

Peacebuilding Support Office



Harnessing capacities globally in the service of conflict prevention and sustaining peace

As part of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) serves as a facilitator to enhance coherence and collaboration across the UN system and with partners, in support of nationally owned efforts to build and sustain peace.

In the founding resolutions (A/RES/60/180) and (S/RES/1645(2005)) establishing the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council requested “the Secretary-General to establish, within the Secretariat, from within existing resources, a small peacebuilding support office staffed by qualified experts to assist and support the Commission”.

Established in 2005, PBSO draws together expertise to advance impactful system-wide action, policies and guidance, and fosters an integrated and inclusive approach to prevention and sustaining peace. The Office comprises the Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch, the Financing for Peacebuilding Branch and the Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch.

Led by Assistant Secretary-General, Elizabeth Spehar, PBSO assists and supports the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) with strategic advice and policy guidance, manages the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) on behalf of the Secretary-General, and works to enhance system-wide coherence and partnerships with UN and non-UN actors in support of building and sustaining peace in partner countries.

The Office helps to sustain peace by fostering international support for nationally owned and led peacebuilding efforts. Our strategic priorities encompass several key areas. Firstly,

we aim to enhance the operationalization of PBSO’s crucial “hinge” role by fostering stronger integration within DPPA and the broader peace and security pillar. This role also involves strengthening our support and ensuring coherence and complementarity with the various Agencies, Funds, and Programmes within the UN system. We are committed to achieving greater alignment and coherence within the peacebuilding architecture, and delivering tangible results to make a lasting impact at the country level. Additionally, we are dedicated to initiating, leading, and contributing to thought leadership efforts in support of the UN’s peacebuilding agenda, by shaping discussions and driving innovation in peacebuilding. We recognize the importance of effectively using the diverse humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding platforms and forums available to us. Through these channels, we aim to communicate and advocate for sustained peacebuilding efforts that bring positive change to communities and regions in need.

The Office uses its key role in bringing together humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors, enhancing coherence, and strategic alignment within the UN system to turn the “triple nexus” into a reality. Our new initiative, Peacebuilding Impact Hub, aims to foster a deeper understanding of the effects and impact of peacebuilding interventions and practice to enhance the ability of peacebuilders to make timely and evidence-informed decisions for effective and adaptive action across all stages, from conflict prevention to recovery and sustaining peace and development. A second new initiative is the annual UN-CSO Dialogue on Peacebuilding which will enable networking and connections among diverse CSOs, in particular from the Global South.

■ The Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is an intergovernmental advisory body that supports peace efforts in conflict-affected countries. The PBC is composed of 31 Member States, elected from the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council. The top financial contributing countries and the top troop-contributing countries to the United Nations system are also members.

The Peacebuilding Commission supports national and regional peacebuilding priorities, at the request of concerned governments. In 2022, the Commission engaged in support of 14 separate country- and region-specific settings, broadening its geographic scope, including by holding meetings for the first time on Timor-Leste, South Sudan, and Central Asia. Since its inception, the Commission has engaged with a total of 26 countries and regions. The Commission's activities include meetings, joint events, briefings, and submissions to the main bodies of the United Nations (such as the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council) and other fora, as well as field missions and informal interactions with relevant stakeholders.

The Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch (PBCSB) provides Secretariat support to the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

Key Priorities

- Moving forward, the Commission will continue to provide a platform to countries willing to share their peacebuilding experiences, and countries seeking support to address challenges.
- It will also continue to review its working methods and approaches, with a view to strengthening its role and its impact.
- The Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch (PBCSB) will continue to provide Secretariat support to the Chair, the Vice Chairs and Member states of the Peacebuilding Commission.



■ The Financing for Peacebuilding Branch

The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund is the United Nations' leading instrument to invest in prevention and peacebuilding, in partnership with the wider UN system, national and subnational authorities, civil society organizations, regional organizations and multilateral banks. The Fund supports joint UN responses to address critical peacebuilding opportunities, connecting peace, development, human rights, and humanitarian action. The core principles of the Fund are being timely, catalytic, and risk-tolerant, and facilitating inclusiveness and national ownership, integrated approaches, and cohesive UN strategies.

Since its inception in 2006, the PBF has approved over USD 1.9 billion in funding for projects in more than 60 countries thanks to generous voluntary contributions from over 60 UN Member States. The PBF Strategy for 2020-2024 has a target of investing USD 1.5 billion over five years, aiming to broaden and deepen actions to prevent violent conflict. The Fund's priority windows include supporting cross-border and regional approaches, facilitating UN transition contexts, and fostering inclusion through women and youth empowerment. In 2022, the Peacebuilding Support Office approved a record USD 231 million to support community and institution-building efforts in 37 countries. That year, PBF support reached over 58 million people through our partners' activities including dialogue processes, access to justice, capacity building for peaceful conflict resolution, awareness raising, employment opportunities and basic service delivery in conflict-affected regions.

Key Priorities

- Responding to national peacebuilding priorities: While any UN programme country can request support through the Fund's Immediate Response Facility (IRF), the Fund prioritizes the currently 27 countries eligible for the Peace and Recovery Facility. Governments request eligibility from the Secretary-General for five-year period.
- Fostering inclusion through women and youth empowerment: the Fund is one of the UN's most important funding instruments in support of both the Women, Peace, Security, and Youth, Peace, Security agendas. Through its 2023 special call for proposals, the Fund has prioritized support for gender dimensions of conflict and climate change mitigation and women's engagement in natural resources management; and support for youth-inclusive political processes. The Fund is moreover expanding its localization efforts through dedicated support for co-creation of gender promotion programmes between UN agencies and local actors in over ten countries; small-grant facility pilot initiatives in the Liptako Gourma and Lake Chad regions; and increased funding to local actors.
- Facilitating UN transition contexts: approximately 35% of the Fund's investments go to contexts undergoing changes in UN configurations to foster UN Country Teams' ability to complement UN mission mandates and sustain gains after mission withdrawal. In the coming years, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Mali and South Sudan are expected to remain among priority recipient countries in this regard.



- Supporting cross-border and regional approaches: a unique comparative advantage for the Fund focused on addressing peace and conflict dynamics that traverse borders and require partners to work together on issues such as farmer-herder conflicts, solutions pathways for displaced and host communities, and violent extremism. Coastal West Africa, the Sahel, the Great Lakes region and Central America are among the regions espousing the largest demand for PBF support in the coming years.
- Impact and learning: the Fund works with a wide range of partners to improve peacebuilding design, monitoring and evaluation practice and distill lessons. For example, following the publication of a major Thematic Review on Climate, Peace and Security in 2023, the Fund will publish a Thematic Review on Human Rights and Peacebuilding in early 2024, and one on Youth, Peace and Security in early 2025. The Fund will furthermore benefit from PBSO's new Peacebuilding Impact Hub, which will help amplify learning from the Fund's programmes.

■ The Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnership Branch

The Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch (PSPB) works to enhance UN system capacities to deliver on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. It supports UN-wide coherence and coordination across the Humanitarian Development and Peace nexus, including by contributing to cross-pillar and interagency coordination mechanisms and working groups that produce guidance and policy advice for the field and HQ. It promotes thought leadership on peacebuilding, by curating knowledge on emerging themes on peacebuilding, impact and lessons learned for advocacy and planning purposes, fostering broader thinking around the holistic approach to peacebuilding in the New Agenda for Peace as well as on financing for peacebuilding. It leads in coordinating the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda on behalf of DPPA, including by hosting the joint Secretariat and by coordinating UN system initiatives on the YPS agenda, together with UNFPA and Office of the SG's Envoy on Youth. It supports partnerships with IFIs, leading the implementation of the 2017 UN World Bank Partnership Framework for Crisis-Affected Situations, coordinating with the UN Secretariat and, UN Agencies and providing liaison, advisory and programmatic support to UN Resident Coordinators and field missions, inter alia through a Partnership Facility. It supports engagement with Civil Society and the private sector for collective impact on peacebuilding. It also promotes South-South and Triangular cooperation for peacebuilding.

Key Priorities

In line with the DPPA Strategic plan, the Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch will focus on four main priorities during the 2023/24 period.

- With the aim of strengthening peacebuilding learning and innovative approaches, the Branch will support the launch of the Peacebuilding Impact Hub including the Peacebuilding Overview report. It will also support the Peacebuilding Architecture Review as well as activities emanating from the New Agenda for Peace.
- Strengthen partnerships in support of peacebuilding with international financial institutions, namely the World Bank, Regional Development Banks and the International Monetary Fund, regional organizations, the private sector and civil society including through the annual UN-CSO Dialogue on Peacebuilding.
- The PSPB branch will also continue coordinating the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda on behalf of DPPA including through the implementation of the DPPA YPS strategy.
- Support UN-wide coherence and coordination across the Humanitarian, Development, Peace and Human Rights Spectrum including through convening of the Peacebuilding Contact Group and the Peacebuilding Strategy Group, and co-chairing the revamped Joint Steering Committee for Humanitarian-Development Collaboration with Linkages to Peace (JSC).



Our Leadership

Elizabeth Spehar

Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support

Awa Dabo

Director and Deputy Head of PBSO

Olu Arowobusoye

Chief, Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch

Brian James Williams

Chief, Financing for Peacebuilding Branch

Roselyn Akombe

Chief, Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch

For details, please see:
<https://www.un.org/peacebuilding>