



Lot 2 – Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Integration

Concept note & Frequently Asked Questions

If you are interested in applying for our conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration (CS) support, please make sure to consult the following documents in addition to this concept note:

- **Our call overview for applicants**
- **Our conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration application form**

RATIONALE FOR SUPPORT

Why conflict sensitivity matters in today's context

Actors working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts increasingly acknowledge that well-intended actions may fuel divisions and violence. International aid actors, governments, local civil society and increasingly the private sector, recognise that they need to better understand the relation between their work and conflict. On the one hand, they may inadvertently exacerbate social tensions, depending on how they operate and who accesses the jobs and services that they bring. On the other hand, many organisations have a great untapped potential for contributing to social cohesion and peace, even if it is not their core mandate. For example, they can use their core work to also bring competing groups together or promote a more equitable use of resources.

The concept of conflict sensitivity emerged in the early 2000s, as a way to approach those challenges and opportunities. It is typically defined as the ability of an organisation to:

- Understand the context in which it operates;
- Understand the interactions between its actions and the context;
- Act upon this understanding to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on conflict.

While not new, conflict sensitivity is receiving more attention in view of the surge and increasing complexity of conflicts over the past decade¹. Violent conflict is now recognised as perhaps the most important barrier to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Other top global challenges such as climate change adaptation, assisting displaced populations or preventing violent extremism also require taking conflict dynamics into account more effectively.

Putting conflict sensitivity into practice: our approach

Major achievements have been made in policy commitments to conflict sensitivity since the idea emerged. However, implementing these commitments within institutions and on the ground in fragile and conflict-affected contexts remains a very live challenge. Our experience is that punctual

¹ *Pathways for Peace*, World Bank and UN, 2018; *Global Peace Index 2017*, Institute for Economics and Peace; *Conflict and Violence in the 21st Century: Current Trends as observed in Empirical Research and Statistics*, World Bank, 2016

support focused at the programmatic level is not enough to enable effective and lasting change. In line with this, our support to partners is guided by a few **core principles**:

- **Using an organisational development approach to conflict sensitivity:** our intention is to provide our partners with longer-term support that embraces the organisational change dimension of conflict sensitivity. This means offering support that takes into account both the interface between operations and their context (programmatic level) as well as the organisational policies, systems and processes shaping these operations (organisational level). It requires understanding the constraints that affect uptake at different levels, and acknowledging the transformative effect such changes may entail for an organisation.
- **Starting from where our partners are at:** we do not prescribe a one-size-fits-all approach or tool, but rather tailor our support to each partner's mandate, challenges, needs and ambitions. We aim to apply a pragmatic and gradual approach to improving systems and practices for conflict sensitivity, taking into account the vision, absorption capacity and internal barriers that are specific to each organisation.
- **Conflict sensitivity is not about conflict avoidance:** we recognise the risks and dilemmas inherent to working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. We see conflict sensitivity as an enabling factor that helps organisations to make informed choices, allowing them to pursue their mandates effectively, while navigating complex conflict dynamics responsibly.

As part of this Call, our offer of support is designed to address two main types of ambitions, which will often overlap but may also have different starting points and require different expertise:

- **Embedding conflict sensitivity across an organisation and its operations:** With this support, our objective is to help organisations increase their understanding of and adaptation to conflict dynamics. The main focus here is to help an organisation adapt how it works, within its current mandate and priorities, so as to minimise the risks of its actions doing harm and, where relevant, to leverage entry points for contributing to social cohesion and peace through its existing (non-peacebuilding) work.
- **Increasing direct engagement and investment in peacebuilding:** With this support, our objective is to help organisations that want to build or increase their direct peacebuilding work to realise that ambition, through strengthening their organisational capacities for peacebuilding. Here the organisation may consider including peacebuilding explicitly in its mandate, or increasing the scope and weight of peacebuilding work within a broader portfolio of programmes.

For concrete examples of what conflict-sensitivity and peacebuilding integration support can help you achieve in practice, please find summaries of our past and current support to:

[Christian Aid Ireland](#)

[ZOA](#)

[OCADES Caritas Burkina](#)

[IOM \(International Organisation of Migration\)](#)

[UNOPS \(United Nations Office for Project Services\)](#)

INTENDED AUDIENCE

PeaceNexus provides conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration support to governmental, multilateral and business actors, whom we see as playing critical roles in conflict-affected environments. However, **in the framework of this call, our support is exclusively targeted at non-governmental and non-profit organisations**. This is to ensure a fair and transparent selection where there is high demand.

If you are a governmental, multilateral or business actor interested in conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding integration support, please contact heloise.heyer@peacenexus.org

We see our conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration support as relevant for all actors operating in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. We aim to support organisations that do not have peacebuilding as their primary mandate but want to minimise the risks of their operations fuelling tensions or who want to maximise their contribution to peacebuilding. Peacebuilding organisations facing challenges in applying conflict sensitivity may also apply. More specifically:

- We intend to pursue and expand our support to **humanitarian and development organisations**. We believe humanitarian actors face particular challenges with the uptake of conflict sensitive approaches, while being at the forefront of protracted violent conflict and present in areas often deserted by others. In the development community, we are keen to support those actors that are challenging siloed approaches and looking for ways to boost their contribution to peacebuilding in relation to their primary mandate (poverty reduction, livelihoods, education...).
- We also want to work with influential actors that are less familiar with the concept of conflict sensitivity. Those would include **organisations working primarily towards environmental, security or economic development objectives, as well as foundations** aiming to develop responsible funding practices in conflict-affected contexts and/or aspiring to become investors in peacebuilding work.
- Finally, our support is suitable for **organisations working at different levels: from local civil society organisations to regional and international organisations**. We strongly encourage local actors to apply, being aware that they may have fewer opportunities for support on conflict sensitivity or developing capacities for peacebuilding engagement. Organisations working in their own contexts face specific challenges in terms of navigating conflict and lines of tension. We also believe they often have untapped potential for contributing to social cohesion and peace, that we aim to help realise.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- In 2018, we welcome applications from:
 - ⇒ Non-governmental and non-profit local, national and regional organisations registered in our focus regions/countries:

- The Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
- Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan
- West Africa: Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal
- Myanmar

⇒ Non-governmental and non-profit international organisations conducting operational work in at least 5 countries (including outside our focus regions).

- Applying organisations need to have a bank account and publish annual financial reports.
- You will also need to confirm in your application that you are not already receiving a grant from PeaceNexus Foundation. Due to legal constraints, we can only support activities that will not violate the [USA PATRIOT Act](#) (18 U. S. C. §2339B).

SELECTION CRITERIA

We will ask you to elaborate on the following criteria in your expression of interest:

- ***Relevance: Demonstration of applicants' impact and influence in fragile and conflict-affected contexts***

To assess this, we need to understand your work in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, through concrete examples. Specifically, we want to know about where you work (globally, in a region, country or at the local level) and on what. We are also interested to know if you have specific expertise in relation to a topic or area of action. Finally, we ask you to explain what difference conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding integration could make to your organisation's impact on the ground.

- ***Change potential : Demonstration of applicants' need, readiness and ability to engage in an organisational change process for conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding integration***

Our support to partners is demand-driven and we need to understand why you want to invest your time and energy in this process. To that end we will ask you to capture in your application: the context(s) you work in; what challenges you face in terms of conflict and doing no harm, what opportunities you see for greater contributions to peacebuilding (if relevant), and why these matter for your organisation; the vision of the change you are aiming for; and past or ongoing efforts that may be built on.

WHAT OUR SUPPORT TO CONFLICT SENSITIVITY AND PEACEBUILDING INTEGRATION ENTAILS

PeaceNexus is an engaged partner and our support is twofold:

- **Direct process accompaniment from PeaceNexus**
- We accompany our partners from process design to the final steps of implementation. At the start of our engagement, we will visit you to facilitate a participatory assessment of the

challenges faced, and opportunities to build on. On that basis we will support you in prioritising and sequencing objectives for change, and designing a roadmap for our support.

- As the process unfolds, which typically involves the recruitment of external expertise, our role includes monitoring progress, providing feedback and input and assisting you where needed to help you achieve your objectives.
- **Financial contribution to cover costs directly associated with the process:**
 - The budget allocated to each partner is determined by the roadmap which we jointly establish after the initial kick-off visit, taking into account your particular needs, scale of operations and absorption capacity (See also in the Overview: [What does PeaceNexus support entail](#)).
 - Our financial envelope covers the costs of external consultants and possibly additional thematic or technical expertise, as well as expenses directly related to the process such as meeting and travel costs. (we also in the Overview: [What is the financial allocation under this call; What is outside of the scope of PeaceNexus OD support and cannot be funded.](#))

The following principles inform our partnership approach:

- *Participation:* We strongly believe in participatory approaches, as our experience is that change can only be successful if those expected to make it happen are actively involved in shaping it.
- *Confidentiality:* We know that an honest self-assessment and open sharing of internal information are essential for success. We commit to always acting with strict confidentiality and only sharing information with your approval.
- *Commitment over time:* if you are making progress but achieving your change objectives requires more time and effort than anticipated, we may extend our commitment to a follow-on phase of support, pending our Board approval. Our support to partners on conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration can last between one and four years.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **The following general questions about PeaceNexus support and partnership approach are addressed in the Overview and are relevant for all three lots:**
 - [What is this grant call about?](#)
 - [What are the eligibility criteria?](#)
 - [What are the selection criteria?](#)
 - [What is the financial allocation under this call?](#)
 - [What does PeaceNexus support entail?](#)
 - [What is outside the scope of PeaceNexus support and cannot be funded?](#)
 - [What is the application and selection process?](#)
 - [If selected, what will the partnership with PeaceNexus look like and how long will the support last?](#)

- **In addition, please read the following frequently asked questions about conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration :**

What can we do with PeaceNexus' conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding integration support?

(This list is not exhaustive, please check real examples mentioned [above](#))

- Developing mechanisms to ensure conflict analysis is conducted and informs programming;
- Building staff and partners' capacities to conduct and make use of such analysis;
- Adapting monitoring and evaluation systems to better track changes in the context and unintended impacts of the work;
- Adapting programming tools and processes to make them more conducive to on-going learning and adaptation;
- Building and sustaining leadership buy-in to conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding integration ;
- Reviewing internal policies and the ways they are applied with a "conflict lens", to ensure they take the context and risks of negative impacts into account (for example on human resources, procurement, security...);
- Reviewing external partnerships and collaborative engagements to ensure the organisation's response to conflict is informed by what others are seeing and doing, and coordinated with them;
- Developing and supporting the implementation of a fundraising strategy to enable an organisation to expand its peacebuilding work;
- Adapting grant-making mechanisms to ensure they incentivise conflict-sensitive practice;
- Developing funding mechanisms to start investing in peacebuilding actors and programmes.

Can we apply if we do not want to do peacebuilding work?

Yes, our conflict sensitivity support is suitable for organisations that aim to better understand and adapt to their context, and minimise negative effects of their work. We believe that different actors have different roles to play in fragile and conflict-affected environments, but that they all have an impact and may face challenges. Our conflict sensitivity support does not mean that an organisation should start doing peacebuilding work.

Can we apply if there is no violent conflict in the context in which we work?

Yes, conflict sensitivity is applicable across a wide range of contexts. This can go from situations of open violent conflict to environments seen as stable but affected by underlying lines of tensions, polarisation and marginalisation. In those latter contexts, conflict sensitivity is often closely interlinked with quality programming principles, and it can contribute to conflict prevention.

We are not sure whether we are interested in support to become more conflict sensitive, or to do more peacebuilding work. How should we describe our vision in the application form?

Our support will always start with a participatory assessment, precisely to help you define your objectives in terms of conflict sensitivity and/or peacebuilding integration. In that sense it is fine if you are not yet clear on the exact vision of what you want to achieve with our support and how.

Most important for us is that you explain the concrete challenges you face in relation to working in conflict-affected areas.

We are the country office of an international organisation or network. Shall we apply as a locally registered organisation in your focus region or as an international actor?

Either option is possible, depending on where the challenges are identified, where the main changes are being sought, and who will drive the process. If you decide to apply as a locally registered organisation, please make sure to refer to the broader organisational set-up you are a part of. Also mention any work related to conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding integration happening in other parts of the organisation.