

PURPOSE AND INTENDED USE

Violent conflict is a key driver of poverty and humanitarian crises, and Sida has a long tradition of supporting peace and security from a development perspective, as foundational to alleviating poverty.¹ The purpose of this brief is:

- to provide a broad overview of Sida's support to efforts where peace and security is the primary objective in light of the Swedish Government's Reform Agenda (2023)
- to briefly describe the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, Sweden's National Action Plan for WPS and Sida's contribution to it as one important aspect of Sida's support to peace and security
- to briefly describe strategy objectives that are primarily about peace and security

Finally, this paper has an appendix that explains the OECD DAC purpose codes that Sida uses to gather statistics about our work for peace and security.

The intended use is for Sida colleagues working on supporting peace and security in the countries where Sida is active, as well as colleagues contributing to Sida's report on the Swedish National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security.

PEACE AND SECURITY IN SIDA'S OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The Swedish Government's agenda for development assistance, adopted in December 2023, identifies war and violent conflicts as key global challenges that cause suffering and poverty and prevent people from reaching their full potential. Violent conflicts force people to flee their homes and have negative effects on democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and freedoms.

Against this background, the Swedish Government's development assistance agenda sets out that: "Globally, development assistance should contribute effectively to preventing war and armed conflicts, counteracting ongoing aggression and promoting post-conflict security and stabilisation".²

Support to peace and security encompasses a wide range of actions implemented with a stated purpose and ambition to prevent the outbreak of violent conflicts, bring ongoing violent conflicts to an end, and promote sustainable and lasting peace. Such work is essentially about addressing context specific root causes of conflict; managing and resolving conflicts by peaceful means and strengthening capacities at all levels (local, regional, national, international) for peaceful conflict management and resolution. Furthermore, support to peace and security includes work to reduce violence and protect civilians through for example strengthening adherence to International Humanitarian Law, mine action, including mine risk awareness, or preventing the irresponsible proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the Youth Peace and Security agenda³ as well as protection of children in conflict⁴ are part of the broader work for peace and security.

In Sida's Operational Strategy 2024-2026⁵, support to peace and security contribute to the following three external goals:

- Promoting freedom and fighting oppression
- Strengthening women's and girls' freedom and empowerment
- Strengthening synergies between development assistance and migration policy

Guiding reflections on how Sida's work to promote peace and security relates to these three overall objectives can be found on the next pages.

¹ An external evaluation found that Sida has had peace and security approaches in place since 1999. See Evaluation of Sida's support to peace-building in conflict and post-conflict contexts: synthesis report (2019), p 28.

² Government of Sweden, Development Assistance for a New Era - Freedom, empowerment and sustainable growth, December 14 2023, p. 9.

³ The Youth Peace and Security (YPS) agenda is enshrined in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020). Sida has experience of supporting all five pillars of the YPS agenda: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships and disengagement and reintegration.

⁴ Protection of children in armed conflict, CAAC, focuses on six grave violations against children: Killing and maiming of children; Recruitment or use of children as soldiers; Sexual violence against children; Abduction of children; Attacks against schools or hospitals; Denial of humanitarian access for children. Work on CAAC is enshrined in Security Council Resolution in 1999 (1261) has been followed by many more.

⁵ Operational Strategy 2024 - 2026 (Sida, 2024). Can be found and downloaded from www.sida.se/publikationer

OBJECTIVE IN SIDA'S OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

External result 3: Promoting freedom and fighting oppression

Democratic institutions are key actors that are in place to counteract conflict and democratic decline. These institutions include electoral institutions and the judiciary, a vibrant civil society including defenders of democracy and human rights and free and independent media. Ongoing democratic development and respect for human rights are strengthened, especially for the most vulnerable. Good public governance contributes to domestic mobilisation of resources, predictability and openness, and contributes to social coherence.⁶ Freedom of speech and access to independent facts and information in a more safe and equal digital environment has been strengthened. Not least in conflict areas where countering information influence and hate speech, as well as countering democratic regression, contributes to peace and security.

Guiding reflections

Links between democracy and peace are well established in peace research.⁷ Supporting inclusive political processes to manage and solve disputes and root causes of conflict can be a peacebuilding strategy. Countering hate speech and disinformation is also very much part of peacebuilding practice. Peace processes often concern core governance and human rights issues. Further, transitional justice in post-conflict contexts is a well established sub-thematic area within work to promote peace and security. The Women, Peace and Security agenda includes among other things support to women's equal political participation in matters important for sustainable peace, and an enabling environment for civil society to fulfil its peacebuilding potential, not least in conflict-affected contexts. (For more information about the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, see below).

An OECD DAC report from 2023 about "peace ODA" explains the potential in ODA dedicated to for example democratic participation, human rights, free media, anti-corruption organizations and institutions, as well as legislatures and political parties to also contribute to peaceful societies. But such work does not automatically lead to peace. Whether the peace potential of work for democracy and human rights materializes and can show results depends on whether it is *intentionally designed to deliver on context-specific peace-building or conflict prevention objectives*.⁸

External result 5: Strengthened women's and girls' freedom and empowerment

To strengthen freedom and empowerment of women and girls, their human rights, economic empowerment and agency, SRHR, education and participation in digitalisation, political decision-making and peace processes are promoted. Freedom from sexual and gender-based violence is central. Accountability for violence is strengthened, not least in conflicts. Women's rights organisations and other actors are strengthened to address growing resistance to gender equality. Transformative results are achieved that change the norms and customs that limit the self-determination of girls, women and LGBTI people. Discrimination is countered by taking an intersectional perspective. Freedom of women and girls to determine their own lives and opportunities to participate in society on the same terms as men and boys is a basis for Sweden's development assistance.

Guiding reflections

Research has found links between gender equality and peace. You can find a short summary in the evidence brief "Root Causes of Armed Conflict, an Evidence-based Overview" in Sida's Peace and Conflict Toolbox.

The objective to strengthen women's and girls' freedom and empowerment includes promoting women's and girls' equal and meaningful participation in peace processes and strengthening accountability for violence in conflicts. These areas are also included in the broader women, peace and security (WPS) agenda and the related Swedish National Action Plan (NAP). See the section below.

Support that is carefully designed to deliver on both peace and security as well as gender equality objectives contributes to the WPS agenda. Within External result 5, such work includes: Women's and girl's human rights; economic empowerment and agency; SRHR; political decision-making and participation in peacebuilding; Freedom from sexual and gender-based violence; accountability for violence, in particular in conflict-affected contexts and support to women's rights organisations and other actors to increase the opportunities to counter resistance towards gender equality.

⁶ The Swedish original term is "social sammanhållning" which is usually translated as "social cohesion".

⁷ See "Root Causes of Armed Conflict, an Evidence-based Overview" (Sida, April 2023) in Sida's Peace and Conflict Tool Box.

⁸ OECD (2023), Peace and Official Development Assistance, OECD Publishing, Paris, p 12.

External result 6: Strengthened synergies between development assistance and migration policies

Development cooperation creates conditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and oppression and affects the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. Through peace-building efforts, Sida counteracts the root causes of forced migration and displacement. Through interventions in countries of origin, transit and host countries strengthen the capacity of partner countries and contribute to safe, orderly and regulated migration, promote returns and contribute to sustainable reintegration. In collaboration with Swedish and international actors, Sida develops innovative approaches to use development assistance to promote returns or the positive contribution that returning migrants can make in partner countries.

Guiding reflections

War and violent conflicts are root causes of forced displacement. Sida's work on conflict prevention and peacebuilding can thus contribute to preventing forced displacement. Furthermore, peace and security are important factors for creating conducive conditions for voluntary, safe and dignified returns of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their places of origin. Peaceful co-existence between refugees, IDPs or returnees and host communities, as promoted by peacebuilding actors, is essential for providing better living conditions, and mitigating the risk of new displacement.

In line with the WPS agenda (see below), Sida supports women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

SIDA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

Strengthening the influence of women and girls, and ensuring their equal and meaningful participation in peace processes, as well as ensuring the integration of a gender perspective in peace and security efforts and measures to protect women and girls from gender based violence are all important aspects of peace efforts. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is enshrined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the subsequent nine resolutions. Sida supports all pillars of the WPS agenda: women's role in prevention, women's meaningful participation and the protection of women's rights during and after conflict, as well as addressing women's specific needs during repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.

In 2023, the Swedish government adopted a new National Action Plan (NAP) to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and

Security (WPS) for the period 2024–2028. It is Sweden's fourth consecutive NAP on WPS where Sida is one out of 12 implementing Swedish government authorities and agencies.

The NAP focuses on the role of women and girls in conflicts and peace processes and encompasses the following four priority areas:

- i. Promote the equal participation of women and girls in conflict prevention
- ii. Contribute to inclusive and equal peace processes and peacebuilding
- iii. Strengthen protection for women and girls
- iv. Leadership and expertise.

Sida is requested to contribute to WPS efforts in the contexts where deemed relevant, based on needs and an assessment of Sweden's opportunities to contribute with added value to reach expected, concrete results.⁹ Such WPS results thus contribute in different ways to Sida's external objectives 3, 5 and 6 in its Operational Strategy, but also contribute to its external result 2: Improved health for the most vulnerable including the subobjective – "Improved health, inclusive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for the most vulnerable, including people in conflict-affected communities."

PEACE AND SECURITY IN STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

In many Swedish bilateral, regional as well as the thematic global strategy for Peace, Security and Stabilisation there are peace objectives.¹⁰ Most of them focus on strengthened conditions for conflict prevention, peaceful conflict management and resolution, social cohesion, as well as reconciliation and transitional justice processes. A number of peace objectives in strategies focus on more inclusive peace processes, sometimes with explicit reference to the inclusion and participation of youth or women. A few strategy objectives focus on the protection of civilians, including protection of children in conflict and the prevention of and accountability for sexual violence in conflict, as well as mine action, and work to curb the irresponsible proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).

Hence, the different strategy objectives related to peace are often broad and general, which gives room for identifying context-specific and relevant peacebuilding support in the operationalisation and implementation of strategies. Sida's tool for multi-dimensional poverty analysis (MDPA) can be used for exploring

⁹ In the Letter of Appropriation 2024, Sida is mandated to contribute to the full Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and to report back on it in connection with Sida's annual reporting for 2024. Similar language may be included in subsequent letters of appropriation.

¹⁰ In 2023 21 out of 46 strategies included peace objectives. See Sida's Annual Report 2023, p 95.

lack of human security in any given context as one of the dimensions of poverty, and conflict as one of the driving factors of poverty. For further guidance, please see [Integrated conflict perspective in the strategy cycle– Technical Note](#) in Sida's Peace and Conflict toolbox. The paper includes guidance on making use of MDPA and conflict analysis in the strategy cycle in both targeted peacebuilding work and in other thematic areas. See also Box 1.

Box 1: Addressing context-specific root causes of conflict

In 2019, Sida conducted an external evaluation of its support to peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict contexts.¹¹ It noted that Sida's support to peacebuilding sometimes has been indirect through engagement in, for example, the health sector, institution-building, decentralisation, or livelihoods support. The evaluation concluded that support often has been relevant but not fully comprehensive in terms of focusing on root causes and drivers of conflict. Therefore, the evaluation recommended Sida to enhance its focus on root causes and drivers of conflict (as well as drivers of peace) and to link these specifically to the expected results of its peacebuilding work.

In response, Sida has published new method support in its Peace and Conflict toolbox where we, for example, provide guidance on conflict analysis and to inform programming to address context-specific root causes of violent conflict.

Effective response to peacebuilding also implies learning from previous support, from what has worked well as well as from what has not led to the intended results. It is very important that when we claim to contribute to peace and security, such results are monitored and reported on, whether as a primary objective or as secondary objective within other thematic areas.

ANNEX A: OECD DAC PURPOSE CODES

Sida uses the OECD DAC purpose code 152 "Conflict prevention, peace and security" to statistically follow up on its peacebuilding support. This is what Sida's yearly publication of peace and security portfolio overview builds on. This table builds on Sida statistics.¹²

Sub-sectors of the OECD-DAC sector code 152 "Conflict prevention, peace and security"

Civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution

This is the largest sub-sector with 87 percent of disbursements for the purpose code in 2023. It includes support to inclusive peace processes, mediation and other initiatives for peaceful conflict resolution/conflict management and prevention of violent conflicts. There

is an institutional side of peacebuilding: the building or strengthening of institutions for the peaceful management of conflicts in a way that is seen as legitimate and therefore acceptable.

Removal of land mines and explosive remnants of war

It includes activities that aim to reduce the social, economic, and environmental impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war. These activities comprise mine risk education, surveying and demining, victim assistance, advocacy to stigmatise the use of landmines, support of a total ban on anti-personnel landmines, and stockpile destruction.

The sub-sector's share of Sida's total disbursements to the purpose code was 10 percent in 2023.

Participation in international peacekeeping operations

This sub-sector comprises ODA-eligible peacekeeping expenditures within a UN context.¹³ It should be noted that most peacekeeping expenditures, including UN peacekeeping expenditures, are excluded in line with the exclusion of military costs, and so this purpose code is only for some closely defined developmentally relevant activities.¹⁴

Sida did not have any disbursements to this sub-sector in 2023.

Security system management and reform

This sub-sector includes technical cooperation to parliament, government ministries, law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, in order to improve good governance and civilian oversight of the security system. That may include for example, democratic control of budgeting, accountability and auditing of security expenditure, including military budgets, as part of a public expenditure management programme.¹⁵

It does not include security sector assistance activities (such as transfer of military materiel, military education for foreign military officers, etc.) since such activities are not ODA eligible.

This is a small sub-sector with only 1 percent of total disbursements to the sector in 2023. However, this sub-sector has strong linkages to sub-sector codes 151 on Democracy and human rights, as further detailed below.

11 Evaluation of Sida's support to peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict contexts: synthesis report (2019).

12 For Sida colleagues, a more in-depth and authoritative explanation of each purpose code can be found in Sida's Statistical Handbook on the intranet.

13 Ibid., p 26. Examples of ODA eligible costs may include human rights and election monitoring; rehabilitation of basic national infrastructure; security sector reform and other rule of law-related activities; reintegration of demobilised soldiers; repatriation and demobilisation of armed factions, and disposal of their weapons; and explosive mine removal.

14 Ibid., p 10.

15 OECD (2023), Peace and Official Development Assistance, OECD Publishing, Paris, p 22.

Child soldiers (prevention and demobilisation)

This sub-sector code covers technical cooperation with governments and assistance to civil society organisations to support the prevention of recruitment of under-age persons into armed forces or armed groups and the demobilisation and reintegration into society of children associated with armed forces and armed groups.¹⁶

1 percent of Sida's total disbursements to the sector in 2023 targeted this sub-sector.

Reintegration & control of small arms and light weapons (SALW)

This sub-sector covers the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of demobilised military personnel or ex-combatants into the economy and society. It also covers the disposal of their weapons, conversion of production facilities from military to civilian outputs, awareness campaigns about Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and SALW collection and destruction programmes.¹⁷

SALW programming refers to efforts to control the proliferation of small arms and ammunition. The main United Nations normative frameworks on SALW include the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), which aims to prevent the movement and production of weapons of mass destruction. There are also several regional and sub-regional legal frameworks.

1 percent of Sida's total disbursements to the sector in 2023 targeted this sub-sector.

¹⁶ Ibid, p 32.

¹⁷ Ibid, p 28.