



Round Table Document

Measuring Peace Performance Round Table

6 April 2021



Authors:

Emery BRUSSET
emery.brusset@wfp.org

Gary MILANTE
milante@sipri.org



Table of Contents:

1. Headlines3

2. Introduction3

3. First Principles4

**4. Connecting Monitoring to the Level of Ambition
for Peacebuilding8**

**5. Foundations for a Peace Monitoring System in
WFP11**

6. Building a Peace Monitoring System for WFP12

**7. Evidence: Monitoring Peace Locally and at the
National Level14**

**8. Process: Collecting, Storing and Analyzing
Evidence16**

9. Use: Design, Mandates and Communication17

**10. Preparing the Next Steps of Peace and Risk
Indicator Measurement and Engagement18**



1. Headlines

- The Round Table Document aims to inform next steps for building WFP’s peace monitoring system. It flows from a series of external consultations, and the conduct of two pilot measurement projects in Bangladesh and the Philippines.
- This is a non-paper, - it does not represent a WFP or SIPRI position. It is intended to help frame the 9 April Round Table on Measurement of Contribution to Peace.
- WFP is highly “Peace Proximate” – it cannot ignore the fact that it works in areas where peace, or the lack of peace, are important considerations. Yet WFP’s mandate is not peacebuilding– at its core it delivers food assistance, improves nutrition, and promotes member state capacities.
- The community of practice has promoted two important elements: Theories of Change and on the importance of locally recognised definitions and drivers of peace (and conflict).. Both elements will be important parts of the emergent analytical framework.
- A number of methods are currently being applied by partners which can inform WFP’s approach, including: analysis of correlations between indicators of food security and violence, surveys, datapools and dashboard and ethnographic methods.
- As WFP builds a system for peace monitoring, it must reconcile a tension between locally meaningful indicators and global comparability, including comparability of both over time. It must overcome the challenges of digital data processing in conflict environments and identify the alignment of interests that are required for local stakeholders to collaborate in the production of meaningful data at the corporate level.
- These emerging system of measurement and engagement will need to work in a variety of country contexts. Any lasting solution will need to be built with other international actors to ensure uptake and sustainability.

2. Introduction

In 2018, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) established a knowledge partnership to help strengthen WFP’s contribution to peace in the countries where the organisation works. The first phase of research concluded in June 2019 that:

‘as WFP establishes itself as a humanitarian and development agency with the aim of helping to improve the prospects for peace wherever possible, it will need to identify ways to manage and minimize (these) challenges. In so doing, because of its scale, it is capable of making a major, if indirect, contribution to improving monitoring, evaluation and assessment throughout the fields of humanitarian action, development assistance and peacebuilding.’

In accepting this measurement challenge, WFP launched two pilot projects in 2020 to demonstrate its performance in conflict sensitivity and contributions to peace. These pilots were designed to be a proof of concept and ran from October 2020 to January 2021 in the Philippines (Mindanao) and Bangladesh (Cox’s Bazar). They were funded partially by the concerned Country Offices and partially by WFP Headquarters.

Using Focus Group Discussions and surveys, the projects identified the main drivers of conflict as well as the risks and opportunities facing the local population. The teams then analysed the interaction of these factors with WFP activities, informing risk management and programme improvement. The results



were transcribed into a digital platform, with the intention of feeding into both operational decision-making and feedback to communities.

In parallel to the proof of concept, WFP and SIPRI convened a series of technical consultations with key Members States, experts, academics and UN bodies, through dedicated Reference Groups. These two external reference groups mirror the internal ones:

- The Peace Evidence Experts Research (PEER) Group has (virtually) met multiple times since it was first convened in October 2020. It is comprised of academic, civil society, institutional and think tank actors who focus primarily on the monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding and development programming in complex settings. These experts regularly advise international organizations on the monitoring of complex issues like peace.
- The Institutional Partners (IP) Reference Group has also met multiple times, with discussions around the methods for the assessment of peace performance deployed by the members. These include some of the principal bilateral donors and UN agencies as well as the UN Secretariat.

These consultations helped to share knowledge regarding the state of the art in measuring effects on peace, across the multilateral and bilateral system on this area of work. It also informed the continuing development of WFP's own approach building on the two pilots.

The present Round Table Document contains reflections and resources shared during these consultations, as well as the learning from the proof of concept. These demonstrated a significant degree of convergence around best practice in assessing performance in peacebuilding, but also some common dilemmas. This learning helps to frame the discussions which are due to take place at a Side-Event of the WFP Executive Board.

The Round Table Document is meant to stimulate discussions, but it is not a compendium of all peace monitoring and evaluation resources. It aims to situate WFP in its contribution to peace. In UN language, it is a “non-paper”. It does not represent an official position of SIPRI nor WFP, and the recommendations are suggestions, not commitments.

The document begins with a summary of first principles as a starting point for the discussion. It proposes a simple relationship between the level of monitoring required for varying degrees of peace action. It then breaks the larger concept of measurement into three areas: Evidence, Processing, and Use. This is a rolling document and will be updated after the Round Table.

Kindly note that the Round Table is sponsored by two engaged Executive Board Members, Japan and Germany.

3. First Principles

Conversations in the PEER and IP group have focused on issues related to mandate, humanitarian principles and what has been called the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP/Triple) nexus. A basic consensus has developed in these conversations - these principles map out the normative basis for WFP's position as regards its contributions to peace.

- **WFP's mandate is not peace.** Put simply, WFP does not build peace – at its core it delivers food assistance, improves nutrition, and promotes food security through resilience. Many humanitarian actors working at the Triple Nexus of peace, development and humanitarian response face challenges of balancing mandate with proximity to peacebuilding opportunities, while maintaining crucial independence and neutrality.
- **Peace is a process.** No country in the world has achieved the outcome of a lasting permanent peace – some countries are more peaceful than others. Rarely is peace achieved by societies or




communities, but the conditions for more peace can be created. In countries that succeed in building peace, these conditions improve until violence is no longer a viable option for actors to resolve conflicts.

- **Peace is contextual.** Obstacles to peace include historical legacies, intergroup rivalries and grievances, local and environmental stressors, regional power dynamics, political pressures and community specificities – all of these challenges result in a conceptualization of peace that is highly contextual and may vary by (or within) village, province, country and region.
- **Peace is multi-level.** Peace (and conflict) operate at multiple levels of society, from the international and transnational to the local and hyper-local and all levels in between. As a result, promoting peace at one level can have impact on other levels.
- **Peace is transitory.** When peace is achieved, it is rarely lasting without investments from all actors. Absence of violence is not necessarily peace. Knowing the difference between negative peace (threat of violence, structural violence) and positive peace (potentially sustainable virtuous cycles) requires nuanced peace awareness and conflict sensitivity. Promoting peace may require action at the right moment by very informed individuals to promote the virtuous cycles necessary for a sustainable peace.
- **Yet, WFP is highly “peace proximate”.** WFP works primarily in fragile, conflict-affected and complex settings, and is often one of the few technically competent and resourced actors that can deliver assistance in conflict-affected setting. It is, therefore, highly “Peace Proximate” – i.e. it cannot ignore the fact that it works in areas where peace, or the lack of peace, are important considerations.
- **From this flows the need to integrate conflict sensitivity,** both by preventing and minimising negative effects of its work on conflict (unintentionally causing harm) but also identifying and being able to use opportunities in the context to maximise a positive contribution to peace – where that is within reach, and does not contradict WFP’s mandate, and where it lies within the organisation’s competence and expertise.
- There is also a possibility, as noted by SIPRI and some of the institutional partners, to strengthen and add to WFP’s expertise, if required. As noted by the Sida member of the Reference Group, a good example of peace proximate work is WFP’s contributions to food security, which contributes to resilience necessary to make peace possible. Sida noted that a word of caution is required here however - that food security is not automatically peace-building. WFP needs to assess how food security plays out in a particular context, and make sure to strengthen conflict sensitivity in order to be sure to support and not undermine peace.
- **Humanitarian actors must first meet emergency needs while promoting International Humanitarian Law.** WFP abides by humanitarian principles. Contributing to violence, even inadvertently, contradicts these principles, so WFP, like all actors working in conflict-affected and crisis contexts, must be conscious of its contributions to both peace and cycles of violence.
- **Once emergency needs are met, WFP can also be peace responsive and peace promoting, resources permitting.** It remains an open question on how, exactly, WFP can promote peace in such diverse settings. In Reference Group discussions, two important elements of a working solution have come to the fore. JICA, Sida, and BMZ, and UN agencies such as UNICEF, support building out from basic theories of change (ToC) applicable to all conflict contexts. ToC are important contribution pathways that connect inputs to impact, often made up of three to four levels of causality. ToC are important for measurement because they identify baselines and changes, essential components of understanding impact and a foundation of monitoring



and evaluation (see box 1 below on the Eirene Peacebuilding Database which has mapped over 3000 indicators used in more than 2000 peacebuilding initiatives).

Box Number 1: Eirene



[The Eirene Peacebuilding Database](#)[®] is a pioneering, open-source effort by [The Alliance for Peacebuilding](#) to map indicators, measures, program approaches, and data sources being used across the peacebuilding field to measure peace. It currently represents an impressive collection of 3,381 indicators curated from a total of 2,008 publicly available peacebuilding resources. Users are able to refine their search based upon geographical and programmatic themes, target groups, tags, and sub-groups. This database represents 85 countries across 7 key programming areas* and has been downloaded in 70+ countries with over 1,000 users.

**Dispute Resolution, Governance, Perceptions of Safety and Security, Resilience, Social Cohesion, Trust, Violence Reduction*

Meanwhile, it is also important that any activity be grounded on local understandings and drivers of peace – this element is promoted by a variety of actors, including those working on Everyday Peace Indicators, at the UN Department for Peace Operations and Comunità Sant’Egidio. They emphasise local knowledge and moments of opportunity, and in some cases an analysis of the material interaction of activities with localised drivers of conflict.

Proponents of the second element caution against centralized planning and long linear effects chains identified at a headquarters or corporate level. Peacebuilding must be adaptive to local contexts and reformulated based on the opportunities as they present themselves. Participants in the reference group meetings noted that systems that promote communication, and adaptability to opportunities, can increase responsiveness (and simultaneously reduce the risk of exacerbating conflict or undermining peace).

This is not solely a specialists’ debate, because reconciling these two elements influences how WFP’s peace monitoring system will be built. It is important to build an analytical framework that highlights the main outcomes and impacts that are expected to be enhanced. A measurement framework will need to define how the impact of activities on peace and conflict will be measured. The measurement framework will need to build on existing organisational measurements where possible, and new indicators where necessary.

Meanwhile, humanitarian, peace and development interventions are always operating in systems that are large and interconnected. Conflict systems are reflexive, in the sense that perceptions of an intervention can either reinforce or undermine it. They are highly dynamic, often making planning out-dated. In practice, these actors observe what amounts to an evaporation of objectives in contact with the field. The analytical challenge is the vast multiplicity of variables, influenced by a constant emergence of new actors and dynamics.

The solution emergent in WFP will revolve around locally recognised definitions of peace, and of drivers of peace and conflict. By incorporating both elements above, it will attempt to address a core tension at the heart of the Triple Nexus – because funding is usually at scale, donors and large organizations need to define corporate concepts like a universal ToC, but practitioners and peacebuilders on the ground must be given the space to bend rules, adapt to local contexts, learn from mistakes, invest in relationships and seize opportunities quickly to be proactive in peace. This is no easy task and the Round Table is an opportunity to build consensus within this community of practice on a way forward for WFP.



The UN Department for Peace Operations has attempted to walk this path with the CPAS approach below, which defines local priority objectives within a universal methodology. Although the UNDPO has peace central to their mandate and is not a humanitarian actor, it is informative for the WFP solution.

Box 2: The Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS)

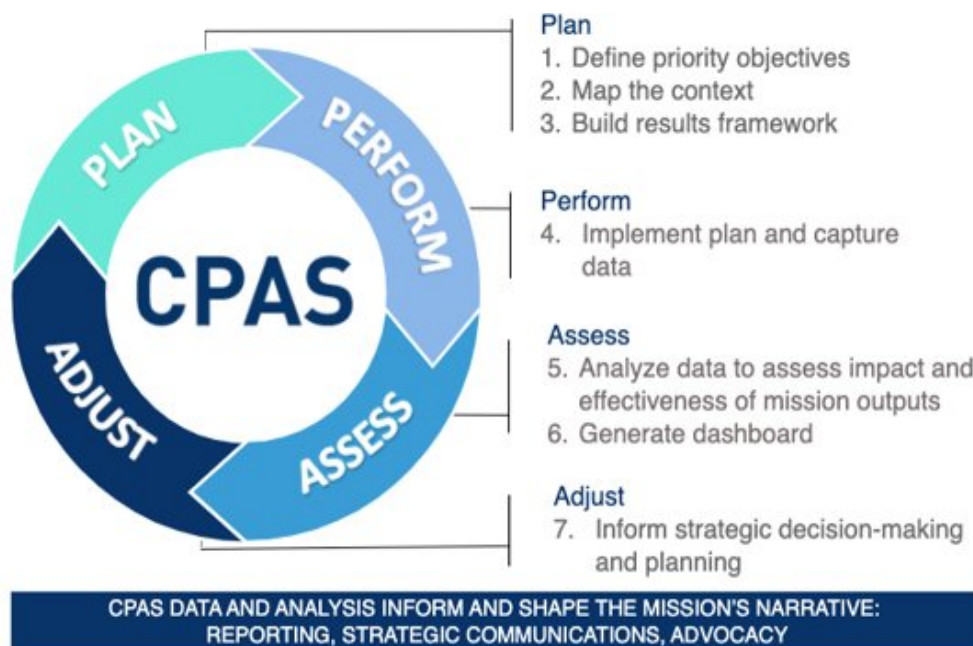
The Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS) is a tool designed to help peace operations improve their effectiveness by helping missions:

- i) set objectives that are derived from the mandate and rooted in an understanding of local contexts and dynamics, and;
- ii) assess progress towards achieving those objectives. CPAS data and analysis will enable missions to regularly assess and share evidence of the outcomes and impact they deliver. It will help mission leaders and managers more clearly visualize where the mission performs well and where there are challenges, providing them with the information needed to adjust plans and the allocation of resources.

The CPAS methodology requires a whole-of-mission approach that facilitates collaborative planning and coordination across mission components and with the UN Country Team and, eventually, other partners such as international NGOs and local stakeholders where appropriate. Meanwhile, other partners have pledged to support UN teams in this whole of mission approach, including BMZ, Sida and Japan. This approach aims to ensure that peace operations’ efforts to deliver on their mandates are aligned with other UN agencies operating in the area.

Figure 1: the UN Department for Peace Operations Performance Assessment System

Overview of CPAS Methodology



CPAS Key deliverables



Context Mapping, conducted as needed to identify current key drivers of +/- change relevant to the mission’s priority objectives, as well as the positions and behaviors of key stakeholders that influence those drivers.



Comprehensive Results Framework, rooted in the context mapping, outlines the relationships between the mission’s priority objectives and outputs, with indicators identified to assess progress.



Performance Assessment: Data & analysis used to assess the efficacy of the mission’s outputs and whether they are contributing to intended outcomes and intended impacts and which informs future planning.



CPAS Reports, the CPAS IT system produces performance assessment and impact reports that help inform Mission Leadership’s reports to Member States and UNHQ

4. Connecting Monitoring to the Level of Ambition for Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is a spectrum – any actor working within the Triple Nexus will need to assess, by context and time, the level of “peace action” ambition. All actors that are peace proximate, WFP included, have to avoid being **peace ignorant** or **peace naïve**, to avoid intentionally or unintentionally contributing to incentives for actors to use violence (unshaded areas in figure 1).

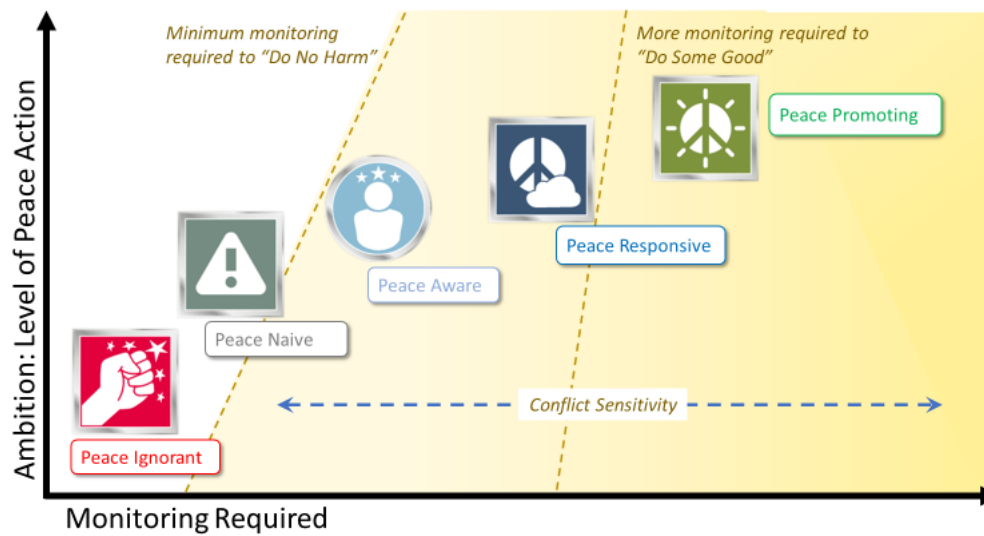
At the minimum, therefore, WFP needs to be ‘**peace aware**’ to ensure conflict sensitivity and avoid contributing to conflict, i.e. to avoid causing harm”.¹ Where possible, WFP may find opportunities to contribute positively to peace by being **peace responsive**² and **peace promoting**. Being **peace aware** requires a minimum level of monitoring to ensure conflict sensitivity (first shaded area in figure). Peacebuilding beyond conflict sensitivity requires more monitoring to both monitor and identify progress and to identify opportunities for engagement. In summary, moving up on the vertical axis in ambition of peacebuilding in figure 1 requires additional monitoring on the horizontal axis or risks doing harm.

¹ This is not unique to WFP. All actors working in conflict-affected settings have formulated guidance for conflict-sensitive approaches. For example, see Sida’s Peace and Conflict Tool Box: which defines conflict sensitivity as “the ability of an organisation to develop a sound understanding of the two-way inter-action between activities and context and acting to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts of interventions on conflict, within an organization’s given priorities/objectives [mandate].”

² This terminology and the spectrum described in figure 2 is based on the Interpeace concept of “peace responsiveness” and is based on discussions in the PEER Group meetings.



Figure 2. More Monitoring is Required to Meet Higher Levels of Ambition for Peacebuilding



Source: Authors, based on PEER Group Meetings

“Doing some good” requires increased peace consciousness and adaptability.

As a peace proximate actor, WFP, like other actors in the Triple Nexus, will see opportunities to contribute to peace – by either being peace responsive (seeing needs and addressing them as a single posture, following Interpeace terminology) or being peace promoting (proactively creating opportunities for peace). It cannot identify and act upon these opportunities unless monitoring systems track them, and WFP staff are aware of them, and are prepared to act.

Two bilateral donors have developed a systematic approach to this:

Box 3: Approach 1 - JICA’s Approach in Monitoring and Evaluation:

JICA monitors projects in conflict-affected countries through Project Monitoring Sheet. These perspectives are incorporated in project evaluation into five (now six) DAC Evaluation Criteria, as additional aspects required under conflict-affected settings:

- Negative/positive impact on drivers of conflict and fragility
- Maximising peace promoting factors
- Identifying relationships between fragile situation and the project implementation process

For those projects that are intended to promote peace from the outset, each of them are monitored based on indicators, which are agreed upon by stakeholders, identified through conflict analysis (Peacebuilding Needs and Impact Assessment, PNA) and other surveys, such as social surveys and governance surveys. Projects are also encouraged to collect episodes and/or stories that indicate changes, since peacebuilding deals with horizontal and vertical relationship, as well as processes.



The JICA change model on state-society relations and social cohesion, and the corresponding indicators, can be visualised in the following manner:

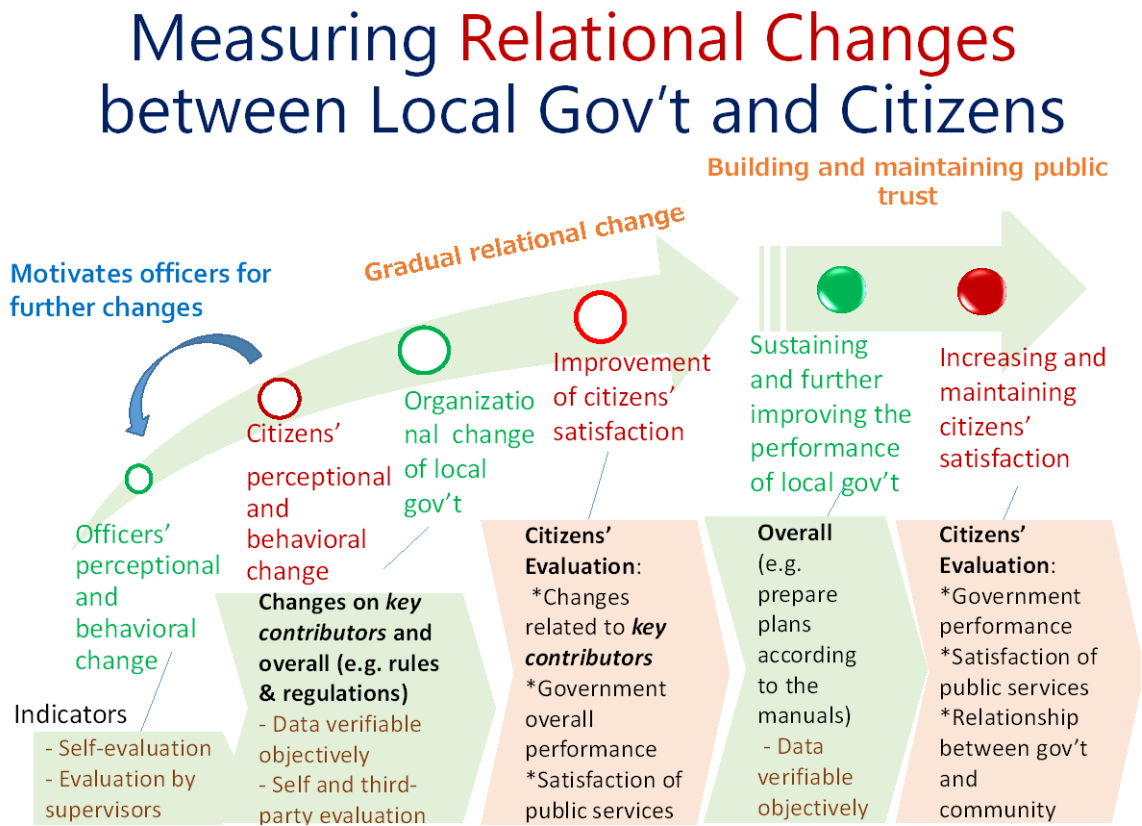


Figure 3: Approach 2 - BMZ's Approach in Monitoring and Evaluation:

Evidence on Social Cohesion in and between groups

- > What do we know about dynamics at individual level?
- **Systematic review** (3ie) of existing international rigorous (impact evaluation) evidence of interventions aimed at building social cohesion at horizontal level

Findings				
• Social Cohesion interventions to be embedded in multisectoral programmes addressing structural change to be effective				
• Interventions to be designed based on thoroughly context- and conflict analysis				
• And to be captured in comprehensive non-linear ToC				
• All five dimensions of social cohesion to be addressed in programme design				
Trust	Sense of belonging	Willingness to participate	Willingness to help	Acceptance of diversity

- Limitation: evidence base limited and fragmented
- => further research, investments in (standardized) measurement approaches and evidence needed

Piloting contributions to peace & measurement

Joint UNICEF/WFP Resilience & Social cohesion Programme (Niger, Diffa)

- Multisectoral/multi-year programme with strong focus on **social cohesion** and **piloting of new measurement approaches** for resilience and **social cohesion**
- “Peace lense” integrated in joint analysis, design, implementation, M+E framework
- **Conflict analysis** embedded in project planning and implementation; continuously be refreshed; => based on c. analysis ToC continuously fine-tuned and context-specific social cohesion activities designed

“Pilot” measurement framework (in line with SIPRI recommendations)

- **Introduce and test resilience and social cohesion-specific indicators and measurements** (e.g. Social Cohesion Score - WFP in Lebanon and Egypt)
- **New ways of analyzing data and information, with a specific focus on conflict analyses**
- **Strengthen existing and develop new complaints and feedback mechanisms**

bmz.de

+

5. Foundations for a Peace Monitoring System in WFP

WFP can do more but need not do it alone.

The phase 1 report of the WFP-SIPRI knowledge partnership concluded that some WFP programming does make a positive contribution to improving the prospects for peace - while noting areas for improvement. Among the latter, the report proposed the following (paraphrased for expediency) recommendations for improving monitoring peace:

- **Recommendation 8:** Develop the capacity to monitor peace contextually
- **Recommendation 9:** Expand monitoring toolkit to include qualitative and visualization methods
- **Recommendation 10:** Draw on surveys, interviews and focus groups to monitor peace
- **Recommendation 11:** Draw on more external data sources
- **Recommendation 12:** Work with partners to supplement WFP skill sets and knowledge

Note, however, that peacebuilding is not new to WFP. The main parameters for WFP’s engagement in peacebuilding activities are defined in the 2013 Policy “WFP’s Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings”³ through a distinction between conflict sensitivity (‘do no harm’ mainly), and intentional contributions to national level peace, and local level peace.

The Policy states that supporting peace means that WFP carries out its interventions in a manner that actively promotes peace rather than simply avoiding ‘doing harm’. At the local level, it involves tailoring activities in a way that supports social cohesion. It also involves working at the national level, engaging in broader efforts to transition towards peace, in line with an agreed national or international strategy.

³ <https://newgo.wfp.org/documents/wfps-role-peacebuilding>

The “OECD DAC Recommendation on humanitarian-development-peace nexus” is a formally monitored legal instrument that is expected to influence both the allocation and implementation of international aid. These commitments guide implementation of the ‘nexus. This framework – the DAC Recommendation on humanitarian-development-peace nexus – is a formally monitored legal instrument that is expected to influence both the allocation and implementation of international aid.

The 2020 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the World Food Programme (WFP) for:

- efforts to **combat hunger**
- contribution to **bettering conditions for peace** in conflict-affected areas
- efforts to **prevent the use of hunger as a weapon** of war and conflict

WFP’s core document called The Risk Appetite⁴ states that WFP must, in the way it operates and delivers its assistance, minimise the risks faced by affected populations. By mirror effect, it should similarly maximise the opportunities to mitigate those risks faced by the population, as reinforced in Policy on WFP’s Role in Peacebuilding.

6. Building a Peace Monitoring System for WFP

A way forward incorporating both elements described above might include using measurement defined in a way that accepts that the referent highly localised and contingent, based on an overall risk and opportunity context analysis. This reinforces reporting across a number of cross-cutting priorities.

As evidenced in the pilots on measuring contribution to peace, WFP is proposing to use the concept of drivers of conflict and resulting risks to populations. This offers the dual advantage that it is a highly ‘peace proximate’ approach and enables the measurement of anything that is pro-peace even if it not part of a formal project. WFP’s Strategic Plan, for example, identifies a number of impact pathways where contributions to peace do in fact contribute to general outcomes, or where general outcomes can influence the opportunities for peace. This allows WFP to broadly embrace a corporate Theory of Change on how engagement in pro-peace measurement at local contexts can promote peace, while giving space to individual country teams to identify specific impact pathways unique to local context.

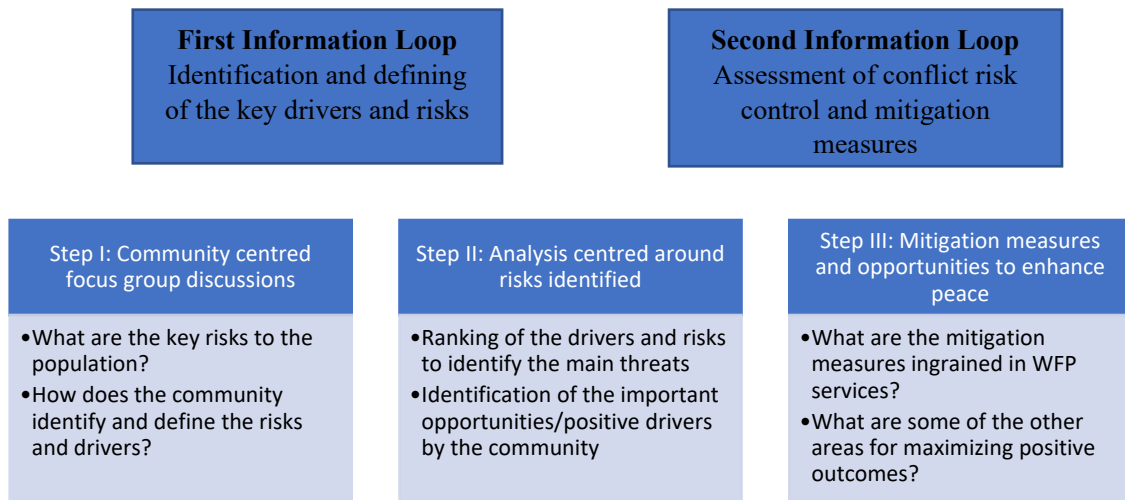
These measurement pilots ran from October 2020 to January 2021 in the Philippines (Mindanao) and Bangladesh (Cox’s Bazar), funded partially by the concerned Country Offices and partially by WFP Headquarters. Using Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and classical surveys, the projects identified the main drivers of conflict as well as the risks and opportunities facing the local population. The teams analysed the interaction of these factors with WFP activities, informing risk management and programme improvement. The results were transcribed into a digital platform with the intention of feeding into both operational decision-making and feedback to communities.

The measurement system is a combination of Community Engagement and self-assessments, as well as risk management and programme performance. Community Engagement integrates risk analysis processes starting from a common understanding of the context. This is a dual flow approach, as shown in the figure below.

⁴ <https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/resources/wfp253490.pdf>



Figure 4: Toward a Dual Flow Measurement System



In the first loop, the priority objectives of the community Focus Group consultation should answer the question: “What risks to the population is WFP to focus on?”. This is the result of a structured and mutually validated process within the WFP teams with its partners, and the communities.

In the second step, the following questions were addressed: what are the existing mitigation measures against these risks and how effective have they been according to the community? Based on the risks defined, this helps identify key areas where WFP can/should focus to reduce those risks following a ‘mitigation hierarchy’⁵, prioritising the main threats and ranking the positive drivers or opportunities.

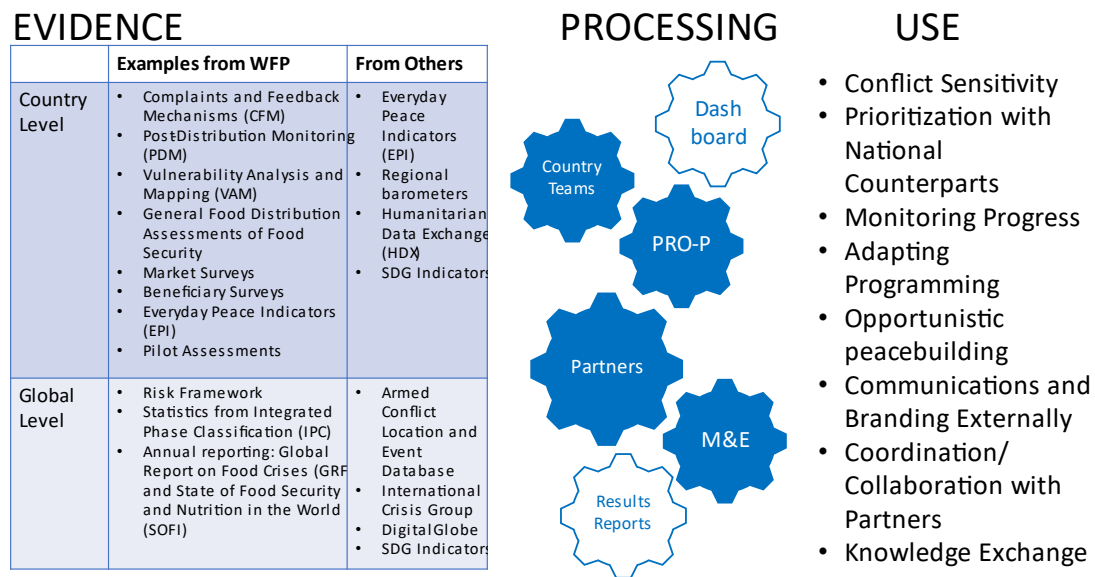
As discussed above, the capacity to monitor peace must be calibrated to WFP’s level of ambition for peacebuilding. WFP is not alone in this, many other organizations and institutions have been learning how to integrate peacebuilding and peace consciousness in their programming, design and monitoring for years.

Some examples of evidence, some notional ideas of who will process it and some examples of use cases are shown below in Figure 2. These are just examples collected from contributors and members of the Reference Groups to ground the discussion in the Round Table. The bulk of the remainder of this document serves as a reference for these three big questions. It is organized in three sections, Evidence, Processing and Use, for quick reference. Several initiatives and examples from participating partners (IP and PEER Group) are included in this reference, to ground the round table discussions.

⁵ See also the Guiding Principles of the WFP Safeguards, described in Module 1.



Figure 5. An Oversimplification of a Monitoring System



Caution: Improving a monitoring system is, ultimately, a change management process. The simplicity above should not suggest that this is merely a technocratic exercise. Systems are used by actors to accomplish their objectives. Simply collecting more evidence or creating new requirements or reporting structures will not, necessarily, result in more and better peace monitoring.

Part of the present inquiry is about what evidence is transmitted, where, and to whom? How is evidence used? What evidence is not transmitted? Why? What changes could be made to improve the flow? How would this information best be analyzed and presented? To whom and for what purpose?

The following sections of the Room Table document aim to frame the subsequent sessions of the Reference Group discussions, outlining the principal dilemmas, and the limits of the current state of the art.

7. Evidence: Monitoring Peace Locally and at the National Level

Peace is a contextual process. Conceptualization of peace can vary dramatically, depending on perceptions of risks, local conditions and grievances. Furthermore, when definitions of peace and insecurity vary along ethnic, sectarian, regional or political lines, using a definition of peace from one group might actually create grievances with another. When peace indicators don't measure the lived experience of peace, security and conflict, actors face dissonance between what is being monitored and local perceptions. Practitioners need to approach measuring peace with caution and care in identifying relevant indicators for every context.

In his recent work, published as 'Measuring Peace: Principles, Practices, and Politics' (Oxford University Press), Richard Caplan makes the case for more rigorous assessments of the robustness of peace among peacebuilding practitioners. He argues that efforts to build peace have been hampered by the lack of effective means of assessing progress towards the achievement of a consolidated peace. Rarely do peacebuilding organizations and governments seek to ascertain the quality of the peace that they are helping to build and the contribution that their engagement is making (or not) to the consolidation of peace—what he refers to as 'strategic assessment'.

There is a trend concerning the choice of evidence that goes rapidly and intensely in the direction of quantitative data, as expressed in the term 'measurement'. Yet peace is a qualitative experience where

not only the goals and the process but also the tone of engagement plays a significant role in seeking, establishing, and strengthening peace. Beyond qualitative evidence, the tone of the inquiry also matters (see Box 2).

Meanwhile, international institutions have a tendency to standardise metrics across countries to improve performance monitoring and operate with economies of scale. This would suggest a possible tension between standardized/global indicators measuring peace (and progress) across contexts versus locally identified indicators to monitor progress against local conceptualizations.

Challenges in monitoring peace also evolve over time. As the local understanding of peace evolves, and new concerns are identified, indicators have to be adapted to new conditions. Such monitoring may not reconcile easily with programming, a two-year project may have peace impact five or ten years on. Indicators must be adaptable and monitoring must transcend individual programmes.

A number of institutions have attempted to “square these circles”, reconciling the complexity of peace with their institutional monitoring systems by innovating, including with locally derived indicators that fall within global categories, aggregating up from impact evaluation indicators, adapting or modifying survey tools and other participatory approaches.

Everyday Peace Indicators provides guidance on local, everyday understandings of peace, coexistence and justice in war-torn contexts. The organisation Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI) conducts participatory research and evaluation in partnership with communities affected by conflict and builds bridges between diverse actors working on peace and conflict issues to inform peacebuilding practice, policy and scholarship. With the bottom-up approach of EPI, instead of experts or scholars defining what peace means and what it looks like, communities define for themselves the everyday indicators that they use to measure successful peace in their own communities. EPI envision a world where decision-makers and community members work together to transform violent conflicts and build peaceful, equitable and just societies informed by the everyday lived experiences of people and communities⁶.

Box 4: WFP should find the right tone

When peace is truthfully sought, the tone of communication is open to nuances and opportunities. It makes an enormous difference if a conversation is requested or imposed, if an observation is presented or offered if an idea is shared or explored. The same content can be perceived and constructed very differently from hopeful and helpful to threatening and destructive.

The Community of Sant’Egidio has been actively involved in peacemaking since the mid-’80s and recognizes that the accurate and competent detection of these tone differences is a result of experience and learning. Similar to professional or artistic competency, tone detection is acquired through thousands of hours of active engagement and practice.

As the World Food Program continue to “systematize and build evidence on the complex relationships between conflict and hunger, define WFP’s contributions to improving the prospects for peace, and inform advocacy, policy, and practice” it is important to pay attention to the obstacles to learning and verification in addition to the investment in cumulative and verified learning

(from Sant’Egidio, Andrea Bartoli and Elizabeth Boyle, personal communication)

⁶ For more, please see everydaypeaceindicators.org



8. Process: Collecting, Storing and Analyzing Evidence

Collecting indicators and evidence is necessary to remain peace aware and peace responsive, but collecting information alone is not sufficient for monitoring peace. Evidence based policy demands that indicators are cleaned, stored, analyzed and made useful to policymakers. Institutions are experimenting with structures for processing of evidence around peace. Sharing of information (breaking out of siloes) also takes time and energy.

- How do we process the evidence?
- How are other institutions organizing themselves to monitor peace?
- What is the potential scope for a greater use of digital technology to: (a) overcome an increasingly fragmented access to affected populations and (b) do so in ways that contribute to local empowerment (including measuring and monitoring that informs local priorities and problem-solving)?

Monitoring and processing evidence requires dedicated resources. Digital technology is taking over current processes, but raises new challenges, including data protection, the protection of beneficiary data, issues of connectivity and the alienating nature of digital communication. Meanwhile established tools like community feedback mechanisms, focus groups and culturally specific participatory processes have been mainstays for peacebuilders because they are accurate and culturally sensitive (though expensive and labour-intensive). Can these be married into better peace monitoring?

Everyday indicators are necessarily grounded in the everyday experience of the communities they are trying to measure. Therefore, it is not particularly meaningful or useful to apply indicators sourced in one community in another community or for a greater territory like a city or region. However, the EPI approach has developed a coding and categorization process, which allows us to compare results and also to speak to broader policy and programming needs. This, of course, requires some accompaniment and technical knowledge from researchers who are familiar with the EPI process. Although we do use technology, we find that crowdsourcing indicators without a specific geographical context to apply them to does not lead to more useful organization of data. However, the indicators, if sourced correctly in multiple communities of interest, can provide significant guidance for a variety of levels of peacebuilding intervention. They can be used for community-wide program planning, for more policy level advocacy purposes (for example local and national governments) and also for measurement and monitoring purposes over time.

Box 5: Of the key role of indicators

WFP is not a peacebuilding organisation. That is why it makes sense for WFP to look for indicators of contribution to peace in the context of specific effects on conflict – for better or for worse – that lie within reach as WFP provides food assistance and strengthening food security for vulnerable populations in conflict-affected contexts. By integrating conflict sensitivity in the programme design and planning phase WFP can identify context specific indicators of contribution to peace that lie within WFP's sphere of influence. These indicators should be concrete. They should be followed up and reported on. What they are should be defined in a given context but they could be about such things as for example countering and reducing exclusionary and discriminatory practices, strengthening cooperation between groups across conflict fault lines, strengthening vertical as well as horizontal social cohesion etc. The point is that they are about maximizing positive contribution to peace that lie within reach of the work WFP already does.

(Sida, staff communication)

9. Use: Design, Mandates and Communication

How data, indicators and evidence will be used should influence both the choice of the evidence collected and the design of the processes for handling it. Some institutions may find it difficult to communicate politically sensitive data to partners, even if it could promote peacebuilding.⁷ In other cases, institutions may undergo risk or fragility assessments, but be unable to share these with partners and national counterparts. Mandates may affect what can and cannot be said, and therefore, what can and cannot be monitored. Much of the evidence used for peace monitoring is considered sensitive and political.

Innovative workarounds for these challenges have included formalising partnerships with other actors who are able to undertake and communicate sensitive information, working in coalitions or clusters that reduce institutional bias, institutionalising some monitoring so that it isn't seen as a specific indictment of policy in a particular country, etc.

Organisations have created new units and reorganized themselves to monitor complex topics like peace. This discussion and the resources below highlight the variety of ways that peace monitoring evidence is used.

Two important questions recur: how do organisations reconcile their mandates and measuring peace? How do development and humanitarian actors perceive their role in creating opportunities for peace?

Obstacles may emerge from the formulation of objectives (due to departmental specialisation or inter-organisational collaboration for example), or limitations in evidence collection. It may be related to the sensitivity of the topic. What are the solutions? WFP will speak of its approach to linking peace to its humanitarian and development work, drawing on emerging Theories of Change (ToCs) linked to its multidimensional mandate.

Box 6: Monitoring as a coalition of interests

There are many examples where those who have tried to develop processes at the management and/or working group levels only to see them break down at the implementation level. The reason was not mostly due to the lack of strength of the ideas themselves, but because of the losses that would need to be incurred by the implementers of these strategies at the ground level, thereby leading to resistance.

As has been noted, implementing such processes may involve taking time and attention away from other perceived priorities or as an "unnecessary" diversion from the day-to-day crises in the minds of some.

There is a risk that if the development of a measurement system is too separated from the input of the on-the-ground actors collecting the data, the challenge becomes how to persuade or use authority to see those new ideas implemented, which could reinforce perceptions that they are being imposed from above. Though technical advice by experts is of course absolutely essential, underlining the importance of incorporating ground level input into the process so that those actors feel some sense of contribution and "ownership," at least to the extent that it's logistically and financially feasible. To minimize such a risk, it will be critical to incorporate input from ground-level actors.

Mark Manashil, personal communication, New York University.

⁷ Such issues might arise with negotiated humanitarian access, services to refugees or displaced or track 2+ negotiations.



10. Preparing the Next Steps of Peace and Risk Indicator Measurement and Engagement

The IP and PEER Groups have been convened as part of Phase 2 of the WFP-SIPRI Knowledge Partnership on understanding WFP's contributions to the prospects for peace. This Round Table and future events with these groups are additional opportunities for knowledge sharing on state of the art peace monitoring.

WFP is committed to pursuing the development of its ability to monitor and evaluate its conflict sensitivity and its contribution to peace. The Reference Groups created have helped formulate the standards and dilemmas of this work. There is a willingness to continue the work in multiple forms:

- A roll-out of experimental forms of peace performance assessment with key partners in the field. This could take the form of context analysis, the identification of risks to populations, experimental evaluation methods, ethnographic attribution, and joint field capacity development. It may also lead to a common approach to community engagement.
- The publication of studies that reflect the ways in which Reference Group members, and WFP in particular, is addressing the challenges and identifying better ways of measuring peace performance. This could focus in particular on adaptive approaches to institutional constraints, operating in the Humanitarian, Development and Peace nexus, and the extending use of digital technology for the promotion of peace in harmony with international standards on privacy and data protection. This will include case studies of current measurement approaches by WFP country teams as part of the SIPRI-WFP knowledge partnership.
- Ongoing meetings of Reference Group and growth of community of practice which combines Institutional Partner and Peace Evidence Expert Reference Groups. This is considered key to enable the organisation to develop its measurement system in synergy with international thinking and best practices, as well as building consensus on the next steps and cooperation with partners.

