



# Peace and Security

Preventing conflict, sustaining peace  
and promoting human security

Armed conflict constitutes one of the main obstacles to sustainable development. More than three quarters of the world's poorest people live in contexts affected by conflict and fragility. Sida's total disbursement to the sector Conflict Prevention, Peace and Security in 2021 was SEK 1.25 billion, which represents 4.7 percent of the total budget.



## DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

The world experiences more than 50<sup>1</sup> state-based armed conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Many of 2021's most violent conflicts (in e.g. Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Yemen, Nigeria and Somalia) are classified as internationalised civil conflicts.<sup>3</sup> Internationalised civil conflicts are often deadlier and more long-lasting than purely internal armed conflicts. In addition, traditional diplomacy is less effective in civil conflicts with third party military involvement. Overall, armed conflicts have become more complex to resolve and in 2020, only 21 peace agreements were signed or declared, which was the lowest at any point since the cold war. In fact, the number of peace agreements (excluding localised agreements) has decreased each year since 2014.<sup>4</sup>

One armed conflict that officially ended in 2021 was the war between the Taliban and the Afghan government, supported by the NATO-led troops and US forces. However, before the international military withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover of Kabul – this was the most violent conflict in 2021, with nearly 35 000 people, both combatants and civilians, killed during the period 1 January – 15 August 2021.<sup>5</sup> Although overall violence levels

have decreased, the Taliban de facto government has used one-sided violence and executed civilians. In addition, the Khorasan chapter of the Islamic State has committed lethal attacks on civilian targets and the overall human rights situation has deteriorated significantly.<sup>6</sup>

## MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

Sweden's long-term commitment to human security, peacebuilding and conflict prevention is articulated in the [Policy Framework](#) for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. The Framework identifies Peaceful and inclusive societies as one of eight prioritised thematic areas. The Policy Framework also establishes that a conflict perspective shall be integrated in Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. For Sida and its implementing partners, this implies that both risk awareness and a conflict sensitive approach should be applied in all Sida supported initiatives. Opportunities to integrate conflict prevention, peace and human security shall also be identified and acted upon. Sida uses a Conflict Prevention Policy Marker to measure how conflict sensitivity and conflict prevention, peace and human security is integrated within all development sectors. This marker shows that a total of 9 percent (same as previous year) of Sida's support in 2021 had both peace and security as principal objective and an explicit conflict sensitive approach. 40 percent of Sida's support had either an explicit conflict sensitive approach or peace and security as a secondary objective in 2021 (43 percent in 2020).

1 Therése Pettersson & Magnus Öberg (2021), Organized violence 1989–2010, with a special emphasis on Syria, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 58(4), July 1, p. 809.

2 According to Uppsala Conflict Data Programme's (UCDP's) threshold level of at least 25 battle related deaths per calendar year. See: [UCDP Definitions: State-based armed conflict](#).

3 This refers to a conflict between the government of a state and one or more non-state armed actors, where at least one external state has intervened on one side of the conflict. See International Rescue Committee, (2021), [2022 Emergency Watchlist / System Failure](#), December 14, p. 14.

4 Ibid.

5 UCDP Bulletin (2021), Afghanistan Under Taliban Rule: Conflict since the Taliban takeover (15 Aug 2021 - 15 Oct 2021), October 27.

6 Ibid.

## THE GLOBAL GOALS

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development include everyone - and we can all contribute. The goals are interdependent and therefore indivisible. Sida's main contribution is to implement development cooperation, thereby reducing poverty and saving lives. Together we can build a better future where no one is left behind.



## Results

In 2021, Sida implemented 46 development cooperation strategies (including humanitarian assistance). Out of these, 17 strategies included the thematic area Peaceful and inclusive societies as one of the support areas. Sweden adopted two new development cooperation strategies in 2021 that include a focus on peaceful and inclusive societies – the Strategy for Sweden's regional development cooperation with Middle East and North Africa (2021–2025) and the Strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with Western Balkans and Turkey (2021–2027).

### SIDA'S SUPPORT

In 2021, Sida's disbursement to the sector Conflict, Peace and Security was SEK 1.25 billion, which accounts for 4.7 percent of Sida's total budget. This represents an increase of about SEK 248 million from 2020.

**FIGURE 1: DISBURSEMENT BY SUB-SECTOR WITHIN CONFLICT, PEACE AND SECURITY IN 2021 (MILLION SEK)**



The sector Conflict, Peace and Security includes six OECD/DAC statistical sub-sectors as listed above. The largest sub-sector is civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution, which accounts for 82 percent of the total disbursements within the sector. The width of Sida's peacebuilding support is larger than what is reflected by the sub-sector titles. For example, many initiatives support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCRs) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), UNSCRs 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), 2282 (2016) on Sustaining Peace as well as UNSCRs on Children in Armed Conflict.

### EXAMPLES OF SIDA'S SUPPORT TO YOUTH PEACE & SECURITY (YPS)

Sida's supports YPS through organisations working on all the five pillars of the agenda: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration. This includes initiatives that increase youth representation in decision-making related to peace and security processes through global organisations, such as Interpeace, Saferworld, Life & Peace Institute, UNDP, UNFPA, International Alert as well as local civil society organisations such as Trocaire and Fondation Hirondelle.

Sida has also contributed to the [UN Secretary-General's report on Youth, Peace and Security](#) (16 March, 2022). Sweden is mentioned in the report for integrating the YPS agenda into its development cooperation framework. The box below presents a few examples of how Sida supported the implementation of the YPS agenda in 2021.

**Participation:** In South Sudan, 59 sub-clusters to Community Action Groups were through Saferworld established in 13 locations. These groups provide youth an opportunity to participate in conflict resolution and peacebuilding and raise their credibility within the community.

**Protection:** Civil society members are trained on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and humanitarian engagement, through Geneva Call. In Myanmar, Youth Unions were this way able to conduct advocacy targeting non-state armed groups to address continued use of landmines and abductions as well as killings of youth in their areas.

**Prevention:** Youth in Colombia and Uganda were through International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) able to reflect on the impact of the past on present day grievances and discuss their role as agents of change resisting violence.

**Partnerships:** Sida's core funding to the United Network of Young Peacebuilders facilitated opportunities for 124 youth-led peacebuilding organisations in 69 countries to form partnerships and increase their capacity in supporting conflict transformation and social cohesion. The network also actively feeds in to global policymaking on the YPS agenda through the UN.

**Disengagement and Reintegration:** In Burkina Faso, the Swedish CSO Diakonia supports the Common Gender Fund in creating youth-inclusive spaces for dialogue and peace promotion to prevent radicalisation.