and mechanisms available to RCs to respond to the challenges and opportunities they face. The environment for conflict prevention in development settings is also growing, with governments requesting this kind of support.

As demands for PDAs are growing, so too comes the increasing need to document and widely share some of their experiences and the lessons learned in working towards national capacity development in conflict prevention. This Practice Note aims to respond to this need – capturing and documenting some of the growing promising practices, supporting the standardising of institutional knowledge, experience and practice, and sharing this with the wider peace and development advisor community to further catalyse the coherence, effectiveness and innovation of the United Nations’ efforts to support national processes and actors in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

This Practice Note greatly benefited from a wide range of sources and interviews with PDAs – both current PDAs and those who have moved on to other positions. Case studies drew from their reports, evaluations and analysis, and interviews with headquarter staff.<sup>2</sup> Part I of this Practice Note is divided into four further sections:

- 2.0 The PDAs: Evolution and operations
- 3.0 Emerging areas of promising practice
- 4.0 Factors driving promising practice
- 5.0 Conclusions

The Annex examines three cases in detail: Ghana, Guyana and Kyrgyzstan.

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<sup>2</sup> Many of the PDAs and former PDAs supported the research process, for which we are grateful. At headquarters, Alex Shoebridge, Nirina Kiplagat, and Anne Kahl provided invaluable inputs and advice.

## 2.0 THE PDAS: EVOLUTION AND OPERATIONS

The Joint Programme that deploys PDAs was launched in 2004, though a number of PDAs and PDA-like specialists were deployed in this role prior to 2004 in countries including Guyana, Zimbabwe, and Ghana. Since 2009, the number of PDAs has doubled, with almost thirty PDAs currently deployed. The partnership brings together the political and developmental arms of the UN to strengthen national capacity for dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation. The programme is executed by UNDP on behalf of UNDP and DPA. It provides seed funding to emerging and ongoing conflict prevention initiatives in various countries and enhances the ability of both UNDP and DPA to deliver on their respective mandates.

Since 2004, support from these Joint Programme initiatives have contributed in a wide range of countries to violence-free elections or referenda, the resolution of specific conflicts or deadlocks, the sustaining of viable platforms for dialogue and conflict resolution, and the more general reducing of insecurity. With the work of the PDAs often instrumental, the programme brings together technical experts, and desk officers from regional divisions and bureaus of DPA and UNDP, as well as relevant field-based colleagues, to provide analytical, technical, and financial assistance for such initiatives as well as to provide direct support to the PDA's work in-country.<sup>3</sup>

While a PDA's roles vary country by country, and the weight broadly given to analysis versus strategy and programming is dependent upon situational demands and responds to a PDA's strengths, it is agreed that the bulk of a PDA's time should be devoted to working with the RC to deliver specific conflict prevention results. In support of the One UN approach, it is expected that the PDA will spend approximately 20% of his/her time serving the UNCT. As such, the RCs are meant to encourage PDA participation in UNCT meetings to share analysis that can inform UNCT programming and strategy, and PDAs are meant to assist the UNCT with overall conflict analysis and applying conflict sensitive practice to the development of UNDAFs. It is also envisaged that a PDA placement shall be accompanied by the deployment of an appropriately qualified national officer who will understudy the PDA with a view to taking over these responsibilities.<sup>4</sup> This also helps to ensure that the PDA team possesses relevant language skills, a potentially deeper understanding of the political and development context that can complement the PDA's position as an internationally recruited 'outsider'. Augmenting this capacity through partnering with UNVs or through the JPO Programme have also been sought, and in some cases implemented, though there are opportunities to more systematically partner in this regard.

Through its oversight of the UN's conflict prevention community of practice, the UN Interagency Framework Team for Coordination on Preventive Action (Framework Team) supports PDAs, who are part of this CoP, in numerous ways, including: the provision of induction programmes for PDAs, linking PDAs to available resources and support across the UN system, and providing support on thematic issues identified by PDAs and RCs to be areas of importance pertaining to the UN's work in conflict prevention.

Prioritisation of requests for the deployment of PDAs through the Joint Programme is based on the following set of criteria:

1. Analysis as to the potential for increasing societal tension or violent conflict;
2. Analysis of the comparative advantage and added value of Joint Programme conflict prevention initiatives, as well as the availability of entry points, or the potential for developing them;
3. Ability of the RC to innovate and undertake strategic initiatives for prevention;
4. Ability of UNDP/UNCT to co-fund interventions.<sup>5</sup>


Prior to agreeing to the selection of a given PDA post, a joint UNDP-DPA mission is usually<sup>6</sup> carried out to review and agree with the RC/UNCT and examine the national situation/context, to explore the strategic opportunities and entry points that programme support could help advance as well as the specific roles of a PDA if deemed appropriate.

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<sup>3</sup> Joint Programme, Report of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention: 2010-2012," 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Joint Programme, "Standard Operating Procedures for Accessing and Requesting Support from the UNDP-DPA Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention," March 2013, p.3.

<sup>5</sup> Joint Programme, SOPs, p.1.



Of the 25+/- Joint Programme PDAs, close to half are in Africa, followed by PDAs in Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific, and the Arab states. Given the prevention mandate, they have in general been located in countries where there is a threat of violence.<sup>7</sup> Increasingly there is awareness, given the recognition of conflict recurrence propensity, that PDAs may well be needed in post-conflict peacebuilding contexts. PDAs for example will shortly be deployed to Timor Leste and to Sierra Leone. While this has ramifications for the types of work the PDAs will likely undertake it also has implications at a more systemic level in terms of how the Joint Programme relates to other parts of the UN's conflict prevention architecture (such as the PBF) as well as peacekeeping and Special Political Missions in the context of transitions.

There are also a range of PDA “types”, or conflict prevention specialists, deployed unilaterally by BCPR that fall outside of the purview of the Joint Programme. This can be for a variety of reasons, as they may be aligned with a particular BCPR or UNDP programme or work in countries that are either BCPR priority countries and/or mission settings. While they are considered to be separate, many of them undertake similar types of roles though tend to focus more on programmatic leadership and are embedded in the UNDP Country Offices, not the RC's office. They also fall outside of the remit of the standard reporting lines of the Joint Programme.

Numerous institutional and strategic challenges surrounding the smooth functioning and desired impact of PDAs have arisen over the years, notably, where they are deployed, how they are selected, the precise nature of their functions and the balance of how they spend their time, and the conduciveness of the operating environment for their work. These are being systematically engaged through the steadfast, ongoing efforts of the Joint Programme, with support of the Framework Team.<sup>8</sup> Notably, the bringing together of high-level workshops of senior staff and resident coordinators from headquarters and country offices in the “Montreux Meetings” (2009 and 2012) under the rubric of “enhancing support to RCs and UNCTs in complex political situations” have helped to address the wider contextual challenges, building a conducive and collaborative environment amongst UN partners for conflict prevention and peacebuilding work in non-peacekeeping mission contexts. The work of PDAs, and addressing institutional and contextual obstacles, has been a featured discussion in these meetings. Retreats specifically for PDAs have also been held, in Kenya (2007), Panama (2008) and Sweden (2010). Partly in response to recommendations made on the occasions listed above, the Joint Programme has sought to standardise a number of aspects pertaining to the deployment, recruitment, and assessment of a PDA, as well as seeking to make reporting lines to DPA and UNDP more effective. While these efforts have sought to bring some uniformity to the deployment and management of PDAs, it is important to note that the duties and responsibilities required of the position are largely determined by the country context.

### 3.0 EMERGING AREAS OF PROMISING PRACTICE

As highlighted in section 2.0, it is generally understood that the bulk of a PDA's work centres around two broad and interlinked activities: analysis – in particular undertaking *political analysis*, and *support* to the design and development of appropriate United Nations policies, strategies and programming. Given the UN's commitment to nationally led and owned processes, a PDA's orientation is often focused on providing technical and analytical support to national partners, particularly in the area of mediation, and in promoting linkages between high level politics and grassroots work.

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<sup>6</sup> Joint missions may not be necessary if a prior UNDP/BCPR or DPA mission had recently been completed and provides sufficient information to duly inform the decision-making of the Technical Committee. Joint Programme, SOPs, p.1.

<sup>7</sup> In BCPR terms, this means “tier 2” or “priority” countries. PDAs are primarily in this category, with lesser numbers in “Tier 3” or “watch list” countries, and some not even on BCPR's tiered lists. Only one PDA has been deployed in a “Tier 1” or “top priority” country of BCPR – Mali – and this was a temporary deployment. BCPR's priority countries are determined on the basis of a variety of factors that are agreed through management discussion.

<sup>8</sup> The Framework Team has supported the implementation of recommendations identified in the ‘Montreux II’ process while also responding to needs identified by PDAs by leading the inter-agency development of an online course on conflict-sensitive approaches (see section 3.2).

The following sections set out broad areas of PDA engagement where there are emerging promising practices. The analysis builds upon and endeavours to integrate findings from previous analyses of PDAs,<sup>9</sup> while drawing on consultations with PDAs and UN staff at HQ engaging with the work of the PDAs.

It must be underscored that these areas of promising practice manifest differently in different contexts, and are in most cases working in tandem or are building blocks in overarching integrated strategies designed to maximise positive peacebuilding and conflict prevention results.

## 3.1 POLITICAL AND CONFLICT ANALYSIS

A key role of the PDAs is analysis – practical analysis that the UN as a whole can utilise for conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy and programming. Bearing in mind the various types of analysis utilised in the United Nations system – i.e. political, context, conflict, and risk analysis, to name a few, PDAs broadly tend to employ the following approaches:<sup>10</sup>

- ***providing political and conflict analysis to inform the UN's positioning both in-country and at HQ level;***
- ***undertaking or facilitating conflict analysis or targeted hot spot analysis to support the identification of entry points for programming, planning and strategy across the UNCT;***
- ***supporting participatory or stakeholder-led conflict and context analysis with the aim of building consensus around the drivers of conflicts and appropriate responses.*** This often involves developing a national understanding on the types of dialogue processes and frameworks required to address the divisive issues. This can be particularly valuable in divided societies, where strategic choices and responses need to be made premised upon a nationally owned understanding of what drives conflict.

Often understated, the PDAs play critical roles in fostering national context and conflict analysis as integral to their overarching role in supporting the development of national capacities in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In this sense, the PDAs across national contexts have worked in innovative ways and varying levels to catalyse greater national efforts. They have also worked to bring together national and international stakeholders to forge more joint analysis and sharing of analysis to better serve more coherent and coordinated responses overall. This may be done as an overarching analysis of what is driving conflict in the country, which was done in Kenya prior to the development of integrated frameworks and joint programmes to serve better coordinated and conflict sensitive government and the international community efforts (see Kenya example, 3.2). Or, it may be more targeted, addressing particular hot spots or challenges, as the case of Georgia, below illustrates. In Ghana (see Annex), the PDA also conducted a highly consultative and strategic hot spot analysis around the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis, which shaped conflict prevention responses that appear to have supported a peaceful election. Priorities identified were supported by UNDP – notably conflict management institutions and processes (see 3.3.3, Infrastructures for Peace) – that served both in the short and long term to facilitate peaceful management of disputes in the region (discussed further in Part II, 1.0).

### Ghana: Strategic hot spot analysis to prevent election-related violence

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<sup>9</sup> An influential 2010 analysis of PDA work, for example, suggested that improved effectiveness would evolve through more integrated conflict prevention strategies at country level, rooted in stronger shared conflict analysis and theories of change, with attention to addressing *structural* issues (and not simply *crisis* issues). Stronger tools, clarified concepts and frameworks with commitments to mainstreaming conflict sensitivity to guide decision-making, as well as M&E practices were also pointed to. “Assessment of BCPR Supported Conflict Prevention Initiatives,” CDA, March 2010. More recently, an April 2013 report of the Joint Programme suggested four areas of impact of the PDAs. These pertain to their ability to: 1) Address immediate triggers and preventing violence; 2) Support national stakeholders implement peaceful elections; 3) Build national and local capacity for dialogue and conflict resolution; 4) Strategically position the UN and increasing the effectiveness of UNCT programming.” Joint Programme,” Report, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> While the first two conflict analysis functions related to the United Nations are often highlighted in documents pertaining to the PDA functions, the third area is clearly of equal import given the key role of PDAs in building national capacities for conflict prevention.

Hot spot analysis conducted by the PDA in Ghana in 2004 helped to identify the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis<sup>11</sup> as the biggest threat to the forthcoming national elections, and to identify measures that supported prevention of violence in the election that followed. Through stakeholder consultations in the Dagbon region involving chiefs, government representatives, and civil society, the PDA elicited perspectives on the causes of conflict, the potential for escalation (particularly during the elections), and options for peaceful resolution. This provided a deep analysis of the conflict dynamics, the security challenges – i.e. lack of trust of security agencies by some communities, and plausible entry points for both the United Nations and government to support peaceful responses. Priorities identified were supported by UNDP – notably conflict management institutions and processes (see 3.3.3, Infrastructures for Peace) – that served both in the short and long term to facilitate peaceful management of disputes in the region (discussed further in Part II, 1.0).

### **Georgia: Facilitating a common political level context analysis**

Georgia still faces many challenges related to sustainable peace and development, resulting in large part from its two unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The international community's engagement has often been fragmented, lacking a common, coherent understanding of the conflict dynamics. To address this, in 2011 the RC's office initiated a participatory context analysis process with ambassadors and international organisations present in Georgia. The PDA supported the RC's skilful convening of parties and setting of difficult issues on the table, while an external consultant formally facilitated to ensure a participant owned process and result. After six months, the group conducted a common analysis of the drivers and structural sources of conflicts and a framework for collective action emerged. The framework was based on a shared vision of how to manage relationships with the parties more effectively. This was the first time international actors had engaged substantively on the issues, and several valuable initiatives spun off, including a Joint Consultative Forum chaired by the PDA to address gaps identified in the analysis. The process also reinforced the RC's convening function and ability to link critical political, security and development concerns forging a more integrated strategic agenda for UN support both at national level, and also on geopolitical issues within the region. The RC has closely coordinated with the UN co-Chair of the Geneva Discussions,<sup>12</sup> which has strengthened the UN's ability to support a structured and deeply informed dialogue and related action at both levels on sensitive issues. This approach also ensured greater protection for UNDP and its partners working in Abkhazia, including by leveraging political support among international partners to advocate with relevant authorities with a view to maintaining access to the conflict regions and continuing to deliver assistance to conflict affected communities.

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<sup>11</sup> The Dagbon conflict is part of a long running dispute over succession to the Dagomba throne and a dominant feature of the security profile of Northern Ghana.

<sup>12</sup> For example, the RC has closely coordinated with the UN co-Chair of the Geneva Discussions, which is co-chaired by the UN, OSCE, and EU and seeks to bring international stakeholders together to address the problems of the 2008 conflict in Georgia and identify ways to improve security and humanitarian conditions. This has strengthened the UN's ability to support a structured and deeply informed dialogue and related action at both levels on sensitive issues. This approach also ensured greater protection for UNDP and its partners working in Abkhazia, including by leveraging political support among international partners to advocate with relevant authorities with a view to maintaining access to the conflict regions and continuing to deliver assistance to conflict affected communities.

## ***Innovations and Improvements in Analysis***

Emerging trends in PDA analysis reflect growing global awareness around the need to centrally engage society in analysis and to ensure action flows from this. The employment of public surveys to support the building of more publically owned analysis and decision-making around priorities is illustrative. There is wide agreement that better use should be made of the results of public opinion surveys and research, which can help to identify risks and provide a basis for scenario planning<sup>13</sup> (see Cyprus case, 3.3.1).

The demand for regional conflict and peace analysis is also rising given the propensity of conflict drivers to not rest easily within borders, especially amongst PDAs themselves. The Kyrgyzstan PDA, for example, has analysed the drivers of emerging inter-state conflict in the Fergana valley of Central Asia and has laid out various worst-case scenarios relating to the effects of rising demographic pressures on land and water resources, the impact of growing insecurity in Afghanistan on religious extremism and organized crime in neighbouring states, and the border demarcation challenges and disputes between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The Sahel is another region that is illustrative of situations where conflict drivers too easily cross borders, and strategic responses can only be effective if tackled across borders.

Other innovations include the use of analysis processes and resulting products to directly and dynamically inform current national political decision-making. In Bolivia, for example, the Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios (PAPEP) project, being used by a “PDA type” located in UNDP’s field governance team, is a high-level knowledge network for strategic political analysis and advice. PAPEP’s work involves the production of substantive knowledge products (applied research and analysis, including conflict analysis and short and medium term prospective political scenarios) to fostering dialogue and consensus building for decision-making on strategic issues in national development processes. The PAPEP approach has inspired similar tools in other countries, including the Political Analysis and Emerging Scenarios initiative (PAESi) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Launched in October 2012 after a series of consultations with PAPEP, PAESi aims to strengthen national capacities to undertake political analysis for mid-term development planning and to explore and generate prospective political scenarios that development actors – including national institutions as well as international partners – can respond to.<sup>14</sup> As stakeholders participate in defining, shaping and then interpreting the analysis, opportunities are created to discuss potentially divisive issues, and build their relationships. The very act of analysis thereby becomes an opportunity for peacebuilding.

Conflict analysis as a practice has evolved over the past decade and is now generally accepted within the international system (and the UN in particular) as the foundation for effective conflict prevention programming. As such, the UN system as a whole is working to improve its capacities for analysis and cross agency coordination, and a number of initiatives are underway in this regard. There is also agreement for the need to have a common methodology for identifying and integrating political, economic and social analysis in a manner that highlights risks for development, and entry points for addressing them.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, there is increasing recognition of the complementarities and comparative advantages of various approaches to understanding and analysing a particular context, whether it is from a human rights, political economy, gender, or conflict-related standpoint. By virtue of their work with agencies in the UNCT, PDAs often operate at the nexus of these different approaches.

An updated version of UNDP’s Conflict Related Development Analysis (CDA) has been finalised and launched in mid 2013. Presented in modular format, it offers tools for conflict analysis, with guidance for analysing the strategic positioning for the UNCT, and how to engage with political processes and programme design that respond to the analysis of conflict. The CDA can also be used with national stakeholders – to support their engaging in reflections and analysis to better understand their situation and context, as well as to build consensus on the approaches to address conflict drivers. This will add value to UNDAF processes, which presently are built upon Common Country Assessments (CCAs), not considered

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<sup>13</sup> Joint Programme, “Enhancing Support to RCs and UNCTs in Complex Political Situations: Debrief on Montreux II”.

<sup>14</sup> PAESi’s three staged methodology involves: 1) defining and establishing the analytical framework by bringing national policy practitioners and international advisors and academics together to identify key trends, challenges, and emerging opportunities for the country’s development; 2) research and data collection, which combines both primary and secondary data, drawn from subject-matter experts on key issues facing the country, public opinion polls, as well as focus interviews with key individuals; 3) examination and verification of research findings by national political, social, and economic stakeholders, involving a scenario building exercise.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

evidence based. The CDA will help to strengthen system results, in particular, those pertaining to the prevention of conflict and the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity (see section 3.2).

PDA political analysis and reporting has been streamlined, with bi-monthly reports now regularly submitted to UNDP and DPA. This regular reporting is also serving the ability of the Joint Programme to raise awareness about the activities and impacts of PDAs on the ground, and to ensure timely and coherent HQ streams of support. More emphasis is also being placed upon exit reports and systematic handover processes for RCs and PDAs, to ensure greater sharing of experiences, lessons and ideas, and policy and programming continuity.<sup>16</sup> Sharing of bi-monthly reports amongst PDAs in the same geographical region is also increasingly practised, offering another opportunity for information and analysis-sharing as well as creating linkages between PDAs to informally share experiences, good practices, and lessons learned.

The UN's online Conflict Prevention Community of Practice (administered by the Framework Team) further provides a valuable forum for PDAs and other conflict prevention specialists to engage in discussions, share good practices and information from both inside and outside the system, which support ever stronger PDA analysis.

## 3.2 CONFLICT PREVENTION STRATEGY AND PROGRAMMING

At the core of the PDA role is the ability to connect political and conflict analysis with strategy and programming. PDAs support the analysis, design and planning of peacebuilding and conflict prevention programming and strategy across UN country teams, and work with government and often other international and national stakeholders to do the same. This often involves building the skills, entry points and buy-in for conflict sensitive approaches, that is, infusing awareness of conflict prevention and peacebuilding concerns into existing development planning, policy and programme frameworks. At the level of the UNCT or UNDP Country Office, these efforts can mean that the PDA is in a position to help break the silos that often exist around sectoral work and support integration and coordination. This critically fosters greater engagement and coherence in strategy across the political and development sides of the UN – a historic obstacle to the realisation of the “One UN”.

When linked to the RC's office and supervised by the RC, the PDAs support the work of the wider UNCT, although they are valued and used varying in different contexts. While not all PDAs sit within the RC Office. It is increasingly considered a requirement of the Joint Programme through the Standard Operating Procedures. While a PDA's natural affiliation may lie with UNDP's conflict prevention or governance programming, PDAs are envisaged to bring the system together to jointly assess conflict-related issues and, importantly, discuss the implications of these for the UN's activities and engagements in-country (see 3.1). Then working with and building upon or complimenting existing UN planning and strategy processes such as the UNDAF, and national processes such as the PRSP, the PDAs:

- **facilitate processes to develop joint strategies and programmes**, ideally through highly participatory processes;
- **support conflict sensitivity mainstreaming in development programming**, and;
- **support the design of specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding programming and the development of appropriate M&E systems.**

Strategies and programmes are often aimed at both addressing immediate triggers and deeper drivers of violence, preventing conflict, and building national and local capacities for dialogue and conflict resolution (section 3.3 highlights common thematic areas of focus). Often, joint strategic frameworks and programmes are developed to maximise resources and impact (see the case of Kenya below).

Because of the very nature and flexibility of PDA roles, and in light of the fact that they are posited to have access to a range of different stakeholders within a country, they have access to at times unique information and analysis, and awareness of strategic entry points that have the potential to catalyse transformative change and proliferate positive impacts for preventing and transforming conflict, and building resilient, peaceful societies. They are thus well placed to

<sup>16</sup> Montreux II, 2<sup>nd</sup> Progress Report Final.

support the development, humanitarian and political sides of the UN in fostering strategies and programming that is conflict and peace sensitive. They can also be influential in the development and facilitation of strategic, integrative processes around particularly politically sensitive issues, as the Sri Lanka case below illustrates.

### **Kenya: Creating unified frameworks for programming and strategy**

In Kenya, the PDA spearheaded efforts to foster integration and coordination of programming and strategy amongst national and international partners around conflict prevention and peacebuilding. An overarching framework to guide UN engagement with government was first developed to focus on community security and social cohesion – a first of its kind amongst a UNCT. The framework complemented the UNDAF, focusing distinctively on conflict prevention and peacebuilding issues. A technical committee was set up with members of the UNCT and government, mandated to identify priority areas and ensure synergies with the UNDAF, and to develop a common programming and M&E framework. A similar trajectory was then followed with government. Working with the key government counterpart, the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC), a concept note guiding coordination arrangements between the UN and the government on peacebuilding and conflict prevention was developed. As part of this overall process, trainings in conflict sensitivity were conducted for both UN programme and operations staff, and for government planning officers in all regions of Kenya. A joint programme with UNDP and government followed, heavily focused on strengthening Kenya's infrastructure for peace (see section 3.3.3). A Programme Executive Group (PEG) was developed to oversee the programme and ensure results. It was jointly chaired by government and involved implementing partners and non-implementing partners across government and civil society, as well as donor representatives. The mechanism helped improve the sharing of information, joint planning and implementation and is considered a best practice in UNDP and among donors for the way it has improved collective action and manifested clear results.

### **Cyprus: Supporting reconciliation and social cohesion efforts**

In Cyprus, the PDA's work in support of both the UN's Good Offices and the UNDP-ACT programme is one example where 'Track II' activities have facilitated crucial inter-communal engagement in the peace process (see section 3.3.1). In light of an ongoing political stalemate, the PDA in Cyprus has supported ongoing community-level activities critical to building social cohesion from the bottom up in this divided setting. This has centrally involved bringing UNDP-ACT's local partners from both the Turkish and the Greek Cypriot communities together to identify and build the role of civil society in the wider reconciliation process. This process is supportive of the official negotiations, but goes further in providing space for the communities to map a common vision for a future Cyprus. Working with partners, the PDA's activities have focused on supporting public awareness and engagement in community-level reconciliation efforts, on building partnerships between key civil society actors and decision-makers to support policy and action on reconciliation, and on supporting a strong vibrant network of actors advocating for reconciliation.

### **Sri Lanka: Developing strategic entry points in highly politicised environments**

At the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka about 11,000 individuals alleged by the GoSL to be members of the LTTE were separated from the rest of the IDP population in holding centres without any access to ICRC and other UN protection agencies. The Government requested the support of the UNCT, including IOM, in the relief and rehabilitation of these individuals. Given the high political and security sensitivity of this case the UNCT agreed to base any support on a carefully negotiated plan with the Government that would allow for full access to the detainees. The PDA was nominated to head a DDR Inter-agency Working Group to coordinate the response. This commenced with a rapid stocktaking exercise to determine what individual agencies have already committed to DDR country wide, and was followed with the development of two Standard Operating Procedures – one on 'release and return' and the other on reintegration. Weekly

meetings were held with the Minister of Social Welfare and the RC, cultivating the government's acceptance and gaining endorsement for the use of the SOPs. An important action in the SOP on release and return was the full identification and establishment of a database, despite government reluctance, for all the 'separatees' prior to their release. IOM led in developing the database that allowed the UN to have a sense of how many persons were in these centres including their physical condition, gender, and original community. The PDA also led the coordination of the UN Agencies in supporting the government to develop a National Action Plan (NAP) for Reintegration of former combatants in Sri Lanka. He was also involved in mediating tensions amongst UN agencies about whether and how the UN should be involved in the DDR process, and his previous efforts to build relationships with heads of the various UN agencies proved vital in facilitating a one UN response. Key to the success of the process was ensuring transparency as a means of building and maintaining trust, in particular with government partners.

PDAs are not meant to get pulled into programme implementation; while in early years this was more common, there is increasing recognition that PDAs can add most value by providing strategic guidance, regular and robust analysis, and technical support to the UN's programming and political engagements in-country. That said, at times, PDAs can implement specific and discreet conflict prevention initiatives and programmatic activities that are deemed too politically sensitive to be conducted via regular UNCT programming (see the Sri Lanka case above). Involvement in programming at a technical and strategic level can also grant the PDA access to key stakeholders that reinforce the PDA's ability to develop sound analysis and, in turn, help to inform entry points for UN programming and political engagement in-country.

Joint programming on peacebuilding within the UN system has received a boost with the development of the UN's Peacebuilding Fund, now in operation for seven years. PDAs are often playing strategic roles in the development of these joint programmes, based on shared conflict analysis. The applicability of such analysis to concepts such as human security and democratic governance have also led to opportunities for PDAs to support country team proposals to those respective trust funds, too.

### **Conflict sensitivity mainstreaming**

The PDAs have themselves been at the helm of a growing demand for conflict sensitivity mainstreaming in programmes across the UN system, reflecting a similar movement across the international system. RCs and country teams have also increasingly called for more training in this area, and a greater systemisation of tools and resources to support their work.<sup>17</sup> The UN is responding, building its awareness and toolbox in this area, with PDAs seen to be a key delivery mechanism rolling out conflict sensitivity training and practice.

In addition to the new CDA (see section 3.1), which facilitates an understanding of how to embed strategic analysis into programming, a Task Force of the Framework Team<sup>18</sup> is developing an online, self-paced training course on conflict sensitivity and conflict-sensitive programming. The online course will offer UN staff the opportunity to acquire deeper understanding, practical knowledge, and hands-on skills to utilise conflict-sensitive approaches in humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and security work, among others, within the UN and our partner organisations.

Despite progress in tool development, there remains need for greater consensus around the use of design, monitoring and evaluation (D, M&E) tools for peacebuilding and conflict prevention programming. The lack of consensus and adoption of a UN approach in this area affects the ability of PDAs to support programming design.

Ideally, conflict analysis is done jointly with government, feeding into the identification of strategies and programming, and the infusion of conflict and peace sensitivity into national planning processes such as the PRSP. Conflict analysis is, however, a sensitive topic for many governments and their interest and willingness to participate in and even lead such processes depends on political and security factors often beyond the PDA and wider UN's ability to influence. As the cases throughout this Note illustrate, government engagement in conflict analysis is occurring in myriad ways, and the trend in

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<sup>17</sup> PDA retreats and Montreux meetings have consistently identified this issue. As noted in the Montreux II recommendations, "More rapidly deployable analytical expertise is needed as part of existing HQ rosters in order to assist with risk mapping and conflict analyses in the context of UNDAF processes, development of peace-building priority plans, and the onset of potentially violent tensions."

<sup>18</sup> The Task Force is comprised of DOCO, DPA, OCHA, PBSO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNSSC, and UN Women.

this direction is expanding. Often this begins with discreet engagements, that create opportunities for more detailed discussions that create space to identify challenges and potential solutions, often with a variety of stakeholders participating or otherwise engaged. The following innovative example from Ecuador illustrates how training programmes offer a means to lay foundations for conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding. Training workshops can offer a “safe space” for bringing national stakeholders together in new ways, inviting openness to engage in collective reflection that can lead to innovation and/ or simply a willingness to try new approaches. The Kyrgyzstan case that follows demonstrates an instance where the government has full buy-in of conflict sensitivity, with government and state institutions leading by applying these methods to the review and development of laws.

### **Ecuador – Training as an entry point for strategy and programming**

The PDA in Ecuador has conducted several trainings of government officials that have served as entry points for developing initiatives to address actual conflicts and, in some cases, as platforms to begin negotiating sensitive issues. Training courses on conflict prevention and transformation have provided spaces for undertaking analysis of specific conflicts and generating a better understating of conflict parties’ positions, interests, and needs as well as underlying causes and collectively identify possible transformative approaches to address them. Specific thematic conflict issues have featured, including those pertaining to indigenous rights, land issues, illegal trade of small arms, citizen security, and protection issues. The Vice-Ministry of Interior has sought to replicate the trainings for staff at local levels. Training material on conflict prevention and transformation has also been included in the curricula for capacity building of the Ministry’s field staff. Upon the request of government, the PDA has further sought to carry out similar processes on some of the most sensitive conflict issues in the country. For example, following a violent conflict in an oil rich area in the Amazonia rain forest between the indigenous Huaorani and Taromenane, a training involving a participatory conflict analysis was carried out in this forest-protected area, with Police, Military and Ministries staff, including indigenous people from the Huoarani ethnic group.<sup>19</sup> This produced a strategy for conflict transformation that will be discussed in an ad-hoc commission created by the President to address the conflict, comprising the Minister of Justice, Minister of Politics, and a recognized member of civil society.

### **Kyrgyzstan: Facilitating conflict sensitive law-making**

In Kyrgyzstan, the United Nations has sought to develop conflict sensitivity across its UNDAF and programming, and to support government to do the same. As part of these efforts, and in response to rising social tensions (caused by the collapse of Bakiev government in April 2010 and violent ethnic clashes in two months later), the PDA, with UNDP support, assisted the government of Kyrgyzstan to develop a methodology for ensuring that laws passed by its young parliament<sup>i</sup> do not create or exacerbate underlying social and political tensions. After a global search produced no compelling methodology to learn from, a team of experts and stakeholders (including MPs, government officials, legal experts, and experts in conflict prevention and resolution) were gathered to develop, test, and pilot the methodology.<sup>20</sup> The methodology was applied to twenty-nine draft laws under consideration by Parliament. They found nearly half (14 of the 29) to be conflict-insensitive and recommended revisions. With Kyrgyzstan still in need of conflict-sensitive laws and policies, the PDA (and the UNCT in general) continues to work for a universal application of the methodology to all new

<sup>19</sup> The Huoarani live in voluntary isolation in the forest while several of their members work within the Ministry of Justice.

<sup>20</sup> It was approved by MPs and other participants in an international conference on the role of parliament in conflict prevention and peacebuilding held in early November 2012.

laws passed by the Kyrgyzstan Parliament.

Examples of mainstreaming conflict analysis across strategic frameworks and programmes at a national level with government partners remain limited. This likely has much to do with the challenge of creating buy-in from existing sectors, departments and/or ministries and other organizing structures for planning around thematic areas. Adopting a conflict sensitive approach requires a change in thinking about the core problems and challenges in a particular sector, and a distinct methodology in terms of design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and/or strategy, with requisite funding and programme implementation implications. This asks a lot in a setting where all actors are under pressure to produce results.

In most cases to date, UNDAFs and PRSPs adopt a standalone output or pillar dealing with conflict prevention or peacebuilding concerns, or link it to another sector, such as governance or security. In the case of Niger, for example, where governance deficiencies are considered a key root cause of conflicts, PDA advocacy led to the formulation of an output combining Governance, Peace and Security. Liberia is often considered a best practice of efforts to infuse conflict sensitivity within the UNDAF and PRSP. While a traditional PDA was not in place, efforts of a PDA “type” working with the DSRSG/RC/HC and UNDP support facilitated adoption of UN and government derived conflict analysis in both the UNDAF and PRSP. Efforts to mainstream were undertaken, although challenged by capacity constraints and time pressures across both the UN system and government.<sup>21</sup> Over time however, successive UNDAFs and PRSPs were able to deepen the analysis and mainstreaming.

Nepal, with PDA ‘type’ support is considered a best practice in mainstreaming conflict sensitivity within UN programming. Through the RC’s office, conflict sensitivity strongly influenced the country analysis for the UNDAF 2013-2017, and it is a guiding principle for the 5-year plan. This involves RC/HC Field Coordination Offices undertaking regular regional and national context analyses and district profiling, and the RC/HC’s office is supporting the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity into the principles, selection criteria and reporting requirements for all future programmes funded through the UN Peace Fund in Nepal.

### 3.3 CATALYSING AND FACILITATING CONFLICT PREVENTION INITIATIVES

PDAs often play a role in catalysing and facilitating the development of conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives that respond to the needs of the particular contexts they are working within. As highlighted above, these often and ideally stem out of robust analysis and strategic conceptual and programming frameworks. While the precise role of a PDA may change in countries that have seen a number of PDA deployments over a period of time, PDAs are expected to sustain the changes initiated by previous PDAs while also supporting the creating of new entry points. A core intention is always to work alongside national actors, and to support the development of their capacities to undertake and sustain these initiatives. This of course, is realised with sensitivity to maintaining UN principles and standards, and at times, challenges and dilemmas arise that may require particular attention from political and security elements of the system. These engagements also have to be carefully premised on the analysis developed by the PDA (in collaboration with others) and upon consideration of the political sensitivities and potential added-value of the UN engaging in such support.

The following three areas – **3.3.1 dialogue and mediation support**, **3.3.2 reconciliation and social cohesion**, and **3.3.3 infrastructures for peace** – are illustrative but not comprehensive. At the same time, they increasingly appear across country settings where PDAs are deployed as core building blocks of UN support for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. All three focus on supporting the development of skills, capacities and resources of national stakeholders to address potential triggers and drivers of conflict, and to systematically build structures and processes to investigate and transform the roots of conflict. They are inter-linked and mutually supportive.

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<sup>21</sup> “Integrated Approaches to Peacebuilding in Transitional Settings: Lessons from Liberia,” *ISS Paper*, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2008.

### 3.3.1 DIALOGUE AND MEDIATION SUPPORT

PDAs support dialogue and mediation efforts in many if not all countries in which they are situated. They work with national and local stakeholders to develop a common understanding of problems and to collaborate on resolving them. These dialogue processes have taken place at national or sub-national level, bringing together, as necessary, government, civil society including key stakeholder groups such as youth, chieftaincy and women, and faith-based organisations. They often begin even before conflict escalates, with the aim of supporting national actors to find consensus-based solutions, transform conflict dynamics, and ultimately prevent the risk of violent conflict from emerging or recurring. Attached to the RC's office, PDAs are often able to benefit from the perceived neutrality of the UN (and UNDP in particular), and the convening power that it has with stakeholders at all levels of society, as well as national actors. PDAs are often able to create space for effective civil society engagement in these processes. They often build local capacities to be able to manage difficult conversations and facilitate social exchange that enable a society to deal effectively with its challenges.<sup>22</sup>

As the cases in this section illustrate, dialogue and mediation support occurs at multiple levels, often in tandem and/or sequentially, as entry points are developed, new actors and stakeholder groups engaged, and processes are deepened and broadened over time. The cases also illustrate the ways the UN is engaged at different levels, and the important role that PDAs can play in fostering collaborative, multi-sectoral and multi-track levels of engagement.

#### **Fiji: Facilitating a National Roundtable on Peace and Development**

The Roundtable on Peace and Development in Fiji is a multi-stakeholder social dialogue process that, since 2009, has annually brought together 100 representatives from government, military and civil society actors, building consensus around the conflict drivers and providing a forum for discussion of sensitive national issues. It is organised by a full-time secretariat directed by a committee of 12 members drawn from civil society organizations, the Fijian Government, academia, media and the private sector. While UNDP has convened the dialogue and the RC has led the process, creating space, the PDA has played a key role in supporting the preparatory phases of meetings with different actors. UN DPA, UNDP headquarters and the UNDP Sub-Regional Centre in Suva have lent additional support to the process.<sup>23</sup> The Third Roundtable held in 2012 had the objective of enabling mutual points of convergence regarding governance in Fiji, and identifying areas requiring further discussion.<sup>24</sup> While trust of international actors has not always been strong, this process appears to have the trust of all parties, cultivating a sense that positive results are emerging.

While the example from Fiji illustrates the formalisation of a multi-stakeholder mediation process around sensitive conflict issues into an annual political one, the cases of Lesotho and Cyprus suggest a critical growing trend where PDAs are working to bring track one and track two efforts together in more genuinely “national” processes. These cases illustrate the shift away from simply elite level or state-based approaches to resolving conflict and towards the crucial involvement of other actors and “Track II” processes – a theme underscored in the Secretary General’s 2009 “Report of the Secretary General on Enhancing Mediation and its Support Activities.” Cyprus importantly illustrates the ways in which the political and developmental sides of the UN can work to support these tracks both individually and collaboratively to maximise results, while the Lesotho case illustrates the role the UN can play in supporting civil society actors, in this case religious leaders, support a mediation process.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Bureau For Crisis Prevention And Recovery (BCPR), Bureau Strategy, 2007-2011, January 2007.

<sup>23</sup> Report and Recommendations on the Third Roundtable, UNDP, July 2012, p. 1

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

### **Lesotho: Supporting traditional structures to achieve peace**

In Lesotho, the UN, with strong PDA facilitation, played a key role in ensuring stakeholders remained committed to dialogue in the lead-up to the Parliamentary elections in May 2012. For the first time in the nation's history, the transfer of power during civilian rule passed without violence, thanks in no small part to the ability of the church-led mediation efforts and the ability of political leaders to place faith in the electoral process. The strong support for the Church in general gave these "insider" mediators strong legitimacy, which made it impossible for them to be ignored by politicians. Behind the scenes, the UN (and particularly the RC and PDA supported by the Joint Programme) assisted the Heads of Churches in their role as brokers, while encouraging political leaders to stay in the talks and to actively support the election. The PDA played an important role in providing technical and operational support to this initiative, supporting capacities to keep the process moving. The experience demonstrates the potential of the UN working together. Led by the RC, the UNCT was able to draw on a range of resources in their support to national stakeholders, including DPA's Electoral Assistance Division and Mediation Support Unit.

### **Cyprus: Building Track I and II linkages for a more inclusive peace process**

In Cyprus, with the DPA Special Political mission, the Office of the Special Advisor for the Secretary General (OSASG), and UNDP- Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT),<sup>25</sup> the PDA has worked to create linkages between the formal peace negotiations that the OSASG supports, and wider civil society driven "Track II" reconciliation efforts that UNDP supports, to address the longstanding divides between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. These have included public polls and analysis for the negotiating teams (Cyprus 2015 project), the convening of public debates on Federalism and other important issues around the peace process (Engage project) across the island, and regular advice to the Economics Technical Committee (Interdependence project), as well as bringing peace-makers from Northern Ireland, South Africa and the Balkans to share experiences and models (Participatory Peace-making Initiative). These initiatives have had some traction in influencing first track negotiators about the value of a more inclusive process, but much more needs to be done to move this agenda forward. Despite some inroads, the elite nature of the negotiation process currently remains intact with the process firmly in the hands of the two leaders, their representatives and the OSASG. While UNDP-ACT continues to push for a more inclusive process, there remain challenges in bridging the two track efforts, and the political and developmental work of the UN more widely.

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<sup>25</sup> There is no UNDP country office in Cyprus. It closed in 1998. There are two programmes in Cyprus. One is ACT that is funded by USAID and works on civil society issues, and the other is PFF (partnership for the future) that is funded by the EU and focuses on the Turkish Cypriot Community.

Chad is illustrative of another critical direction in PDA, and wider UN mediation support, building mediation capacities at all levels to address myriad conflicts in an ongoing manner. Particularly in fragile settings, this systemic approach can be a vital preventive measure to ensure conflicts do not fuel or catalyse one another.

### **Chad: Peace Caravans for mediation support**

Faced with multiple political, security and economic challenges,<sup>26</sup> the PDA in Chad has supported UN efforts to create an environment conducive to political dialogue at national and local levels. As a starting point, an EC/UNDP project has sought to build the conflict management and mediation skills and capacities of religious, political and civil society leaders at both levels. “Peace Caravans” of mediators were then created, supported by UNDP and the Swiss Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which travelled across the country to disseminate messages of peaceful conflict resolution and to engage with local communities to resolve conflicts. This project was developed in partnership with the national NGO Peace and Reconciliation Committee and the Media House N’Djamena who are familiar with Chadian cultural and political dynamics. It is envisaged that mediation capacities for various types of local conflicts will spread throughout the country. The RC’s office has also launched a PBF project this year, in collaboration with IOM and supported by the PBF, to strengthen the Chadian government’s commitment to mediation, by: 1) developing capacities of the Office of the Mediator to implement its mandate through dedicated technical expertise, 2) developing a policy framework and action plan, and, 3) establishing and strengthening Local Peace Committees in regions affected by local conflicts.

While results and impacts of dialogue and mediation efforts are diverse and difficult to measure, there are clear examples where they have led to positive change that can, in turn, be sustained by national actors. In Nigeria, for example, the work of a PDA in targeted confidence building measures of a joint platform established between civic, religious, and political leaders to defuse inter-ethnic and inter-religious tensions in a highly conflict affected state of Plateau. In April 2011 with election-related violence in the neighbouring states of Kaduna and Bauchi, Plateau state remained relatively peaceful, which the state governor attributed to local level violence prevention mechanisms, and to the work of the political dialogue platform supported by the PDA.<sup>27</sup>

Emerging lessons coming from PDA experiences in dialogue and mediation support start with the recognition that effective work in this area is tied to the ability of the UN to act promptly and creatively at critical moments. The context and specific dynamics of crises in a particular setting will seriously determine the types of roles the UN can play, although a strong and well skilled PDA can greatly influence both the context and nature of UN engagement and support by supporting the RC to create space for the UN’s involvement. Lesotho is a noteworthy testament in this regard.

The UN can offer valuable organisational and technical support, including helping to clarify roles, responsibilities, and duties of different actors. The UN can play a strong leadership role in bring parties to the table and in creating a conducive environment for dialogue – ensuring a safe space for stakeholder participation. Strong partnerships within and across the

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<sup>26</sup> These include demobilisation of the national armed forces and rebel groups, mass repatriation of Chadian populations from Libya and their community reintegration, a number of refugees from neighbouring countries, recurring food crisis across the Sahel as well as social tensions between the Government and labour unions.

<sup>27</sup> Joint programme, Report, 2013.

UN – notably amongst the PDA, the RC, UNDP and DPA – are a key ingredient for ensuring the UN acts as one and helps to support processes with strong chances to succeed.

Positive results ultimately rest on national ownership, where the broadest possible set of stakeholders share ownership of the dialogue space and mechanisms. Ensuring national actors have the capacities, resources and political will to sustain dialogue and mediation processes and results is not a short-term project. While this may not be a particularly attractive aspect of a PDA's function, it is critical if a PDA (and the UN more broadly) is to have an impact beyond a PDA's relatively limited tenure. As many cases illustrate, investments by various UN agencies and others, over years, is often simply a first step in fostering an openness in attitudes for parties to engage in dialogue. Bringing in other societal stakeholders towards the development of inclusive processes and societally owned agendas for peacebuilding, statebuilding and managing and preventing conflict can take much longer.

### 3.3.2 RECONCILIATION & SOCIAL COHESION

PDAs engage in a range of reconciliation and social cohesion initiatives, which lie at the core of building resilient and peaceful societies. Often the goal of dialogue and mediation efforts, reconciliation concerns the (re)building of relationships among people and groups in society and between the state and its citizens. It is a highly context sensitive process that must be tailored by societies to meet their own needs, the nature of the conflict and the character of their transition.<sup>28</sup> Social cohesion, a related and supportive concept, is the glue that brings society together, and it can be developed in numerous, often intertwined, ways: economically (i.e. through equal opportunities and reduced disparities); socially (i.e. through strengthened social relations, interactions and ties – social capital); and politically (i.e. through transparent and inclusive institutions).<sup>29</sup>

The cases in this section illustrate how PDAs are catalysing and facilitating initiatives that bring divided communities and societies together at different levels, building social cohesion through political, economic and social processes as they work to build relationships and support communities in mapping more peaceful, co-existent futures.

#### **Guyana: Building social cohesion at the political level**

In Guyana, a targeted conflict analysis<sup>30</sup> undertaken against the backdrop of ethno-political tensions and violence that followed the November 2011 elections<sup>31</sup> pointed towards the need to support social cohesion, in particular at the political level. In response, the PDA facilitated the development of a social cohesion strategy that sought to help build and promote inter-communal trust and cross-cultural understanding across the national political elite. An equally important (and more immediate) goal was equipping Guyanese lawmakers with the requisite analytic and negotiation tools for effective law-making through consensus building and collaborative leadership. With sensitivities on the part of government to acknowledge the country's simmering conflict dynamics, and to accept internationally led peace initiatives, orientation programmes for new MPs were designed with embedded social cohesion goals and activities. Training programmes addressing needs expressed by existing MP were also implemented in 2012, focusing on building legislation-writing capacity. The trainers were designed to build collaborative leadership and consensus building across party lines. Trainers – some of them MPs from UK and Canada – reflected the ethnic and racial diversity of Guyanese society.<sup>32</sup> To provide a model for collaborative leadership within a divided government context, the PDA invited several former MPs from New Zealand (which has a minority government) to interact with the Guyanese MPs. These efforts at building social cohesion at

<sup>28</sup> PBSO, "Building Just Societies: Reconciliation in Transitional Settings," Workshop Report, 5-6 June 2012.

<sup>29</sup> Peace Dividends.

<sup>30</sup> The PDA consulted key stakeholders in Guyanese society – politicians, religious leaders, civil society and the private sector – on the causes, dynamics, and possible remedies to the crisis.

<sup>31</sup> The elections pitted the People's Progressive Party (PPP), dominated by Indo-Guyanese, against the Afro-Guyanese People's National Congress (PNC). Despite the PNC and its allies in A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) winning a majority of Parliamentary seats, the elections produced minority government led by the PPP, which also retained the presidency.

<sup>32</sup> The UK MP was a Guyanese émigré while the MP from Canada was of Indian descent.

the level of the political elite complemented wider UNCT social cohesion programming that sought to help Guyana develop its conflict prevention and management capacity (the case study in the Annex goes into further detail).

### **Sri Lanka: Reconciliation through Housing Project**

In Sri Lanka the PDA undertook a field mission to assess UNDP's Transition Recovery Programme (TRP) with a view to identifying entry points for cross-ethnic reconciliation. A project was then developed to provide intensive applied training for all TRP field staff engaged in a community reintegration housing project in the conflict-affected, multi-ethnic districts of Sri Lanka. The trainings focused on methods for context analysis, community-based reconciliation, and fostering social agency, providing skills for staff to embed inter-ethnic reconciliation goals and strategies into their work. While many of the staff were initially sceptical about the approach in a highly divided country where ethnic groups did not share a language, they found they were able to bring communities together in new ways that saw results – i.e. in joint planning and housing construction across ethnic lines. Staff reported that communities moved from initial fear of working alongside each other, to demonstrating a sense of overarching community and participatory decision-making. There were also signs of increased tolerance within and across communities. Staff recognised that more time was needed to solidify gains, and that skills in dialogue and process management for communities would further enhance their ability to reconcile. As one participant in the process highlighted: "Once I only built foundations for houses, now I see I am also building foundation for social cohesion, tolerance and reconciliation."

Key lessons emerging from the work of PDAs in these areas are grounded in an understanding of the need for greater sensitivity to conflict dynamics, and in particular the perspectives and preferences of national actors for design, and ownership of the process, i.e. how particular processes are articulated, who is invited, and the setting within which the process takes place. Often sensitivities revolve around a desire for an "even playing field", the need to avoid being put in a compromising position, and around the need for ownership felt in the design and implementation, as well as the outcomes of the process. Often it can be quite challenging to balance different interests and ensure that certain parties are not overly dominating and marginalising others (inadvertently or advertently), and that all parties are sufficiently comfortable. PDAs often play an important role in encouraging national facilitators to create and sustain space where divisive issues can be addressed and where mutual respect is observed. These "uncomfortable safe spaces"<sup>33</sup> can facilitate movement out of polarisation and towards a shared commitment to create a better future.

In most contexts, building social cohesion and fostering reconciliation will ultimately require multi-pronged strategies that structurally address the conflict dynamics, at various levels of society. In FYR Macedonia for example, the PDA has helped to guide the UN's support to the Government in strengthening social cohesion and inter-ethnic relations through a) long-term structural prevention in areas such as governance, education, media and society, b) strengthening political dialogue and c) advancing conflict resolution initiatives at both national and local levels. In Cyprus, while supporting links between Track I and II processes (see 3.3.1), building the capacity and cohesion of civil society to engage in Track II efforts has been an important priority to ensure their sustained and meaningful engagement with national counterparts.

Social cohesion work can be fostered at different levels and through varied entry points, often requiring innovation, adaptability and persistence on the part of the PDA given the intractable nature of many conflicts that characterise UN settings of operation. Long-term efforts requiring dedicated attention and technical and financial support to build local capacities and incentives are often required. This lays the logic for the next discussion – infrastructures for peace.

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<sup>33</sup> This idea has emerged through PDA discussions and is popular amongst PDAs.

### 3.3.3 INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE

Increasingly, where recurrent conflicts are common, PDAs are working in support of national stakeholders to put infrastructures for peace in place or to reinvigorate or strengthen existing infrastructures in order to develop and nurture standing arrangements to address and prevent conflict. I4P's can be defined as a "dynamic network of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values, and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in a society."<sup>34</sup> Central to the concept is the linking of infrastructure at national and sub-national level, in the interests of building more societally owned processes for peace.

The concept of I4P is built upon the premise that sustaining conflict prevention efforts requires sustained collaboration across a broad spectrum of stakeholders. As such, the role of the state is central to peace infrastructures, but so too is the role of civil society, in particular key stakeholders such as chieftaincies, women and youth groups and religious and civil leaders.

Some elements of infrastructures for peace may involve some physical institutional structures, which generally focus on processes of dialogue consultation, coordination and collaboration. I4P structures often evolve to focus around the following areas:

- **Early warning, particularly around election related violence prevention**
- **Conflict management, social cohesion and reconciliation**
- **Targeting specific conflict drivers and/or key stakeholder groups**, to encourage or support their peace efforts.

PDAs have supported the development of infrastructures for peace in many countries, but notably: Ecuador, Ghana, Georgia, Guyana, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Malawi, Togo, Sierra Leone and Kyrgyzstan. UNDP more widely has supported the development of infrastructures for peace in Costa Rica, Philippines, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Uganda, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Timor-Leste, and the Solomon Islands. Several examples are highlighted:

#### **Ghana: Infrastructure for Peace to Support Peaceful Elections and the Management of Conflict**

Over the last decade, the PDA (and the UNCT as a whole) has supported Ghana in significantly strengthening its conflict management and peace infrastructure, reducing the ability of threats to destabilise the country. Between the 2004 and the 2008 elections (when political tensions ran high) the PDA championed the strengthening of peace infrastructure at both national and local levels. At the national level, the Electoral Commission was targeted, with a review of its management of 2004 elections followed by a conflict management training programme for staff. Capacity of allied institutions (i.e. political parties, the media and the judiciary) were also enhanced to support means for strengthening socio-political cohesion. Technical and financial assistance was also provided to key human rights and justice organisations.<sup>35</sup> The PDA supported many critical activities strengthening the National Peace Council, a central forum dedicated to the promotion of peace through collaborative problem-solving tools and timely action, and corresponding regional and district peace councils comprising the National Peace Architecture. The PDA's support not only helped improve their performance in times of crisis, but also provided a common forum for open dialogue and cooperation on

<sup>34</sup> In a meeting in Naivasha, Kenya in February 2010, representatives of governments, political parties, civil society, and UN Country Teams from 14 African countries agreed on a definition of infrastructures for peace. See: Kumar, C., 2011, "Building National 'Infrastructures for Peace': UN Assistance for Internally Negotiated Solutions to Violent Conflict", in: Susan Allen Nan, Zachariah Cherian Mampilly & Andrea Bartoli (eds.), *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory, Volume 1*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 384-399.

<sup>35</sup> These included the Ghana Association of Chattered Mediators, the Ghana Judicial Service, the Legal Aid Council, and the office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and Administrative Justice.


Ghana's peace and security challenges (see Annex for more details of the Ghana case).

### **Kenya Infrastructure for Peace: Early warning and election-related conflict prevention**

Kenya's infrastructure for peace has evolved over the last decade but enhanced in the wake of Kenya's 2008 post-election violence that left 1,500 dead and 500,000 displaced. There are four main components: 1) the National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management, located in the office of the President, which houses a national conflict early warning system and supports coordination of peace actors in the country, receiving, analysing and sharing information about potential conflict and facilitating coordinated responses. The NSC also supports the government's district peace committees, recognised as an effective local conflict mitigation mechanism, which were expanded across the country, particularly in "hot spot" areas in the wake of the post-election violence. 2) the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, established following the mediation surrounding post-election violence in 2008; 3) the National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons, created to respond to the prevalence of small arms and light weapons in the country, their pervasive use, and for the prevention of armed violence. The PDA played an instrumental role in facilitating the enhancement of these structures in the post-election violence, notably by supporting needs assessments and strategy development, attracting and coordinating financial and technical support by international partners, and convening meetings to facilitate coordination, coherence and development of the infrastructure at all levels. He further spearheaded the development of a fourth pillar to the structure focused on bringing civil society peace organisations together – the Partnership for Peace and Security.

2010 and 2013 brought opportunities to test the strength of the I4P. In 2010 society was polarised on issues around a referendum on a new constitution, and violence was predicted. Recognising the potential for violence that could result, the PDA facilitated the collaboration of the NSC, NCIC and civil society in forming the 'Uwiano Platform for Peace', supported by UNDP. Through a variety of strategies including media campaigns and broadcasts, peace campaigns, rallies and public meetings across the country, and the establishment of a free cellular phone text messaging service using crowd sourcing and other tools, and coordination amongst district peace committees, civil society and security agencies across the country in early warning and response, the potential violence was averted. In the 2013 general election the Uwiano Platform for Peace was mobilised again involving more partners, including the Independent Elections and Boundary Committee. The new PDA supported this process with headquarter support, notably the original PDA for Kenya. They constituted a group of respected and influential nationals to engage Kenya's political leadership at political and district levels, and facilitated a series of meetings with stakeholders that developed a strategic framework to support what turned out to be largely peaceful elections.

PDAs, with the support of the Resident Coordinator and UNDP, DPA and at times the wider UNCTs, work to identify entry points to both support existing structures in conflict sensitive ways, i.e. that target actual or potential drivers of conflict, or develop and nurture capacities of stakeholder groups. In Guyana, for example, the PDA is working to expand the purview of a disaster early warning system managed by the Civil Defence Commission (CDC) to include conflict (see Part II, 2.0), while in Kyrgyzstan, the UN with strong PDA facilitation, is striving to support institutions and policies that aid resilience and social cohesion, supported with PBF funding. The infrastructure for peace includes a new agency for Local Self Government and Inter-ethnic Relations, State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development, and local level Peace Advisory Committees support reconciliation, now coordinated and enhanced by a National Peace Advisory Committee. At



provincial and district level youth centres have been supported in multicultural communities, and water user associations were supported in order to manage tension over distribution. Women's peace committees were supported to enhance local efforts to establish peace networks. Similarly in Kenya, infrastructure for peace related initiatives often had a youth focus. In one, a photographic exhibition of the post-election violence followed by hosted conversations in the six towns worst affected by the violence, thirty thousand young people signed peace pledges stating their willingness to engage in peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities within their communities. These young people were then linked up with ongoing local level peace structures and activities.

Initiatives focused on dialogue and mediation and reconciliation and social cohesion are deeply intertwined, and both feed into and support the development of infrastructures for peace. While they are inherently process oriented, infrastructures for peace are fundamentally focused on ensuring the standing capacities, structures and mechanisms for transformative processes that national actors manage, are in place. Building upon the lessons in the above two sections and given the integrated nature of this work, other notable lessons emerge. First pertains to the particular importance of supporting national actors in establishing clear roles and relationships between institutions and actors at all levels. National actors face the same challenges of coordination and coherence as international actors in supporting strategic conflict prevention and peace efforts. The UN can play a useful role in creating participatory, transparent space for national actors to work through, clarify and where possible codify roles, mandates and areas of comparative advantage of relevant institutions and organisations. Second, a key challenge lies in ensuring that Infrastructures for Peace are situated where they will have legitimacy by a wide range of actors. There are likely benefits and drawbacks to any choice: i.e. situating them in departments responsible for security can facilitate a quick security response, but will have more difficulties in building trust-based partnerships with civil society institutions. A third challenge lies in fostering national incentives and ownership in Infrastructures for peace, with requisite funding streams to support them, along with sustained stakeholder participation.

With clear consensus that early warning capacities are needed in many complex political settings, as well as post-conflict peacebuilding settings and even development contexts affected by fragility, the known challenges lie in effective response. Infrastructures for peace attempt to create standing capacities, with coordinated and integrated efforts of different actors to respond effectively. For these efforts to be transformative and not merely temporary, or working at the surface level to address triggers and proximate causes of conflict, they need to be driven by a consensus based analysis of the root causes and drivers of conflict, and focused on identifying and activating coordinated responses to address issues at this level. It is thus crucial that PDAs realise their comparative advantage of bringing the more operational and structural, and political and developmental elements of the UN system together to support these needed links across infrastructures for peace.

## 4.0 FACTORS DRIVING PROMISING PRACTICE

There is no blueprint for what makes a successful PDA. Every context is unique and factors influencing change in any setting are not predictable. Nonetheless, growing evidence across cases where PDAs operate points to a number of issues and strategies driving promising practice. This section offers an overview of the strategic and operational factors that appear to be facilitating this. It starts however, by identifying key challenges that PDAs tend to confront in their work.

These include:

- Political instability and/or an unstable security context, which can limit the PDA's ability to move beyond the capital city or into certain areas of the country, leading to a limited understanding of the broader conflict/ political dynamics and events, as well as leading to a partial understanding of possible programmatic options to address these;
- Not having sufficient political will, openness or support of national actors. It is important to note that the level of support may vary at different levels of society. In instances where national actors are open, a PDA can have a particularly valuable impact in advancing conflict prevention, reconciliation, and peacebuilding efforts;

- Deteriorating or challenging relationships and openness to engagement, particularly in the context of supporting change that some national actors may not want;
- Limited entry points within the UN system for the PDA to engage in the development of programming, strategy and other types of support. The extent to which PDAs can influence programming can be limited due to the increasing projectised nature of development activities and the “isolation” PDAs can sometimes experience vis-à-vis the UNDP Country Office and UN Country Team. In these cases, if the PDA is not empowered by the Resident Coordinator to “reach out” and participate in programming design, a PDA can become a de facto political analyst housed in the Office of the Resident Coordinator;
- Managing expectations and the difficulties of showing results in short time frames, and balancing the relatively short term nature of a PDA’s deployment with the need to embed certain capacities within the UNCT and amongst national stakeholders to support a measure of sustainability. This links to funding limitations to realise strategies and programmes, or generally to support a PDA role, and national officer, with the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme intended to provide catalytic support;
- Attracting PDAs and developing UN staff both in country and at HQ with the appropriate mix of substantive and process skills required.

Many of these challenges are persistent and lie beyond the scope of PDAs to individually address. However, as illustrated in the following discussions on strategic and operational factors, these challenges are, to varying degrees, being tackled by innovative and courageous PDA efforts that cut across and drive promising practice.

## 4.1 STRATEGIC FACTORS

As highlighted in a recent report from the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme, successful UN support for conflict prevention often critically requires initial, catalytic work by PDAs that opens entry points, obtains buy-in from key national counterparts, and ensures that effective response is grounded in sound analysis and strategy.<sup>36</sup> This necessarily involves the consideration of a number of factors, including:

### ➤ *Building relationships, partnerships and trust, and identifying entry points*

Building working relationships and partnerships, and ultimately trust, is a necessary foundation of PDA work. It is the first and, arguably, the most valuable ongoing strategy with requisite needed skills that a PDA can employ to identify entry point and build the momentum to carry strategies and programmes forward. In Ghana, for example, the PDA’s early cultivation of a network of political, media, and civic contacts greatly facilitated his analysis of conflict drivers and assessment of potential entry points for UNDP’s work in support of national peace actors. The network became a source of valuable information about the root causes of political and ethnic conflict in the country, and also gave him unusual access to influential stakeholders such as government ministers, leaders of political parties, civic organisation leaders, prominent journalists (see Annex).

To be effective, PDAs must attach equal premium to both building relationships, partnership and trust internally with UN colleagues and partners (discussed below, under “operating environment factors”), and, equally, with national, and even other international partners.

In many contexts where PDAs work there is a severe absence of trust between societal parties and groups, and also of international actors. As noted by the PDA in the Maldives, “UN responses and engagement with local partners must

<sup>36</sup> Joint Programme, “UNDP-DPA Collaboration with Regard to Complex Political Situations”, 2010 UNDP-DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention (2012), *Programme Document 2012 to 2014*.

therefore start from the basic requirement of confidence-building and communication" (PDA, Maldives). An emerging promising practice of PDAs involves building networks to support collaborative action, and specifically identifying "champions" to work with – national counterparts that will support, and optimally, drive efforts. "Establishing a regular platform for conversation with a small group of well-placed locals has also been extremely important to my work. I refer here to the Heads of Churches with whom I meet monthly. I felt lost until this structure emerged as a basis for the most important work that I do" (PDA, Lesotho).

The risks in becoming too close to particular stakeholders are clear, and awareness that "spoilers" too, need to be engaged. PDAs have to avoid the dangers of their work becoming politicised – "one of the biggest risks associated with the PDA's work" (PDA, FYRO Macedonia). "Polarization and politicisation define virtually all spheres of life in the country, and sensitivities around the UN position in this environment are high. The key risks for the PDA work (and that of all UN actors here) relate to perceptions of impartiality" (PDA, Maldives).

To overcome these challenges PDAs advise maintaining professional contacts and balancing easy access to decision-makers while "remaining at arm's length from various dynamics and processes" (PDA, Maldives), and identifying neutral partners to work with, and to "constantly ensure political buy-in from all sides" (PDA, FYR Macedonia). The PDA, and the UN more generally, often have a major comparative advantage in being perceived as neutral and impartial. Many PDAs report being able to leverage this perception to gain access and to build catalytic entry points for strategy and programming.

More generally, building relationships with actors across the divides is vital for producing strong analysis to guide strategy and programming of the UN. "Networking provides information and the means of triangulating information as well as the views of knowledgeable contacts" (PDA, Niger).

➤ **Gathering robust information and undertaking/facilitating conflict analysis, involving as wide an array of stakeholders as possible**

As discussed at length above, conflict analysis is now considered a foundation and cornerstone of robust programming and strategy. The challenges lie in fostering joint, consensus-based analyses. "Regular communication with the UNCT, and, more importantly, national colleagues, is also a crucial starting point for developing local knowledge, gathering information and preparing good analysis" (PDA, Maldives).

A key challenge, as highlighted by the PDA in Niger, is "identifying and weighing factors and actors' views in a conflict analysis in a complex setting". Managing this challenge requires the employment of good research practice, and the building of relationships and networks: "As your credibility increases and your range of knowledgeable and influential contacts expand, our ability to sift through and triangulate all the factors and data available increases and consequently your analysis becomes more prescient. However, information will also need a grounding in conflict prevention and mitigation theory and practice (what has worked and why and what has not worked and why) to be best used" (PDA, Niger).

➤ **Drawing on that analysis to develop strategies and frameworks for coordinated, coherent action**

PDAs are facilitating promising practice in their mandate of bridging the political and developmental sides of the UN system, and in addressing a core problem for peacebuilding in the international system: the need for strategy development. Many PDAs report the development of strategy as a core factor in driving beneficial results of their work. As highlighted by the PDA in Kyrgyzstan, "Developing this strategy first and clearly outlining the way forward was a big help in getting people on board with where we wanted to go with the overall programme."

Strategies and frameworks often respond to complex and unpredictable contexts, requiring multi-pronged and multi-levelled approaches to catalyse transformative efforts.<sup>37</sup> They hold particular promise when they build upon joint analysis and often work at policy and programme level, within and through both UN and national planning processes. They often include both short-term and long-term efforts to address both immediate threats to peace and development, and longer-term structural efforts to ensure sustained results.

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<sup>37</sup> This is consistent with conflict transformation theory, i.e. that of John Paul Lederach.

There are challenges in building consensus and facilitating joint ownership of programmes both within the UN and with respect to the political nature of international relations. “Flow of information and resource mobilisation in the UN System in Guinea is quite fragmented and programmatic responses do not always support a real common and synergetic approach. The international community is more the expression of bilateral agreements than one shared vision” (PDA, Guinea Conakry). PDAs can play an important role in supporting RC efforts to bring the international community together to share analysis and define common priorities.

➤ **Prioritising the development of national capacities across all areas**

While developing national capacities in development related work is a cornerstone of UN agency efforts, the methods of capacity development in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding are less well understood, despite being a driving objective of the Joint Programme, and also at the core of BCPR’s organisational mandate. This is largely due to the evolving understanding about what constitutes success in these areas, and what are the specific comparative advantages of different actors.

In many settings the UN is lacking in its own capacities – a recognised reality that it is working to address. This of course presents challenges in the organisation’s attempt to develop the capacities of others. In many cases, the reality is that the international and national systems are learning together, in an iterative way. This may well have benefits, ensuring the context sensitivity of international approaches.

A key promising practice is the employment of national officers to work with PDA counterparts. In addition to holding promise for sustaining efforts beyond the UN’s departure, a national PDA can bring added value of local knowledge and experience, supporting the development of context sensitive strategies. Obvious challenges are resource constraints for these positions, and how to develop institutional memory and sustainability of efforts, once they leave.

In Kyrgyzstan, the challenges were mainly around capacity issues both in the office (and the project staff) and with the government and civil society partners. I developed the PDA process and the new strategy around building this local capacity and creating mechanisms to identify and address the underlying causes of conflict on the ground. Unfortunately, capacity was still low and mechanisms were still too fresh to effectively deal with what happened after I left. (PDA, Kyrgyzstan)

➤ **Informing the UN’s engagement with national stakeholders and programming with a rich understanding of contextual factors**

As many of the above cases illustrate, designing appropriate and effective programmes and strategies requires strong attention to the context – notably the national and local contextual factors shaping the environment, but also, the nature and parameters of international engagement in the country.

Key aspects of national context that fundamentally shape promising practice of programme and strategy design include:<sup>38</sup>

**Type of conflict setting and the degree of stability:** Whether a country is fragile, in transition, is in the immediate aftermath of conflict and/or has deep structural, historical divides that present risks to peace – all matter – for the design of effective conflict prevention strategies and programming. Specific drivers and roots of conflict manifest varying in each of these settings, as well as within regions and across borders of UN engagement.

**Level of development:** PDAs operate in countries that represent widely varying levels of development. While the majority are low-income countries, especially in Africa and Asia, many are also in middle-income countries in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and Caribbean regions. National actors tend to have different interests and expectations in the types of support desired, i.e. in middle income countries, the desire is typically more for knowledge and expertise brokerage than financial resources. Levels of poverty also critically factor, i.e. “for Niger, there are

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<sup>38</sup> These draw from and build upon John Ohiorhenuan and Erin McCandless, “Sustaining Development Gains: Towards a UNDP Strategy for Preventing Violent Conflict,” 2013.

high levels of extreme poverty (according to the World Bank), the country ranks last on the HDI 186/186, leading to lack of resilience, vulnerabilities and dissatisfaction and frustration amongst the populace – particularly amongst the youth (64% of the youth are below the age of 24 and the fertility rate is at 7.6%)” (PDA, Niger).

**Vulnerability to disaster:** A country’s degree of vulnerability to disaster is a key contextual factor affecting conflict and conflict prevention strategy and programming, which PDAs must account for and have the skills to respond to.

**International actors and operating environment:** The openness and orientation of both national and international (UN) actors on peacebuilding and conflict prevention work constitute a contextual operating environment that can clearly also support or inhibit the work of PDAs, and impact the nature of process and results. As the PDA in Kosovo explains:

Most of the international community in Kosovo<sup>39</sup> has a security and/or political mandate. The development agenda is consistently subordinated to the political agenda. In the case of UNKT, status-neutrality can be an impediment to resource mobilisation, particularly in the context of Northern Kosovo. The European Union and the United States jointly dominate the donor environment in Kosovo, and exert considerable influence in determining governmental priorities.

The type of UN engagement, notably whether there is a UN mission of any type, and/or DPA engagement on the ground, and generally the history of UN and wider member state involvement in the country undoubtedly shapes important aspects of the political landscape. These factors can greatly affect the nature and types of PDA engagement, and the forms of conflict prevention strategy and programming that will be feasible and garner appropriate and effective UN support.

## 4.2 OPERATING ENVIRONMENT FACTORS

### ➤ *Openness and support of government to conflict prevention and peacebuilding-related work*

The capacity and openness of the host government to work in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding is an undeniable factor in the success of a PDA’s efforts.

At the time I worked there, Kyrgyzstan was coming out of its first ‘revolution’. The new government was willing to engage on issues of conflict because they were not worried about being caught out like the previous government had been. This gave us a lot of room to manoeuvre and to try new things—as long as it was clear we were supporting the government in its efforts to understand the situation on the ground. (PDA, Kyrgyzstan)

The Guyana case alternatively (see Annex), where perceptions of the UN or the nature of its involvement may not be favourable, demonstrates that programming and strategy can be affected. This lies beyond the PDA’s control, and inevitably needs to be handled at a more political level, and over time.

Most, if not all, contexts that PDAs work in are politically complex, divided, and operationally challenging and entry points must be built and nurtured over time. “It takes some time to establish one’s credibility with (national) counterparts,” and it often comes through sharing insights and resources (or at least facilitating and obtaining resources for valuable conflict mitigation/prevention programmes) (PDA, Niger).

### ➤ *Openness and support of a PDA role within the United Nations (both at UN Country Team level and at HQ)*

PDAs emphasise the support of colleagues and institutions – departments, funds and programmes – at both field and HQ level, as well as the infrastructure and resources to back up action. Support of senior management in particular is vital, including the RC and heads of agencies at the country level, and if there are representatives of the Secretary General

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<sup>39</sup> As referred to in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999). The United Nations, through its Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and its Agencies and Programmes, including UNDP, is present in Kosovo on the basis of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) which provides the mandate for its operation.

and/or DPA. As stated by the PDA in Bosnia-Herzegovina, “Vision and leadership by the RC is critical for incorporating effectively the PDA into the work of the RC and the UNCT. I have been able to make a valuable contribution because the RC knew beforehand what he wanted the PDA to do. The RC has fully included the PDA in all RC Office activities, including political, liaison and diplomatic work, UNCT programming, meetings, visits etc.” The RC’s role is pivotal in ensuring transparency and communication with UNCT colleagues, and this must be built upon a sound relationship between the RC and the PDA, with clarity around roles and expectations.

PDAs recognise that they are not lone actors: their efforts require institutional support to drive the at times risky and often innovative strategies needed to catalyse transformative change. At the same time, many recognise the continuing challenges, despite myriad efforts to maximise joint efforts and realise a “One UN”. These can include gaining trust and access with RCs and the agencies, wide gaps between the political and development sides of the UN that can be too difficult in some contexts to bridge, and operational coordination amongst agencies: “UNCT dynamics and the challenges associated with coordinating diverse UN agencies that have difference mandates, incentive structures and funding requirements. These have to be carefully managed through effective communication, negotiation and liaison, as well as finding practical solutions that all UNCT members can reach agreement on” (PDA, Bosnia-Herzegovina).

### ➤ *PDAs possessing the appropriate skills-set and are encouraged to learn new skills*

Effective PDAs possess a range of analytical, strategic and programming skills that are difficult to find, and to expect, one person to hold. The PDA skill set marks a departure beyond the traditional programme management skills required by development practitioners, augmenting these aptitudes with the ability to understand a certain context, frame possible entry points for the UN to make a positive contribution in that context, and help to facilitate any difficult conversations between national stakeholders or other partners that may arise along the way. To that end, and in addition to the theoretical/ conceptual and practice knowledge of the field, PDAs require practical skills that include the ability to:


- conduct robust analysis;
- design and evaluate programmes and facilitate processes to develop joint strategy and programming;
- harness and manage resources;
- advise and help position senior leadership;
- conduct dialogues, mediate and facilitate; and
- train and build capacity.

They also need strong interpersonal skills, and above all, the ability to take initiative. “Initiative and interpersonal skills, together with relevant insight and an ability to elaborate concrete suggestions from such experience, will likely determine how well the PDA can develop the trust and confidence of local and international interlocutors, and how useful s/he will ultimately be. In turn, these can contribute greatly to PDA analysis, and programming and strategy recommendations” (PDA, Maldives). Importantly, “a degree of humility, recognition that there is always room for improvement and adjustment, good listening skills, and clear and practically useful ideas” are crucial in a PDA’s ability to overcome the many challenges they face (PDA, Cyprus).

The balancing act required by PDAs in providing support to the UN as well as national stakeholders to advance a nation’s peace and development clearly require a mixture of aptitudes and attitudes that are difficult to quantify. The characteristics described above are not a required list of “ingredients” for what it takes to be a good PDA, but rather, a testament to the range of talents and skills possessed by the growing cadre of PDAs. They suggest a range of skills needed to support the UN in playing an effective role in variety of different settings, and overall, navigating rapidly changing development landscapes and supporting national stakeholders to build resilient and peaceful societies. PDA retreats and regional workshops provide PDAs with valuable opportunities to share experiences with each other and refine and develop skills and learn about new approaches.

### ➤ *Sufficient funding to sustain PDA posts*

Funding challenges concern both support for conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in a particular context, and more specifically, support and sustained support for a PDA in a particular context. Bosnia-Herzegovina illustrates the first, where, 17 years after conflict, but nonetheless in a declining political and security situation, there is international donor



and diplomatic fatigue. This creates obvious challenges for the PDA, and the UN generally, in engaging strategically and having an impact on issues of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Many PDAs lament insufficient resources to implement initiatives. As highlighted by one: “without resources, very little can be done and PDAs run the risk of becoming the Personal Assistants of Resident Coordinators”.

At the most fundamental level, PDAs suffer from poor job security. They are usually offered one year contracts with possibility of renewal, increasingly tied to the ability of the UNDP Country Office or UN Country Team to contribute a portion of funding from the second year on. In addition to clear challenges related to identifying PDAs willing to leave their homes and families to take work under these conditions, such short-term contracts often make it difficult or “impossible to design long term strategies for conflict transformation” (PDA, Ecuador), as well as to build trust with national actors and to gain a deep understanding of the context – driving factors of success across all conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives.

Funding for PDA positions through the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme is intended to be catalytic, with UN Country Teams (or UNDP Country Offices) encouraged to absorb the costs associated with the position from the second or third years. Increasingly this is occurring, although there are cases where it is challenged by limited resources, i.e. due to donor fatigue or the country in which a PDA is deployed being a “donor orphan”. This presents challenges for the Joint Programme’s Standard Operating Procedures, and requires closer consideration if PDAs are to continue to have an impact in the contexts that demand their deployment.

PDAs can also have an important role in mobilising resources in-country. In 2012/2013, it is estimated that PDA’s contributed to resource mobilisation efforts that raised more than USD 20 million for conflict prevention and peace building activities. This included funding from donors, national governments, and other sources in-country. Such funding has at times been used to cover a PDA position beyond a second and third year. While PDAs are not expected to dedicate a significant portion of their time to this role, at times such opportunities flow from a PDA’s engagement with and support to the UNCT strategy and programming development.

➤ ***Ability to engage with a broad range of stakeholders – across geographical and social, political, and economic spheres***

Ensuring PDAs move beyond the “cocktail circuit” of international partners, established political leaders, and national elite in the capital cities is critical if a PDA is to be able to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the country context and conflict dynamics. Broad engagement will also ensure that entry points for UN engagement not seen, or perhaps not preferred, by certain stakeholders are recognised and, if appropriate, pursued. Beyond engaging with opposition political parties, a PDA plays an important role in leading the UN’s efforts to be seen to be consultative and participatory. There are often very practical (and political) challenges to these efforts, including limited budget support for PDAs to undertake travel in country. This challenge is exacerbated in larger countries, though can also be an obstacle even in smaller geographic areas.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

As the analysis and illustrations above suggest, PDAs are adding value and generating promising practices in a variety of roles that aim to respond to the myriad challenges confronting states and societies as they endeavour to prevent violent conflict, and transition from conflict and fragility towards peace and resilience. PDA efforts tend to cluster around three primary areas in their support to the UN and national partners: analysis, strategy and programming, and catalysing and/or facilitating strategic responses. The bulk of PDAs engage in a combination of these, and there is increasing awareness around the value of ensuring the inter-linkages between these areas, ideally squarely in support of and *with* national partners, for maximizing results.

First and foremost, PDAs play a central analysis role. Efforts by the PDAs to undertake political and conflict analysis to inform the UN's positioning in-country and at HQ level are increasingly complimented by process-oriented conflict analysis with both UN country teams, and, with national actors. This is consistent with the UN's commitment to ensure that conflict prevention and peacebuilding (alongside other policy agendas including development, statebuilding and resilience) are country owned and led. While a central, ongoing challenge lies in the fact that greater participation and transparency around analysis can antagonise political sensitivities, the benefit is that shared analysis provides a foundation and route for shared, more cohesive responses. Great innovation is occurring in the forms that analysis is taking and the tools and products emerging as a result. These need to be assessed for their utility and adaptability, and ultimately promoted where they offer promise.

Secondly, PDAs play a critical role in linking political and conflict analysis with conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy and programming. Here they are serving the UN via the RCs office to bring the UN system together in support of national partners, in line with global best practice, to ensure that awareness of the drivers of conflict and fragility informs development programming and wider strategy development. Towards this end they work with and through existing UN country team planning frameworks, notably UNDAFs where they exist, but also, in concert with and in support of national partners and their national development strategies and frameworks. They also strategically support the development of specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding programmes and initiatives, at times facilitating multi-stakeholder processes to inform joint ownership of conceptualisation, design and even implementation.

Third and last, PDAs play a key role in catalysing and facilitating strategic conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives. These often fall into areas of *dialogue and mediation support; reconciliation and social cohesion; and infrastructures for peace*. These, often highly sensitive and politically strategic initiatives manifest in contextually unique ways. As the illustrative examples offered in section 3.3 suggest, great innovation is occurring that is bringing national actors at policy, regional and local levels together in new ways, addressing historical divides and generating practical, strategic and operational results. These processes are also serving to bring the political, humanitarian and development sides of peace efforts broadly understood, into conversation – and the actors that drive these, be they national or international. Vital to underscore is that patience, accompanied by sustained support is required; results usually come very slowly, and are difficult to measure.

Examining promising practices and the factors driving constitutes a core piece of the overall effort underway within and through the Joint Programme, and with the support of the Framework Team, to address the challenges that PDAs face and to strengthen improved practice. This note contributes to ongoing efforts to deepen and clarify the growing consensus around roles and comparative advantages of PDAs, towards the ultimate aim of supporting national partners in preventing conflict and building resilient and peaceful societies.



**ANNEX  
CASE STUDIES:  
GHANA, GUYANA,  
AND KYRGYZSTAN**

The section that follows reviews PDA contributions in Ghana, Guyana, and Kyrgyzstan. It highlights key activities undertaken by PDAs and discusses the outcomes of those activities against the backdrop of the opportunities and challenges that impact the work of PDAs.

## 1.0 GHANA

### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Ghana is often described as a model of stability in West Africa. This description belies the fact that the country faces major security challenges including chieftaincy and land rights disputes, a youth bulge, persistent poverty, and deepening conflict between the two main political parties: the New Patriotic Party (NPP), and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). Political tensions tend to escalate during election, and on several occasions (particularly 2000 and 2008) posed a serious threat to Ghana's stability. Tensions arose once again after the NPP rejected the results of the 2012 elections. Violence was however avoided when the NPP accepted a Supreme Court verdict affirming the victory of the NDC's John Mahama. Partisan political rancour has also affected the management of a recurrent chieftaincy conflict in the Dagbon traditional area of northern Ghana. The conflict,<sup>40</sup> part of a long-running dispute over succession to the Dagomba throne, is a dominant feature of the security profile of northern Ghana and constitutes a serious challenge to the country's stability. These challenges notwithstanding, Ghana has managed to avoid full-scale conflict, thanks in part to the efforts of concerned national actors with support from UNDP. A growing economy (fuelled by a recent oil find), development of peace infrastructure, and enhanced participation by civil society, the media, and other stakeholders in governance, should help Ghana consolidate peace and security in the coming years.

A PDA was assigned to Ghana in 2004 in response to the recommendation of a UNDP/ Regional Bureau for Africa assessment mission to the country (26 August-4 October 2002). He brought conflict sensitivity awareness to the work of the UNCT, helped the RC weigh avenues for UNDP actions in support national peace efforts, and led cross-team consultation within the CT and collaborations with national and international partners to support peacebuilding in the country.

### 1.2 STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

#### 1.2.1 CONFLICT ANALYSIS BY THE PDA

The 2002 assessment highlighted chieftaincy, land-ownership and tenure disputes, competition over natural resources, religion, and tensions between NPP and NDC as main sources of conflict,<sup>41</sup> and the findings were reinforced by a second report commissioned by UNDP in November 2002.<sup>42</sup> Building on these findings, the PDA's analysis probed how conflicts identified in the reports might impact the 2004 election. Consultation with key national stakeholders revealed the high conflict potential of chieftaincy disputes (particularly in Dagbon), deepening political tensions, and weak conflict management institutions as the main areas of need. Specific findings on the Dagbon conflict pointed to its politicisation with the NPP and NDC supporting the Abudus and the Andanis respectively.<sup>43</sup> The analysis also highlighted ethnicisation

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<sup>40</sup> The conflict pits two factions of the royal family—the Andani house (or gate), and the Abudu house (or gate) —against each other. The families descend from the two sons of Ya Na Yakubu II who ruled Dagbon in the 19th century. Each gate (and their supporters) disputes the others right to the throne and periodically employs violence in pursuit of their goals. The conflict escalated on March 27, 2002, when the Andani incumbent, Ya Na Andani Yakubu II was beheaded, and 28 of his followers were killed. This resulted in widespread violence and the destruction of property in Yendi (the district capital) and in Tamale, the northern regional capital.

<sup>41</sup> UNDP-Regional Bureau for Africa (2002): "Report of Conflict Assessment Mission to Ghana, 26 August – 4 October 2002."

<sup>42</sup> Aning, K. et al (2002): "Ghana Conflict Vulnerability Assessment," *African Security Dialogue and Research*, November.

<sup>43</sup> Key NPP officials such as Vice President Aliu Mahama, National Security Advisor Joshua Hamidu, and Interior Minister Malik Alhassan were known Abudu sympathizers. So were the Tamale Municipal Chief Executive and the District Chief Executive of Yendi. The NDC on

of political campaigns, media partisanship, and weak conflict management capacity of political parties and the Electoral Commission, as major areas of concern. Sustaining peace would require dedicated effort from national and foreign partners (including the PDA and CT) to address these and other concerns.

## 1.2.2 IDENTIFICATION OF “OPENINGS” FOR UN SUPPORT

Through consultations the PDA determined that local stakeholders trusted the UN and would welcome UNDP-supported peace efforts. He was also able to conclude that such support could be channelled through both national and local actors. In the case Dagbon, he identified Northern Regional Minister Ernest Debra (a moderate who demonstrated commitment to peace) as a potential partner for UNDP. On the basis of these deductions, he proposed strategies for UNDP intervention in several areas: support for government’s intervention in Dagbon, support for political conflict management, and support for the development of a National Peace Architecture.

## 1.2.3 SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT’S EFFORTS FOR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE DAGBON CONFLICT

The PDA led UNDP’s efforts to support government’s search for a peace in Dagbon. He consulted with both government officials<sup>44</sup> and the Otumfuo mediation team on avenues for UNDP to support their peace efforts. He also arranged funding and technical support for trust-building activities (such as a 2-day conference organized in Cape Coast by Interior Minister Owusu Ankomah for Northern Regional MPs, and a Dagbon reconciliation meeting organized by the government and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja Nigeria with UNDP support. UNDP also supported capacity-building projects for stakeholders in the conflict region. Examples of projects include conflict reporting training for local journalists, and conflict management training for butchers at the Tamale Abattoir who were often mobilised as foot soldiers for the violence.<sup>45</sup> Another group that received special attention at the local level was the youth. Like the butchers, youth groups were often mobilised by the disputants to attack rivals. To help prepare the youth for a more positive role, the PDA supported several projects designed to build trust between Andani and Abudu youth. Examples include a Peace March to create awareness about the impact of conflict (December 2004), and a novelty football match (also in December 2004) to promote peace through contact. Consistent with assumptions underpinning the contact hypothesis in co-existence research,<sup>46</sup> the match featured Andani and Abudu youth playing on one team against a team of Ghanaian ex-international players led by Abedi Pele.

## 1.2.4 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR PEACEFUL MANAGEMENT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT

The peaceful management of political conflict requires both a tolerant political culture and institutions capable of managing conflict without stifling civic liberties. Several of Ghana’s political institutions fell short of that standard in 2004. Among these were the EC, political parties, the media, and the judiciary. The PDA led UNDP’s efforts to support projects designed to help these and other institutions improve their conflict management practices. The Electoral Commission (EC)

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its part picked Muhammad Mumuni, an Andani, as its vice presidential candidate. Mistrust of the government led some Andani youth to allege that the police did not protect the Yaa Naa when Gbewaa Palace was attacked.

<sup>44</sup> Including 3 Interior Ministers: Albert Kan Dapaa, Papa Owusu Ankomah, and Kwamina Battels

<sup>45</sup> Butchers played a crucial role as “partisans” for the factions in the Dagbon conflict. The conflict framed tensions at the Tamale Abattoir where Andani and Abudu butchers kept separate organisations. Andani butchers accused the municipal government of denying them access to municipal council credit. Clashes between the two factions resulted in the burning down of the Abattoir and the Tamale market. To help diffuse the tension, the PDA arranged a conflict management training session for the butchers and set up a \$5000 credit fund to support joint partnerships. To be eligible for the credit, butchers had to propose a joint partnership with someone from the other community.

<sup>46</sup> The general assumption underlying the contact hypothesis is that exposure to (or contact with) persons of dissimilar interests or cultural backgrounds can positively influence our perceptions and our actions towards them. The catalyst for “change” is usually a realization that “out group” members share some of our interests and hence may not be as threatening or unreasonable as we initially thought.

received targeted capacity-building assistance because of its central role in managing political affairs and elections. The PDA supported a review of the EC's management of 2004 elections in order to help establish a baseline for assessing performance and needs. One clear finding was that the EC had inadequate capacity for managing election related conflict, a problem that was addressed in a conflict management capacity enhancement programme supported by UNDP in partnership with the African Association of Election Administrators. The programme trained EC staff in election administration, results certification, and conflict management. Political parties also received special attention. Most parties lack strong internal democracy procedures and appeared unable to detect and prevent internal conflict. To help address this weakness, the PDA led UNDP to partner with the West African Network for Peacebuilding to provide conflict management training to leaders of the three main political parties, the NPP, NDC and the CPP.

### **1.2.5 ENHANCING CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN THE MEDIA**

Informal consultations within media and civil society circles revealed that the media, like much of Ghanaian society, was partisan in their political analysis and news coverage. Sensationalism, wild inaccuracies, and political insults characterised much of election-year political reporting. Such practices created political tensions, fuelled their escalation into conflict, and reduced incentives for cooperation among elites at both the local and national levels. In northern Ghana, for example, media partisanship fanned the flames of the chieftaincy conflict. To help address this problem, the PDA supported Rural Media Network, a network of local journalists, to do conflict-sensitive training for journalists in the Northern, Upper West and Upper East Regions. At the national level, partisanship was so ingrained that editors of the major news outlets in the country had not met in seven years to discuss industry-wide problems. To help advance responsible journalism, the PDA joined with local partners to organise a meeting of Ghanaian news editors to review the quality of journalism and to stress the need for accountability. He also supported the organisation of a conference on the role of the media in national development (2006) and assisted the National Media Commission to develop guidelines on political journalism (including guidelines for local language broadcasting), and also to launch a media-monitoring programme.

### **1.2.6 SUPPORT FOR THE JUDICIAL SECTOR**

To help strengthen the rule of law in Ghana, UNDP supported mediation training projects as well as efforts to mainstream Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes. The PDA led UNDP efforts to provide mediation training for the Commissioner for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and members of the Ghana Association of Chartered Mediators (GACM). Through UNDP's help, GACM teamed up with the Legal Aid Council to set up ten 10 Community Mediation Councils across the country, which in a single year, mediated more than 10,000 cases. Support for ADR services included provision of technical advice and funding support to help institutions such as the Ghana Judicial Service, the Legal Aid Council, CHRAJ, and GACM develop new ADR programmes or improve existing ones. He supported training programmes (such as a one-week workshop organized for members of Ghana bar Association, the Legal Aid Council, and the Ghana Law School to develop rules of procedure for ADR services), and a novel idea to use national service personnel to provide ADR legal services through the use of chiefs' court premises.

### **1.2.7 SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL PEACE ARCHITECTURE (2005-2008)**

UNDP also provided significant support to build the national peace architecture.<sup>47</sup> Working closely with the Ministry of the Interior, the PDA helped establish the first regional peace council, the Northern Regional Peace Advisory Council (NORPAC) in May 2004. NORPAC successfully tackled conflicts in the north through peace education, sensitisation, mediation, and peace rallies. UNDP assisted by providing funds and logistical supplies for some programmes, including conflict management training for NORPAC members. Based on NORPAC's success, a National Peace Council (NPC) was established

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<sup>47</sup> The National Peace Architecture was set up to promote non-violent resolution of conflicts across the country. It comprises a National Peace Council charged with promoting peace at all levels of government; Regional Peace Advisory Councils responsible for the peaceful resolution of inter-district conflict or conflicts among groups that inhabit more than one district; and District Peace Advisory Councils in charge of promoting peace at the district level. A peacebuilding support unit (based at the Ministry of Interior in Accra) performs coordination and liaison functions.

in 2006 to coordinate activities of the national peace architecture. Beyond the peace architecture, UNDP has also supported the enhanced participation of marginalised groups, particularly the youth and women, in local and national peacemaking efforts. The PDA arranged funding and technical support for several youth and women's groups, including Women in Peace Building Movement, an organisation dedicated to mobilising women for peace in the north. The support enabled the organisation train members in conflict analysis and peacemaking.

## 1.3 OUTCOMES

The outcomes of these support activities were largely positive and may have helped prevent a major conflict in Ghana during the 2008 and 2012 elections. On the Dagbon conflict, the PDA's decision to support conflict management training for butchers in Tamale, for example, proved very successful. The PDA's engagement with the butchers led to the dissolution of factional associations and the formation of a single butchers association, helping to diffuse some of the tensions underlying the conflict. Similarly, the strategy of engaging youth in the conflict area proved a success. Besides the positive impact of peace and conflict training, the novelty football match, for example, created opportunities for peace promotion through contact. The camaraderie and collaboration occasioned by the "teamwork" became an important driver of peace between youth groups associated with the factions. Support for the formal conflict management process (both the Otumfuo process and the government's process) also yielded positive outcomes. Financial and technical support from UNDP, among others, facilitated the two processes and contributed to a preliminary agreement to allow the Ya Na's burial on April 10 2006. On April 21, his eldest son, Abdulai Andani, was installed as Regent, bringing an element of closure to the citizens of Dagbon.

Programmes launched at the national level were also largely successful even though they faced different implementation challenges. A 2009 evaluation of the impact of these programmes on conflict prevention in Ghana concluded that in general terms the programmes were contributing to the prevention of violence in the country.<sup>48</sup> The report documents the positive impact of conflict sensitivity training for the media, the National Peace Council, Youth groups, and support for women's peacemaking roles. However some initiatives proved to be unsustainable. UNDP's support for the Legal Aid Council's expansion of ADR services, for example, led to positive outcomes in justice delivery at the rural level but was unsustainable because the programme relied upon national service personnel who typically emigrated to urban areas upon completing their mandatory year of national service.

## 1.4 CHALLENGES

The PDA in Ghana faced several challenges including inadequate funding and logistics support. While the array of UN agencies and wider international community on the ground presents vast opportunity for collaboration and maximising impacts, it also posed a coordination challenge to the PDA. Working through non-UN organisations such as local NGOs means that outcomes are often driven by these organisations, at times with limited influence or control by the PDA or UNDP. The 2009 Evaluation Report identified this as one of the potential bottlenecks for UNDP's ability to positively implement its peace agenda. There is evidence to suggest that the UNCT was not always clear about how to use the PDA. Much of the directions regarding the PDA's role came from the RC. But that dynamic was not always consistent or predictable, creating implementation challenges and delays. An allied problem, also noted in the 2009 Evaluation report, is that the uncertain relationship with the RC sometimes meant that the general theory of change driving the conflict prevention and resolution programme was not always clear.<sup>49</sup>

Another major obstacle is Ghana's 1992 constitutional provisions regarding chieftaincy disputes.<sup>50</sup> Under article 272 of the constitution, chieftaincy disputes fall under the jurisdiction of Regional Houses of Chiefs and the National House of Chiefs (appellate).<sup>51</sup> This leaves little room for other actors (domestic or foreign) to intervene systematically to help address chieftaincy disputes, a known driver of conflict in the country. UNDP's work in support of the Otumfuo mediation in

<sup>48</sup> Draman, R. et al (2009). "The Conflict Prevention and Resolution Portfolio of UNDP Ghana: Evaluation Report." Cambridge MA: Collaborative Learning Projects, November 2009. Page 35

<sup>49</sup> Draman, R. et al. (2009). OpCit. Page 40.

<sup>50</sup> The two PDAs interviewed for this case did not, however, frame the constitutional provisions as a limitation.

<sup>51</sup> See Article 272 (1), Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992

Dagbon appears to be an outlier, which belies the fact that the UNCT has been unable to develop a broader strategy for engaging systemic problems emanating from the chieftaincy institution. Without directly referencing the limitations imposed by the constitutional provisions on chieftaincy affairs, the 2009 evaluation report highlights the lack of such a broader strategy for addressing chieftaincy disputes as a “serious gap in programming.”<sup>52</sup>

## 1.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FACTORS THAT DETERMINED OUTCOMES

Several factors account for the positive outcomes of the UNDP’s peace support activities in Ghana. The PDA’s ability to develop a network of influential contacts and local advisors (including senior politicians, influential journalist, prominent lawyers, journalist and civic leaders) was a key factor. The network enabled him to collect and vet information on the causes of conflict in the country, as well as solicit ideas about possible avenues for UNDP assistance. Access (through the network) to influential stakeholders, also facilitated cooperation with national and local government departments whose leadership and support is essential to the success of UNDP’s work. The PDA’s own personal qualities as an outgoing, and incredibly affable person also contributed to the positive outcome. His knowledge of Ghanaian cultural practices (and his ability to draw links to his own cultural background) also played a major role. These qualities enabled him to mobilise the resources needed to make a positive impact on the ground.

## 1.6 LESSONS

Several lessons can be drawn from the Ghana case. The first is the value of consulting stakeholders in the conflict zone (rather than relying solely on the opinions of national actors who may be somewhat detached). Another lesson pertains to the key role that cultural competency plays in effective analysis of conflict dynamics and identification of entry points. The PDA’s familiarity with the cultural norms of Northern Ghana, for example, helped him to identify influential local stakeholders. It also allowed him to take risks and “experiment” in ways that another PDA not sharing that background might not have. The case also points to the need to think about long-term sustainability in designing projects. The use of national service personnel in the Legal Aid programme, for example, shows how a promising project can falter if long-term staffing concerns are left unaddressed. The overall lesson from the Ghana case is that achieving desired outcomes requires a PDA to possess the right technical skills needed to identify entry points, to craft meaningful intervention strategies, and to mobilise the requisite resources for implementation.

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<sup>52</sup> Draman, R. et al (2009). OpCit. Page 38.

## 2.0 GUYANA

### 2.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Since it gained independence from Britain in 1966, Guyana has been plagued by ethno-political conflict involving the country's two dominant ethnic groups, the Indo-Guyanese (who make up 43.5% of the population) and the Afro-Guyanese (who comprise 30.2% of the population). The country's two biggest political parties are ethnically based and tend to encourage ethnic voting. The Indo-Guyanese support the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which has dominated Guyanese politics since the country's first "free and fair" elections in 1992. Similarly, the Afro-Guyanese support the People's National Congress (PNC), which dominated the political landscape in the 1970s and 1980s and is now part of a broader coalition called A Partnership for National Unity (APNU).<sup>53</sup> APNU was formed during the 2011 elections and currently controls the National Assembly.

Friction between the two groups is largely the result of competition over the allocation of socioeconomic resources and political power. Slowing economic growth and the pressures of a youth bulge are contributory factors. The resulting tension feeds into a narrative of relative deprivation and distrust peddled on both sides by elites and, occasionally, leads to violence especially during elections. The March 2001 elections, which were particularly contentious, led to major violence and deaths. Subsequent elections (in 2006 and 2011) have been less prone to violence largely as a result of local and national efforts (supported by UNDP and other development partners) designed to build trust and social cohesion in the country. Guyana continues to face challenges today, and UNDP's has remained a good partner supporting the Guyanese efforts to build capacity for managing present and future problems.

A PDA was appointed for Guyana in 2003 after an inter-agency mission recommended a UN conflict prevention presence to help the country manage its conflicts.<sup>54</sup> With elections on the horizon (in August 2006), the PDA led UNDP's efforts to develop (in partnership with other donors) several strategies to support local actors promote peace as part of a Social Cohesion Programme (SCP). Critical elements of the SCP were providing capacity building, training, and strategic support to national partners seeking to change the tone of political discourse in Guyana under difficult ethno-political circumstances. Through cooperation with governmental and non-governmental partners, UNDP, led by the PDA, made a modest but long-lasting contribution towards peace in Guyana.

### 2.2 STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

#### 2.2.1 BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH SUPPORT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES

A major goal of the SCP was to help develop the conflict management capacity of local governance institutions. To that effect, UNDP signed a MoU with the Ministry of Local Government to provide assistance to several Regions<sup>55</sup> and supported several projects designed to help officers of the Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs) and the Police force, improve their conflict management capacity. UNDP's support included financial and technical assistance to organisers of workshops and training programmes for RDCs. In July 2005, for example, UNDP supported a weekend conflict transformation workshop for the chairpersons and councillors of Region 3. It also sponsored the Chairpersons of Regions 3 and 4 (and coordinator of the Spirit of Guyana – a civic group) to attend a peacebuilding workshop in Turkey in March

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<sup>53</sup> Other members of APNU the Guyana Action party (GAP), the National Front Alliance (NFA), People's National Congress Reform (PNCR), and the working people's Alliance (WPA).

<sup>54</sup> The mission, which visited Guyana in 2002, comprised representatives from the DPA, UNDP (RBLAC and BCPR), DESA, OCHA, and OHCHR. The PDA was appointed in 2003 as a Peace and Development Expert.

<sup>55</sup> Guyana is divided into 10 regions each of which is administered by a Regional Democratic Council (RDC) headed by a Chairman. Under the MoU, direct beneficiaries of the SCP included Regions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10.

2006.<sup>56</sup> UNDP's support for the Police included technical and funding support for the organization of three conflict mediation workshops for police officers between December 2005 - June 2006.

## 2.2.2 BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE

Another major strategy of the SCP involved supporting the development of Guyana's national infrastructures for peace. Centrally, this involved an Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), which became a major partner for the SCP. A needs assessment of the ERC (conducted in July 2004) led UNDP to provide strategic planning and conflict management training support for the Commission.<sup>57</sup> The PDA facilitated UNDP's support for a two-day workshop in February 2004 to train ERC commissioners in ethnic conflict management as well as assist the Commission in its efforts to promote conflict awareness and skill training for key segments of the Guyanese public.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps the most visible aspect of UNDP's partnership with the ERC was support for the Commission's facilitation of Multi Stakeholder Forums (MSFs) organized to promote community-level dialogue on conflict and peace challenges throughout the country.

The MSFs provided safe spaces for ordinary Guyanese to take ownership of peacebuilding in their country through dialogue and collaborative problem-solving in their communities. In a strategic move to zone in on the needs of specific groups, MSFs were organized for women (8 August 2006), religious leaders (9 August), and youth (10 August). Each of these MSFs provided an opportunity for cross-community networking and collaboration among stakeholders dedicated to finding comprehensive solutions to challenges to peace in their community.

The PDA also facilitated UNDP's support for projects designed to help Guyanese institutions improve their early warning capacities. Examples include training in early warning mechanisms for groups such as political parties,<sup>59</sup> and their youth arms, whose conduct was deemed crucial to peace in the country.

## 2.2.3 BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

UNDP also helped Guyana build social cohesion by supporting projects that provide conflict management training for key stakeholders including the youth, media, trade unions, and civil society actors.

### *Support for youth groups*

The PDA facilitated UNDP's support for conflict management training programmes benefiting the youth. Two youth groups in particular received targeted support: the Guyana Youth and Student Movement (GYSM, the youth wing of the PNC) and the Progressive Youth Organization (PYO), which is affiliated with the PPP. UNDP helped organize several meetings that addressed some of the training needs of leaders of the two groups.<sup>60</sup> In addition, UNDP's support enabled the leaders of GYSM and PYO to participate in a Summer Peacebuilding Institute held at Eastern Mennonite University in the United States (June 2005). The programme provided much-needed international exposure and training in international peacebuilding and conflict transformation skills for the leaders.

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<sup>56</sup> Building National Capacity for Conflict Prevention and Transformation workshop, 6-8 March, Istanbul, Turkey.

<sup>57</sup> Roxanne Myers and Jason Calder, "Toward Ethnic Conflict Transformation: A Case Study Of Citizen Peacebuilding Initiatives On The 2006 Guyana Elections." *Occasional Paper: Peace Building Series No. 4.* (Franklin, West Virginia, Future Generations Graduate School, November 2011). Page 42.

<sup>58</sup> In August 2004, UNDP supported a film festival organized by the ERC to create awareness on diversity and tolerance among school children (August 2004); a conflict transformation workshop organized for leaders of political parties and civil society organizations. It also supported a one day consultative meeting (held in September 2005) organized to help civic leaders consider strategies to promote conversation at local, regional and national levels.

<sup>59</sup> In July 2003, for example, UNDP supported the participation of the Secretary Generals of the PPP and PNC in a UN Early Warning Mechanisms workshop held on the Dutch-Caribbean Island of Curacao.

<sup>60</sup> Examples include a Party Youth Leadership Planning Session (October 2003), and a Party Youth Arms training workshop (April 2005).

### **Support for unions**

UNDP also supported conflict management training programmes for Unions, which had become politicized and threatened to fuel escalation of political tensions in the country. To help turn Unions into agents of peace, UNPD provided support for several conflict training programmes, including a peace education workshop (June 2004), and a weekend strategic planning workshop (in December 2004) organized for members of the Guyana Congress of Trades Unions.

### **Support for civil society**

UNDP has also dedicated significant resources and attention to help build the conflict management capacity of civil society actors in Guyana. Beneficiaries groups include the Spirit of Guyana (SOG), and the Guyanese Peacebuilding Network (GPBN). The SOG emerged out of facilitation training organized by the ERC with UNDP support in late 2005. With UNDP's help, SOG developed into a major partner for the ERC, particularly in the area of training facilitators for MSFs. UNDP also helped to convene (in August 2006) the GPBN, a collection of peace activists who had previously participated in SCP programmes.<sup>61</sup> UNDP's support helped the GPBN to organize a forum (on Friday 25 August 2006) that brought leaders of five political parties to the National Library in Georgetown to discuss their strategies for promoting peace after the elections.<sup>62</sup> UNDP also supported the GPBN's efforts to research factors that contributed to the relatively peaceful elections in August 2006. At the time, the PDA served as the focal point for UNDP in all these efforts.

### **Support for the media**

The PDA also dedicated significant resources and attention to the Guyanese media, which plays an important role in framing political discourse in the country. UNDP support facilitated consultations among journalists and other media stakeholders. Between February and May 2004, for example, four such consultations sessions were held to bring owners of media houses, editors, and prominent journalists together to consider the drafting of a broadcasting bill and to deliberate on steps towards self regulation. UNDP also supported a June 2004 strategic planning session that brought in the Center for Communication and Studies at the University of Guyana to design courses on journalism for journalists.

### **Support for the peace research and education**

UNDP's support for peace promotion activities in Guyana also included significant focus peace research and education. In February 2004, for example, UNDP assisted the University of Guyana to organize a conference on Conflict Analysis, Conflict Resolution and Governance. The conference, which drew the participation of national and international peace scholars, prominent politicians, and civil society leaders, helped create awareness of the value of conflict resolution training and became an important marker in efforts to promote peace research and education in the country.

## **2.3 OUTCOMES**

UNDP's support for peacebuilding programmes in Guyana has been largely successful. An evaluation of the SCP conducted by Lund and Myers in 2007, for example, concluded that the programme achieved its broad 2006 objective of promoting social cohesion and peace at national, regional and local levels.<sup>63</sup> Another study (conducted by Simmons and Myers in 2006) also credits the SCP with having provided "the single formalised mechanism for some communities to convey their sentiments to political leaders."<sup>64</sup> Beyond these broad characterizations of success, there are some specific examples of positive outcome. These include evidence that suggest that civil society became empowered by the SCP: members of Spirit of Guyana, for example, undertook several peace promotion activities on their own following their participation in

<sup>61</sup> Roxanne Myers and Jason Calder, 2011OpCit. Page 43.

<sup>62</sup> Guyana Development Gateway. "Peace and Politics: Uniting Guyana during and after elections." (see <http://www.guyanagateway.org.gy/node/248>).

<sup>63</sup> Michael Lund and Roxanne Myers, *Can Fostering a Culture of Dialogue Change the Course of a Nation? An Evaluation of the Social Cohesion Programme. Key Findings and Summary of Recommendations*, UNDP UNDP-Guyana Report. August 2007. Page 13.

<sup>64</sup> Terrence Simmons and Roxanne Myers, *From Violent to Peaceful Elections: A Preliminary Look at Peacebuilding Initiatives in Guyana*, (Georgetown, 2006, December unpublished). Cited in Roxanne Myers and Jason Calder, "Toward Ethnic Conflict Transformation: A Case Study Of Citizen Peacebuilding Initiatives On The 2006 Guyana Elections." November 2011. *Occasional Paper: Peace Building Series No. 4* (Franklin, West Virginia, Future Generations Graduate School, November 2011). Page 50

UNDP-supported capacity building projects. There is also some evidence to support a theory that engagement with the media appears to have had a positive impact. The PDA notes (in his final report), for example, that major news outlets, particularly Kaieteur News, appeared to not only to have behaved responsibly during the elections, but also promoted peace by donating advertising space to Bikers Uniting Guyana as well as carrying peace promoting news articles submitted by for publication.<sup>65</sup>

It can also be argued that UNDP's support for programmes targeting youth leaders had a positive impact. Outreach and training programmes such as the Party Youth Leadership Planning Session and the Party Youth Arms training workshop, for example, led to a commitment by the two youth groups to consider a joint calendar of activities. Similarly, UNDP's engagement with Unions also contributed to their depoliticisation. These positive anecdotes suggest that the SCP may have played a crucial role in reducing violence during the 2006 elections.

## 2.4 CHALLENGES

The PDA and UNDP faced several challenges in Guyana. First, entrenched negative ethno-political attitudes (and attendant personal and group security challenges) made developing and sustaining a meaningful national dialogue on peace difficult. Other studies acknowledge this point in their work, which also found that large sections of the population were "overcome by the needs for personal safety and security" and remained unaffected by peacebuilding initiatives requiring them to "reach across villages to work towards a common future."<sup>66</sup>

Another challenge was persistent tension caused by allegations of extra-judicial killings and abuse of state resources. UNDP was unable to openly address these allegations (due to the nature of its mandate), and chose instead to focus on its conflict transformation work.<sup>67</sup>

A third challenge pertains to the broad scope of the SCP and its impact on output monitoring. Another evaluation of the programme suggests that the multi-pronged thrust of the SCP "might have led to insufficient effort to track and measure results."<sup>68</sup>

## 2.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FACTORS THAT DETERMINED OUTCOMES

Several factors appear to help explain the relative success of the SCP. They include the sheer scale of the grassroots peace promotion efforts organized through the Multi Stakeholder Forums. Tens of thousands of Guyanese received some form of conflict and peace awareness education as a result of these MSFs and media campaigns led by UNDP's national partners. One study estimates that about five per cent of the total population of Guyana was reached directly by the SCP while many more were reached through media messaging.<sup>69</sup>

An even more important factor of success was the sustainability of peace promotion efforts as local partners, such as SOG, became trainers themselves after receiving facilitation training support from UNDP. The PDA reports, for example, that SOG members organized peace process skills training for 300 teachers in Region 3,<sup>70</sup> produced a CD of peace songs and peace messages for local TV and radio broadcast ahead of the elections, and supported Bikers Uniting Guyana to organise a motorcycle ride from Region 6 to Linden (in Region 10) via Georgetown to promote peace and harmony in April 2006.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Chris Spies, *End of Assignment Report 18/03/2013. PDA Guyana Report, UNDP*. Page 25

<sup>66</sup> Roxanne Myers and Jason Calder, 2011. OpCit. Page 60


<sup>67</sup> Lund and Myers suggest that ignoring the human rights dimensions of the problem might not have been the best way to promote long term conflict resolution given that "human rights and conflict transformation are both necessary to resolve conflicts." Michael Lund and Roxanne Myers, Op Cit. 2007. Page 11.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Lund and Roxanne Myers, 2007. Op Cit. Page 11.

<sup>69</sup> Michael Lund and Roxanne Myers, 2007. Op Cit. Page 9

<sup>70</sup> Chris Spies, *End of Assignment Report 18/03/2013. PDA Guyana Report, UNDP*. Page 23

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. Page 23.



Other institutions that benefited from UNDP support also engaged in peace promotion activities on their own. The religious leaders who participated in SCP workshops, for example, became actively involved in peace promotion efforts and launched a campaign to get leaders of political parties to sign a peace pledge.<sup>72</sup> Another case in point is the GPBN, which was comprised by people who had previously benefitted from SCP programmes. Also noteworthy is a decision by the Police administration to provide mediation training for top officers as well as incorporate mediation training into its curriculum for training the rank and file.<sup>73</sup> Such positive activities helped create a self-sustaining grassroots peace movement across Guyana.

## 2.6 LESSONS

Several lessons can be drawn from the Guyana experience. First, successful operation as a PDA requires a good working relationship with the RC and key members of the UNCT. In Guyana, for example, good relations with the RC enabled the PDA to have major inputs in programme designing and execution. Good relations also allowed him to pursue conflict prevention and peacebuilding leads without fear of a backlash.

Second, some prior knowledge of the country-context and familiarity with the work of the CT can be essential for success. The PDA's prior experience as a facilitator of a UN workshop in Guyana provided an opportunity to meet with, and "test the chemistry" with CT colleagues before his deployment.<sup>74</sup> This proved important to his relationship with key members of CT and others stakeholders.

Third, strong local buy-in and local ownership of projects is a prerequisite for successful peace promotion programmes. Much of the success witnessed in Guyana, for example, was due to the strong ownership exhibited by local partners.

An allied lesson is the need to prioritise capacity development of local actors as the mainstay of any long-term peacebuilding effort. In Guyana, such capacity-building attention from the PDA and UNDP ensured that national partners could assume control of local peace promotion efforts without too much help from donors.

## 3.0 KYRGYZSTAN

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. Page 3.

Kyrgyzstan has struggled to find socio-political stability since its independence in 1991. Mass protests over economic and political grievances toppled its first two leaders, Askar Akaev (1991-2005) and Kurmanbek Bakiyev (2005-2010). In June 2010 a simmering political conflict exploded into nationalist violence that left many dead and many more displaced. The worst affected areas were the southern cities of Osh and Jalalabad, where radical Kyrgyz nationalists targeted ethnic Uzbeks. A burgeoning narcotics trade, and ever-present threat of Islamic guerrilla activity, added to the crises. A new constitution paved the way for parliamentary elections in October 2010 and the election of President Almazbek Atambaev a year later. The 2011 election was relatively peaceful and led to coalition government that gave rise to hope that Kyrgyzstan's instability might be over. However many problems remain today. The country's democracy is still fragile and its economy continues to struggle amidst charges of official corruption. Rising food prices, declining foreign remittances, unreliable power supply, and growing regional disparities have added to the hardship. The coalition government collapsed in August 2012 under the weight of these and other problems and a new government (under Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiev) was appointed in September. Kyrgyzstan remains a poor performer on key social and economic indicators. However, with UNDP's support, the country continues to confront its challenges and appears poised for a breakthrough.

### 3.1.1 PDA ROLE AND MANDATE IN KYRGYZSTAN

The Kyrgyzstan PDA was appointed in response to the government's request for UN assistance with reconstruction and reconciliation following the June 2010 violence. With PBF providing funding support,<sup>75</sup> the PDA led UNDP's efforts to help national partners build capacity for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Several UN agencies (including PBSO, UN Women, and DPA) helped to shape peace projects undertaken by UNDP in partnership with the government. These projects built upon previous UNDP peace support efforts, including the Democratic Governance Programme, the Preventive Development Programme, and the Peace and Development Programme. In November 2010, a UNDAF Strategic Prioritization Workshop was held in Bishkek to outline projects goals and targets for Kyrgyzstan. The PDA and UNDP led the design and implementation of peace promotion projects under the UNDAF.

## 3.2 STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

The PDA's strategies and activities reflect larger peacebuilding goals outlined in the UNDAF and reinforced by the PBF (under both the IRF and PRF). The Peace and Development Analysis launched under the Peace and Development Programme in 2008 by UNDP in partnership with Kyrgyzstan's Department for Economic and Social Policy, and the Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI) informed analysis of triggers of Kyrgyzstan's conflict, in large part.<sup>76</sup> The PDA consulted with key stakeholders such as government officials, political party leaders, leaders of NGOs and civic groups, professional associations, women's and youth groups. Information gathered from these consultations informed the design, planning and implementation of UNDP projects supporting peacebuilding efforts of government and other local partners. The section that follows reviews the PDA's leadership of peace support projects in three key areas: conflict sensitivity promotion, peace infrastructure development, and dialogue and mediation support services.

### 3.2.1 CONFLICT SENSITIVITY PROMOTION

The PDA led UNDP's efforts to assist national actors in their effort to mainstream conflict sensitivity in Kyrgyzstan. Programming reflected conflict-sensitivity needs expressed at consultative meetings organized by the CT and national partners<sup>77</sup> UNDP (in collaboration with the World Bank and OSCE), for example, supported government counterparts to

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<sup>75</sup> The PBF approved \$3 million in October 2010 from its Immediate Response Facility (IRF) for Kyrgyzstan. Later, the SG approved an additional \$7 million from the PBF's Programme Recovery Facility (PRF) to fund several peacebuilding priority projects.

<sup>76</sup> The Peace and Development Analysis aimed to help improve strategies for conflict prevention in Kyrgyzstan. Its preliminary findings were presented for local stakeholder comments at various workshops organized at the regional level throughout the country.

<sup>77</sup> On October 19, 2011, for example, the Peace and Development Programme and the Democratic Governance Programme jointly organized a roundtable meeting with government partners at Osh to explore ideas for conflict-sensitive development for peace in the country. The Roundtable, which was attended by Jantoro Satybaldiev (Minister and Head of the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development of Osh and Jalal-Abad cities), the Deputy Mayors of Osh and Jalal-Abad cities, representatives of Osh, Batken and

promote a conflict sensitive urban development agenda. UNDP became a co-chair of the Development Partners Coordination Council (DPCC) assembled to pursue that agenda. The PDA led the co-chairing effort on behalf of UNDP and engaged key local stakeholders in a continuous dialogue on how best to promote human rights as part of a broader urban development agenda in cities such as Osh. At the national level, the PDA guided UNDP's support for conflict sensitive lawmaking at Kyrgyzstan's parliament. He supported efforts to create a conflict sensitive methodology for lawmakers when a review of global practices failed to find a model suitable to Kyrgyzstan's unique social cohesion challenges. He provided facilitation and technical support to enable a team of experts and stakeholders (including MPs, government officials, legal experts, and conflict prevention experts) develop, test, and pilot the methodology. The methodology was approved by MPs and other participants at an international conference called in November 2012 to consider the role of parliament in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

### 3.2.2 DIALOGUE AND MEDIATION SUPPORT

UNDP's support for dialogue and mediation programmes in Kyrgyzstan reflected priorities set by local stakeholders, including President Atambayev, who highlighted mediation capacity building needs in a 2012 meeting with RC Alexander Avanesov and SRSB Miroslav Jenča.<sup>78</sup> To help address such concerns, UNDP has collaborated with national partners to promote dialogue and mediation support activities. The PDA often leads these collaborative efforts on UNDP's behalf. For example, he helped coordinate a joint effort (with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) to organize a dialogue session that brought law enforcement officers and civil society actors to Bishkek to consider ways to prevent violence during the 2011 elections. The meeting's success led the President to request that a similar event be planned for Osh, the epicenter of the June 2010 violence. The PDA has supported dialogue at the national level. In November 2012, for instance, he facilitated a conference organized by UNDP and the Office of the Speaker of Parliament to explore avenues to improve Parliament-civil society cooperation for peace in the country. Participants from other countries were invited to share their experiences at the conference.<sup>79</sup>

UNDP has also supported mediation capacity building by funding training programmes for local mediators and helping to create awareness about laws governing mediation practices in Kyrgyzstan. In September 2012, for example, UNDP joined the Organization of Islamic Conference to organize mediation training for Islamic religious leaders. It was led by mediation experts from DPA's MSU, who also trained advanced mediators to handle complex cases in Kyrgyzstan. The PDA assisted in the development of criteria for selecting participants for the training. He also helped direct UNDP's support for the establishment of a Mediation Coordination Committee to serve as a platform for collaboration among mediators and also for deliberating on Kyrgyzstan's draft mediation law.<sup>80</sup> These training programmes have helped strengthen Kyrgyzstan's conflict prevention capacity.

UNDP's support for peacebuilding in Kyrgyzstan is not limited to dialogue and mediation support activities. With the help of the PDA, the CT seized other opportunities to support peace activities initiated by the government. In September 2012, for example, UNDP supported the Office of the President to promote peace through a "Peace Caravan" campaign. UNDP joined with UN Women to provide technical advice and financial support for the campaign, which involved a national "peace tour" featuring "peace role models" selected through a TV /social media competition event.<sup>81</sup> The PDA helped plan aspects of the campaign and played a lead role in facilitating the partnership with the Office of the President.

### 3.2.3. INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE

The PDA has led UNDP efforts to help national partners develop Kyrgyzstan's peace infrastructure. Activities include advocating for the establishment of a body to coordinate conflict prevention, supporting reform of existing institutions such as the Assembly of the People, and promoting conflict early warning at the local level.

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Jalal-Abad provinces, and NGOs, considered best practices in implementing conflict-sensitive projects, mainstreaming conflict-sensitivity in project cycles, participatory approaches to conflict-sensitive programming.

<sup>78</sup> *PDA Report August/September 2012-Kyrgyzstan*

<sup>79</sup> Key foreign participants included the Kenyan National Ethnic & Race Relations Commission

<sup>80</sup> *PDA Report August/September 2012-Kyrgyzstan*

<sup>81</sup> Ibid



UNDP has been a strong supporter of a local advocacy campaign (mostly by NGOs) to get the government to establish a national body to coordinate conflict prevention efforts in the country. The agency (in collaboration with UN Women) consulted stakeholders and supported public outreach events touting the value of a centralized approach to conflict prevention. The PDA took the lead in organizing these consultations and outreach. He also helped mobilize some 30 NGOs active in conflict prevention to draft a letter to the President requesting action on the matter. The letter enumerated the merits of institutionalizing conflict prevention through the establishment of a high government office to coordinate prevention efforts across the country. The advocacy campaign generated little attention at the presidency until a change in government in September 2012.

Another peace infrastructure advocacy project supported by UNDP is a campaign to reform the Assembly of People, a public platform for promoting inter-ethnic harmony in Kyrgyzstan. The campaign aims to help the Assembly to better protect the Uzbek minority. UNDP joined with several partners (including OHCHR and the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities) to provide funding and technical advice for the advocacy effort. With UNDP support, a local consultant was recruited to assess the Assembly's capacity and to suggest ways for improvement.

Cognisant of the value of early warning, the PDA has supported crisis monitoring in Kyrgyzstan. He coordinated UNDP's partnership with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and the Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI) to design and implement a simple monitoring system involving local NGOs and provincial level Advisory Councils in seven provinces. He also provided training support, including in the ICT, to local conflict monitors as part of the efforts to strengthen early warning capacity in the country.

### 3.3 OUTCOMES

These strategies and projects have helped to strengthen Kyrgyzstan's conflict management capacity. The conflict sensitivity law-making methodology, for example, has already been used to improve draft laws deemed conflict insensitive. In November 2012, for example, a team of experts participating in a national conference on the peacebuilding roles of parliament tested the efficacy of methodology by applying it to some 29 draft laws that had been laid in parliament. The experts discovered that nearly half (14 of the 29) did not meet the conflict-insensitive threshold set by the methodology and made appropriate recommendations for improving the draft laws. Similarly, outcomes of the dialogue promotion and mediation support programmes have been largely positive though challenges remain. The dialogue between parliament and civil society, for example, seems to be going well after a slow start. The mediation support programme has also yielded positive outcomes, including the establishment of a Mediation Coordination Committee to enhance collaboration among mediators. So did the PDA's engagement of local institutions, which helped to develop the mediation training capacity of local bodies such as the Institute of Public Policy (a Kyrgyz institute that does mediation and mediation training). There is also evidence that mediation practice is catching on in Kyrgyzstan and country now has a new association dedicated to promoting mediation in the country.

The advocacy campaign to get government to establish a central body to coordinate conflict prevention activities has also produced some good outcomes after a slow start. The campaign led to the inclusion of the coordination concept in Kyrgyzstan's 2012 Strategic Development Strategy, paving the way for a new body, the National Agency for Local Self Governance and Inter-Ethnic Relations, to be formed. The early warning and conflict monitoring programmes are still in their pilot phases. They should contribute significantly to Kyrgyzstan's conflict detection capacity when fully functional.

### 3.4 CHALLENGES

Several challenges confront the PDAs work in Kyrgyzstan. Among these are unstable country context, funding constraints, and a lack of clarity about mandate and reporting lines. Political instability has hampered programme implementation and made it difficult for the PDA and UNDP to establish the kinds of local stakeholder networks essential to operational

success. Programmes often suffer when the requesting government is removed from power and successor government emphasizes other priorities, as was the case after the overthrow of Bakiev in 2010.

Finding adequate funding for projects is another major challenge. In spite of benefiting from the PBF funding, there are programme needs that are not adequately covered. This has led to the PDA exploring alternative funding options for some projects. Another challenge is the lack of clarity regarding the PDA's relationship with the RC and CT. In the case of Kyrgyzstan, the relationship structure and reporting lines are even more complicated by the PBF funding.

### 3.6 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FACTORS THAT DETERMINED OUTCOMES

Several factors account for the PDA's relative success in Kyrgyzstan. First, the PDA's ability to explore joint-funding opportunities for projects has been a major boost for the CT as a whole. The PDA for example is collaborating with the World Bank team on a joint proposal to seek Swiss Trust Fund support for several conflict sensitivity projects. This shows initiative and innovation on the part of the PDA.

Another factor of success is the PDA's prioritization of needs assessment in planning projects. This approach has helped establish a baseline for measuring progress as well as helped identify gaps in existing knowledge and literature on best practices that can then be filled in. This was the case in the development of the conflict sensitive law-making methodology. A review of the practice experiences in conflict sensitive law-making produced no adequate models for Kyrgyzstan, clearly underscoring the essential nature of the methodological aspects of the project.

Also helpful is the PDA's ability to identify opportunities for progress within unstable contexts and taking advantage of them. An example is the conflict prevention coordination advocacy campaign, which made little progress in its first few years due to an unfavourable political climate. Collapse of the coalition government in August 2012 added new complications but the PDA managed to salvage the campaign by leveraging past good relations with members of the new government.<sup>82</sup>

The PDA's forward-thinking abilities have also contributed to his success in Kyrgyzstan. His August/September 2012 PDA report, for example, devoted considerable space to analysing future trends in regional and inter-state conflict in the Fergana valley of Central Asia. This forward-looking report laid out various worst-case conflict scenarios that might emerge out of rising demographic pressures on land and water resources, the impact of state collapse and insecurity in Afghanistan (particularly how that might impact extremist groups like Islamist Jihad Union, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and Hizb ut-Tahir operating in the Fergana valley and organized crime in Kyrgyzstan), and the politics of border demarcation and associated disputes between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.<sup>83</sup> Such forward-looking analysis enable the UNCT anticipate and plan for problems before they arise.

### 3.7 LESSONS

Several lessons can be drawn from the PDA's work in Kyrgyzstan. They include the value of good networking among all stakeholder communities – civil society, government, security agencies, research community, and donors. This not only ensures local buy-in for projects, but also provides a measure of insurance for projects when requesting governments are removed from power.

Another lesson is that support for advocacy projects can work yield dividends in "tough" political contexts when done well. The PDA's use of local NGOs to advocate (through the letter writing) for a central body to coordinate conflict prevention activities is a case in point. Development agencies are often reluctant to directly and publicly advocate for policies that run

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<sup>82</sup> Key contacts included Jantoro Satybaldiev, the new Prime Minister, who had benefited from cooperated with UNDP when he was Director of the State Directorate for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Osh and Jalal-Abad cities (SDRD); and Mira Karybaeva, Chief of Staff of the President's Office. Mira Karybaeva was later appointed to head the Department for Ethnic Development, Religious Affairs and Interaction with Civil Society in the Office of the President. She became important asset to the PDA in that new position.

<sup>83</sup> PDA Report August/September 2012-Kyrgyzstan

counter to host government agenda. Deferring the public aspects of the advocacy campaign to local NGOs (while providing strong technical support) worked in Kyrgyzstan.

Another lesson pertains to the value of prioritising local ownership in designing and implementing projects. A critical evaluation of projects funded by PBF under the IRF1, suggests that low local ownership may have undermined some of the projects implemented by the CT. The evaluation, which was conducted by two PBF consultants from 10 May to 30 June 2012, reports that local authorities felt left out of the decision-making process even though the UNDP project staff consulted them.<sup>84</sup> The report offers three explanations for the low ownership of the IRF1 projects: the timing of the projects (immediately after the June 2010 violence);<sup>85</sup> the absence of a Joint Steering Committee;<sup>86</sup> and insufficient communication between the UNCT and the national government.<sup>87</sup> The cumulative impact was the emergence of an “understanding divide” between the UNCT and the local authorities.

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<sup>84</sup> Marla Zapach and Ibraeva Gulnara, *Final Evaluation-Kyrgyzstan Peacebuilding Fund - Immediate Response Facility (IRF)*. 2012. Page 28.

<sup>85</sup> The evaluators note that the projects were launched at a time when the “transitional government was still trying to consolidate its authority and was unable to respond and participate fully in the development of the IRF1 programming given the rapidity of the IRF response mechanism and the humanitarian crisis that was ongoing at the time.” <sup>85</sup> See Marla Zapach and Ibraeva Gulnara (2012). Ibid. Page 28

<sup>86</sup> The report notes that the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) was never activated, and hence did not meet. Under the IRF, the JSC is mandatory and should have been composed of senior representatives of the UNCT, the Kyrgyz government, major donors, and civil society groups. It is a major coordinating body that enables local stakeholders to have an input in to project planning and implementation decision-making. The fact that the committee was not activated therefore constituted a big loss for local ownership.

<sup>87</sup> The report suggests that the UNCT lacked an effective peacebuilding strategy and was ineffective in its communication and engagement with national government. This, presumably, was the principal cause of an “understanding divide” between the UNCT and the government. However, a senior UNCT staff member is quoted in the report shifts the blame for the understanding divide to local authorities who are “not well informed and don’t understand peacebuilding...(and)... need to be convinced on the value of peacebuilding.”<sup>87</sup> Marla Zapach and Ibraeva Gulnara (2012). Ibid.

