

Interpeace Peacebuilding in Practice

Paper No 8

Livelihoods for Peace

March 2024





Interpeace
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR PEACEBUILDING



Interpeace Peacebuilding in Practice

Paper No 8

Livelihoods for Peace

March 2024

3  **Years**
Making
Peace
Possible



Acknowledgements

This report was drafted by Phil Vernon, working closely with Rebecca Brubaker, Abiosseh Davis, Estelle Brot, and Elena Maffioletti Arratia.

Interpeace's peacebuilding efforts worldwide are possible thanks to the strategic partnership with the governments of the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark and Slovenia



Kingdom of the Netherlands



**MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

Table of Contents

2	Acknowledgements
4	Acronyms
5	Executive Summary
6	1. Introduction: livelihoods, a necessary but insufficient ingredient of peace.
8	2. The links between livelihoods and peace
8	2.1 'Peace' and 'livelihoods' defined
9	2.2 Livelihoods enable and are enabled by peace
11	2.3 Peacebuilding
13	2.3 Livelihood promotion
15	3. Theory of change
15	3.1 The evidence
17	3.2 The basis for a livelihoods-focused peacebuilding theory of change
18	3.3 A focused, practical theory of change for building peace through livelihoods
20	3.4 How interventions contribute to outcomes
20	3.5 How outcomes lead to impact
22	3.6 Choosing a pathway
22	3.7 Indicators
23	4. Putting the theory of change into practice
23	4.1 Ensure that programmes are tailored, sequenced, multi-level, targeted and conflict sensitive
25	4.2 Enhance, increase and diversify livelihood opportunities, and widen access to them
29	4.3 Strengthen regulatory and problem-solving mechanisms
31	4.4 Promote livelihoods activities that particularly encourage or require cooperation
33	4.5 Improve access to social protection
36	5. Opportunities, challenges and principles
36	5.1 Opportunities
37	5.2 Challenges and risks
38	5.3 Principles
39	6. Conclusions
41	Annex 1. Illustrative indicators at intervention, outcome and impact levels of the theory of change for building peace through livelihoods.
44	Annex 2. Acknowledgements

Acronyms

CCA	Common Country Analysis
CENAP	Centre d'Alerte et de Prévention des Conflits
DDR	Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
FAO	The Food and Agricultural Organization
HDP nexus	Humanitarian, development and peace nexus
IDP	Internally displaced person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFRC	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MHPSS	Mental health and psychosocial support
PAR	Participatory action research
PCA	Peace and conflict analysis
UNCCA	UN Common Country Analysis
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
VSLA	Voluntary savings and loans associations
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
YPS	Youth, peace and security

Executive Summary

Livelihoods for Peace explores the contribution of livelihoods to peace, and the integration of livelihoods with peacebuilding programming. This is of increasing interest because policy makers and agencies are seeking new ways to build peace in the face of growing need, amid a renewed international commitment to peacebuilding. Livelihoods are a suitable and practical entry point for peacebuilding in conflict-affected countries because they provide tangible benefits for communities, who complain that they “can’t eat peace”.

The links between fair access to decent livelihoods and peace have long been known. But evidence for how best to leverage them in peacebuilding is incomplete. It is mainly based on limited, short-term projects. There is not yet a body of best practice.

Taking the evidence that does exist, and practical experience and examples, *Livelihoods for Peace* proposes a theory of change for building peace through livelihoods. The theory positions four familiar livelihoods intervention areas as the main entry points, and makes fairness and inclusion central to each:

1. Enhance, increase and diversify livelihood opportunities, and widen access to them;
2. Strengthen formal and informal regulatory and problem-solving mechanisms;
3. Promote livelihood activities of the kind that particularly encourage or require cooperation;
4. Improve access to social protection.

To maximise their peacebuilding potential, each entry point is designed and implemented using peacebuilding methods familiar to most peacebuilding organisations: peace and conflict analysis, dialogue, mediation, violence interruption, psychosocial recovery, reconciliation, reintegration and peacebuilding training, capacity building, and advocacy. An advantage of integrating peacebuilding with livelihoods promotion is that they already have much in common: for example, both often use holistic analysis in programme design, and deploy a resilience lens. A combined livelihoods and peacebuilding approach is also a vehicle for implementing the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, since it is highly relevant to all three of its dimensions.

Combining familiar livelihoods and peacebuilding methods and expertise helps improve cooperation, mutual knowledge and trust between groups, as well as between people and those in power. It reduces grievances and the level and incidence of conflicts, and builds self-confidence, reconciliation, a sense of agency and belonging. Engaging in sustainable livelihoods improves households’ incomes and assets, increasing their ability to say no to instability and violence. Taken together, these outcomes strengthen and consolidate peace, measured by trust in and the effectiveness of vertical and horizontal relationships and the institutions that mediate them (i.e., social cohesion) and fairer access to the means of security, justice and wellbeing. Greater peace in turn makes it possible to increase the number and accessibility of decent livelihoods further, creating a virtuous circle.

Successfully integrated peacebuilding and livelihood policies and programmes are based on explicit theories of change that clarify peace *and* livelihood outcomes and goals. They emphasise fairness and inclusion, integrate a gendered approach, and use facilitated, participatory approaches. They are most effective when they work at multiple levels, and when *both* peacebuilding and livelihoods expertise are engaged and empowered from the start of and throughout design and implementation, so that initiatives and their expected outcomes are consistent with both peacebuilding and market logic.

Governments, international agencies, civil society and businesses have an important responsibility and opportunity to collaborate and work in complementary ways to improve the ability of people in conflict-affected places to make a decent living and so build peace. Working in this manner will enrich the aid discourse and make a growing body of evidence available to policy makers and practitioners in this crucial area of work.

1. Introduction: livelihoods, a necessary but insufficient ingredient of peace.

In December 2011, Mohamed Bouazizi, a young street seller, burned himself to death in a public protest in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia. Local officials had yet again confiscated his scales and produce, preventing him from earning even the meagre living that selling fresh produce provided. His tragic suicide is considered the spark that lit the regional unrest known as the 'Arab Spring'. It also symbolises the fragility of societies that deny their people a chance to earn a decent livelihood.¹

The policies and programmes of governments, international agencies, donors, civil society, and other actors increasingly acknowledge that access to livelihoods is critical to stability and peace. This is reflected in the Sustaining Peace agenda, which calls on UN agencies and Member States to mainstream peacebuilding in their policies and programmes.² The seminal UN/World Bank document *Pathways for Peace* showed that sustainable peace is out of reach where economies fail to deliver fair livelihood opportunities and benefits across society.³ The link between livelihoods and peace is a particular concern in countries with high numbers of young people (the 'youth bulge') and high dependency rates, a phenomenon that is often correlated with instability.⁴ Media reports and policy makers have claimed, controversially, that young people who lack access to livelihoods are drawn directly into violent extremism.⁵ In parallel, an increasing number of societies are undergoing major transitions – such as urbanisation, land tenure reform, migration, political or governance change, or climate change – the effects of which, it has been shown, can also threaten livelihoods and fuel instability.⁶

The links between decent livelihoods and peace have been recognised for a long time. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was founded after the First World War because it was recognised that social justice, based on widespread access to decent work, would be critical to post-war stability.⁷ Karl Marx had famously described the link between livelihoods and conflict in the previous century, and Adam Smith had worried about the effects of chronically poor wages on social cohesion a century earlier.⁸ Nevertheless, practical integration of livelihoods and peacebuilding has not yet been achieved at scale in recent times due to sectoral and funding silos, the low confidence and capacity of peacebuilding and livelihoods organisations, fear of 'politicisation' in some agencies, and insufficient evidence of how best to proceed.

In recent years, however, peacebuilders have paid increasing attention to livelihoods. This was largely because their own and others' analysis had consistently revealed the importance of livelihoods to peace and stability in the contexts in which they operate.⁹ In addition, numerous local communities had reported that they could not "eat dialogue", suggesting that a more integrated response was needed to the conflicts that beset them. A third

1 Khalil, S. Mohamed Bouazizi, '1984-2011: The Fire That Lit the Arab Spring', *The New Arab*, 17 December 2020, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/mohamed-bouazizi-fire-lit-arab-spring>.

2 UN Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016), Sustaining Peace.

3 UN/World Bank (2018), 'Pathways for Peace. Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict'.

4 O'Driscoll, D. (2020), 'The relationship between population growth, age structure, conflict, and governance in Sub-Saharan Africa', K4D Emerging Issues, Report 38, Institute of Development Studies.

5 Bove, T. 'The deadly legacy of unemployment: Lack of jobs is one of the biggest drivers of terrorism and extremism, UN says', *Fortune*, 7 February 2023.

6 FAO/IGAD/Interpeace (2022), 'Conflict, Climate Change, Food Security, and Mobility in the Karamoja Cluster: A study to analyse interactions amongst conflict, food security, climate change, migration and displacement factors'.

7 <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/08/ilo-international-labour-organization/>.

8 Paganelli, M. P., Schumacher, R. (2019), 'Do not take peace for granted: Adam Smith's warning on the relation between commerce and war', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 43, Issue 3, May 2019, pp. 785-797, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bey040>.

9 Interpeace (2021), 'Strategy 2021-2025: A Resilient Peace'.

influence was donor funding preferences. Sometimes, it was pragmatically in the interest of peacebuilders to frame their work as 'economic development': in politically closed or repressive contexts, governments do not always welcome 'peacebuilding' with open arms.

Nevertheless, although more peacebuilders and livelihoods agencies are now working on initiatives that integrate livelihoods and peace, there is still a lack of evidence about the best ways to do so. This is concerning from an effectiveness perspective. Worse, if peacebuilding and livelihoods are integrated poorly, there is a risk of undermining both.

This report explores that challenge. It proposes a theoretical and practical framework for integrating livelihoods and peacebuilding. The framework is a direct response to the call in Interpeace's Five Year Strategy to further develop its *Economic Peacebuilding* strategy.¹⁰ The report also builds on Interpeace's recent *Mind the Peace* report on integrating livelihoods and peacebuilding with mental health and psychosocial support (MH-PSS).¹¹ It offers strategic and programme guidance, and hopes to make a contribution to the wider debate. It draws on theory and practice, based on secondary data, on-the-ground experience, document review, and interviews. Interviewees and others who kindly contributed to the report, including at a round table held in November 2023, are listed in Annex 2. Readers will note a preponderance of examples from African countries, where most Interpeace field programmes are based. Nevertheless, the report consciously takes a broad view, and is confident of its findings, both as guidance and as a contribution to debate.¹²

Following this introduction, Chapter Two explains the links between peace and livelihoods, and between peacebuilding and livelihoods promotion. Chapter Three proposes a theory of change which shows how integrating peacebuilding and livelihoods promotion contributes to sustaining peace. Chapter Four explains this in more detail, giving examples. Chapter Five lists opportunities and challenges associated with integrating peace and livelihoods, and provides some guiding principles. Chapter Six contains the report's conclusions. Annex 1 provides a list of generic indicators for each level of the theory of change.

Before continuing, let us return to Mohamed Bouazizi, the street trader whose suicide sparked the Arab Spring. Contrary to simplistic narratives, which see the contribution of livelihoods to peace only in economic terms, Mr Bouazizi's grievances were not just about money. His despair – shared by many other Tunisians – was also fuelled by a more complex mix of corruption, unaccountable governance, repeated harassment and disrespect, his inability to obtain a vendor's licence and formalise his business, lack of agency, and a general sense of injustice and a feeling of being ignored, all of which had contributed to a lifetime of grinding hardship and exclusion.¹³ His tragic case reminds us that decent livelihoods do not just provide an income; they also contribute to, and are unsustainable without, justice, inclusion, a sense of agency, and social cohesion. This suggests that improving access to jobs and other livelihood opportunities alone, in the absence of other changes, is a necessary but insufficient ingredient of stability and sustainable peace.¹⁴

10 *Ibid.*

11 Interpeace (2023), 'Mind the Peace: Integrating MHPSS, Peacebuilding and Livelihood Programming - a guidance framework for practitioners'.

12 It should be underlined that this report is not a primer on either peacebuilding or livelihoods techniques. Such information is available elsewhere. It explains peacebuilding and livelihoods approaches but only for the purpose of showing how peacebuilding and livelihoods agencies can integrate them.

13 Lageman, T., 'Remembering Mohamed Bouazizi: The man who sparked the Arab Spring', Al Jazeera, 17 December 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/12/17/remembering-mohamed-bouazizi-his-death-triggered-the-arab>.

14 UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015), Youth, Peace and Security.

2. The links between livelihoods and peace

This chapter defines ‘peace’ and ‘livelihoods’, and explains the close and mutually reinforcing connection between them. It then goes on to describe ‘peacebuilding’ and ‘livelihoods promotion’, and the links and complementarities between them.

2.1 ‘Peace’ and ‘livelihoods’ defined

Livelihoods. Put simply, livelihoods are how people earn a living, or “the means by which households obtain and maintain access to the resources necessary to ensure their immediate and long-term survival”.¹⁵ This is further broken down by the Red Cross as:

*The capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long and short term.*¹⁶

From this we can see that a livelihoods lens helps to explain not just what people do to earn a living sustainably, but also their resilience, how internal and external factors affect them, and their impact on others.

Adapting the ILO’s definition of decent work,¹⁷ ‘decent livelihoods’ are livelihoods that allow people to live with dignity in accordance with their human rights, in which people are treated fairly by employers and other stakeholders, and treat others similarly. A decent livelihood is also one that does not harm others.¹⁸

Peace encompasses both ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ peace.¹⁹ Peace is negative when violent conflict has stopped or been prevented, even though its causes may not have been addressed – as is often the situation after a ceasefire or a peace agreement. Peace is positive when societies demonstrate their resilience and capacity to anticipate, manage and resolve differences without recourse to violence, and make developmental progress with increasing levels of justice and fairness.²⁰ Negative peace without positive peace is unsustainable.

Peace is not just an abstract idea. It can be broken down into five core elements. These act as indicators of the presence and depth of peace, on one hand, while practically contributing to peace on the other. Taken together, they embody negative and positive peace, and operate at a range of levels, scopes and scales, from the household and community to the international. They reflect the legitimate need of people, groups, countries and societies to aspire to progress; the importance of justice (fairness) in process and outcomes; and the corresponding duty to exercise power fairly and justly. Using fairness as a programming lens has the practical

15 USAID (2010), ‘Livelihoods and conflict’.

16 International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2011), ‘Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming’.

17 “Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for all, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.” <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang-en/index.htm>.

18 Vernon, P. (2015), ‘Peace through Prosperity: Integrating peacebuilding into economic development’, International Alert.

19 Interpeace (2023), ‘Mind the Peace: Integrating MHPSS, Peacebuilding and Livelihood Programming - a guidance framework for practitioners’.

20 Galtung, J. (1964), ‘An Editorial’, Journal of Peace research, 1(1).

advantage that it reflects how people often express their grievances, and can be monitored and measured through simple perception surveys. 'Fair access', as used in this document, implies not only the presence, availability and openness of sufficient opportunities and services, but also that people from all parts of society have the ability and means to access or benefit from them.

The five core elements of peace are:

- **Social cohesion.** The horizontal relationships between and among people are trusting and effective, as are the vertical relationships of people with those who have authority and power, and with the institutions that mediate their horizontal and vertical relationships, thereby enabling good governance, reconciliation, cooperation, and responsive, fair decision making.
- **Fair provision of and access to the means of security** so that people are safe from harm and fear.
- **Fair, predictable and accessible mechanisms of justice**, allowing problems to be resolved in a timely and accepted way.
- **Fair access to the means of maintaining and improving health, education and other aspects of wellbeing**, so that people can participate fully in society.
- **The availability of and fair access to livelihoods**, so that people can meet their needs, feel confident and participate fully in society.²¹
- These five dimensions act as enablers of peace in the present, and promote aspirations and continued progress in the future. Peace is therefore best seen as a continuous process, requiring continual nourishment, not a state or destination to be achieved once and for all. As such, it can be thought of as a form of resilience: the dynamic capability, within and between societies, to anticipate and react to internal and external stresses and shocks, and respond to these in continuously transformative ways.²²

The five dimensions of peace are mutually reinforcing (Figure 1). For example, justice helps to keep people safe, and people who are safe can more easily participate in the other four dimensions of peace. People who are educated, are in good psychosocial and physical health, and enjoy decent living conditions, are more equipped to work and develop livelihoods, and participate in social interactions and governance processes. Trusting and effective horizontal and vertical relationships enable fair access to all the other dimensions. Because peace is dynamic, each of the five dimensions simultaneously contributes to and is an indicator of sustainable peace, and also a result of it.

2.2 Livelihoods enable and are enabled by peace

Looking more closely at the importance of livelihoods to peace, it is easy to see how inclusive and fair access to decent, sustainable livelihood opportunities can contribute to both negative and positive peace:

- When hitherto excluded people gain better access to decent livelihoods, they have fewer grievances and a greater sense of belonging and status, and more opportunities to participate in society. This is especially important if their exclusion was – or was perceived to be – linked to identity markers such as geography, ethnicity, religion, gender or age.²³ It is hard to imagine a successful social contract that does not provide livelihoods that allow people to meet their legitimate aspirations for improvement.
- For people with decent livelihoods the opportunity cost of instability or violence is higher, because they

21 This definition of peace draws on sources including: Interpeace (2014), 'Strategic Position Paper'; ILO (2021), 'Peace and Conflict Analysis'; International Alert (2017), 'Programming Framework'; UN/World Bank (2018), 'Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict'; UN (2023), 'New Agenda for Peace'.

22 Simpson, G., Makoond, A., Vinck, P., Pham, P. N. (2016), 'Assessing Resilience for Peace', Centre of Studies for Peace and Development, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Interpeace, Platform for Dialogue and Peace.

23 Sen A. (2011), 'Violence and Civil Society', in Amartya Sen (ed.), 'Peace and Democratic Society', Commonwealth Secretariat/Open Book Publishers.

have a greater stake – more to lose – both socially and economically. Livelihoods also help to make them more independent of outside influences, and thus better able to resist calls to mobilise for violence.²⁴

- Productive activities often entail collaboration with others at work or in the marketplace. Over time, and especially with careful facilitation,²⁵ this can enable people who belong to different, and perhaps conflicting, social groups (horizontal relationships) to share knowledge and increase trust, develop shared interests and collaborative skills, increase contacts outside work, and enhance the possibilities for reconciliation.²⁶
- Livelihoods can similarly bring people together with those who exercise authority (vertical relationships), for example over planning, licensing, regulation, taxes and the resolution of disputes. Interactions that are positive and collaborative become opportunities to strengthen trust, confidence and skills. Productive activities also increase revenue collection, which not only improves services but spurs accountability and improved governance, because taxpayers make demands on their governments and identify more with government programmes and spending, especially if these are managed transparently.^{27, 28}
- Sustained access to decent livelihoods increases people’s confidence, skills and status, which can have the knock-on effect of increasing social participation and involvement in decision making and governance – further contributing to social cohesion.²⁹

If fair access to livelihoods helps to underpin peace, the obvious corollary is that unfair access to livelihoods can undermine peace and fuel conflict.³⁰ Peace, meanwhile, enables increased and fairer access to livelihoods, generating a virtuous circle. This is because peace is associated with higher levels of trust and confidence in vertical and horizontal relationships and institutions, and stronger feelings of security. These, in turn, help to create a conducive environment for public and private investment and economic development. By improving access to services, peace also helps to enrich human capital. Over time, economic incentives become increasingly aligned with consolidating and sustaining peace.³¹

By contrast, conflict undermines livelihoods. It destroys public and private infrastructure and disincentivises public and private investment, weakens relationships, and reduces human capital.³² The average cost of a civil war is equivalent to thirty years of GDP growth.³³ Economic incentives become intertwined with and reinforce conflict dynamics, resulting in non-decent livelihoods, harmful coping strategies and war economies.³⁴

Both livelihoods *and* peace can be negatively affected by stressors that accompany transition and change, such as urbanisation, climate change, land reform, commercialisation or consolidation of the rural economy, digitisation, or migration and displacement. It is worth noting, however, that such ‘transformational moments’ also offer opportunities to improve livelihoods and peace, if they are seized properly and fairly.

In sum, decent livelihoods, if they are available and accessible fairly, can help to sustain peace and stability; and peace and stability can help in turn to multiply decent livelihoods and improve fair access to them.

This said, it is important to note one caveat: while it is clear that livelihoods can contribute to peace, we will see in Chapter Three that whether they do so depends on the strength of the other factors known to contribute

24 Brück, T., Ferguson, N. T. N., Izzi, V., Stojetz W. (2016), ‘Jobs Aid Peace’, International Security and Development Center.

25 Mcleod, S. (2023), ‘Allport’s Intergroup Contact Hypothesis: Its History and Influence’, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/contact-hypothesis.html>.

26 Brück, T., Ferguson, N. T. N., Izzi, V., Stojetz W. (2016), ‘Jobs Aid Peace’, International Security and Development Center.

27 Vernon, P. (2015), ‘Peace Through Prosperity’, International Alert.

28 International Centre for Tax and Development (2019), ‘Tax and Accountability: How to strengthen the links?’, [Tax and Accountability: How to strengthen the links? – ICTD](#).

29 Interpeace (2023), ‘Mind the Peace: Integrating MHPSS, Peacebuilding and Livelihood Programming - a guidance framework for practitioners’.

30 UN/World Bank (2018), ‘Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict’.

31 Vernon, P. (2015), ‘Peace through Prosperity: Integrating peacebuilding into economic development’, International Alert.

32 Institute of Economics and Peace (2023), ‘Global Peace Index’.

33 World Bank (2011), ‘The World Development Report, 2011: Conflict, security and development’.

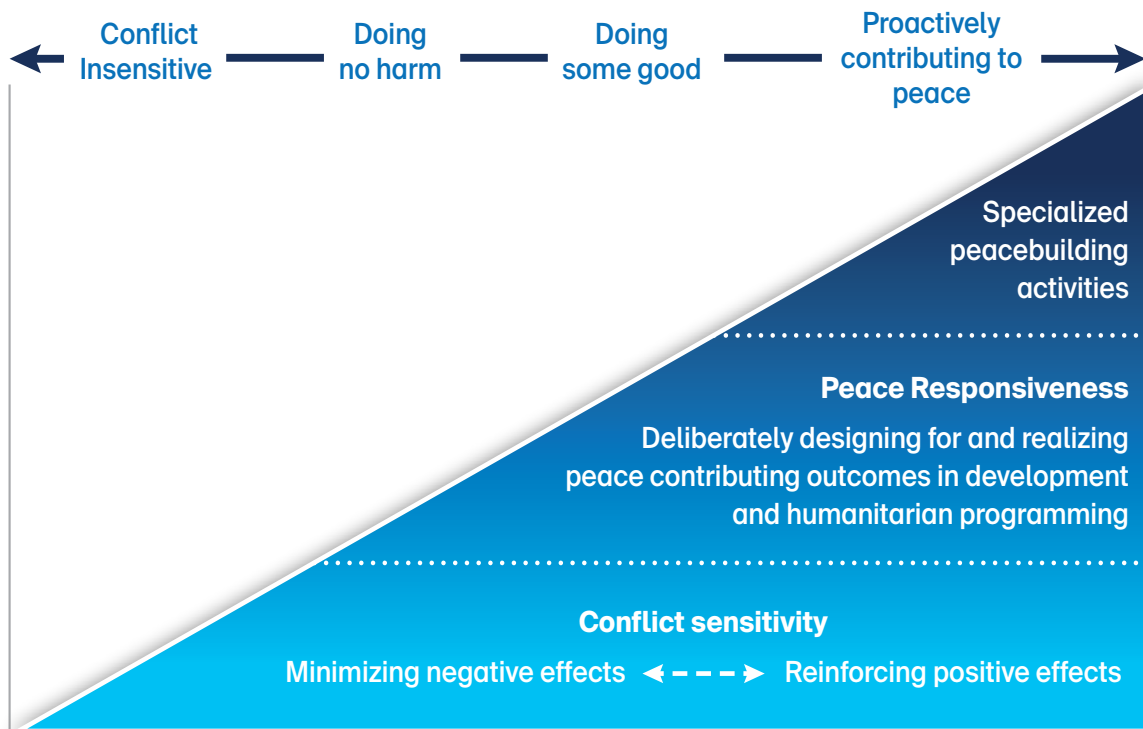
34 USAID (2005), ‘Livelihoods and Conflict: A Toolkit for Intervention’.

to peace (see Figure 1): social cohesion and good governance; and access to rules-based justice, security and other services. How livelihoods interact with these elements therefore matters greatly. For example, in rural areas where livelihoods depend on natural resources that are subject to competition, good governance and compliance with agreed regulations or norms are critical.

2.3 Peacebuilding

Between the methods and approaches used to build peace and promote livelihoods, there are important similarities, differences and complementarities. 'Peacebuilding' describes a wide variety of approaches, since it is context-based and implemented by many different governmental and non-governmental actors, large and small, at different levels and at different scopes and scales. At its heart, however, peacebuilding aims to prevent, reduce or stop conflict-related violence and contribute to stability (or negative peace) as well as positive peace by improving social cohesion and providing fairer, more inclusive access to justice, livelihoods, safety and wellbeing. Commonly used peacebuilding methods, which can be implemented on different scales and at different levels, include:

- **Peace and conflict analysis.** Peace and conflict analyses (PCA) are used to determine pathways of action in a given context. Typically, they use participatory approaches, since peace cannot be built *for* people in conflict-affected contexts, but must be built *by* them if it is to last. PCAs identify proximate and underlying causes of conflict, and practical pathways for resolving or managing them. They take a broad and comprehensive view of the context, reflecting the multi-level, intertwined nature of peace and conflict dynamics. But they can also focus on specific localities or programming themes.
- **Dialogue, mediation, inter-group contact and violence prevention/interruption.** All the peacebuilding methods in this category facilitate contact between and among groups who have experienced or are at risk of violence. Dialogue allows affected parties to explore specific topics or themes known to cause conflicts, and seek practical and agreed solutions. Dialogue can focus on collective action planning and problem-solving, often on very practical and specific issues such as local infrastructure, community activities or service provision. It presupposes a minimum level of trust; when trust is lacking, mediation techniques and/or external mediators are used. The facilitation of inter-group contact brings communities in conflict together, not necessarily to discuss or resolve their differences explicitly, but to develop mutual awareness, reduce 'othering', and create opportunities to build relationships. These opportunities often occur around economic or social activities. Finally, violence prevention or violence interruption is used when early warning indicators suggest that violence may be imminent; trained, trusted 'violence interrupters' may intervene to restore calm.
- **Psychosocial recovery, reconciliation and reintegration.** Psychosocial initiatives help people deal with the past and address individual and community trauma. They may be linked to reconciliation programmes designed to reduce grievances and mistrust and create a platform for peaceful coexistence, often involving dialogue and inter-group contact. Reintegration schemes support the social and economic reintegration of those who have been absent or excluded. Such groups might include internally displaced people (IDPs) and returning refugees, or ex-combatants who are involved in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes.
- **Training and building capacity.** Peacebuilding involves training and building organisational capacity to undertake the kinds of peacebuilding methods described in this list. It targets the staff and members of peacebuilding organisations, community or government institutions, businesses and other organisations. It can also be an important advocacy tool, when other organisations need to learn how to act peace-responsively, as envisaged in Figure 2 and described below.



- **Advocacy.** Because peace and conflict are dynamic and complex, peacebuilding almost always involves advocacy: to create a more enabling environment for peace, it is usually necessary to influence institutional policies and practices. Targets include governments (including donors), community leaders, NGOs, businesses, and international organisations. Where such actors do not see themselves primarily as ‘peacebuilders’, peacebuilding advocacy can be framed as ‘peace responsiveness’. Being peace-responsive means adopting policies, strategies and practices that are, at a minimum, conflict sensitive: organisations intentionally avoid and mitigate any risks that they cause or that may exacerbate conflicts inadvertently. Ideally, they go further and aim to make a positive contribution to peace.³⁵ Figure 2 illustrates this: conflict sensitive actions sit in the bottom left of the diagram, specialised peacebuilding actions in the opposite corner, while peace responsive actions lie in between.
- **Collaboration.** Collaboration is an essential feature of peacebuilding, because it is vital to maximise the range and scale of ownership, action and impact. Collaboration models include long-term partnerships, which leverage the complementary capabilities of each partner. Some collaborations take the form of ‘accompaniment’, where the relationship is one of mentoring and mutual learning. As part of an accompaniment relationship, peacebuilders with access to funds may provide grants to others, to support their work. More transactional forms of collaboration can also be beneficial for peacebuilding if they are part of a strategic approach. For example, peacebuilders may implement specific peacebuilding tasks commissioned by and on behalf of others.

As one third of the humanitarian, development and peace nexus (HDP nexus), peacebuilders share an interest in building resilience with humanitarian and development actors. Peacebuilders focus on resilience to conflict, but there are wide overlaps with resilience to natural disasters. For example, both forms of resilience include a society’s capacity to anticipate, respond to and recover from challenges and ‘build back better’. However, whereas peacebuilders and development actors tend to consider long-term resilience to stresses *and* shocks, humanitarians are generally more likely to concentrate on resilience to shocks.³⁶

35 Ernstorfer, A., Stockman, A-S., de Weijer F. (2022), ‘Peace responsiveness: a paradigm shift to deliver on conflict sensitivity and sustaining peace’, Interpeace.

36 Simpson, G., Makoond, A., Vinck, P., Pham, P. N. (2016), ‘Assessing Resilience for Peace’, Centre of Studies for Peace and Development, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Interpeace, Platform for Dialogue and Peace.

Peacebuilding is long-term by nature, because it takes time to establish and embed the resilience needed to anticipate, manage and resolve conflict. Even short-term peacebuilding projects tend to be framed within a longer-term vision. Partly because of this, peacebuilders strongly emphasise the importance of *getting the process right* - taking the time that is needed to involve people and institutions, build their ownership and capacity, and legitimise sustainable mechanisms that address needs and create conditions for peace.

2.3 Livelihood promotion

As with peacebuilding, there are many ways to promote livelihoods. Many forms of action may be carried out by individuals, businesses, governments, agencies and other bodies that create, protect or improve sustainable livelihood opportunities, allow people to earn a living, and meet their needs and aspirations. For examples, initiatives can:

- **Establish and manage businesses of all sizes.** Businesses are not usually involved in 'livelihood promotion' as such. However, when considering the links between livelihoods and peacebuilding, we need to take account of all forms of business enterprise that provide or influence livelihood opportunities, from self-employed traders and household enterprises all the way up to multinational companies. Their actions, decisions and policies can have an important impact on peace, including on the livelihood opportunities of others, for example their choice of supply chains and locations, or their employment practices.³⁷
- **Policy and policy advocacy.** Policies, and by extension advocacy to influence them, can support or undermine efforts to promote decent livelihoods. The wide array of instruments available include regulations on banking, taxation, sectoral or industrial strategy, infrastructure, subsidies, and business investment, environmental regulations, business registration procedures, regulations to protect workers' and others' rights, and mechanisms that cover social dialogue between workers, employers and government. Such policies can influence peace and conflict, and can be tailored to be peace responsive, for example by building infrastructures that promote economic development and livelihoods in marginalised areas, reduce the exclusion and grievances of particular population groups, or favour livelihoods that align with peace rather than with war economies.³⁸
- **Social protection.** Social protection covers a range of policies and practices that support people when livelihoods fail, due to unemployment, economic downturns, sickness, disability, old age, disaster or war. Support can be provided by the State (as it often is in wealthier nations), by community and private mechanisms, or by external humanitarian transfers to alleviate hardship, especially among women, children and vulnerable groups. Social protection can reduce competition for scarce resources and therefore the risk of conflict, make harmful coping strategies unnecessary, and send a strong signal of inclusion and fairness.³⁹
- **Financial support.** Banks, development banks, micro-credit providers, development projects, and small community-based savings and loans groups all support livelihoods financially. Sometimes this support is accompanied by technical support and training. Access to financial support is an important measure of inclusion.
- **Value chain or market system development.** The value chain approach is an increasingly popular approach to livelihoods improvement.⁴⁰ It reviews each step in the value chain of a particular product or service, from input supply through to sale, to identify where production and/or productivity can be improved. The choice of sub-sector or value chain can be based merely on narrow economic criteria, but the approach is often adapted to include social, political or peacebuilding goals (such as the improvement of economic opportunities for women, other social groups, or regions), influencing the choice of sectors and

37 International Alert (2000), 'The Business of Peace', Jane Nelson.

38 Vernon, P. (2015), 'Peace Through Prosperity', International Alert.

39 Help Age International (2021), 'Impacts of social protection on social cohesion and reconciliation'.

40 USAID Market Links (undated), 'Overview of the Value Chain Approach'.

interventions.⁴¹ Other interventions look more widely at market systems, often aiming to change these to “make markets work for the poor”.⁴²

- **Training, building capacity and skills, and technological improvement.** Promotion of livelihoods often involves the introduction of new skills and technologies, and training in their use. But training and capacity building are not confined to technical skills and tools. They can include business skills, such as management, planning and marketing, as well as soft skills, such as teamwork, collaboration, tolerance and other skills relevant to peacebuilding.
- **Holistic livelihood approaches.** Some livelihood approaches, for example those developed by CARE, DFID, Oxfam and UNDP in the 1990s, adopt a holistic approach.⁴³ This approach typically takes the household as the focus of impact, and analyses internal and external factors that can enable or disable a household’s means, capabilities, assets and income. Such approaches also consider households’ vulnerability and resilience to stresses and shocks, incorporating humanitarian support and resilience building. More recently, holistic approaches have progressively been absorbed in resilience models.⁴⁴ Resilience is of course also a core element of climate adaptation and mitigation. Climate initiatives often address the need to adapt or change livelihoods. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) initiatives may also include livelihood protection, diversification and adaptation strategies.⁴⁵

Neither livelihoods nor livelihood promotion *automatically* strengthen peace.⁴⁶ However, as Chapters Three and Four explore, they can and often do. It is therefore unsurprising that many of the analytical livelihood programming frameworks have much in common with peacebuilding ones. For example, both look holistically and systematically at proximate and underlying causes and opportunities; both take account of gender; often (though not always) they give attention to inclusion. Livelihood analyses consider both the availability of and access to enabling services and other assets, including social capital and other aspects of social cohesion. Both peacebuilding and holistic livelihoods approaches aim to understand and strengthen resilience. Just as peace and livelihoods are linked conceptually, there are also practical overlaps between the two disciplines. There are also important complementarities, based on differences in the practices of peacebuilding and livelihoods promotion. These overlaps and complementarities are summarised in Figure 3. Work to integrate peacebuilding and livelihoods can take advantage of their commonalities, while also drawing on their complementarities, for example by using market linkages to maximise the economic viability of enterprises, and applying participatory methods to deepen relationships with communities and other stakeholders and ensure ownership and peacebuilding impact.

41 Cuny Garloch, A. (undated), ‘Pushing the Poverty Frontiers of Inclusive Value Chain Development’, Briefing Paper, USAID.

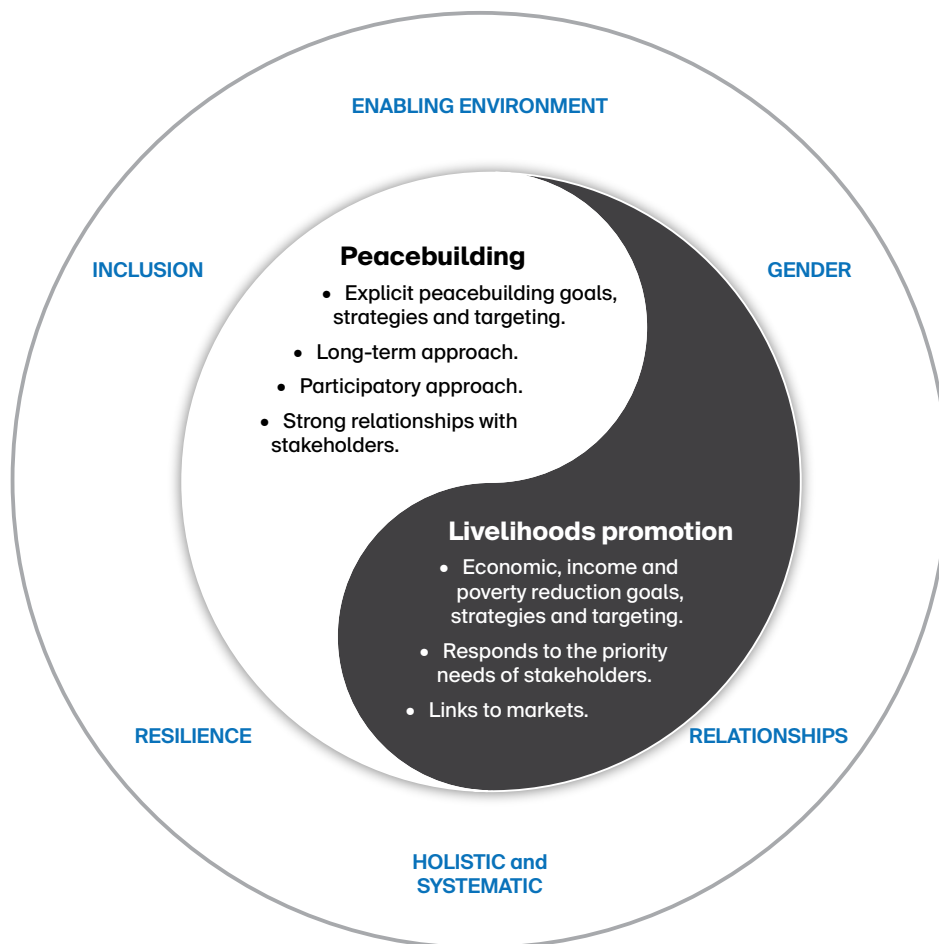
42 Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (2008), ‘Synthesis of The Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) Approach’.

43 Carney, D., Drinkwater, M., Rusinow, T., Neefjes, K., Wanmali, S., Singh, N. (1999), ‘Livelihoods approaches compared’, <https://www.fao.org/3/X9371e/x9371e11.htm>.

44 Carr, E. R. (2020), ‘Resilient livelihoods in an era of global transformation’, *Global Environmental Change*. Volume 64, 102155, ISSN 0959-3780.

45 UN (2015), ‘The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030’.

46 As one UN staff member interviewed for this paper succinctly declared, “Jobs do not equal peace”.



3. Theory of change

This chapter considers the evidence on integrated peace and livelihoods initiatives, and outlines a high-level theory that shows how livelihood improvements can enhance conditions for peace if they are addressed alongside or are supported by other peace factors. This presentation is followed by a practice-based theory of change that shows how integrated peacebuilding and livelihood initiatives contribute to peace; it can be used by policy makers and practitioners as the basis for mapping initiatives on the ground.

3.1 The evidence

As explained earlier, the link between decent livelihoods and peace has long been acknowledged. But direct evidence that livelihood *programmes* contribute sustainably to ‘peace writ large’ is inconclusive. UN-sponsored research published in 2016 found no hard evidence that job creation had been successful in building peace at scale.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, it endorsed the theory that jobs and (by implication) livelihoods aid peace by increasing people’s access to opportunities, deepening their stake in society, improving mutual understanding within and between communities, and reducing grievances.⁴⁸

47 Brück, T., Ferguson, N. T. N., Izzi, V., Stojetz W. (2016), ‘Jobs Aid Peace’, International Security and Development Center.

48 The ‘Jobs Aid Peace’ report is sometimes said to have disproved the link between jobs and peace. However, this judgement over-interprets a piece of research that looked only at the relatively short-term outcomes and impact of projects and programmes, rather than examining longer-term evidence from history.

In fact, many programmes *have* demonstrated a causal link between livelihoods and peace, even if only in the short term and within the limited scope of their impact. For example, surveys conducted for an Interpeace DDR project in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) found that security was improved where ex-combatants had engaged in commercially successful collaborative livelihood activities.⁴⁹ In nearby Rwanda, Interpeace and its partners found that integrating cooperative livelihood activities in community-based psychosocial interventions enabled perpetrators and survivors of the 1994 genocide to collaborate practically, assisting reconciliation and the formation of trust.⁵⁰

However, the link between livelihoods and peace is not simple or linear. The UN's 2015 *Youth, Peace and Security* (YPS) report consulted young people widely across the globe. Their opinion, endorsed by the authors of the report and the UN, was that livelihood opportunities for young people can improve stability and strengthen peace. Nevertheless, as the report pointed out, it is simplistic and unhelpful to suggest that livelihoods alone are *the* answer for young people who might be tempted to engage in extremist or other violence: doing so unfairly stigmatises young people, can put them at risk, and reduces their agency.⁵¹ The report made clear that there is no straight line relationship between livelihoods and peace. Livelihoods, and decent livelihoods in particular, for young people and for others, can be far more than just a way to earn a living. In addition to jobs or livelihoods, respondents cited the importance of respect, voice, agency, a sense of belonging, and legitimisation of their aspirations.

More recent research projects have reinforced the YPS report's nuanced analysis of the relationship between livelihoods and peace. Many of these also focused on young people, given the link that is often made between the youth bulge and instability and the focus after 9/11 on preventing young people from being recruited for extremist violence. Nevertheless, many of their findings are relevant across a wider demography. One seminal study of natural resource-based livelihoods pointed out their importance to identity, self-worth, confidence and dignity.⁵² A recent review of evidence⁵³ found that "no single perspective adequately explains [...] the link between youth and violence in Africa", and that "the theoretical and empirical case for using youth employment programmes as an *exclusive* tool for reducing violent conflict [is] extremely weak" [our italics]. Its authors noted a dangerous willingness of policy makers to over-generalise and emphasised the need to disaggregate, given that 'youth' includes a large and vastly diverse proportion of society. Like the YPS report, this review cautioned policy makers that power and agency were central to understanding the 'youth bulge'.

Other experiences support a nuanced analysis of the link between livelihoods and peace. DDR programmes are well-known to be more effective when they embed livelihoods in a broader social reintegration process.⁵⁴ In the Interpeace projects in the DRC and Rwanda referred to earlier, combining livelihoods with psychosocial interventions made a crucial difference to outcomes.⁵⁵ Mercy Corps researchers found that social factors reduced support for violent extremism more than access to skills and livelihood opportunities. Their report advocated the adoption of integrated approaches that provide psychosocial support, access to local government (to air grievances), connections to job markets, and job skills training; and that increase the supply of jobs, and address contextual causes of instability and violence.⁵⁶ Context remains crucial. For example, a study in Somalia found that young people joined the extremist group Al Shabab when elders ordered them to, rather than

49 Interpeace (2022), 'Rapport final', Consortium Mchango Wetu Kwa Amani.

50 Interpeace (2023), 'Reinforcing community capacity for social cohesion through societal trauma healing in Bugesera pilot programme: End-line Programme Evaluation Report'.

51 UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015), Youth, Peace and Security.

52 Young, H., Goldman, L. (2015), 'Managing Natural Resources for Livelihoods: supporting post-conflict communities', in Helen Young and Lisa Goldman (eds), 'Livelihoods, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding', Routledge.

53 Ismail O., Olonisakin, F. (2021), 'Why do youth participate in violence in Africa? A review of evidence', *Conflict, Security & Development*, 21:3, 371-399.

54 Young, H., Goldman, L. (2015), 'Managing Natural Resources for Livelihoods: supporting post-conflict communities', in Helen Young and Lisa Goldman (eds), 'Livelihoods, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding', Routledge.

55 Interpeace (2022), 'Rapport final', Consortium Mchango Wetu Kwa Amani; Interpeace (2023), 'Reinforcing community capacity for social cohesion through societal trauma healing in Bugesera pilot programme: End-line Programme Evaluation Report'.

56 Mercy Corps (2015), 'Youth & Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence'.

because they were frustrated by lack of livelihoods or other grievances,⁵⁷ whereas a study in Syria found that the need for incomes *was* a driver of recruitment to armed groups.⁵⁸

Nor is the evidence limited to young people. One project worked with groups of women trading across the DRC's eastern borders: it assisted the women to improve their business profits but in so doing improved social cohesion by strengthening cross border relationships and relationships with border officials.⁵⁹ Employers in different regions of the world have helped to improve harmony in their communities by proactively recruiting staff from across religious or ethnic divisions.⁶⁰ Livelihoods in peacebuilding contexts can offer "opportunities for interaction between former warring groups – whether through migration, trade, the exchange of labour, or the shared governance and use of resources".⁶¹ Peacebuilders can also help to protect livelihoods during conflict, where this is in the interest of conflict actors. La Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare, a farmers' association in the Carare River valley in Colombia, represented rural households who were preyed upon by guerrillas, paramilitaries and the army (the three sides in a triangular conflict). It bravely negotiated with armed groups an arrangement to protect the villagers from attack, enabling them to sustain their local economy when similar communities could not.⁶² Social protection – an often forgotten element of livelihoods – is also widely acknowledged to have made a significant and sustained contribution to peace in many countries, by reducing exclusion and strengthening social cohesion.⁶³

3.2 The basis for a livelihoods-focused peacebuilding theory of change

The evidence suggests that, while improving access to livelihoods does not create or consolidate peace on its own or in a simple linear relationship, there *are* genuine links between improving access to livelihoods and peace. This is especially so when livelihoods are not considered in isolation but alongside other dimensions of peace: social cohesion rooted in respectful, trusting relationships and mechanisms that give people a sense of agency and belonging; and security, justice and wellbeing. It is worth noting that this matches the way experts increasingly understand peace: as the unstable outcome of a dynamic interaction between multiple factors at different levels within and between societies.⁶⁴ With this in mind, we can very broadly summarise how improved livelihoods contribute to peace:

If livelihood opportunities become more widely available and fairly accessible across society, on a sustained basis, **and** people from across society have the capacity to access them fairly, **and** the other dimensions of peace shown in Figure 4 also strengthen (through this process or others), **then** people and communities will have fewer grievances and feel a greater sense of belonging and agency, **and** will be less likely to engage in destabilising or violent actions **and** will be more likely to engage in private and civic actions that further improve social cohesion and peace, so continuing to widen the availability of and access to livelihoods.

57 Grayson, G., Bertouille, F. (2020), 'Can more jobs bring peace? Understanding peace impact in employment programme design in Kenya and Somalia', International Alert.

58 International Alert (2016), 'Why young Syrians choose to fight: Vulnerability and resilience to recruitment by violent extremist groups in Syria'.

59 Vernon, P. (2015), 'Peace through Prosperity: Integrating peacebuilding into economic development', International Alert.

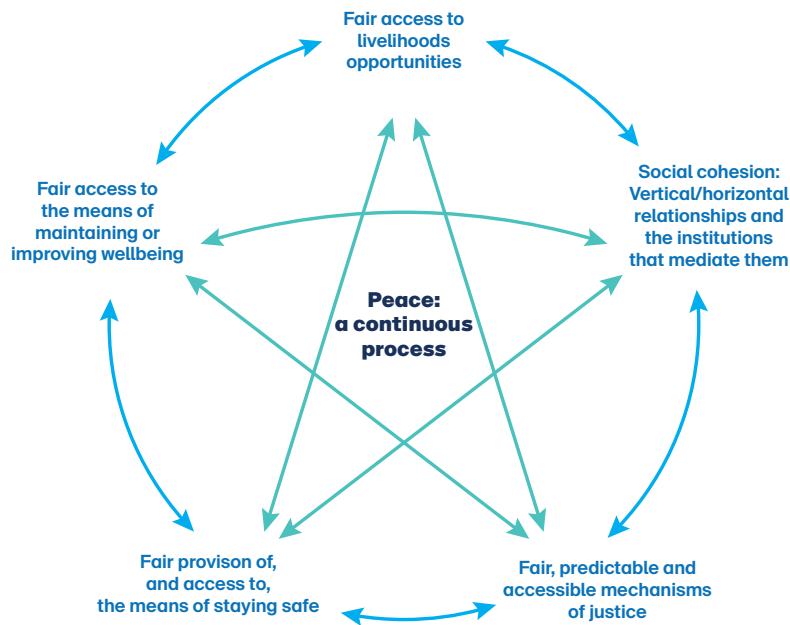
60 Banfield, J., Gundüz, C., Killick, N. (eds) (2006) 'Local Business, Local Peace', International Alert.

61 Young, H., Goldman, L. (2015), 'Managing Natural Resources for Livelihoods: supporting post-conflict communities', in Helen Young and Lisa Goldman (eds), 'Livelihoods, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding', Routledge.

62 Kaplan, O. (2013), 'Protecting civilians in civil war: The institution of the ATCC in Colombia', Journal of Peace Research, 50(3), 351-367.

63 ILO (2014), 'World Social Protection Report 2014/15'.

64 UN/World Bank (2018), 'Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict'.



This is **because** wider and fairer access to livelihoods reduces grievances and builds confidence and a sense of belonging; strengthens other dimensions of peace, such as personal safety, rule-based and accessible justice, access to services and other sources of wellbeing; reinforces trusting and effective vertical and horizontal relationships and the institutions that mediate them; while progress in other dimensions of peace (Figure 4) also helps to steadily improve the enabling environment for livelihoods.

3.3 A focused, practical theory of change for building peace through livelihoods

The theory outlined above underlines the need to ensure that livelihood initiatives set out to maximise their contribution to all dimensions of peace, and link up with other initiatives designed to improve these. Because the theory is nevertheless rather broad and abstract, this section introduces a simpler, action-oriented and practical theory of change that shows how livelihoods can make a deliberate contribution to peace by combining peacebuilding and livelihoods methods. The diagram in Figure 5 can be used by agencies or projects to identify their niche or strategic and programming options.

The theory of change is based on the analyses in Chapter Two and this chapter. It draws on Interpeace's overall peacebuilding theory of change, the theories of change used by various current Interpeace projects, and published research and theories of change shared by other organisations.⁶⁵ The logic is as follows:

- If** livelihood opportunities are increased, diversified and become more open and productive,
- and/or** provide enhanced opportunities for cooperation between and among communities,
- and** people's capacity to access livelihood opportunities fairly is improved,

⁶⁵ These include: Interpeace (2023), 'Mind the Peace: Integrating MHPSS, Peacebuilding and Livelihood Programming – a guidance framework for practitioners'; CRS (2016), 'Strengthening Trade, Building Peace'; FAO (2022), 'Operationalizing pathways to sustaining peace in the context of Agenda 2030 – A how-to guide'; ILO (2020), 'Jobs for Peace and Resilience'; Vernon, P. (2015), 'Peace through Prosperity: Integrating peacebuilding into economic development', International Alert; Mercy Corps (2011), 'Peacebuilding Through Economic Development'.

and/or access to social protection is enhanced,

and/or formal and informal regulatory frameworks and other systems are strengthened, allowing problems to be anticipated and managed or resolved, and competition to be managed,

and this is done in ways that deliberately increase fairness and are sensitive to gender, age and other differences, based on participatory deliberation and analysis, using methods such as dialogue, mediation, inter-group contact, violence prevention/interruption, psychosocial healing, reconciliation, reintegration, and peacebuilding training, capacity building and advocacy,

and in ways that influence both policy and practices to achieve sustained impact and scale,

and take account of and collaborate with others building peace,

then peace and stability will be enhanced, as measured by reduced levels of fear and violence, improved, fairer access to livelihoods, justice, security and the means of wellbeing, and by more trusting and effective vertical and horizontal relations and the mechanisms that mediate them, **and** this will further improve the enabling environment for livelihoods in a virtuous circle,

because the above changes will:

- Reduce the number and seriousness of grievances based on inadequate access to livelihoods, and perceptions of unfairness;
- Improve self-confidence, agency and sense of belonging;
- Raise the opportunity costs of instability, because the benefits people accrue from their livelihoods give them interests to protect, and make them less vulnerable to political manipulation;
- Reduce the number of conflicts linked to resources and livelihood opportunities and enable conflicts that do occur to be managed and resolved better;
- Enhance trust and cooperation within and between communities and between people and the authorities; and
- Improve psychosocial wellbeing and reconciliation.

As Figure 5 shows, four familiar livelihood intervention areas provide the entry points for this theory of change. These seek to:

1. Enhance, increase and diversify livelihood opportunities, and widen access to them;
2. Strengthen formal and informal regulatory and problem-solving mechanisms;
3. Promote livelihoods activities of the kind that particularly encourage or *require* cooperation;
4. Improve access to social protection.

Crucially (as shown in the green section of Figure 5), these interventions are designed and implemented using familiar peacebuilding methods described in Chapter Two, such as peace and conflict analysis, dialogue, and mediation, in order to maximise their peacebuilding potential. In other words, the key to this theory of change is that familiar livelihood interventions are devised and executed in conjunction with familiar peacebuilding methods.

3.4 How interventions contribute to outcomes

The four livelihood intervention areas will be explained in more detail in Chapter Four. As the connecting lines in Figure 5 show, each has the potential to influence at least three of the six outcomes listed in the figure. These outcomes can be achieved at different levels and scales: depending on the programmes implemented, they change the situation, perceptions, attitudes and actions of individuals, communities and institutions. (See also the generic indicators in Annex 1.) Because peace is dynamic and multidimensional, outcomes will usually be sought at several levels. For example, a programme designed to improve relationships and livelihoods locally can also have an impact nationally if the government and others with wider collective reach pick up and replicate its successes.

It is important to note that the four livelihood intervention areas must be designed and implemented in conjunction with the peacebuilding methods shown in the lower part of Figure 5 – which can therefore be thought of as cross-cutting approaches. This means that all initiatives are based on a peace and conflict analysis and integrate dialogue, mediation, psycho-social support or other peacebuilding methods to maximise the peacebuilding outcomes of livelihood work.

- 1. Enhance, increase and diversify livelihood opportunities, and widen access to them.** This intervention contributes to people's income and assets, can reduce grievances over unfair access to opportunities, and can reduce conflicts linked to livelihoods (for example over access to natural resources or supply chains). People who have decent livelihoods are also likely to improve their psychosocial wellbeing, self-confidence and sense of belonging.
- 2. Strengthen formal and informal regulatory and problem-solving mechanisms.** This intervention reduces and resolves conflicts linked to livelihoods, and therefore also grievances. It requires the adoption of collaborative processes that improve vertical and horizontal trust and cooperation.
- 3. Promote livelihood activities that particularly encourage or require cooperation.** This intervention involves bringing people from diverse groups together in workplaces, markets or cooperatives, and in regulatory processes, training and other activities. Bringing people together cooperatively, with appropriate facilitation where needed, can assist reconciliation and improve psychosocial wellbeing, mutual understanding and trust, and inspire further cooperation. Improving people's access to these kinds of livelihood opportunity can also enhance their sense of belonging and self-confidence, reduce their sense of grievance and unfairness, and increase their incomes and assets.
- 4. Improve access to social protection.** Social protection helps to improve vertical cooperation and trust when it is provided by government, and can also improve horizontal trust if it is provided by communities or delivered through collaborative activities (such as mother and baby clubs). More fundamentally, by providing support at difficult moments, social protection maintains incomes and protects assets, improves self-confidence and a sense of belonging, and can reduce grievances and feelings of unfairness.

3.5 How outcomes lead to impact

Figure 5, and the indicators listed in Annex 1, show the impacts of livelihood programming on peace. Impacts are measured in terms of fair access to the five dimensions of peace introduced earlier: social cohesion, security, justice, wellbeing, and livelihoods. This is explained here for each of these in turn.

- All the outcome areas (improved vertical and horizontal collaboration and trust, reconciled communities, effective resolution of conflicts, reduction in grievances and perceptions of unfairness, and improved incomes and asset accumulation)⁶⁶ contribute to **social cohesion**. Their cumulative impacts can be mea-

66 The link between incomes and assets and social cohesion is based on the idea that they allow people to engage more actively and confidently in society. It is of course assumed that incomes and assets are distributed fairly, in an inclusive manner, because

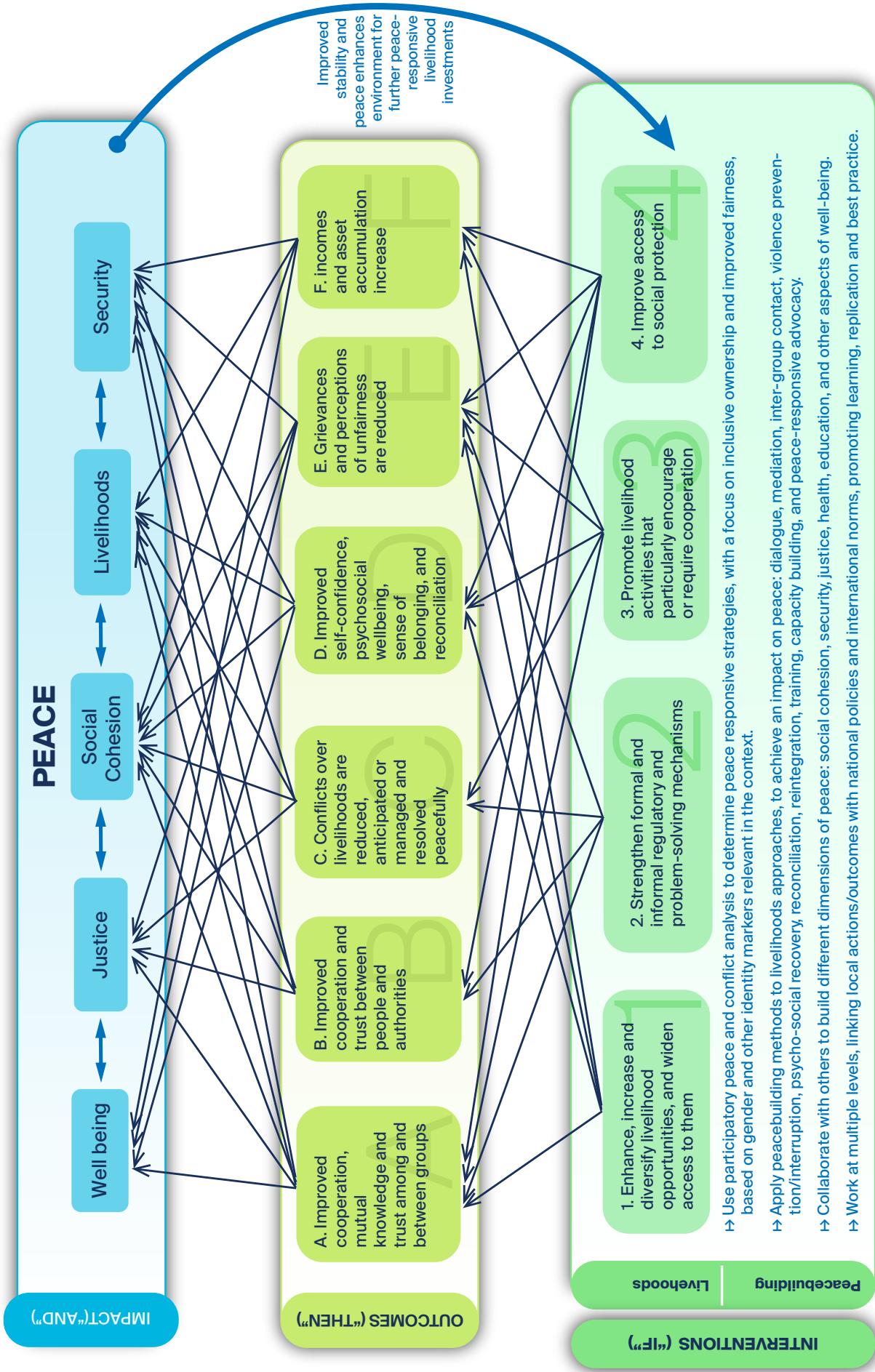


Figure 5: Theory of change for building peace through livelihoods.

Note: The cross-cutting peacebuilding interventions shown at the foot of the diagram are fully integrated with livelihood interventions shown immediately above them.

sured in terms of improved, functioning and sustained mechanisms for vertical and horizontal cooperation, and people's improved perception of their freedom to participate and speak out.

- All the outcome areas contribute to improved **security**, as measured by a reduction in the scope and incidence of violence and people's levels of fear.
- Outcome areas A, B, C and E (improved vertical and horizontal cooperation, the resolution of conflicts, and a reduction of grievances) contribute to improved access to **justice**, as measured by the presence and use of justice mechanisms that are perceived to be effective and fair and that address livelihood disputes and wrongdoing.
- Outcome areas A, D, E and F (improved horizontal collaboration, psychosocial wellbeing and reconciliation, improved self-confidence and agency, sense of belonging and sense of being treated fairly, and increased incomes and asset accumulation) contribute to better **wellbeing**. Wellbeing can be measured in terms of people's fair access to health and education services, and decent living conditions.
- Outcome areas A, B, C, D and F self-evidently contribute to fair and accessible **livelihoods**. Improved incomes and assets do so by supporting the economy through consumption and investment. Conflict resolution and vertical and horizontal cooperation do so by improving the enabling environment for accessible livelihood opportunities. Cumulative improvement in peace further enhances the enabling environment for livelihoods, creating a virtuous circle, shown by the large arrow on the right of Figure 5.

3.6 Choosing a pathway

The global theory of change shows how a comprehensive approach that combines peacebuilding and livelihoods approaches can be transformative for peace. It can be used to inspire and inform specific programmes, but each of these will have its own, specific theory of change, based on contextual analysis and organisational capacities, which will set out intended peace and economic outcomes, with appropriate progress and impact measures. Ideally, of course, it will apply all four of the livelihood intervention areas, using peacebuilding methods, on as wide a scale as possible. But agencies should not adopt an 'all or nothing' mindset. They can use the framework set out in Figure 5 to map strategy or programme designs whose scope, level and ambition reflect their capacity and circumstances, including what others are planning or doing. For instance, a programme that expands access to jobs through training and job creation might recognise that it cannot provide social protection, and might encourage others to meet this need. Or a programme that assists communities to resolve conflicts over access to natural resources may not have the skills or capacity to develop technical livelihood strategies that will reduce the incidence of future clashes, but can invite agencies with appropriate expertise to provide this service, making its own work more effective and sustainable.

3.7 Indicators

Annex 1 provides generic indicators for interventions, outcomes and impacts. They are illustrative only. Indicators for actual strategies, policies or programmes should be tailored to their specific goals and contexts. Many indicators will be based on perception surveys, since people's perceptions – of fairness, fear, inclusion, and so on – are critical to their support of peace. Peacebuilding effectiveness is often assessed and explained in terms of specific, qualitative examples of change. For this reason, some of the Annex 1 indicators take the form 'Examples of...':

Outcomes and impacts may be measured at different levels, depending on the intentions, scope and scale of a particular intervention: they may cover behaviours and attitudes of individuals, local communities, institutions, national organisations, or international agencies.

otherwise grievances would persist, undermining cohesion.

Finally, and critically, in practice all indicators need to be disaggregated in terms of gender, age and other demographic or identity categories, such as ethnicity, that are relevant to peace and conflict in a given context.

4. Putting the theory of change into practice

This chapter describes each of the four main intervention areas in turn, after an introductory section on cross-cutting issues. Text boxes show how different peacebuilding approaches can be deployed in support of livelihood initiatives.

4.1 Ensure that programmes are tailored, sequenced, multi-level, targeted and conflict sensitive

Cross-cutting issues that need to be considered in programmes that build peace through livelihoods include tailoring programmes to the context; working at different levels and at different scopes and scales; targeting; trade-offs; and conflict sensitivity.

Tailoring programmes to the context. The theory of change described in Chapter Three shows how livelihoods can be promoted in ways that improve peace. This provides initial inspiration; however, each programme should be designed for its context – and each context is different. It follows that the sequence of interventions will change from one situation to another, and that, in some cases, it may be necessary to stabilise a situation, using dialogue and conflict management mechanisms, before introducing technical measures to improve livelihoods approaches that had, by their nature, contributed to the conflict. In other cases, even short-term stability might be out of reach until technical or management changes are made. Factors that influence programme entry points and sequencing include:

- Where the situation lies along the peace and conflict cycle. An approach to prevent violence and protect assets might be indicated where violence appears imminent. Humanitarian social protection may be more appropriate during periods of conflict. DDR, psychosocial support and livelihood recovery programmes may be needed after violence has ceased.
- Research results. These may identify important practical links between peace and livelihoods, including community, government and donor preferences and expressed needs.
- The absorptive and socio-emotional capacity of target communities and stakeholders to engage in planned activities; and the mandate and implementation capacity of agencies and their networks or potential partners.
- Whether the intervention is led *primarily* by a peacebuilding or a livelihoods perspective (with the other playing a secondary role), or whether the partnership is more equal.

Levels, scope and scale. Single programmes can seldom address all livelihood and peace needs. Ultimately, the kinds of transformation envisaged in the theory of change require interventions at many levels, from community to national. This does not mean that organisations cannot or should not proceed to work on ‘pieces of the puzzle’ that fit their particular niche and capacity; only that these interventions will be more effective if others are working in parallel on other pieces of the puzzle, ideally collaboratively and in ways that are complementary. Programmes will run at the level, scope and scale appropriate to their capacity and the context. But

they can maximise and extend their impact by advocacy, collaboration, sharing knowledge and helping others to replicate or adapt successful approaches.

Targeting. Livelihood initiatives designed to help build peace will target beneficiaries whose inclusion is critical to peace, often groups with grievances. The latter can include groups whose previous exclusion from livelihoods, or whose current approach to livelihoods, is problematic for peace. Members of armed groups taking part in a DDR process might be an example of the first group; pastoralists and farmers in competition for land might be an example of the second. Given the relatively modest scale of many peacebuilding programmes, accurate targeting is essential if they are to maximise their potential. Targeting is also important when adapting programmes to the characteristics of different actors. For example, through careful targeting, programmes can identify which kinds of livelihood may be appropriate and accessible to populations who may play specific roles in creating conditions for peace, such as younger or older men, or younger or older women, of different backgrounds and experience. In many cultures, women do not participate in certain decisions, and their grievances may not be as visible as those of men. However, women's full participation in society is essential to the achievement of positive peace, and their inclusion in livelihood programmes should therefore be prioritised.

Trade-offs and compromises associated with integration. It may be necessary to adapt livelihood and peacebuilding approaches in order to integrate them. For example, introducing livelihood activities into a peacebuilding programme may expand the number of stakeholders that need to be included in dialogue processes, perhaps to take into account stakeholders at different stages in the value chain. To reduce the risk of clashes between rival pastoralists in an area, a programme may need to involve livestock traders in distant cities whose market strategies are driving local conflict.⁶⁷ On the other side of the coin, specialised livelihoods agencies (and their stakeholders, such as donors and governments) may need to adapt their expectations if a peacebuilding analysis indicates that it is necessary to work with participants whose potential for economic growth is lower than they (and their stakeholders) normally prefer.

Combining peace and conflict analysis with livelihoods analysis

Peacebuilding initiatives are based on a peace and conflict analysis (PCA), which identifies causes of the conflict, capacities and openings for peace, and opportunities to address them. PCA methods can easily be adapted to fit the systems of livelihoods agencies. Both the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the ILO have developed in-house PCA methodologies.⁶⁸ The PCAs of peacebuilders can also be enhanced by integrating data familiar to livelihoods experts. What matters is to understand how livelihoods and peace and conflict dynamics affect each other, and identify entry points for intervention.

In Ethiopia, Interpeace collaborated with the Ministry for Peace to develop a research framework known as the Ethiopia Peace Index, a form of PCA. The initial 2023 Index found a correlation between food/income security and social cohesion. Economically insecure communities were less peaceably inclined, and tension between ethnic groups was higher; economically, isolated communities were also more insecure. This implied that carefully targeted programmes were needed which combined livelihoods and social cohesion goals. Having implemented the Peace Index together, Interpeace and the Ministry of Peace jointly own its results, and have started a policy dialogue to consider next steps.⁶⁹

Conflict sensitivity. A programme needs to be based on a good understanding of the political economy of any livelihoods sector they enter, and also evaluate how different actors may react to proposed changes that

67 The New Humanitarian (2014), 'Cattle-rustling and the politics of business in Kenya', <https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/cattle-rustling-and-politics-business-kenya>.

68 FAO (2019), 'Guide to Context Analysis: Approaches to working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts'; ILO (2021), 'Peace and Conflict Analysis: Guidance for ILO's programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts'.

69 Ministry of Peace, Government of Ethiopia and Interpeace (June 2023), 'The Ethiopian Peace Index: Pilot Study'.

they perceive will affect their political or economic power. Promoting new or enhanced livelihood opportunities can create competition, which can affect and may worsen existing conflict dynamics. These effects can be mitigated by thorough context analysis and programme design, careful stakeholder engagement, and strong communication and management.

4.2 Enhance, increase and diversify livelihood opportunities, and widen access to them

The remainder of this chapter explains each of the four livelihood intervention areas in the theory of change. The first of these (which seeks to increase, diversify, and improve access to livelihood opportunities) is the largest, since it covers a wide variety of possible approaches. As discussed earlier, ‘improving access’ includes widening and opening opportunities and improving people’s capacity to take advantage of them. The logic is that, where livelihood opportunities become more available and more accessible, more people can provide for their needs and meet their aspirations by increasing their incomes and assets, which reduces their grievances and feelings of unfairness, improves their status and sense of belonging, and confidence and self-respect, and enhances their ability to play an active role in society. At the same time, their economic participation increases the cost to them of instability and helps insulate them from manipulation by conflict entrepreneurs. As livelihoods become more productive and diverse, competition for livelihood opportunities may also decline, reducing the potential for conflicts.

Using value chain approaches in peacebuilding

In an integrated programme, the programme’s peacebuilding aims are likely to influence its choice of a livelihood value chain. It is likely to select a product chain that has the potential to reduce conflict, rather than one that just brings economic benefits. However, a study of value chain programmes in conflict-affected contexts emphasised that (as with all economic interventions) such programmes must be market-driven to be sustainable, even if they are designed to contribute to peace. They should also aim to improve the wider business environment, particularly its physical and administrative infrastructure. The same study reviewed successful value chain approaches in post-conflict environments, including eco-tourism and coffee in Rwanda, and dairy in Kosovo. It highlighted cases, such as the fresh produce sector in Nepal and the poultry sector in Afghanistan, where the value chain approach had enabled projects to reach excluded populations during periods of conflict, resulting in improved social cohesion. Increased trust was a common outcome of value chain approaches, and trust increased most where interventions had grown the overall value of the sector in question, thereby reducing competition within it.⁷⁰

Many livelihood approaches offer opportunities for peacebuilding, particularly those that increase the inclusion of marginal groups and focus on gender and young people. For the purposes of this report, we note that of all the following approaches can be used in peacebuilding:⁷¹

- **Value chains and market systems development.** The value chain approach starts by taking a particular economic sub-sector. By analysing each link in the sub-sector’s value chain, a programme can identify efficiency gains that can improve productivity and profit, create new jobs, and generate livelihood opportunities. The approach can incorporate conflict sensitivity and peace responsiveness, notably by choosing a product whose value chain offers livelihood opportunities to people with grievances linked to exclusion.⁷² Market systems development approaches (sometimes known as ‘Making Markets Work for the Poor’ or

70 USAID (2008), ‘A Synthesis of Practical Lessons from Value Chain Projects in Conflict-Affected Environments’.

71 Note: this is not an exhaustive list.

72 USAID (2008), ‘Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Value Chain Development’.

'M4P') take a broader perspective: they use systems analysis to map out how markets work, and how they can be made more inclusive and accessible.⁷³

→ **Skills and technology transfer.** Skills development and technology transfer can have a major impact on livelihoods at all levels - including national or sectoral skills programmes, industrial strategies, or local training programmes. Where peacebuilding is an objective, training and technology transfer programmes often target excluded groups. For example, they work to reintegrate ex-fighters or returning IDPs or refugees. Livelihood training can also be adapted to include 'soft' skills that are important for peacebuilding: participation, conflict resolution, problem-solving, tolerance, and teamwork. Post-war recovery projects in Northern Uganda used cash for work to repair rural roads, and selected workers from different communities along the routes to ensure wide distribution of benefits. The projects placed a percentage of the workers' wages in individual savings accounts, and then offered workers the opportunity to learn small business skills. When the workers' savings were released as start-up capital, they were able to generate successful new livelihoods that contributed to stabilisation.⁷⁴

Training and capacity building

For organisations that promote livelihoods in conflict-affected contexts, it is important to learn how to use peacebuilding concepts and skills. Interpeace has worked closely with the UN agencies FAO and ILO to help them embed peace responsiveness in their systems, strategies, skills and programming. This work involves helping to develop key policy and guidance documents, as well as collaboration on the ground. The partners have integrated livelihoods and peacebuilding analysis in numerous countries, including Yemen, Libya and the Horn of Africa.

After the end of the civil war with the Lord's Resistance Army, International Alert trained and advised investors and businesses in Northern Uganda on how to reduce the risk of recurrence. For instance, it advised investors on sensitive questions linked to conflict, such as how to go about the purchase of productive land.⁷⁵

→ **Infrastructure.** Infrastructure plays an influential enabling role in efforts to promote both livelihoods and peace. For instance, a well-situated road or bridge can reduce transport costs *and* improve communication and collaboration between communities. Further, when local stakeholders are able to contribute their views to infrastructure decisions, it tends to improve a project's impact and quality, and strengthens social cohesion. A strategy has been widely adopted in parts of the DRC affected by conflict in the last two decades. It combines livelihood training and support with the provision of local infrastructure funding. Communities are trained and supported in dialogues, through which they prioritise and help design projects to maximise livelihoods and peace impacts. The model provides short-term livelihood opportunities (from wages and the procurement of materials) and promotes medium-term economic and peacebuilding objectives linked to reconciliation, social cohesion, citizen participation, the integration of marginalised communities, and local economic recovery.⁷⁶ On a larger scale, over many years the Nile Basin Initiative has promoted dialogue, technical collaboration and the collection and sharing of data to help the countries of the Nile Basin cooperate effectively to meet their major infrastructure and co-existence challenges.⁷⁷

73 Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (2008), 'Synthesis of The Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) Approach'.

74 Personal experience of author.

75 Policy Research Institute (PRI) (2017), 'Evaluation of International Alert's economic development for peace programming'.

76 For example, see MSI, 'Stabilization and Community Reintegration in Eastern Congo', [Stabilization and Community Reintegration in Eastern Congo - MSI \(msiworldwide.com\)](https://www.msiworldwide.com).

77 World Bank (2019), 'Stronger Together: 20 Years of Cooperation around the Nile'.

Peacebuilding advocacy

Over seven million refugees have fled the Syrian civil war, including 2.6 million to Jordan and Lebanon. Domestic politics initially led the governments of these two countries to block refugees from working legally. This restricted their ability to provide for themselves and their families, and contributed to keeping them in miserable living conditions. Three-quarters lived below the poverty line, a situation that had particularly damaging impacts on women and children. Exploiting the migrants' lack of rights, many employers hired them illegally on low pay, without written contracts. This created conflicts between refugees and locals, who saw that their jobs were being taken away and their salaries reduced.⁷⁸

Advocacy by international and local agencies, including perhaps surprising voices such as the World Economic Forum, whose advocacy was partly based on the business case for change,⁷⁹ persuaded the two governments to permit refugees to undertake certain (not all) economic activities. In parallel, NGOs and other organisations have worked to bridge relations between refugee and local communities, using dialogue and joint projects to reduce tensions and violent incidents. Donors have provided funds and support to boost economic opportunities.

This remains a work in progress, especially given the high unemployment rates and risks of political instability in both countries. Nevertheless, it represents a helpful example of relatively coherent advocacy and action, involving many different entities and organisations, at different levels, on an issue that connects livelihoods and peace.

- **Financial services.** Whether they are large companies or petty traders, businesses typically rely on financial institutions for capital or loans. Banks, development banks, micro-credit organisations, savings and loans groups, and other sources of funds, play an essential role in efforts to improve livelihoods and make resources available to targets of peacebuilding programmes. Because banks and other financial service providers are risk-averse, such efforts often need governments or donors to provide subsidies or loan guarantees. The role of local VSLA groups in building social cohesion is discussed in 4.4. At a higher level, Finance for Peace is a recent Interpeace initiative designed to facilitate the flow of project finance to major investments in fragile contexts, applying criteria that will at once reduce the risks to financial investors and make contributions to peace, including through the provision of decent livelihoods.⁸⁰
- **Business practices.** Large and small businesses have an impact beyond their products and direct economic performance. Their decisions about investment choices, employment, procurement and training, among others, have a significant social impact and can either exacerbate conflict or make a contribution to peace.⁸¹ For example, large mining companies have employed dialogue to explore how they might support alternative livelihoods to improve stability in their areas of operation.⁸²
- **Diversification.** Diversification of livelihoods helps spread risk, for instance when livelihoods are subject to weather or market fluctuations, or communities and economies are undergoing rapid change. It is clearly a relevant strategy in conflict-affected contexts, in which risk and unpredictable change are prevalent. Diversification can contribute to peace by creating new jobs and opportunities, especially where there is a high incidence of structural unemployment or underemployment linked to perceptions of exclusion and alienation; or where existing livelihoods create competition that engenders violence; or where some livelihoods are closed to particular caste, age, gender or ethnic groups. Libya provides an example:

78 Culbertson, S., Kumar, K. B. (2019), 'Jobs Can Improve the Lives of Syrian Refugees and Their Host Communities—and Support Stability in the Middle East', Rand Corporation.

79 World Economic Forum (2020), 'How job opportunities for Syrian refugees could drive economic growth in Jordan and Lebanon'.

80 <https://financeforpeace.org/>.

81 UN Global Compact (2013), 'Business for Peace'; International Alert (2000), 'The Business of Peace'.

82 ICMM, International Alert (2014), 'Learning from company-community conflicts: Understanding practical dilemmas'.

many organisations there are promoting entrepreneurship and business development as part of a strategy to diversify employment opportunities away from reliance on public sector jobs, which are vulnerable to nepotism. In Libya, nepotism has the potential to undermine progress towards peace in a very sensitive and violent political transition.⁸³

The remainder of this section provides some examples of how peacebuilding methods and expertise can be deployed in conjunction with the livelihood improvement approaches described above.

Peace and conflict analyses (PCAs) helps to identify population groups with grievances, and actual or potential conflicts and their causes, including gaps in social cohesion. They can be designed to show links between particular livelihood programmes and conflict factors: for example, conflicts over access to natural resources where this is known to be an issue, or exclusion from economic sectors under consideration for investment. Their findings can then support the design of livelihood programmes. They can show, for example, that certain economic sub-sectors are more inclusive of marginal groups, young people or women; or indicate potential new livelihood opportunities if existing livelihoods are threatened by climate change.

Peacebuilding approaches such as dialogue are deployed in livelihood programmes, for example to ensure that decision-making is participatory, to maximise a project's impact on social cohesion, or explore causes of conflict or openings for peace. Mediation can be used to negotiate a 'ceasefire' between pastoral groups, or between pastoralists and farmers: in the safe space that this creates, projects can improve productivity or diversify employment to reduce the risk of further conflict by lessening users' reliance on diminishing natural resources. Bringing members of communities with a history of conflict together to share a workplace, or livelihoods training, is a key part of the ILO's peacebuilding theory of change linked to decent work.⁸⁴ Shared experiences can improve mutual understanding and trust, and can be a vital element of a strategy for reconciliation and reintegration.

Advocacy for peacebuilding adds a critical dimension to livelihood improvement programmes. Framing livelihoods as a peacebuilding measure, and showing practically how this can be put into practice, can encourage local and national governments, donors and other influential players to adopt similar approaches. Even organisations that have formally adopted a peacebuilding approach often miss opportunities; advocacy can help them to identify these. Local and international peacebuilding organisations have worked for many years to improve relations across the unofficial border between Georgia and the unrecognized territory of Abkhazia. Recognising that trade and the livelihoods of producers and traders can be a vector of collaboration between the two sides, they use carefully researched trade data to encourage dialogue on both sides and inform the international track 1 peace process.⁸⁵ In its discussions with governments, the ILO promotes policies that enable economies to replace informal by formal jobs, on the understanding that formal employment tends to provide decent terms and conditions of work that better underpin and sustain peace.⁸⁶

83 World Bank (2015), 'Labor Market Dynamics in Libya: Reintegration for Recovery'.

84 ILO (2020), 'Jobs for Peace and Resilience'.

85 Mirimanova, N. (2015), 'Abkhazia: Regulations for Trade with Disputed Statehood', in Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and Swisspeace, 'Caucasus Conflicts: Frozen and Shelved?', Politorbis, No. 60.

86 ILO (2019), 'Promoting transition to formality for peace and resilience'.

4.3 Strengthen regulatory and problem-solving mechanisms

Initiatives to promote livelihoods that contribute to peace need to establish norms and rules and regulations, as well as mechanisms to implement them, in order to manage competition connected to livelihoods, solve problems, and ensure fairness. Norms and rules enhance predictability, reduce risk, and help to guarantee fairness of opportunity, reducing the likelihood of grievances. When they prevent or regulate conflicts, they reduce violence, harm, physical damage, and disruption to livelihoods. The experience of agreeing, following and pursuing rule-based conflict resolution processes can also help to strengthen the vertical and horizontal relationships that create social cohesion, and can enhance relationships and governance more widely. The involvement of women, young people and different social groups in deliberative decision-making bodies embeds their participation and representation.

Regulatory frameworks relevant to livelihoods include formal and traditional governance and justice mechanisms, international frameworks governing trade, the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and national arrangements for implementing and enforcing these.⁸⁷ Strengthening these mechanisms through dialogue, participatory reviews, training, and advocacy, creates opportunities to embed processes and norms that contribute to peace. In general, regulatory frameworks favourable to peace are fair, predictable, consistent and transparent; their mechanisms and rules are clear and easy to understand; their processes are timely, participatory and accessible; they include mechanisms for enforcement, complaint, appeal and redress; and they are regularly reviewed and revised.

A peace and conflict analysis can show where revision or reinforcement may be needed. Sometimes, regulatory gaps simply need to be filled; or frameworks may have weakened, be skewed in favour of particular interests, or have failed to keep up with changes in their environment. Between 1990 and 2009, for example, at least 40% of all intra-State armed conflicts were driven at least partly by claims over natural resources.⁸⁸ In part this was because many of the systems that had mediated access to natural resources (such as land or water for agriculture or livestock) were failing to cope with new stresses or shocks. The situation of pastoralists in the Karamoja Cluster in East Africa is a case in point: reduced rainfall and other changes in the region have combined to undermine finely balanced governance systems for containing violence between groups.⁸⁹ This example also illustrates the importance of harmonising regulatory frameworks and enforcement in border areas, to minimise friction where livelihood strategies straddle borders.

Peacebuilding methods can help to establish the need for regulation, and also help to agree appropriate rules and implementation mechanisms. Dialogues can assist stakeholders to agree new or stronger norms for managing local access to land and water for pasture and agriculture. For pastoralists, these might include transhumance corridors, weather-based criteria to determine when livestock can graze in harvested fields, and rules for overseeing such agreements and resolving disputes.

In eastern DRC, similarly, projects have used dialogue to help many communities restore or renew *baraza* (committee-based) systems that have successfully anticipated and managed local disputes, many of which concerned land access and land tenure.⁹⁰ *Dushirehamwe*, a nationwide women's peacebuilding network, has supported community dialogues in Burundi that established mechanisms to resolve disputes that arose over access to housing and land after long-term refugees returned from Tanzania to find their properties had been 'occupied' in their absence. Similar programmes have eased the return of Congolese refugees from Rwanda.⁹¹

87 ILO (2022), 'ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work'.

88 United Nations Environment Programme (2009), 'From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment'.

89 FAO/IGAD/Interpeace (2022), 'Conflict, Climate Change, Food Security, and Mobility in the Karamoja Cluster: A Study to analyse interactions amongst conflict, food security, climate change, migration and displacement factors'.

90 Personal experience of author. See also: <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/success-story-drc>.

91 Personal experience of author.

Dialogue and conflict resolution in South Kordofan⁹²

Peace committees established by local community leaders in South Kordofan in Sudan have resolved many conflicts over access to land and water between farmers and herders or between pastoralist groups. They have also prevented outbreaks of violence linked to social disputes, and in at least one case prevented an escalation of violence after a murder. In another case, they mediated between two pastoralist groups which had threatened to attack one another. To put this in perspective, an earlier similar case had resulted in 150 deaths.⁹³

The peace committees were established by farming and herding communities who faced repeated, worsening episodes of violence linked to land access. Through dialogue, with external advice from Collaborative for Peace in Sudan, they agreed on norms and collaborative procedures for preventing and managing conflicts.

A review of similar interventions in South Kordofan found:

- In over half of peace committee interventions, communities that had previously fought alongside one of the parties to a conflict subsequently chose not to.
- Where violence had occurred and had been brought to an end, no further violence was reported in 80% of cases.
- In 94% of interventions, the specific conflict was deemed to have been partially or fully resolved.
- Only 6% of interventions appear to have failed entirely.⁹⁴

The deliberative process of bringing people together to develop and agree regulations can itself improve relations. Forest communities in Guyana, who were involved in developing new national forest management guidelines, found that working together helped to improve their highly conflictual relations regardless of the outcomes they achieved. In several countries in Asia, Africa and the Americas, similar national deliberations to reform forest regulations created opportunities for women and marginal social groups to engage. This is especially important, because forests are vital for their livelihoods. The systems established by these deliberative processes have proved effective. They have been used to channel and resolve grievances that otherwise might have become a source of instability, and enabled local communities to access timber royalties, reducing tensions and supporting local livelihoods.⁹⁵

Because it typically takes a long time to embed rule-based agreements and secure their acceptance at different levels of society, training and accompaniment, advocacy, and awareness raising are critical elements of implementation. The ILO consistently supports what it calls Social Dialogue: formalised dialogue mechanisms involving government, unions and employers to agree national or sectoral norms in employment and resolve tensions and differences.⁹⁶ Those who have economic or political interests to defend will often try to undermine new systems that address exclusion or inequity. In such cases, a combination of persuasion and sanctions may be needed. A lesson learned in livelihoods programmes is that it is important to 'institutionalise' new norms and agreements, to ensure they have teeth and oversight. Ideally they should have government backing, and should at least be endorsed by local leaders and other key stakeholders.⁹⁷ In form, mechanisms can vary: they may be entirely new institutions of governance, or may reform and revive existing but ineffective

92 Alliance for Peacebuilding, Peace Direct (2019), 'Local Peacebuilding: What Works and Why?'

93 Komey, G. K. (2017), 'Evaluation of the Process, Outcomes and Impact of the CfPS-RRF and PCs in Local Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolutions in South and West Kordofan, Sudan'.

94 Integrity (2012), 'Final Report: Evaluation of the CFPS Rapid Response Fund and Peace Committee Model in Sudan', cited in Paul van Tongeren (2013), 'Potential cornerstone of infrastructures for peace? How local peace committees can make a difference', Peacebuilding, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1–31.

95 Forest Governance, Markets, and Climate (FGMC) Programme (2020), 'The Interaction of Multi-Stakeholder Forest Governance with Peace and Conflict'.

96 ILO (2023), 'The ILO and the UN Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace'.

97 Interview with NGO programme director in the DRC, 13/6/23.

mechanisms. As an example of the latter, Interpeace is working with UN agencies to train and support Land Commissions designed to resolve land disputes in Guinea Bissau: established on paper, these had never been operational in practice.⁹⁸

4.4 Promote livelihoods activities that particularly encourage or require cooperation

By their nature, certain livelihood activities create opportunities to bring people together for peacebuilding. In some cases, this is because cooperation is *required* if they are to succeed: examples include cooperative enterprises, and commercial activities that require cooperation across national or intercommunity borders. Cross-border trade involves people-to-people cooperation (horizontal relationships) and also cooperation with officials (vertical relationships). In other cases, cooperation is more a deliberate choice: for example, a business may proactively hire men and women from different communities to encourage social cohesion.

The benefits of taking such opportunities were listed under 4.2: they help to improve people's self-confidence and sense of belonging, reduce grievances, and increase income and assets. In addition, careful facilitation of inter-group contact can have a powerful positive impact on the mutual trust and understanding of those taking part, and contribute to reconciliation.

Peace and conflict analyses help to identify where such programmes are likely to be most beneficial. Cooperative ventures have proved they can successfully consolidate reconciliation and reintegration processes, based on the idea that working together towards a common economic goal can complement other methods used to build trust and the habit of collaboration. This may require considerable external accompaniment or facilitation, at least at the start, to avoid and manage internal conflicts or problems and traumas that resurface from the past. It is also important to ensure that any livelihood activities are genuinely market-oriented, as well as having peacebuilding potential. Projects should rigorously analyse the feasibility and viability of their plans, to maximise their chances of commercial success. To this end, the Bugesera Societal Healing Initiative team in Rwanda developed a set of protocols, designed to ensure that both peacebuilding and economic criteria were met.⁹⁹

In the Rwanda example (text box), the participants themselves opted to set up small agricultural cooperatives. Cooperative ventures were more successful if preceded by a period of psychosocial support.¹⁰⁰ In neighbouring Burundi, the initial results of a project set up by Interpeace and the *Centre d'Alerte et de Prévention des Conflits* (CENAP) suggested that young people who had been trained in violence interruption techniques were coming under pressure from party leaders to reject this approach

and engage in political violence. To overcome this problem, the project assisted groups of young men and women from across ethnic and party lines to form cooperative ventures. Doing this helped to improve inter-group solidarity, and, by raising the participants' incomes and self-confidence, also insulated them somewhat from societal pressure and manipulation.¹⁰¹

98 FAO (undated), 'Prevention of Natural Resources Conflicts related to Pastoralism and Transhumance in Bafata and Gabu Regions'.

99 Bugesera Societal Healing Initiative (undated), 'Collaborative Livelihoods Protocols'.

100 Interpeace (2023), 'Mind the Peace: Integrating MHPSS, Peacebuilding and Livelihood Programming - a guidance framework for practitioners'.

101 Kimote, J., Kwizera, E. E. (2021), 'Synergies for Peace Programme-Burundi: Final Evaluation'.

Livelihoods as a vehicle for psychosocial healing and reconciliation in Rwanda

Interpeace and its partners in Rwanda have supported community-based healing initiatives for many years, with considerable success.¹⁰² They use dialogue, training and trauma counselling to foster recovery and reconciliation between survivors and perpetrators of the 1994 genocide. More recently, community members who had formed healing groups (each comprising around 15 survivors and perpetrators) expressed an interest in transforming these into cooperative enterprises, partly as a way to keep the healing process going, partly to meet their economic needs. After a pilot project that tested this concept, cooperative group members (both ex-prisoners and survivors) reported improvements in both mutual trust and socio-economic status. The cooperatives were economically successful; but cooperatives whose members had not been through a reconciliation and healing process were less so.¹⁰³ This suggests (a finding consistent with other research¹⁰⁴) that providing MHPSS in post-conflict societies can positively influence livelihood outcomes.

This has implications for sequencing. It suggests that livelihood projects designed to encourage cooperation as a pathway for peacebuilding will be more successful if they add psychosocial interventions early on (as appropriate). In Rwanda, this is highly relevant, because the government is developing policies to guide the reintegration of large numbers of genocide prisoners who are due to be released back into their communities. A combination of livelihoods and life skills training for ex-prisoners and community members, coupled with psychosocial interventions to manage their reintegration, should facilitate this sensitive phase in Rwanda's post-genocide transition.

In the different context of the Terai region in Nepal, community members from diverse caste groups in Sun-sari district established a group called *Amuna Krishi Sahakari Sasth*. In a radical move, when the group began to collect and sell cows' milk, it decided to mix the milk collected by untouchable communities with the milk collected by others – normally a taboo. Because there was mutual economic benefit, and in response to peer pressure, higher caste villagers came to accept this tentative step towards countering the taboo of untouchability. This allowed the gradual emergence of a more positive environment for untouchable groups, and as a result untouchability has become a lower barrier to economic and social inclusion.¹⁰⁵

The voluntary savings and loans associations (VSLA) movement has been promoting VSLAs across the world successfully for more than 30 years.¹⁰⁶ Because cooperation is at their heart, VSLAs can be an effective tool for combining livelihood support and local peacebuilding. For example, a Mercy Corps programme in Nigeria has helped women form local Women's Peace Councils. These provide peacebuilding training, and intervene as 'violence interrupters' to prevent conflicts breaking out or escalating. They have established cooperative livelihood projects as a way to fund their programmes and build social cohesion.¹⁰⁷ Some have also gone on to establish networks of VSLAs, because they have found them to be a useful vehicle for awareness raising, building bridges and strengthening social cohesion.¹⁰⁸

102 Davis, A., Nsengiyumva, C., Hyslop, D. (2019), 'Healing Trauma and Building Trust and Tolerance in Rwanda: Lessons learned from Peacebuilding Approaches to Psychosocial Support Group Healing in Rwanda', Interpeace, Never Again Rwanda; Hilliard, S., Ntaganda, E., Bartholomew, K. (2017), 'Societal Healing and Participatory Governance: Mid-Term Evaluation', Taysha Consulting.

103 Interpeace (2023), 'Reinforcing community capacity for social cohesion through societal trauma healing in Bugesera pilot programme: End-line Programme Evaluation Report'.

104 Lund, C., De Silva, M., Plagerson, S., Cooper, S., et al. (2011), 'Poverty and mental disorders: breaking the cycle in low-income and middle-income countries', *The Lancet*, 378/9801.

105 International Alert (2019), 'Consolidating peace through inclusive access to livelihoods in Nepal'.

106 <https://www.vsla.net/the-vsla-methodology/>.

107 Mercy Corps, 'Leveraging Livelihoods to Support Women's Peacebuilding', <https://nigeria.mercycorps.org/blog/interventions-support-womens-peacebuilding>.

108 Mercy Corps, 'Benue women leverage VSLA to promote women's involvement in peacebuilding', <https://nigeria.mercycorps.org/blog/benue-women-promote-involvement-peacebuilding>.

4.5 Improve access to social protection

Social protection includes “initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups”.¹⁰⁹ In the context of this paper, we are primarily concerned with ‘protection against livelihood risks’: the provision of support to people whose access to a living is constrained by circumstances. Relevant circumstances may be personal, for example old age, disability or lack of appropriate education or skills; or factors in the environment, such as an economic downturn, unrest, conflict, drought or natural disaster. Social protection is provided via State-led schemes, community-based or civil society support, or humanitarian programmes. These mechanisms contribute to people’s livelihoods – their ability to provide for themselves and their dependents.

“In the immediate post-conflict period the poorest people are the most exposed to misinformation, corruption and disillusionment wilfully brought on by players interested in capturing the power vacuum. Direct cash transfers to the most vulnerable groups [through social protection programmes] can play a key role in counteracting those negative forces and securing stability”.

Emilio Peres, Minister of Finance, Timor Leste.

In *Timor Leste Ten Years After* (2009), Development Outreach, World Bank.

Social protection can reduce social unrest and contribute to social justice and peace, especially if designed with this intent.^{110, 111} It strengthens people’s resilience, enabling them to cope better with the rigours of conflict, and bounce back after conflict ends to help rebuild stability and peace. It can also strengthen the two-way (vertical) relationship between people and the State, disarming identity-based competition, mistrust and enmity that otherwise feed conflict. State-based social protection has this capacity because it offsets dependence on social capital linked to narrow identity groups, strengthening a wider sense of citizenship.¹¹² In a similar way, social protection mechanisms also strengthen and widen horizontal relationships and deepen social capital and trust by demonstrating social solidarity, providing support in a transparently fair way, and using delivery mechanisms that bring beneficiaries from different social groups together around social activities or to access services.¹¹³ Finally, it can reduce grievances by ensuring social protection is inclusive of marginalised people and groups.¹¹⁴

Pensions improve social stability and local governance in Timor Leste

In post-conflict Timor Leste, the introduction of a pension for older persons and people with disabilities, together with other social provisions, was key in preventing further social unrest after a violent political crisis in 2006. One challenge was to identify people who were eligible but lacked documents; many people in Timor Leste had never had these or had lost them during displacement or conflict. By confirming the identity of applicants, local chiefs played a crucial role. The measure itself, but also its method of implementation, improved social cohesion, local governance, and inclusion.¹¹⁵

109 Devereux, S., Sabates-Wheeler, R. (2004), ‘Transformative social protection’, Institute for Development Studies.

110 UNESCAP (2015), ‘Time for Equality: the role of social protection in reducing inequalities in Asia and the Pacific’.

111 Taydas, Z., Peksen, D. (2012), ‘Can States Buy Peace? Social welfare spending and civil conflicts’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 49(2), 273-287.

112 HelpAge (2021), ‘Impacts of Social Protection on Social Cohesion and Reconciliation’.

113 *Ibid.*

114 Vernon, P. (2023), ‘How Social Protection programmes can contribute to peace: an ILO perspective’, internal paper.

115 ILO (2019), ‘100 Years of Social Protection’, Volume 1.

When designing social protection programmes, peace and conflict analysis can help to reveal where assistance is most needed, and by whom. For example, UN analysis revealed that Iraq's social protection system was divisive in that it was widely seen to be biased in favour of certain groups; it also disincentivised young people's active economic engagement. In these ways, it was undermining economic growth and social cohesion. With the aim of strengthening social cohesion, the UN is supporting the government to reform social protection benefits in a manner that will attract more young people into work and encourage families to keep their children in school longer, linking these changes to improved education provision.¹¹⁶ In another example, analysis underpinning the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* in areas affected by armed violence in the Philippines led the project to offer conditional cash benefits to poor families, aiming to improve children's health, nutrition and education. Evidence shows that these contributed to a significant decrease in the incidence of armed violence in affected areas in the Philippines, and reduced the influence of armed groups in affected communities.¹¹⁷ Peace and conflict analysis can be integrated easily in widely used methodologies for analysing social protection, such as the Core Diagnostic Instrument.¹¹⁸ PCAs can also be used by shock responsive social protection systems, which UNICEF and others are developing, to show how livelihoods can be adapted to improve resilience.¹¹⁹ They can equally be applied to targeting. For example, they can help identify strategies to improve the inclusion of minorities without triggering the resentment of other groups.¹²⁰

Dialogue is used in local or community-based social programmes to agree who should receive benefits, potentially improving social cohesion through the process as well as through its outcomes. When civil society organisations that represent population groups with historic perceptions of exclusion participate in national or regional social protection reforms, this can reduce perceptions of bias, improve inclusion on the ground, and also generate better policy outcomes. Social protection beneficiaries in Latin America have been encouraged and supported to participate in community organisations and in various forms of deliberative democracy. This has been shown to increase social capital and social cooperation, and thereby contribute to social cohesion. For example, the *Familias en Acción* conditional cash transfer programme measurably improved social capital, trust and willingness to cooperate among beneficiaries in Colombia.¹²¹

Social protection can also be included in DDR projects, or programmes to integrate or reintegrate migrants or refugees. A combination of social benefits and access to services (such as health care and training) can support and incentivise (re-)integration and participation in other initiatives that encourage demobilisation. Social assistance that provided families in Colombia with benefits linked to school attendance measurably increased the demobilisation of minors.¹²²

These and other examples demonstrate that social protection has made and can make a major contribution to peace.¹²³ Nevertheless, because social protection programmes still frequently fail to take this dimension into account, international and national advocacy is required. International organisations need to be persuaded to frame social protection policies and agreements in terms that explicitly include language on peacebuilding. National governments and national institutions need to promote universal or at least more inclusive approaches to social protection. For instance, they might extend out-of-work benefits to the informal sector, or extend benefits to include refugees: both these initiatives can improve social cohesion. As proposed in the World Social Protection Report 2020-22, advocacy can be strengthened by engaging a range of government departments and civil society organisations in broader national discussions that extend the social protection

116 UN Iraq (2022), 'Building Iraq's Social Protection Floor. Framework and Recommendations, Position Paper'; ILO (2023), 'Cost of Inaction: Education Deprivation in Iraq and the Potential of Social Protection to Reverse It'.

117 Crost, B., Felter, J. H., Johnston, P. B. (2016), 'Conditional cash transfers, civil conflict and insurgent influence: Experimental evidence from the Philippines', *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 118, January 2016.

118 Inter-Agency Social Protection Assessments (2014), 'Core Diagnostic Instrument'.

119 UNICEF (2019), 'Programme Guidance: Strengthening Shock Responsive Social Protection Systems'.

120 HelpAge (2021), 'Impacts of Social Protection on Social Cohesion and Reconciliation'.

121 ILO (2011), 'Social protection floors for a fair and inclusive globalization: Report of the Social Protection Floor Advisory Group'.

122 Pena, P., Urrego, J. A., Villa, J.M. (2017), 'Civil Conflict and Conditional Cash Transfers: Effects on Demobilization'.

123 ILO (2017), 'World Social Protection Report, 2017-19: Universal social protection to achieve the SDGs'.

discourse beyond poverty eradication and economic development, to include wider societal impacts including peace.¹²⁴

Collaboration, complementarity and working at multiple levels

Collaboration and complementarity are essential if livelihoods are to be leveraged for peacebuilding on a scale commensurate with the challenges that many conflict-affected societies face. Complementarity requires agencies to at least share information about their own plans and activities, and be aware of what others are planning or doing; and ideally to engage in forums for this purpose and for coordination. Those working locally and nationally can inform and support each other, at various levels. Forms of proactive collaboration between peacebuilders and livelihoods promoters or businesses include:

- **Long-term partnership.** Peacebuilders and livelihoods organisations combine their expertise to develop a sustained approach in a particular context, based on complementary capacities and mutual learning.
- **Accompaniment.** A peacebuilding organisation ‘accompanies’ a livelihoods agency or vice versa, providing strategic advice and mentoring, as a critical friend.
- **Collaborative analysis processes.** Peacebuilders and livelihood experts collaborate in contextual analysis, usually for a specific strategy design or purpose, often as part of wider processes, such as the UN’s Common Country Analyses (CCAs).
- **Ad hoc collaboration.** Organisations collaborate on specific issues, for example in donor-led sectoral discussions, or humanitarian cluster coordination meetings.
- **Project consortia.** These usually form in response to donor calls for proposals. They work well when there is a genuine integration of ideas, and peacebuilders and livelihood experts co-design proposals.
- **Multi-mandate organisational integration.** Multi-mandate NGOs like Mercy Corps, which have in-house expertise, are not only able to develop coherent programming on the ground but can produce practice notes based on operational research.

¹²⁴ ILO (2021), ‘World Social Protection Report 2020-22: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future’.

5. Opportunities, challenges and principles

Chapters Three and Four explained how combining livelihoods programming with peacebuilding methods contributes to peace. This chapter identifies some of the opportunities that are available, globally and operationally, and the challenges that need to be met. Finally, it proposes a set of principles to guide those who wish to seize the opportunities and resolve the challenges.

5.1 Opportunities

This section outlines some of the main opportunities to integrate livelihoods and peacebuilding, both globally and in particular contexts.

There is a renewed interest in livelihoods as a vehicle for peacebuilding. Global initiatives, such as the Sustaining Peace, Youth Peace and Security and anti-extremism agendas, reflect a renewed concern for peace and stability and consequently a renewed interest in peacebuilding linked to livelihoods. Governments, donors, major international agencies, and some businesses, seek to support livelihoods as a way to contribute to stability and peace. This represents an opportunity to implement funded programmes, and influence policies and programmes by providing advice and advocacy at many levels.

The analysis and design frameworks for livelihoods and peacebuilding are similar. There are considerable similarities between the analytical frameworks used by many livelihoods and peacebuilding programmes. For example, both use holistic models, both seek to identify the obstacles to and the openings for change, and both attach importance to resilience. This bodes well for collaboration.

Evidence is needed. Although there is renewed interest in livelihoods and peacebuilding, the evidence available does not yet show how livelihoods can best be leveraged for peace in different circumstances. This potentially undermines the effectiveness and scale of interventions. At worst, wrong-headed strategies may be deployed: these might cause harm and could even dissuade policy makers from investing further. Sustained, action-oriented research over the medium term and robust programme M&E could help to fill this knowledge gap. Forums for sharing knowledge, including the findings of such research, would improve programmes as well as organisational, national and global strategies and policies.

The world is in the middle of a strategic transition. In a global context of major geopolitical unease, societies across the world are grappling with change: demographic and environmental change; urbanisation; migration; digitisation; governance and political change. All have an economic and livelihoods dimension. They also create new stresses within and between societies, and stress often leads to conflict. Livelihoods and peacebuilding initiatives can and should contribute to managing transition.

Opportunities arise at strategic moments. Integrated peace and livelihoods initiatives are relevant in all stages of peace and conflict cycles, especially to programmes that prevent conflict and that address post-conflict recovery. Key moments in strategy cycles and coordination processes of governments and aid institutions also offer opportunities to integrate livelihoods with peacebuilding. Points of entry include but are not limited to: UN Common Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks; EU/UN/World Bank Joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments; UN Recovery Clusters and humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) nexus processes; and regular and *ad hoc* coordination events such as in-country sectoral donor meetings. UN and donor agencies can play an important role helping countries to develop and fund strategies for navigating the

kinds of transition mentioned in the previous paragraph. Relevant global policy publications published by UN agencies also offer opportunities to influence: these include the World Social Protection Report (ILO), The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO), and the World Development Report (UNDP).

Formal peace processes and peace agreements. Peace processes and agreements are opportunities to advocate for ‘peace dividends’ that promote fair access to livelihoods and help to consolidate peace. Such ‘events’ are really processes, of course, that continue long after agreements have been negotiated and signed; many establish economic policies and institutions that affect livelihoods over a long period. Too often, however, it is assumed that ‘peace dividends’ refer to the brief period when economies and economic opportunities grow rapidly after conflicts come to an end. In the absence of structural change, such growth, and post-conflict economies more generally, are likely to simply restore discriminatory economic relations, including unfair access to resources and livelihoods, blocking genuine peace and sowing the seeds for new conflicts.

Build on standalone peacebuilding or standalone livelihoods initiatives. An integrated approach may be developed on the foundations of existing but unintegrated programmes. This might be an option, for example, when a peacebuilding or livelihoods project has problems or weaknesses that could be resolved by adding the other dimension (livelihoods or peacebuilding); or when stakeholders simply recognise that integration is the best way forward. Building on an ongoing initiative has the advantage that it will have built many stakeholder relationships and acquired contextual knowledge.

Integration may be an option where space for peacebuilding is politically restricted. In some unstable contexts, the government (or other parties) may not be willing to allow peacebuilding, even though it would bring benefits. In such situations, an integrated approach that is framed primarily as an economic intervention may be more acceptable.

5.2 Challenges and risks

As with all areas of work, the opportunities are accompanied by a number of challenges and risks.

The challenge of integration. The sectoral cultures and habits of peacebuilders and livelihood promoters or businesses can clash. Each may see *their* dimension of any joint initiative as more important; they may minimise the value of the other; they may resist proposals to adapt their approaches. Peacebuilders may be more willing than livelihoods agencies to engage in long deliberative processes that involve a wide range of stakeholders before moving on to concrete outputs and outcomes; and donor, community and government impatience can exacerbate this difference. The opposite scenario is equally imaginable. Meanwhile, community groups or civil society partners that have been chosen for their specialised peacebuilding or livelihoods expertise may lack the capacity to absorb another field of expertise. The possible results of poor integration include ineffective execution, failure to achieve programme goals, and doing harm by ill-informed actions that do not align with either peacebuilding or market logic. Programme budgets and plans, including staffing and partnership plans, should address the organisational dimensions of integration, and organisations need to be prepared to manage these.

Managing stakeholder motivation. Programmes that set out to build peace through livelihoods also face the challenge of understanding and managing the motivations of stakeholders. There is always a risk that project participants and other stakeholders will pay lip service to the peacebuilding elements of a project, but only to access the livelihoods benefits. This too needs to be factored into programme design and management. For example, organisations should pay careful attention to participant targeting and selection and monitoring, and give weight to design elements whose peacebuilding potential is less likely to be undermined by the motivations of individual stakeholders.

Confusing stability with sustainable peace. There is a risk that some stakeholders will assume that the integration of livelihood and peacebuilding programmes is a matter of consolidating stability, or negative peace. The language of ‘peace dividends’, frequently used in post-conflict situations, is often used to describe the near-term economic benefits of restored stability (negative peace), rather than the longer term challenge of building positive peace. The risk is that the peacebuilding components of livelihood programmes may be sidelined after an initial burst of enthusiasm.

Expectation management. Where grievances linked to livelihoods cause conflict, it is often on a large scale. But policies, projects and programmes can seldom respond on the same scale, and certainly cannot respond very rapidly. This is especially true when structural change is required, since structures generally evolve and embed slowly, often with difficulty. Sometimes, livelihood ‘solutions’ are simply not, or not yet, available.¹²⁵ This suggests that communication with stakeholders needs to be clear, honest and consistent; that a range of actors need to be involved in multi-dimensional and multi-level actions; and that replication and advocacy, and careful targeting, are important. Recognising that inclusive economic opportunities take time to come to fruition, inclusive social protection can often provide interim support.

Sustainability. The sustainability of livelihood opportunities and peacebuilding processes is at risk if the former are not clearly linked to real market opportunities and dynamics, and the latter are not institutionalised with the backing of governments and/or other leaders and institutions. The sustainability of both can also be undermined if people and institutions are not trained and prepared to adapt to future changes in their operating environment.

Conflict sensitivity. As with any initiative operating in, or touching on, conflict-affected contexts, integrated livelihoods and peacebuilding initiatives are likely to exacerbate or create conflicts if they are not undertaken with due care. It is therefore essential to prepare an explicit conflict sensitivity strategy.¹²⁶

5.3 Principles

Taking account of the opportunities, challenges and risks outlined above, the following principles are intended as a guide. Integrated livelihoods and peacebuilding initiatives should:

- Be based on **a comprehensive and thorough analysis of both peace and conflict and livelihood dynamics and the interactions between them.** They should identify openings for livelihood promotion and peacebuilding, as well as conflict sensitivity issues, and build these into an integrated plan with clear goals, regular peace and conflict scans, and measures of progress. Plans should emphasise fair access to livelihoods but also other dimensions of progress towards peace, in line with the theory of change in Figure 5.
- Be based on explicit **theories of change**, with associated goals, outcomes and outputs, and track **indicators of progress and impact for livelihoods and peacebuilding.** These should be used to map a clear and consistent communications strategy.
- **Increase and disseminate knowledge of best practices** with respect to livelihoods and peacebuilding, by integrating research and communications in budgets and plans.
- Adopt **a gendered approach** from the analysis stage, so that female and male community members of different ages and varied circumstances can participate and benefit appropriately.
- Adopt **facilitated, participatory approaches** that engage with all relevant stakeholders, including mem-

¹²⁵ Lind, J. (2016), ‘Manufacturing peace in a “no man’s land”’: Livestock and access to natural resources in the Karimojong Cluster of Kenya and Uganda’, in Helen Young and Lisa Goldman (eds), ‘Livelihoods, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding’, Routledge.

¹²⁶ Guidance on conflict sensitivity is widely available, for example at <https://www.conflictsensitivityhub.net/>.

bers of marginal groups, from as early as possible in the design process, and balance new technical knowledge and ideas with local knowledge and practices, aiming for stakeholder ownership.

- Ensure that **peacebuilding and livelihoods expertise** are both engaged and empowered throughout design, implementation and evaluation, **so that initiatives and their expected outcomes are consistent with both peacebuilding and economic logic.**
- Work as far as possible at **multiple levels and dimensions**, through collaboration and in complementarity with others, to maximise the scale of impact.
- Build the capacity of participants and participating institutions to adapt their skills and capabilities to changes in the context, and link peacebuilding processes and livelihood enterprises to governments, markets and other institutions **to maximise the prospects for sustainability.**
- Foster **a collaborative and adaptive culture** that encourages both peacebuilding and livelihoods practitioners to be humble and curious.

6. Conclusions

This report contains no explicit recommendations. Nevertheless, the following conclusions may suggest ways forward for organisations that wish to support livelihoods as part of peacebuilding.

Inadequate or unfair access to decent livelihood opportunities contributes to conflict and undermines progress towards peace. Fair and sustained access to decent livelihoods not only improves the public's stake in stability, but empowers people to contribute more broadly to society and to positive peace. Improving fair and inclusive access to livelihoods can therefore make a significant contribution to peace, provided the approach is tailored to the context, addresses peace and conflict dynamics, and takes account of market and economic realities.

There is growing interest in integrating peacebuilding and livelihoods approaches. Tested, transferable evidence on the best ways to build peace through livelihoods is limited, however. What evidence exists is relatively narrow, based on short-term projects of limited scope and scale. It does confirm – in line with intuition and theory – that improving fair access to decent livelihoods can help to improve peace. But it also suggests quite strongly that this is most true when livelihood interventions (perhaps in combination with other interventions) also address the wider dimensions of peace: fair, trusting and effective vertical and horizontal relationships and access to the institutions that mediate them (social cohesion), and fair access to the means of security, justice and wellbeing. Simply improving access to livelihoods, in a context where these other factors are weak or absent, will have only a limited and probably unsustainable impact on peace.

Policies and programmes designed to build peace through livelihoods are effective when they combine tried and tested livelihoods approaches with tried and tested peacebuilding methodologies, adapting each as necessary to enable their effective integration. This means integrating peacebuilding methods (such as peace and conflict analysis, dialogue, mediation, reconciliation and psychosocial recovery) with livelihoods interventions that enhance, increase, diversify and improve access to livelihood opportunities; strengthening formal and informal regulatory and problem-solving mechanisms; promoting livelihoods that particularly encourage or require cooperation; and improving access to social protection. For those wishing to combine livelihoods promotion and peacebuilding, a great advantage is that both disciplines already use similar analytical and programme design frameworks, and both acknowledge the importance of supporting and sustaining resilience.

Combining familiar livelihood and peacebuilding methods and expertise in this way can help to improve cooperation, mutual understanding, and trust, both between social groups and between those in power and those

they govern. It can also reduce grievances and the level and incidence of conflicts, and build self-confidence, reconciliation and a sense of agency and belonging. Engaging in sustainable livelihoods improves households' incomes and assets, and increases their ability to say no to instability and violence. Taken together, these outcomes strengthen and consolidate peace, as measured by more trusting and effective vertical and horizontal relationships and the institutions that mediate them (social cohesion), and fairer access to the means of security, justice and wellbeing. Consolidating peace in this way makes it possible to further improve the availability of and access to decent livelihoods, creating a virtuous circle.

Policies and programmes that successfully integrate peacebuilding and livelihoods apply explicit theories of change that clarify both peace *and* livelihood outcomes and goals. They emphasise the importance of fairness and inclusion, integrate a gendered approach, and use facilitated, participatory approaches. They are most effective when they work at multiple levels, and when both peacebuilding *and* livelihoods expertise are engaged and empowered throughout design and implementation, so that initiatives and their expected outcomes are consistent with the logic of both peacebuilding and markets.

Agencies, governments, civil society and businesses have a real opportunity to promote complementarity and collaboration by improving access to livelihoods in conflict-affected places in a manner that helps build peace. Where the opportunity is taken, it will benefit people in particular countries and can also enrich the discourse globally, making a growing body of evidence available to policy makers and practitioners in this crucial area of work.

Annex 1. Illustrative indicators at intervention, outcome and impact levels of the theory of change for building peace through livelihoods.

See Figure 5 and Chapter Three for details. All indicators are disaggregated by gender and other relevant dimensions of inclusion, depending on context.

PEACE IMPACTS

Wellbeing	Justice	Social cohesion	Livelihoods	Security
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Access to education and health services. → Sustainably improved health and education outcomes. → Perceptions of decent living conditions. → Perceptions of self-efficacy and agency. → Perceptions of the availability of opportunities for pursuing individual, family and community enhancement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Mechanisms for achieving justice and reconciliation are accessible, achieve results, and are perceived to be effective and fair. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Mechanisms for collaboration and accountability between authorities and people achieve results and are perceived to be responsive, helpful, open and trusting. → Mechanisms for collaboration and support between and among communities achieve results and are perceived to be responsive, helpful, open and trusting. → Perceptions of freedom of speech and participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Perceptions that individuals or groups with improved access to livelihoods resist calls to take part in violence; examples of such behaviour. → Improved livelihoods are sustained without external grant funding. → Livelihoods continue to adapt to changing circumstances. → The economic and political environment is improved, is rights-based and enabling for business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Level and frequency of violence. → Level of fear of violence; perceptions of safety.

OUTCOME AREAS

A. Cooperation, mutual knowledge and trust between and among groups have improved	B. Cooperation and trust between people and authorities have improved	C. Conflicts over livelihoods have reduced, and are anticipated, managed or resolved peacefully	D. Self-confidence, psychosocial wellbeing, sense of belonging and reconciliation have improved	E. Grievances and perceptions of unfairness have reduced	F. Incomes have increased and assets have accumulated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Perceptions of mutual understanding between groups. → Perceptions of mutual trust between and within groups. → Instances of cooperation. → Perceptions of the ability to participate of previously marginalised groups. → Depth and scope of cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Perceptions of mutual trust between people and authorities. → Perceptions of confidence in authorities. → Grievances and needs are aired. → Grievances and needs are addressed. → Instances of cooperation. → Depth and scope of cooperation. → Perceptions of the ability to participate of previously marginalised groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Number and scope of conflicts or violent incidents. → Examples of conflicts anticipated, managed, avoided, resolved without violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Perceptions of individual and identity group confidence and recovery. → Perceptions of individual and identity group belonging. → Perceptions of reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Perceptions of access to decent livelihood opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Income levels from livelihood activities and/or social protection. → Ownership of assets or savings.

OUTPUTS - LIVELIHOOD INTERVENTION AREAS

1. Livelihood opportunities have been enhanced, increased and diversified, and access to them has widened	2. Formal and informal regulatory frameworks and problem-solving mechanisms are stronger	3. Livelihood activities that particularly encourage or require co-operation have been promoted	4. Access to social protection has improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → People trained. → Decent jobs and livelihood opportunities created. → Diversity of livelihood opportunities increased. → Productivity enhancements achieved. → Wages and/or profitability of enterprises increased. → Physical infrastructures built or enhanced. → Sources of finance available and being accessed. → Examples of people brought together across social divisions in livelihood settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → (Completed) dialogue processes have developed a shared understanding of the need for systemic change. → Systems have been amended or established. → Amended or newly established systems have been used successfully. → Examples of conflicts anticipated, and interventions made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → People trained. → Cooperative ventures formed; number of members taking part. → Decent jobs and livelihood opportunities with cooperative characteristics created. → Opportunities for cooperation created in other forms of business. → Examples of people brought together across social divisions in livelihood settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Inclusive dialogue processes held that discussed social protection eligibility at community and national levels. → Changes enacted to community and national social protection eligibility. → Social protection support received by new recipients. → Social protection recipients attending community/intercommunity activities linked to social protection access.

SELECTED CROSS-CUTTING PEACEBUILDING INTERVENTION OUTPUTS

- Peace and conflict analyses conducted with stakeholder participation, whose results were used in programme and policy design.
- People and organisations trained in peacebuilding methods and supported to use them.
- People and communities supported through psychosocial interventions.
- People, communities and stakeholders engaged in dialogue, mediation and other forms of inter-group contact.
- People reintegrated in community, society and the economy following conflict.
- Stakeholders engaged in peacebuilding advocacy; advocacy strategies implemented.

Note. Because peacebuilding interventions are integrated with all the livelihood intervention areas, peacebuilding outputs are shown as cross-cutting.

Annex 2. Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges the essential contributions of those who kindly agreed to be interviewed or otherwise shared their insights and knowledge, including Abel Abata, Ahmed Abdullahi, Alassane Niamele, Andreas Luis Hahn, Bettina Boekle, Candida Beatriz Lopes Silva, Charles Ndayiziga, Cheick Faycal, Christopher Wynn, Daniel Hyslop, Elina Mariutsa, Ernest Dukuzumuremyi, Frank Kayitare, Gary Milante, Giorgia Nicatore, Giulia Ferrati, Graeme Smith, Gretta Fitzgerald, Hassan Ismail, Hélène Calame, Jarso Qanchoro, Jean-Paul Mugiraneza, Julius Jackson, Kasahun Abdeta, Kirsten Meersschaert, Laura Pistarini, Leonard Fried, Luke Errington-Barnes, Luvini Ranasinghe, Macková Emanuela, Maged Alkholidy, Majdalene Bentaher, Malamine Traore, Marie Therese Sabina Berger, Menna Waguih, Moses Mutabazi, Najib Bajali, Nieves Thom-et, Nura Wako, Pacifique Borauzima Buluhukiro, Paddy Docherty, Phil Priestley, Priscilla Ateyo, Renée Lariviere, Saidou Ilboudo, Sekou Kay-entao, Séverin Kouame, Stefano Ghirardi, Ted Holmquist, Theo Hollander, Tommaso Sonno, Weniba Sonia Christelle Mantoro, and Yacouba Bakayoko.



Interpeace Headquarters

Office 5A, Avenue de France 23,
1202 Geneva, Switzerland

www.interpeace.org  [@InterpeaceTweet](https://twitter.com/InterpeaceTweet)     [@interpeace](https://www.youtube.com/@interpeace)



In Partnership with the United Nations