

ILLUSTRATING OUR PREVENTION AND MEDIATION WORK IN AFRICA



The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) funds a substantial part of its prevention work via voluntary contributions from UN Member States through the Multi-Year Appeal (MYA). It is usually difficult to showcase successful conflict prevention. There are no pictures of wars that didn't break out, and few gripping tales of crises that didn't worsen because of the international community's quick and concerted efforts. But difficult does not mean impossible. As presented in the examples below, countries from around the world value early action which contributes to lowering tensions and any potential violence.



Central African Republic

In early 2019, the process of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic under the auspices of the African Union culminated in peace talks in Sudan attended by the countries of the region and the UN. On 6 February of this year, the Government and 14 armed groups signed a peace agreement in Bangui. The African Union and the region led the process, counting on DPPA's consistent technical and political backing. The Secretary-General welcomed the agreement and called on neighboring countries and regional organizations to support its implementation

to bring lasting peace and stability to the Central African Republic. Based on a request from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA), DPPA had deployed its Standby Team expertise to Bangui in 2018 to reinforce the mission's technical capacity in addressing the violence and promoting reconciliation. Going forward, MINUSCA and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), with support from Headquarters, will continue to support the process with technical expertise and good offices across Central Africa.

ABOVE: Signing ceremony of the peace agreement between the 14 armed groups and the Government of the Central African Republic on 6 February 2019.

UN Photo/MINUSCA/Hervé Serefio



ABOVE: Voter education in the run-up to the elections. November 2018.

UN Photo/UNDP Madagascar/Josselin Bremaud

Madagascar

The concerted efforts of the UN and partners in 2018, contributed to preventing further violence and opened space for a Malagasy-led agreement, credible elections and the formation of a new Government that paved the way for a peaceful transfer of power. In 2019, MYA funding facilitated the deployment of the Special Adviser on Madagascar, Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, to Madagascar to represent the Secretary-General at the swearing-in ceremony of President Andry Rajoelina. The historic handover of power among democratically elected leaders took place on 19 January and marked the peaceful conclusion of the presidential elections. The Special Adviser discussed with the new president his priorities for UN's support going forward, including in relation to the forthcoming legislative elections on 27 May 2019. Mr. Bathily will be returning to Madagascar in July to consult with the Government and the New Assembly on priorities for UN future involvement and support in particular in the areas of dialogue, reconciliation and sustaining peace.



ABOVE: A voter casts his ballot in Abuja during the elections held on 23 February 2019.

On this day, Nigerians were voting for the presidential candidate and representatives in the House of Assembly and the Senate. UN Photo/UNDP Nigeria/Lucky Musonda

Nigeria

MYA funds supported the holding of high-level political dialogue and sensitization workshops in four Nigerian states to contribute to a peaceful Presidential election in February 2019. The workshops provided platforms for the main stakeholders, including State governors, political parties and their candidates, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), security agencies, civil society, as well as traditional and religious leaders, to exchange views and address concerns on key electoral issues likely to provoke violence and how to avert them. They were conducted as part of the UN efforts to support Nigeria's National Peace Committee to mobilize stakeholders in states where there was a potential for electoral violence. In addition, MYA funds supported the deployment of staff from DPPA and the **United Nations Office for West Africa and Sahel** (UNOWAS) and an electoral expert before, during and after the elections to support the SRSG's good offices towards peaceful elections. The intense UN advocacy efforts contributed to lessening the level of electoral violence in the targeted states.

Lesotho

There are many common challenges – including political transitions, inequality, and transborder threats - that can best be addressed through regional cooperation. DPPA's Liaison Presences are often best placed to engage with regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as with Resident Coordinators (RCs) in the region. The DPPA-SADC Liaison Presence based in Gaborone, Botswana, is backing efforts in Lesotho to implement a National Dialogue and Stabilization Project funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund; the project has a major component on women's participation in the national dialogue process. In a context of cyclical political challenges in the country and a dialogue and reforms process that seeks to break this cycle and promote long-term stability, the DPPA team has helped strengthen coordination of support efforts with SADC and provided political and technical assistance to the RC in Lesotho.



ABOVE: Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations Lesego Makgothi and UN Resident Coordinator Salvator Niyonzima, handshake after signing and exchanging Lesotho National Dialogue and Stabilization Project (LNDSP) documents. Maseru, Lesotho. June 2018. UNDP Lesotho

Sudan

Sudan's transition to an inclusive, civilian-led government is currently in the balance. The transitional military council is in negotiations with the popular protest movement on the terms of a handover to a government which would enjoy the support of the hundreds of thousands of ordinary Sudanese whose demonstrations have led to the removal of President Omar al-Bashir. The United Nations- with DPPA in the lead - is working with the African Union and regional and international partners to support this process. The work is led by the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General

who works directly with the African Union in engaging the Sudanese stakeholders on the ground, including a Sudanese mediation committee. More broadly, the United Nations is focused on supporting the Sudanese stakeholders in their efforts to build lasting and sustainable peace, including in crafting a long-term plan to deal with Sudan's underlying economic crisis. This work, which commenced four months ago, was conceived at the outset as a prevention strategy in respect of a fresh outbreak of civil violence and the promotion of an orderly transition to democracy.



LEFT: Protesters demonstrate outside the Sudanese Armed Forces headquarters in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. 11 April 2019.

UN Photo/UN Sudan/Ayman Suliman

Burkina Faso

DPPA deployed a UN mission to Burkina Faso from 18 to 24 February. The team - led by SRSR of UNOWAS, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and comprising UN entities working on sustaining peace - assessed how the UNCT is organized to provide support through the sustaining peace framework, and how it can better leverage its capacities to assist the country to cope with rapidly evolving security threats, human rights violations and humanitarian challenges. The mission recognized the need to strengthen the RC's Office and identified four immediate priorities 1) expanding the UN's footprint through the deployment of integrated UN presences in the region; 2) supporting social cohesion; 3) supporting national authorities to



expedite the processing of cases that fuel frustration and violence; 4) strengthening human rights presence in the country. The mission also recognized UNOWAS good offices and advocacy role, both with national actors in Burkina Faso and with regional leaders.

ABOVE: A family go in search of water in Burkina Faso where more than 950,000 people are severely food insecure, notably in the conflict-hit northern regions. May 2019. UN Photo/OCHA/Otto Bakano

Cameroon

The UN has continued to advocate at the highest level in favor of a peaceful resolution of the crisis in the North-West and South-West regions through an inclusive dialogue, in close coordination with regional and international partners. At the same time, the UN has remained engaged with national authorities to offer technical assistance in support to Government-led dialogue bodies and civil society structures. A Senior Electoral Adviser was deployed in June 2018 to Yaoundé to provide institutional capacity building to the Election Management Body of Cameroon (ELECAM) ahead of the 2019 legislative and municipal elections. SRSR Fall (UNOCA) and SRSR Chambas (UNOWAS) also undertook a joint visit to Cameroon in April 2019 in the framework of a tour of the Lake Chad Basin countries affected by Boko Haram activities and offered UN support to enhance DDR efforts.



ABOVE: Joint EU-UN visit to the Far North region of Cameroon to assess the consequences of and the response to Boko Haram. UN Special Representatives for Central Africa and West Africa and the Sahel were part of this visit. April 2019. UN Photo/UNHCR Cameroon

CRISIS RESPONSE WINDOW

DPPA's Crisis Response System funded with the MYA is an invaluable tool to ensure quick and tailored responses to unanticipated crisis or requests from SRSGs, Member States and regional organizations. The Rapid Response Window provides timely and flexible resources to meet short-term needs of Special Envoys and SRSGs, Special Political Missions, Member States and regional/sub-regional organizations. The demand for Rapid Response has significantly increased with a total of \$2.3 million programmed in the first quarter alone, a testimony of the usefulness of the Rapid Response as a cross-pillar instrument.

Great Lakes region

The reform of the peace and security pillar has brought increased attention to the need for regional approaches and strategies. The Great Lakes region is undergoing some encouraging developments, notably the peaceful conclusion of the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), new peace agreements in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, the repatriation of disarmed foreign combatants, and economic improvement in some countries. Many of the root causes and immediate factors of instability affecting the region have yet to be fully addressed, however. During the first meeting of the Standing Principals' Group in January, the Secretary-General recommended the development of a regional strategy containing recommendations to enhance United Nations conflict prevention efforts in the Great Lakes region. The strategy is to focus on four countries commonly designated as core Great Lakes countries: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. Rapid Response funding is

Western Sahara

The Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Mr. Horst Köhler, capitalized on the window of opportunity in the political process to convene the initial roundtable on Western Sahara in Geneva in December 2018, with the participation of Morocco, the Frente Polisario, Algeria and Mauritania. The meeting was a unique opportunity to make progress on a longstanding conflict that impacts stability and socio-economic development in the entire region and was followed by a second roundtable meeting on Western Sahara on 21-22 March. The new dynamism in the political process introduced by the Personal Envoy has led to a significant increase in the workload of the office, due to the increased number of engagements including the roundtable

process, high-level bilateral consultations with parties and neighbors, and meetings with Security Council members and other stakeholders. Rapid Response funding allowed the quick deployment of additional capacity to support the preparations for and implementation of the next steps in the political process. In addition, an expert of the Standby Team supported the Personal Envoy in facilitating the talks by providing process design advice to the mediation team. Since the reform, the unified and integrated team backstopping the Office of the Personal Envoy – an SPM – and MINURSO – a peacekeeping operation – has led to increased coherence, more efficient information sharing and integrated analysis of challenges and opportunities in Western Sahara and in the region more broadly.



helping DPPA hire a highly experienced senior consultant to lead the development of the strategy and travel to the region to hold consultations with officials in national governments and regional organizations. The strategy is expected to be completed by 15 October.

ABOVE: Newly appointed Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region Huang Xia during a courtesy visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, April 2019.

UN Photo/MONUSCO

THE STANDBY TEAM OF SENIOR MEDIATION ADVISERS

Established in 2008, the **Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers** deploys experts in less than 72 hours to support the broad UN system and partners when and where it is most needed. The Standby Team is composed of world-leading mediation experts who can be rapidly deployed to provide advice on a wide range of issues that tend to arise in mediation and preventive diplomacy efforts, including: the design and management of dialogue processes, constitution-making, gender and inclusion issues, natural resources, power-sharing, and security arrangements. The Team's services are available, without cost, to United Nations envoys, peace operations and Country Teams, as well as to regional organizations and partners with whom the United Nations works closely in conflict mediation, dialogue facilitation, and good offices worldwide.

Since the beginning of the year, the Standby Team has provided expertise over 75 times supporting initiatives in a wide range of contexts including Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, El Salvador, Georgia, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tuvalu, Western Balkans, Western Sahara and Yemen.

RIGHT: High-level UN, AU and IGAD meeting with South Sudanese President Salva Kiir. Juba, South Sudan. May 2019.

UN Photo/UNMISS/Isaac Billy/Maal Maker

South-Sudan

The signing of the revitalized peace accord facilitated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with the support of the AU, has sparked renewed hope, even as more needs to be done to definitively silence the guns and end abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence in South Sudan. In March 2019, DPPA deployed a Standby Team member at the request of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to support two confidence building forums with South Sudan leaders. The first forum focused on sharing comparative experiences on transitions to assist in ideas on strengthening the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) with a particular focus on the South African experience, drawing

upon South African experts. The second focused on enhancing inclusivity of the National Dialogue by exploring best practices and facilitating discussions between the National Dialogue Steering Committee leadership and leaders of all political parties, including the armed opposition. The meeting helped address some initial concerns and generate better understanding on the possibilities of the national dialogue with some of the skeptical opposition that are weighing up whether to engage. In addition, the Mediation Support Unit conducted a training for UNMISS staff members on mediation and facilitation skills highlighting initiatives at the local and sub-national level; local conflicts in South Sudan continue to pose a significant risk to national political processes with the potential to destabilize communities.

