Building secure communities.

Bringing civil society on board to build a safe environment provides a crucial foundation for recovery and long-term peaceful development. Local government, police forces and prosecutors cannot function sustainably without involving their communities and addressing concerns and needs of the people. The guiding principle in our work is connecting local and national government, the police and justice system with civil society to improve safety and security in communities. We believe traditional community based mechanism such as sharia courts need to be considered when building local and national government, the police and justice systems. We foster the active involvement of marginalized and vulnerable segments of society, women, and youth in the planning, monitoring, and execution of security services.

Through our Community Security project we support Somali authorities in the development and implementation of related policies, community correction mechanism as well as the building of national safety and security infrastructure such as the Peace Building unit at the national level, the Regional Response mechanism for conflict, and the District Safety and Peace Committee hosted at the Resource Centers for Peace. Each levels partner authorities with civil society thus creating a space to host peace building activities. UNDP-supported youth rehabilitation programmes and the establishment of Women’s Protection Units help address one of the biggest cause of insecurity in Somali communities - youth violence - while at the same time providing support for victims of violence.

With its strong partnerships with Somali communities as well as government actors, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is uniquely positioned to bring state and civil actors together in building a resilient, peaceful and prosperous environment. We work with the Government, non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to establish security in all regions.

Adapting to the Local Context

Active in South Central Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland, we adapt our approach based on different context (levels of conflict, coping mechanisms and support structures) and typology of criminal youth who vary from petty criminal and organised crime such as piracy to members of armed militia groups such as Al Shabaab.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK

Giving Somali youth a future.

"Crime has reduced significantly; there are less arrests and recorded incidents within the stations." Suleiman Duale Ubahle, Police Commissioner in Burao, on impact of Youth at Risk programme

At risk youth in Burao, Somaliland, participate in a plumbing theory class. Photo: UNDP Somalia

Despite recent gains in stability across all three regions, there still remains a significant portion of youth who are either at risk, or become drafted into conflict. This phenomenon poses a serious threat to strengthening peace. Through our Youth for Change initiative, we are helping dismantle existing armed groups as well as prevent young Somalis to be recruited by armed militia, organised criminal and piracy groups. The programme provides young people with an opportunity for rehabilitation and personal development through educational activities, social rehabilitation, economic integration, and leadership training while at the same time sensitizing them on the adverse impact of conflict and violence on their country.
United Nations Development Programme
In South Central Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland

Key Achievements

- 40% of the 1,174 participants in our Youth at Risk/Youth for Change programme are from armed militia groups, preventing their involvement in criminal/violent activities and contributing to reducing insecurity at district level
- 697 children and 953 young adults successfully graduated from the programme, giving them an opportunity to resist criminal and violent lifestyles. They have benefited from the community’s involvement and support, which has reinforced positive attitudes and outlooks, as well as minimized the fear of becoming stigmatized.
- 1300 short-term jobs created economic opportunities for youth and supported their reintegration into society.

Empowering women.

Somali women and girls are particularly vulnerable and underrepresent in community-based structures. But they are not only victims of several forms of gender-based violence; they can also act as agents. In our projects, we ensure that their voices are heard and listened to when designing responses to insecurity. The Women's Civilian Protection Unit was established as an innovative pilot initiative to empower women in peace and security, and act against vectors of violence and crime. Women have an essential role to rehabilitate and reintegrate youth formerly associated with armed groups, provide referral services to victims, monitor and report incidents of crime or violence to the police. These female participants were trained as community workers to provide victim referral services and crime prevention advice to the community.

Key Achievements

- 500 women from Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps and resident communities work together with 120 police officers in Women's Civilian Protection Units in 5 districts of Mogadishu to support the protection of communities
- Women participating in the Protection Units have drastically increased their literacy skills through the literacy and numeracy trainings offered. 113 out of 168 illiterates passed basic literacy standards. Further, they coached 500 violent youth towards reintegrating the community.

Giving space for peace-building activities.

We believe that sustainable violence reduction requires to partner communities and local authorities to identify, develop, and implement solutions to strengthen peace and security at the district. Therefore, we help to overcome one of the obstacles for success: lack of neutral physical space where many of the activities which lie at the heart of community security, such as consultations, dialogue sessions, trainings or mediation can be hosted and supported.

Key Achievements

- 20 District Safety Committees (DSC) were established across all 3 regions, coordinating conflict solutions such as better water management, public dialogue on peace-building, or cooperation between the administration and the community on disarmament at a community level.
- 4 Resource Centers for Peace (RCP) host the District Safety Committee and provide essential support to all peace and security initiatives in the related region.
- The Somali Community Safety Framework Webportal (www.somalipeacebuilding.org) was launched to develop a harmonized approach to community safety by sharing and utilizing local and international knowledge and resources.
- The establishment of the Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention on the campus of University of Hargeisa as well as Satellite offices in Bosasso and Mogadishu is completed, providing a location for training and capacity building, research and analysis as well as knowledge management on conflict related issues.