



## **Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies: SDG 16 implementation and the path towards leaving no one behind**

27 – 29 May 2019

Rome, Italy

### ***Session A2: Accelerating progress on peaceful, just and inclusive societies in conflict and crisis situations***

Date: 28 May 2019, 11:00 – 12:30

Description:

Since 2010 the number of major civil wars almost tripled, and between 2011 and 2015, there was a six-fold increase in conflict-related fatalities. While the world has not experienced any full-scale war involving the major powers since 1945, geopolitical power configurations are in flux, contributing to a dramatic increase in proxy warfare by global and regional powers. As a result, conflicts are progressively more internationalized and regionalized, making them bloodier, longer and more intractable. In 1950 there were an average of eight armed groups engaged in a civil war. By 2010 the average number had surged to 14, and in 2014 there were more than 1,000 armed groups estimated to be active in Syria alone. Displacement as a result of armed violence is also at its highest level recorded, involving more than 65 million people.

Violence has become the biggest obstacle to reaching the SDGs as more than 80 per cent of the extreme poor are expected to live in countries affected by violence and conflict. Member States and the international community need to be better at working *on* conflict and working *in* conflict, i.e. reducing the drivers of violent conflict and improving ways to reach marginalized populations affected by conflict and make progress on the SDGs.

Addressing drivers of crisis, conflict and instability includes building inclusive and capable justice and security institutions and systems. These can address the underlying perceptions of unequal access to power and resources and mitigate the impacts to population groups feeling marginalized and excluded from decision making processes. Transitional justice and advancing the state's ability to secure human rights are important parts of sustaining peace.

In addition, frequency and size of climate-related disasters have increased, reversing development gains and aggravating risk of conflicts. Those risks are also intertwined with global dynamics such as migratory and demographic pressures, rapid urbanization, illicit flows of drugs and arms, disaster risk and climatic and environmental stresses.

Achieving Goal 16 and the SDGs in general will depend on a step-change in the way we think about our support to help countries and regions break cycles of conflict and instability. It also requires that countries and member states take charge and lead reshaping the institutional and social landscape, preparing grounds for important reforms that help build sustainable peace and achieve SDG 16 and the other SDGs.

This session will highlight and explore how countries in/post crisis/conflict situations have established appropriate policies and operational environments to achieve SDG16 and accelerate progress towards the

SDGs. The session will also discuss the issues around lack of data to monitor SDG16 indicators and measure progress particularly in crisis settings and how countries have dealt with this challenge. The session will also highlight the key principles of conflict sensitivity, equity, justice and inclusion of differing voices, and participation of marginalized communities as a key ingredient for sustaining peace. These key principles relate to both designated peace-related processes and the long-term governance of institutions on all levels in a society. Lessons learned will be shared to further strengthen south-south cooperation, partnerships and learning. The importance of innovation and multi stakeholder partnerships will be further explored.

The session will bring together representatives from conflict-affected countries, including middle-income countries and countries that are navigating their way through a political transition. Some of the thematic areas this session is expected to touch upon are 1) reconciliation, reintegration and social cohesion; 2) policy agenda/reforms needed to sustain peacebuilding efforts towards sustainable development; 3) importance of conflict prevention and engaging early on through development of national capacities for conflict prevention and mediation; 4) the role of institutions at all levels to prevent conflict, improve prospects for local peace, and sustain peace; 5) the importance of progress on SDG 16 for the other SDGs; and 6) the importance of inclusion and participation in governance, taking a whole-of-society approach.

The session will also highlight the importance of SDG 16 in crisis and conflict affected contexts, and highlight strategies adopted in different contexts to prevent conflict and violence and support a longer term, developmental approach to peacebuilding.

#### Objectives:

- Draw attention to specific challenges of achieving SDG16, which could have a domino effect on the progress of other SDGs;
- Provide a global platform for highlighting lessons learned and good practices/innovations for a strengthened partnership;
- Highlight the challenges of achieving SDG 16 in crisis contexts and key strategies that can be adopted to promote peace, justice and inclusion.

#### Key questions:

- 1) What are the main challenges, key areas of progress, and areas of potential rapid acceleration?
- 2) How can we enhance data-driven monitoring and reporting processes to support evidence-based action?
- 3) What key interventions and policies can help us ensure that no one is left behind?
- 4) What are the specific policy reforms, local actions and strategies adopted to support national and local processes to strengthen resilience of communities and institutions to best deliver on SDG16? This includes strengthening of social cohesion, dialogue and reconciliation, access to basic services including justice and security and conflict/dispute resolution.
- 5) What innovative and good practices and efforts, including collection of data and monitoring, have helped in the acceleration of SDG16 achievement?
- 6) What processes and mechanisms are needed to be put in place to ensure that voices of traditionally marginalized groups, women and young people are included in peacebuilding and the policy formulation/discourse?

*UNDP, PBSO, FAO, and IDLO have been facilitating the organization of this session*