

## ANNEX 1: PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

---

### 1. Process

The White Paper on Peacebuilding constitutes a participatory process that attempts to give voice to, and capture, a multitude of diverging views and perspectives. Conducted over a 12-month period, the initiative was coordinated by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The process drew on the network of professionals of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its four partners – the Graduate Institute's Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP); the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Interpeace; and the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva (QUNO) – as well as the networks of the Centre for International Cooperation (CIC) of New York University (NYU), and of the Swiss FDFA.

Overall, the aims of the White Paper on Peacebuilding echo those of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform itself:

- Add value to on-going discussions by generating substance, analysis or understanding on peacebuilding at the cross-section of institutions, sectors, and disciplines;
- Enable frank and honest exchange by locating discussions outside of official meetings on positions, and above institutional and sectorial silos and 'turf wars'; and
- Listen to the voices of local peacebuilders worldwide, and make those voices heard in decision-making circles in Geneva, New York, and other major policy hubs.

For the purpose of the White Paper, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform established a Management Support Group (MSG). The MSG was composed of senior working-level representatives of the four Platform partners, CIC-NYU and the Swiss FDFA with a representation that bridges Geneva and New York. The group oversaw all aspects of the work conducted, including the structure of the process itself, the mobilization of interview partners and paper authors, data collection and analysis, as well as peer review and quality control. Since October 2013, the MSG has met roughly every two months in different constellations of its members.

### 2. Methodology

The White Paper process began with the formulation of a series of thematic lead questions to guide the discussion (see section 3 on guiding questions). The themes addressed were deliberately kept broad, as the aim was to allow for interlocutors to talk about their experiences in their own terms, based on their individual, context-specific understandings of the practices and institutions of peacebuilding.

In more technical terms, the process did not want to operate with preconceived analytical categories (e.g. a particular definition of peacebuilding), but instead sought to allow patterns of consent and disagreement to emerge from the data itself, i.e. from the views and perspectives shared during the White Paper process through interviews, background papers and discussions in meetings, consultations, and a retreat.

Rather than seeking to fill an identified data gap, the aim was to critically unpack underlying assumptions, presuppositions, and standard narratives. What is the available evidence base occluding from the analysis by virtue of the questions that have been posed so far? In other words, how can we dissect the "information architecture" around the notion of peacebuilding in a way that also allows for new perspectives and forms of knowledge to be "discovered" in the process?

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform reached out to peacebuilding practitioners in all regions and collected data along four avenues:

**In-depth conversations with a variety of stakeholder communities:** 28 of over 80 individuals from different stakeholder communities agreed to an in-depth conversation conducted by Platform staff. All individuals were identified collaboratively through the network of practitioners and diplomats of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its partners. Each conversation lasted between 30-60 minutes and followed a set of guiding questions (see section 3). The substance of the conversations remains confidential and was used without attribution in order to encourage authentic appraisals.

**Background papers offering regional perspectives:** The Platform commissioned 12 background papers that provide regional perspectives on peacebuilding. The authors' task was to provide an authentic and original analysis around three questions:

- What are the main challenges for building peace in your region?
- What are the key opportunities for building peace in your region over the next one or two years?
- What would be the key support necessary to build peace in your region over the next one or two years? Is there any specific role for the UN?

All authors were jointly identified through the network of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its partners. Intricate knowledge of specific regional dynamics was a key selection criterion. A list of the regions and authors is included in Annex 2.

**Background papers offering thematic perspectives:** The Platform commissioned 8 papers with a focus on scholarly and policy literatures, the history of institutional peacebuilding dynamics, data and trends on risks to peace, and several specific themes. The authors for the reviews and thematic paper were also collaboratively identified through the network of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its partners.

**Consultations, meetings and a retreat:** Over a 12-month period, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform organized three consultations on the White Paper in New York (21 October 2013, 3 March 2014, 11 July 2014) and two consultations in Geneva (20 March 2014, 2 April 2014). Facilitated by Switzerland's Missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, these consultations provided an opportunity for UN Member States and other stakeholders to contribute with substance and experiences to the White Paper process, and receive regular progress updates.

Additional insights were gained during a series of informal meetings:

- *What's next in Peacebuilding?* – organized by the Quaker United Nations Office New York (New York, 4-5 March 2014);
- *World Urban Forum 2014* – organized by UNHABITAT (Medellin, 5-11 April 2014),
- *Seizing Opportunities: Peacebuilding in a Complex World* – organized by FriEnt (Berlin, 7-8 May 2014);
- *Preparing for the 2015 PBC Review* – organized by Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (Uppsala, 14 May 2014);
- *Retreat on the White Paper on Peacebuilding: Distilling preliminary findings, shaping the strategic horizon* – organized by Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (Chexbres, 4-6 May 2014); and
- *What Future for Peacebuilding? Needs, Policy, Action* – Annual Meeting of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (Geneva, 20-21 November 2014).

All consultations, meetings and the retreat were conceived as opportunities not only to gather additional data, but also to test and consolidate thematic and conceptual patterns that had emerged from the analysis.

### 3. Guiding questions

The in-depth conversations had three specific analytical objectives and were structured along a series of guiding questions. These questions were developed in consultation with the MSG and were shared with conversation partners prior to the interview.

**Objective 1:** Gather perspectives on the nature and evolution of the broader peacebuilding universe

- What do you do to build peace?
- What does 'building peace' mean in your daily work life?
- Has anything changed in the way you build peace since you have started working in this field?

**Objective 2:** Gather perspectives about the role of the United Nations and other multilateral or regional organizations within the broader peacebuilding universe

- How much do you collaborate with multinational or regional organizations?
- Is there any specific UN office you have worked with?
- Has there been anything particularly successful in this collaboration?

**Objectives 3:** Gather different visions for building peace in violent and fragile contexts

- How do you think the building of peace will look like in the future?
- Do you think there is a specific role for outside actors?
- Do you have any specific expectations from the UN?