



Peacebuilding and conflict prevention

Policy document

"What is needed today is nothing less than a new consensus between alliances that are frayed, between wealthy nations and poor, and among peoples mired in mistrust across an apparently widening cultural abyss. The essence of that consensus is simple: we all share responsibility for each other's security. And the test of that consensus will be action."

(A more secure world: Our shared responsibility, UN 2004)



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List of abbreviations

ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe
AU	African Union
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
CPDC	OECD Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-Operation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DCA	Development Cooperation Act
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration
ECCP	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUPM	European Union Police Mission
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NSSED	National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PCA	Peace and Conflict Assessment
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Process
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SSR	Security System Reform
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Summary

Peacebuilding and human security are one of the main goals enshrined in the Austrian Development Cooperation Act (DCA). This policy document defines four areas of intervention as focuses of peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities of the Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe (ADC):

1. Conflict-sensitive approach – mainstreaming

Every ADC intervention can have unforeseen consequences or violence-promoting side effects. Mainstreaming in this context means the systematic consideration of possible conflict potential in ADC interventions that are not directly aimed at conflict prevention but could very well unintentionally trigger or intensify conflicts.

2. Strengthening local organisations working in the field of conflict prevention

Local organisations in the ADC key regions are indispensable for durable peacebuilding and conflict prevention. ADC therefore seeks to work more intensively with regional and subregional organisations active in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. These organisations will also be supported in the development of efficient and effective structures. In the area of conflict prevention in particular, civil society organisations have an important role complementary to state structures. ADC will therefore support such organisations by means of institution-building measures.

3. Promoting reintegration

ADC has already been active in the reintegration and rehabilitation of soldiers in the conflict and post-conflict phases and will continue this commitment in the future. It will not restrict itself to the reintegration of ex-soldiers but will also focus on other population groups and minorities uprooted by conflicts. Children and women in armed conflicts are a particular focus of ADC.

4. Strengthening the justice and security systems

Effective and democratically legitimised and controlled security systems are an important prerequisite for the prevention and management of conflicts. ADC will therefore continue its activities in the justice sector and support justice and security sector reforms in partner countries.

1. Introduction

This policy document on peacebuilding and conflict prevention serves as a guideline for strategic planning and implementation of the peacebuilding and conflict prevention focuses of ADC as managed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). It describes the motives, targets and priority intervention focuses of ADC in this area. It also serves to establish the position of ADC in dialogue with developing countries and countries in transition, the international donor community and other development policy actors in Austria.

ADC takes a holistic approach and regards the promotion of peacebuilding and conflict prevention and of human rights as essential components of good governance. The policy document on good governance thus provides the framework for the policy documents on peacebuilding and conflict prevention and on human rights.

A holistic approach

ADC bases its position on the Austrian Development Cooperation Act (DCA) and on international discussion in the United Nations, European Union and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (e.g. in the Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Network or the Working Group on Fragile States).

2. Definition of terms

The end of the Cold War did not, as had been expected, bring about a reduction in violent conflicts. More than two thirds of the poorest countries in the world are situated in conflict regions. Destruction of the basis for existence, serious psychological damage and physical injury to victims and high individual and economic costs are the direct consequences. The nature of violent conflicts has changed, however: whereas conflicts used to be mainly between states, today they are mostly internal conflicts in disintegrating states, civil wars and global terrorist threats, in which 90 per cent of the victims are civilians. The challenges for international cooperation in dealing with conflicts, multiple crises and difficult partners ("fragile states") have grown considerably in the last decades.

New peacebuilding and conflict prevention challenges

Violent conflicts cause extreme individual suffering and economic costs. Even with internal conflicts, the effects within the country, region and even on a global scale are palpable and leave deep scars in the political, social and economic landscape long after they are over. They also destroy years of development cooperation efforts.

Peace and stability are thus the prerequisites for development and prosperity, and conversely a sustainable improvement in living conditions makes an important contribution to the avoidance of violent conflicts. The interaction between poverty, violence and the disintegration of states therefore necessitates an increased commitment to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Dissatisfaction with great discrepancies in wealth, abuse of human rights, unequal access to resources or the absence of democratic participation are mutually reinforcing structural causes that can easily escalate into violent eruptions. They must therefore be combated in a targeted and coordinated manner. ADC regards the avoidance of these structural causes of conflict and the early avoidance of escalation as important components of peacebuilding.

Peace and stability as prerequisites for development and vice versa



Development and peace are inseparably connected

The United Nations Millennium Declaration made clear that development and peace are inseparably connected and that their achievement will depend significantly on whether conflicts are ended and peaceful co-existence is possible. In this context, ADC regards its commitment to peacebuilding and conflict prevention as an important prerequisite for its efforts to reduce poverty, destruction of the environment and the shortage of resources and for removing social and economic injustices.

“The world must advance the causes of security, development and human rights together, otherwise none will succeed. Humanity will not enjoy security without development, it will not enjoy development without security, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights.”

In Larger Freedom, UN, 2005

In his report “In Larger Freedom”, the UN Secretary-General stressed that all causes and effects are interlinked and mutually conditioned. Security not only affects the stability of a state and its institutions but also involves wellbeing, freedom from fear and freedom from want for individuals. Security, structural stability and development are thus inseparably connected.

The DCA defines “ensuring peace and human security, especially by promoting democracy, rule of law, human rights and good governance” as one of its three main goals. ADC defines security as a broad-based concept of comprehensive human security that embraces political, legal, economic, social and environmental security.

Human security

The concept of human security, described for the first time by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1994, focuses in contrast to the traditional military approach on the individual and collective concept of security of human beings. It describes economic and social aspects of security as well as the preservation of the natural basis for living as prerequisites for peaceful co-existence. The poverty-related absence of health care, food, education or human rights and interstate and internal conflicts that cannot be solved by military means (alone), represent a danger to human security.

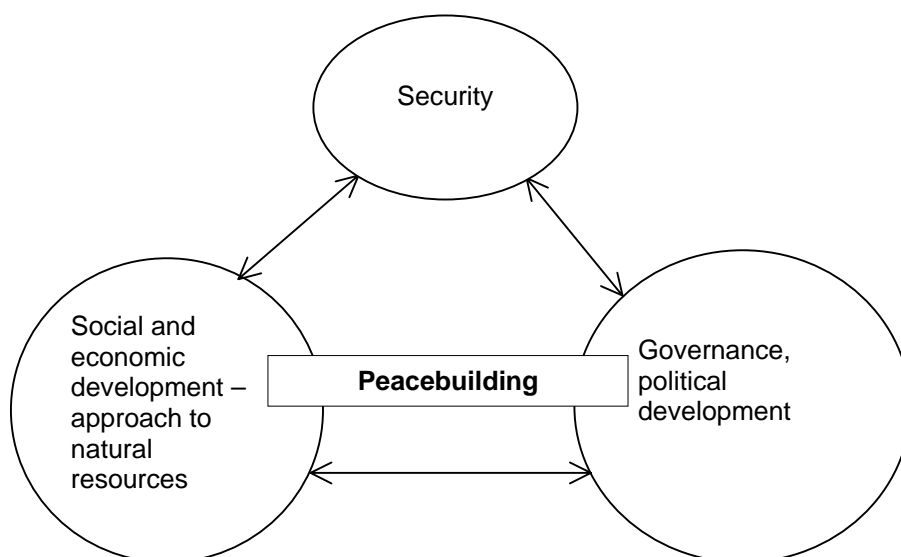
The main aim of peacebuilding is to create the conditions for lasting peace and justice so as to permit sustainable development. Active conflict prevention is designed to help prevent violent conflicts before they erupt using peaceful means, to open up the way for peace efforts and peace processes in countries with conflicts, and to support reconstruction. It tries to act early on and with latent conflicts in which preventive structural measures can still have an effect.

To secure a “positive” peace

ADC endeavours to ensure “positive” peace based on the elimination not only of direct violence but also of the causes of structural violence (such as discriminatory exercise of political power, unequal access to land, suppression of human rights or impunity) by peaceful means such as the recognition and addressing of root causes.



Following the OECD structure, ADC distinguishes three complementary conflict-relevant areas referring to different causes:



Three conflict relevant areas of peacebuilding

1. Security

This includes as a prerequisite for political, economic and social development, both the security of the country and human security.

Possible entry points for the international donor community are: disarmament; demobilisation and reintegration of soldiers, women and children (DDR); security sector reform; control of small arms and light weapons (SALW), and humanitarian mine actions.

2. Governance and the political dimension

This includes illegitimate or weak institutions, corruption, disrespect for human rights, bad governance, absence of democratisation processes, abuse of power. Possible entry points for the international donor community are: good governance; democracy; human rights; support of state, political and administrative structures; strengthening of the rule of law; accountability, transparency and efficiency; trauma management; reconciliation; strengthening civil society and the media regarding peacebuilding and conflict prevention; peace education.

3. Social, economic and environmental dimension

This includes unequal access to resources, exploitation of natural resources through the use of violence, increasing socioeconomic differences, marginalisation of disadvantaged groups, exploitative trade with natural resources. Regarding “conflict resources” (oil, minerals, wood, diamonds, etc.), the external responsibility of international donors is also included (e.g. Kimberley process on trade with conflict diamonds).

Possible entry points for the international donor community are: reconstruction of physical, economic and social infrastructure; reintegration of refugees and IDPs; promotion of employment; economic revival; general access to education and health.

Since the exploitation and shortage of natural resources has not only an economic and social dimension but also a political security one and is closely related to good governance, ADC seeks an interdisciplinary approach.



“Prevention must be central to all our efforts, from combating poverty and promoting sustainable development; through strengthening national capacities to manage conflict, promoting democracy and the rule of law, and curbing the flow of small arms and light weapons; to directing prevention operational activities.”

In Larger Freedom, UN 2005

The diplomatic, military and development policy levels all play a significant and mutually reinforcing role in peacebuilding. This policy document is restricted to ADC projects and refers to the civil character of peacebuilding.

Coordination with the donor community and in accordance with national strategies

ADC sees peacebuilding measures as comprehensive, consistent and coherent interventions that are coordinated with the international donor community and take place with allowance for national responsibility and harmonisation and in alignment with national strategies and policies. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), in which the World Bank seeks a more conflict-sensitive approach, and other national development strategies, where available, are included in the planning.

Women in armed conflicts

UN Security Council resolution 1325 on “Women, Peace and Security” (31 October 2000) describes the specific role of women in conflict situations, the effects of armed conflicts on women and young girls and their vital role in peace processes and peacebuilding measures, and formulates recommendations. In compliance with the DCA, ADC pays particular attention to the gender perspective in the context of peacebuilding, the integration of which is of vital importance for the success of conflict prevention and peacebuilding measures. It must be taken into account at all levels and in all phases of planning, implementation and evaluation.

Protection of children in armed conflicts

The situation of children in armed conflicts is also dealt with in the DCA and reiterated in UN Security Council resolution 1612 (2005). It is therefore a particular concern of ADC. Since the Austrian Chairmanship of the Human Security Network (July 2002 to May 2003) in particular, children have become a special focus in programmes and projects.

3. ADC involvement in peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities

The sectors of good governance and human rights, which are closely connected with peacebuilding and conflict prevention, are described in separate policy documents. This policy document focuses on ADC measures more specifically linked with peacebuilding and conflict prevention, even if the boundaries between these activities and the two fields mentioned above are often blurred.

3.1 ADC activities to date

ADC activities to date

ADC can look back on years of involvement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the South and the East. It promotes conflict prevention and conflict resolution by peaceful means through numerous programmes and projects to build up stable social and political structures and with instruments for conflict management and non-violent social change. It supports numerous specific peacebuilding programmes and projects. Conflict prevention and peacebuilding also constitute a cross-cutting issue in country and sectoral programmes (e.g. rural development and water supply and sanitation).

Geographically, ADC focuses mainly on its priority countries in accordance with the Three-Year Programme in force, although the specific thematic focus in the various countries and regions can differ.

With the perspective of accession to the EU of some South-Eastern European countries, the Stability Pact and stabilisation and association agreements in South Eastern Europe provide a central reference point for the stabilisation of these countries and their reform efforts. These instruments offer an important coordinating framework for a coherent and coordinated approach by donors to support the states of South Eastern Europe in their endeavours in favour of peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity.

ADC activities in South Eastern Europe to date have focused on regional cooperation, mainstreaming of a conflict-sensitive approach and individual projects relating to the return of refugees, human rights education and reconciliation.

In the countries of the South and also in South Eastern Europe, national and regional strategies, PRS and NSSED and international principles have served as the guidelines for intervention. ADC is involved in this respect in democratisation, reform of the security sector, promotion of human rights, promotion of peace processes, mediation or training programmes, reintegration, reconciliation and strengthening of civil society in respect of conflict prevention.

3.2 ADC position

ADC works in regions and countries in conflicts or post-conflict situations and in fragile states, i.e. countries with unstable political, economic and social situations.

ADC's activities in this area are based on the following principles:

- ADC understands conflict prevention as an integral component of poverty reduction and takes account of the interaction between poverty reduction and peacebuilding in all phases of programme and project work.
- ADC's increases its commitment to a proactive approach to the prevention of violent conflicts.
- ADC encourages a conflict-sensitive approach so as to prevent possible escalation.
- ADC is in favour of long-term commitments to ensure lasting peace and structural stability.
- ADC favours "positive peace" by eliminating not only direct but also structural violence and its root causes and by promoting human security and structural stability.
- The integration of gender-specific perspectives and measures is of prime significance.
- ADC recognises the importance of civil society and promotes its participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
- ADC promotes dialogue between the conflicting parties and between the state and civil society.

8 principles of ADC

In South Eastern Europe some specific features of ADC activities can be traced: ADC regards the promotion of regional, transfrontier cooperation in South Eastern Europe not only as an instrument for dismantling conflicts and prejudices but also as an opportunity for stronger regional integration with a view to long-term peacebuilding. The South Eastern Europe regional programme therefore encourages transfrontier dialogue (e.g. Catalogue of Media, Balkan Case Challenge), supports regional coordination and cooperation measures (e.g. Investment Compact) and follows a regional approach to problems that cannot be solved at the national level (e.g. human trafficking).



3.2.1 ADC areas of intervention

4 areas of intervention

Based on the analysis described above and with allowance for the capacities and know-how developed through ADC, four areas of peacebuilding and conflict prevention intervention have been identified by which ADC implements its legal mandate of *ensuring peace and human security*.

3.2.1.1 Conflict-sensitive approach of ADC – mainstreaming

Since development cooperation is embedded in a wider political context of a country or region, possible conflict potential must be taken into account, even where the project or programme does not have a specific peacebuilding component. Every ADC intervention can have potentially unforeseen consequences or violent side effects.

If an ADC programme or project takes place in a conflictual context where violence has not yet erupted, care must be taken to avoid exacerbating actions and to ensure that the causes of the conflict are not activated (working in a conflict). If the activity takes place in a region directly affected by a violent conflict (working on the conflict), a direct contribution to conflict transformation is made.

Conflict sensitivity

ADC therefore takes a conflict-sensitive approach as a quality assurance measure both in the programme and project work and in humanitarian reconstruction. Conflict sensitivity is understood by ADC to mean taking account of the interaction between the conflict and the measure with the view to avoiding negative, conflict-exacerbating impacts and to strengthening positive, de-escalating and peace-promoting impacts. For this purpose there is a need to identify the degree of conflict potential and, together with local partners, to develop a greater awareness of conflict symptoms and to observe tensions and conflict developments so as to be able to help transform the conflict and secure peace in good time.

ADC integrates this conflict-sensitive approach into the programmes and projects by way of mainstreaming. Two variants may be distinguished in the implementation of this mainstreaming approach:

“Do no harm” approach

- The “do no harm” approach is designed to identify, avoid and cushion unintended consequences of an ADC activity and to ensure that the conflict is not exacerbated by it. It should be used in all projects and programmes, even those not devoted specifically to peace, and integrated at the project conception and planning stages. There is no need, however, for separate project verification by specialists, as is the case with gender and environment projects.
- If an ADC activity is directly affected by the conflict, a conflict analysis or “Peace and Conflict Assessment” (PCA) by a local structure is required.

For this purpose, ADC will elaborate specific tools for training desk officers, coordination office staff and partners to apply a conflict-sensitive approach and will encourage the development of conflict- and peace-relevant competence and allowance for conflict components in project cycle management. In particularly sensitive sectors such as water supply and sanitation or rural development, conflict prevention considerations have long been a systematic part of the project planning process.

In its endeavours in this respect, ADC is guided in particular by the work of the OECD Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (CPDC), which devises joint training documentation on peacebuilding and conflict prevention for desk officers and country desk officers.

3.2.1.2 Strengthening local organisations active in the field of conflict prevention

Local organisations in the ADC key regions are an indispensable prerequisite for a sustainable peacebuilding and conflict prevention system. ADC therefore aims deliberately at creating a strategic framework for long-term and predictable partnership with local organisations. Organisations that focus on conflict prevention, early warning and peacebuilding need to be strengthened through capacity- and institution-building. In this context ADC concentrates on cooperation at both the district and local levels and at the regional (e.g. AU) and subregional (e.g. ECOWAS) levels.

Long-term partnerships

Regional cooperation and integration contribute significantly to stability, prosperity and peace. In the last few years regional and subregional organisations have increasingly recognised their responsibility with regard to peacebuilding and conflict prevention and have attempted to play an active role.

ADC is therefore committed, particularly in Africa, to working more with regional and subregional organisations which are active in the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention and to helping them develop efficient and effective local structures.

Cooperation and strengthening regional and subregional organisations

At the multilateral level (e.g. through the “African Peace Facility”, which is an instrument of the EU), Austria already contributes to strengthening the AU Peace and Security Council. It is now also endeavouring to strengthen peacebuilding and conflict prevention capacities within the AU and ECOWAS at the bilateral level. There are plans for a pilot project in ECOWAS regional zone 2 (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Côte d’Ivoire) with headquarters in Ouagadougou. Greater cooperation with other regional African organisations (SADC, IGAD) will also be considered in the next few years.

Conflict prevention measures must be subsidiary and multi-dimensional. ADC recognises the important role of civil society as a force that promotes and prepares the way for peace and supports it in its efforts to safeguard democratic norms and principles of responsibility, transparency and good governance. The promotion of “peace alliances”, i.e. the support of groups within a society which are active in the field of non-violent conflict management, is a particular concern of ADC.

The important role of civil society

3.2.1.3 Fostering reintegration

Within the first five years after a violent conflict or the signing of a peace treaty, there is an extremely high risk that the former conflict zone will again become the scene of open conflict. ADC therefore sees the reintegration of former soldiers and child soldiers in the post-conflict phase as an important contribution to conflict prevention, reintegration and reconciliation, since non-integrated ex-soldiers who are discriminated against are an acute conflict risk.

ADC does not restrict itself to the former combatants but also devotes itself to other population groups uprooted by conflicts (particularly soldiers’ families, women and girls, child mothers, women and girls who have been forced to marry rebels or soldiers, rape victims and women who have turned to prostitution to survive). In accordance with the DCA, ADC pays particular attention in all its measures to women and children.

Population groups uprooted by conflicts are also targets of reintegration

ADC has two thematic focuses in this area:

- Psychological and social reintegration (in particular trauma management, reconciliation, training and promotion of young people, right to return)
- Economic reintegration (in particular projects permitting professional reintegration and prospects for sufficient revenue and economic survival for the persons concerned).

Psychological, social and economic reintegration



In its reintegration measures ADC pays particular attention to the needs of persons with disabilities.

To ensure long-term success, the local public structures must take responsibility themselves and make an active contribution. ADC therefore involves local institutions from the outset and projects are derived from local, regional and national development plans, complementing rather than competing with them.

3.2.1.4 Strengthening the justice and security systems

Effective and democratically legitimised and controlled security systems are an important prerequisite for the prevention and management of conflicts. Programmes and projects in the justice sector play a significant role as preventive measures in the pre-conflict phase in fragile states and also in the post-conflict phase during the transition to a democratic state (transitional justice).

Security system reform

In its guidelines on Security System Reform (SSR), the OECD distinguishes between three related challenges facing every state:

- Development of a clear institutional framework that offers security, integrates security and development policy, involves all relevant actors and concentrates on particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children or minorities
- Strengthening good governance and civil oversight of security institutions
- Creation of competent professional security forces responsible to civil authorities and open to dialogue with civil society.

With account taken of national and regional plans and strategies, ADC will be involved in the following areas:

Strengthening the justice system

- Justice: support of justice and law reforms at the national level, promotion of access to legal information and training (legal aid) at the local level
- Promotion and support of security sector reform through strengthening good governance and democratic civil control, inter alia through training programmes (e.g. human rights training based on the human rights manual “Understanding Human Rights”) for police, prison and security officers and representatives of civil society.

Wherever it is more useful, effective and efficient ADC justice and security activities take place by way of multilateral cooperation. ADC also endeavours where possible to cooperate in particular with Vienna-based multilateral organisations (e.g. UNODC).

4. Coherence with other actors in Austria

There is a need for close coordination between Austrian diplomacy, security policy and development cooperation to ensure the effectiveness and impact of peacebuilding measures. In implementing the coherence requirement of the DCA, ADC will therefore continue and intensify dialogue and coordination with Austrian diplomatic actors (Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs internally) and security policy (Federal Ministry of Defence, Federal Ministry of the Interior, Federal Ministry of Justice).

The work of ADC is based on an extended security concept (see Chapter 2) that goes beyond purely military security. It is important to note in this regard that military security measures (particularly support and cooperation with armies in the recipient countries) are in most cases not ODA-imputable and cannot therefore be financed by ADC funds.

Austria is active in South Eastern Europe at all three of the above-mentioned levels of cooperation: at the diplomatic level through its bilateral and multilateral foreign policy commitment, at the military level through the high proportion of Austrian soldiers in EU and UN operations (e.g. EUPM), and at the ADC level through cooperation with its priority countries. For many years now the activities in all three levels have been mutually supportive and complementary.

ADC currently works together with the Austrian army in CIMIC (Civil Military Cooperation) in Kosovo and will actively verify in future whether further CIMIC projects can be implemented together with the Federal Ministry of Defence.

In the South the establishment of a discussion platform “Centre de Réflexion Europe-Afrique pour la prévention des conflits” (CREAF) in Dakar makes an important contribution to conflict prevention at the diplomatic level. ADC will also step up its efforts to strengthen cooperation between ADC, diplomacy and the military in partner countries in the South.



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