Concrete Solutions:

Construction and Peacebuilding

A Handbook

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On behalf of:

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Concrete Solutions: Construction and Peacebuilding

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On behalf of
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Preface

Dear reader,

This handbook is based on the understanding that peacebuilding requires more than the absence of war: It cannot be achieved without social justice and addressing the structural causes of violent conflicts, such as poverty, a lack of prospects and inequality. *Concrete Solutions*, however, focuses not on the metaphorical but on the physical aspects of building lasting peace.

A consequence of all wars is the destruction of physical infrastructure. This prolongs the suffering of the affected population far beyond the duration of violent conflict. Destroyed homes, schools, hospitals or places of work do not just have an immediate impact. They also deepen the structural causes of war, making further violent conflicts more likely. In this way, wars often result in new wars, recurring fragility or protracted conflict situations.

The construction of infrastructure is therefore a central instrument for promoting peace. Reconstruction gives people hope for a better future in peace and prosperity. Equal access to public services for the entire population, for example, can help reduce tensions between refugees and host communities.

This handbook is intended to be a contribution to the discussion on the "how" and "what" of peacebuilding. It outlines GIZ's experience on combining peacebuilding and construction in four countries (Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Ukraine) based on federal government funding.

The text has been written by practitioners for practitioners, using the innovative Book Sprint method. It is our hope that *Concrete Solutions* will prove a useful tool in our shared goal of a more peaceful world.

Dr. Martin Schuldes
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Acronyms

ALCs	Accelerated Learning Centers
BMZ	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
CDP	Community Development Planning
EU	European Union
FC	Financial Cooperation
FFO	German Federal Foreign Office
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HDP-nexus	Humanitarian-Development-Peace-nexus
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
iPCA	integrated Peace and Conflict Assessment
ISIS	so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGA	Local Government Area
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MENA	Middle East and North East Africa region
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
RMOs	Risk Management Offices
RRM	Recovery and Reconstruction in Mosul
PWD	People with Disabilities
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SLE	Stabilization of Livelihoods in Nineveh
TC	Technical Cooperation
TDA	Transitional Development Assistance
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VTC	Vocational Training Center
WASH	Water, Sanitary Supply, and Hygiene

Introduction

A book about linking construction and peacebuilding

In recent years, bricks-and-mortar construction projects have become an important part of German Development Cooperation in crisis contexts. First and foremost, this is because they are an obvious way of meeting the needs of people in our partner countries in direct, substantial ways. In addition, they are also attractive to policymakers both locally and in donor countries, because their results are tangible, visible, and clearly attributable to those organizing the project.

To be sustainable in the long-term, however, construction projects need to be embedded in the local context and contribute to supporting peaceful and inclusive societies on the ground. It makes little sense, for example, to provide a community with infrastructure installations without also facilitating their usage. Only if construction projects are responsive to the context in which they are set, will they have a lasting positive impact.

How then to marry the twin objectives of providing solid construction projects and ensuring peacebuilding? That is the main question addressed in this book. The main point of departure is the observation that German Development Cooperation has engaged in a significant number of projects where this marriage has been attempted. These include projects in Technical and Financial Cooperation (TC and FC), and crisis instruments such as *Transitional Development Assistance* (TDA), or the *Special Initiative on Forced Displacement*. However, the experiences and lessons learned from these projects are not readily available for others to use.

By sharing their experiences and discoveries, the writers of this book are hoping to provide some practical suggestions for those planning and implementing projects on the ground — and to de-mystify the concept of peacebuilding for those working in different sectors who may not have

encountered it so far. This book is the beginning of further exchanges that will deepen the understanding of linking construction with peacebuilding. The purpose is to further improve the ability to assist people in fragile contexts across the world.

How did this book come about?

We are a team of experts from across *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)*, bringing together a variety of experiences and many years of practical expertise in different fields. As such, our group includes colleagues involved in implementing the four case studies, planning officers, as well as subject experts on TDA, peacebuilding, and construction. Together, we represent the multisectoral approach that distinguishes GIZ, and the breadth of experience necessary to tackle the challenge of linking construction and peacebuilding.

To write this book, we chose the Book Sprint method. A Book Sprint is a facilitated, collaborative method for writing and producing a book, co-authored by a group of experts. The book is conceptualized, written, and peer-reviewed multiple times, as well as designed, illustrated, edited, and prepared for publishing during a 5-day in-person intensive workshop or a 10-day virtual environment. The Book Sprint generated some very stimulating discussions and, at times, heated exchanges. We feel the book has benefited from this co-creation process.

In this sense, this book is a joint reflection on available experience intended to stimulate further discussion. It is not an all-encompassing authoritative review, and in no way a formal statement of policy on behalf of German Development Cooperation.

What is in the book?

The book is organized into eight chapters. They are written to be read in sequence, but readers pressed for time or interested only in particular topics or countries will find that they also stand on their own.

The first three chapters present the book's conceptual foundation. Chapter One: *Why this book?* outlines why peacebuilding and construction are relevant topics for German Development Cooperation today. It underlines the peacebuilding potential of construction and shows that the often-mystified concept of peace can easily unfold for projects in all sectors. Chapter Two: *Linking construction and peacebuilding* then shows different tangible ways in which construction can be brought to bear on peacebuilding. It focuses on the need for sound analysis during the

project planning stage and a recognition of the conflict dynamics of the local context. Chapter Three: *Building blocks for construction and peace* complements this logic by outlining the key quality mechanisms needed to ensure that projects achieve their desired impact in often exceedingly difficult circumstances.

Chapters Four to Seven present four in-depth case studies from global GIZ projects: Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine. These follow a consistent structure to highlight the main lessons learned relevant to linking construction and peacebuilding.

Chapter Eight: *Constructing a better future* concludes by drawing out key lessons learned from case studies to provide concrete insights and inspiration that can be directly applied to on-the-ground activities. Relevant areas of tension are identified and ways to navigate them are proposed.

Why this book?

1

Why this book?

Development does not automatically lead to peace

No security without development, no development without security. This catchphrase sums up the political belief that development cooperation can play a significant role in reducing violence and promoting human security. Indeed, peace and security are urgently needed: The *Global Peace Index* (2020) lists 39 countries plagued by violent conflict with nearly 80 million people forced to seek refuge.[1]

Conflicts around the world have had a direct impact on German and European domestic politics. During 2015, for example, more than 1 million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe by land and sea, creating challenges for resettlement which are still to be resolved, especially in Germany. One response has been the increase in Official Development Assistance funds to tackle root causes for violent conflict and flight.

More than two thirds of all German Development Cooperation partner countries are considered fragile. In these countries, basic needs of the population are not addressed, risks of violent conflicts are high, and capacities to address them are incredibly low. Afghanistan and Iraq are among the most prominent cases, but other long-standing partner countries have recently fallen into crisis and civil war.

There is a broad consensus in current academic and policy discussions within the development sector that peace and development are mutually dependent, but also that development is not a sufficient condition for peace. In ongoing conflicts, political demands often include that development cooperation activities also contribute to more security and peace on a national level. This, however, cannot always be fulfilled.

1 IEP. (2020). *The Global Peace Index: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*. Institute for Economics and Peace.

The latest discussions hint at a more modest and localized approach to development cooperation, improving living conditions and strengthening the resilience of people and local structures. These contributions can be the starting point for peaceful and inclusive societies and pro-active peacebuilding after the end of widespread violence. Development cooperation in ongoing conflicts, done the right way, may support a bottom-up peacebuilding process, potentially complementing diplomacy that works top-down.

RESILIENCE

Resilience is the ability of people and institutions to adapt to new conditions and risks, wherever possible, particularly in contexts of prolonged crises, and to develop new prospects for their future. People and local structures are empowered to cope independently with crises and to prepare themselves for recurring stresses and strains. The aim is to mitigate the negative effects of crises and gradually find ways to deal with their impacts permanently through structural changes. Resilience is maximally strengthened if the three capacities (stabilization, adaptation, and transformation) are addressed simultaneously. A positively strengthened system is more likely, if the development of resilience in one dimension is linked to the other dimensions and more than one societal level (individual, household, community, provincial, national).

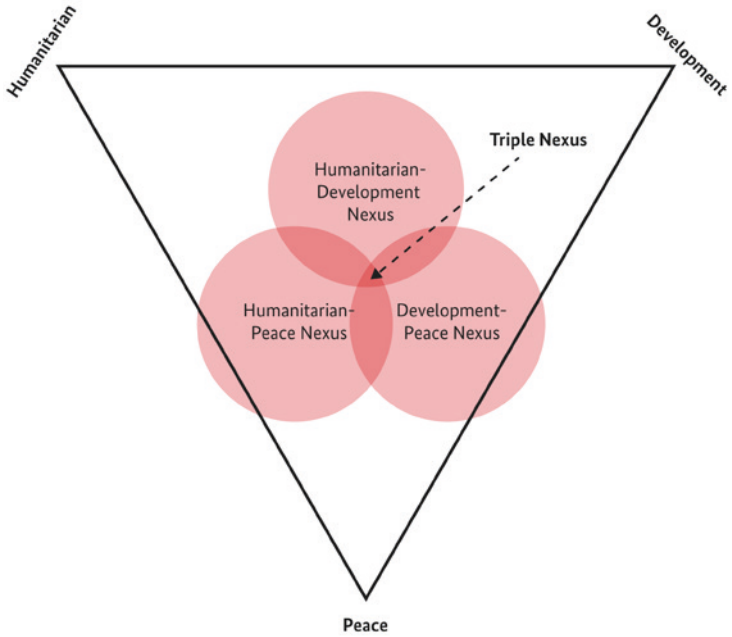
Meeting **basic quality criteria** for implementing development cooperation is decisive — especially but not only — in the acute phase of conflict. Amongst others, this includes the human rights-based approach, inclusion of all people, and equal participation. These criteria are at the heart of value-driven development cooperation in Germany and we discuss them further in Chapter Three: *Building blocks for construction and peace*.

Peacebuilding can be strengthened by the implementation of the **Humanitarian-Development-Peace-nexus (HDP-nexus)**. To form the basis for peacebuilding, it is essential that development cooperation is linked to humanitarian assistance. Integrated measures of these pillars have the potential to provide an enabling environment for peace. In this book, we will address the peace pillar of the HDP-nexus and answer the following question: how can we contribute to peace through development cooperation in practice? We will argue that linking the construction of physical infrastructure with capacity development, social cohesion, and peacebuilding measures becomes a strong instrument to **provide an enabling environment for peace**.

THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE-NEXUS

During the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the United Nations and the World Bank introduced a New Way of Working.[2] It offers a concrete path forward to reducing risk and vulnerability by creating synergies between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. Focusing on the peace pillar is a more recent development and reflects the need for coordination of all actors — especially in crisis contexts.[3]

On a practical level, the HDP-nexus means there is a need for development cooperation to overcome project-based thinking and undirected competition. This applies to sectoral as well as organizational silos, and duplicating approaches from international development actors. German Development Cooperation therefore promotes and applies coordinated, multisectoral, and multilayered approaches. This implies a smart combination of Technical and Financial Cooperation (TC and FC), instruments for crisis management such as transitional



HDP-nexus

2 OCHA. (2017). *New Way of Working*. OCHA Policy Development and Studies Branch.
3 OECD. (2019). *DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

development assistance, and the special initiative on forced displacement. To strengthen the HDP-nexus, we should focus on working jointly towards collective outcomes that help overcome concrete challenges on the ground.

Demystifying the concept of peacebuilding

The concept of peace has an undeserved reputation of being lofty and complicated. However, it can be defined along two relatively simple and clear dimensions. Those dimensions can then be used for thinking about projects in any sector, including construction.

The first dimension is the absence of organized physical violence — so-called **negative peace**. This dimension of peace is often found in the immediate aftermath of civil wars, for example, when peacekeeping activities have begun and there are no longer active hostilities. While this phase is crucial in the short-term, the underlying drivers of conflict, and the reasons that hostilities broke out in the first place, remain unaddressed. Development activities, including larger construction efforts, are unlikely to achieve a sustainable impact in such settings.

This is where the second dimension of peace comes in — **positive peace**. Our experience suggests that the absence of organized violence can only be sustainable if additional elements such as political participation, the rule of law, and respect for protection and guarantee of human rights, are present. As discussed in the Chapter Two: *Linking construction and peacebuilding*, the absence of those aspects are often the drivers of violent conflict. Sustainable peace can be achieved wherever people, regardless of their living situation, origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, ethnic background, or legal status, are respected in their inalienable rights and have more freedom to shape their lives.

Based on this definition, peacebuilding implies that development efforts seek to make a specific contribution to longer-term social transformation. This is not a goal itself but a contribution to making development efforts more sustainable in the long-term. Similarly, the concept of peace can at first sight seem like an overwhelming and lofty objective, but it can be broken down into very tangible programming activities and represents a method more than an activity in and of itself.

One very humble and minimal approach considering the ways development activities can impact on (negative) peace, is by not making the situation worse, thus **avoiding any**

adverse effects of specific activities on local populations. The goal is to avoid a situation where a project reinforces the conflict dynamics or even leads to escalation in any given setting. Building a school, for example, requires an analysis of who benefits from the construction process itself, and whose children will be attending.

A further step is required to **strengthen the positive effects** of specific development activities. The goal here is to design specific activities in a way that they not only meet their primary goal but also influence positive peace. For example, if public housing is constructed, positive effects will be strengthened by bringing specific groups together during the construction process (with mediation or dialogue) and/or to ensure that the housing complex is operated and maintained jointly by diverse groups (again with mediation or dialogue).

Contributions of development activities to social transformation and positive peace can thus be broken down into clear parts to help make peacebuilding more easily applicable in practice. This is more straightforward than thinking about peace and peacebuilding in an all-encompassing way. Further, it does not overwhelm construction projects with additional, lofty objectives that impede implementation progress. Instead, it will enhance the sustainability of any activity.

Focusing development on peace — recent developments

Addressing the needs of the population in war-torn contexts (e.g., through housing, basic social infrastructure, and income generation) sends signs of hope, provides perspectives for the future, and increases the trust of governmental institutions. Infrastructure facilities have often been destroyed, leading to the very tangible needs of local populations remaining unmet. If government entities manage to meet these needs, this can lead to increased trust in nascent or fledgling state institutions and represents an important contribution to economic development. In addition, newly constructed buildings can symbolically underline the move from conflict to peace. These potential benefits are often referred to as a **peace dividend**.

This peace dividend, however, is not easily earned. Economic development on its own does not automatically lead to peaceful and inclusive societies. In 2017, a systematic review of development cooperation countries affected by civil war[4] concluded that any

4 Zürcher, C. (2017). What Do We (Not) Know About Development Aid and Violence? A Systematic Review. *World Development*, 98.

development cooperation project can only contribute to reducing violence if located in stable regions that are controlled by the government. If this precondition is in place, the study identified three mechanisms through which development cooperation can contribute to reducing violence. First, the provision of public good through development cooperation can increase the sympathy of the population for the government, so that the population is less likely to join the insurgents. Second, the prospect of an improvement in living conditions can bolster the local population's perception of the government as a service provider. And third, economic opportunities for the local population can be expanded, especially through employment-promoting measures, which can make insurgent recruitment more expensive.

Keeping in mind these findings, multiple policy agendas have been developed. One of the most prominent agendas linking peacebuilding objectives and construction projects is the World Bank's *Building for Peace — Reconstruction for Security, Equity, and Sustainable Peace in MENA*[5] report of 2020. It aims to develop a **new reconstruction paradigm** which considers the enormous social and political upheavals in the Middle East and North East Africa region (MENA) and addresses them appropriately. Its key conclusion is that to contribute to sustainable peace, reconstruction activities need to go beyond the classical understanding of rehabilitating physical infrastructure and restoring central government functions. Rather, they need to focus on measures to promote accountable and legitimate institutions, a fair and inclusive economy, and an inclusive social fabric. Such measures can restore an enabling environment for peace. Some of the report's lessons provide fruitful points of reflection for this book and can help leverage the peacebuilding potential of construction projects:

- Recurring participatory mechanisms serve to create a broad acceptance of development measures, strengthen social cohesion, and ultimately, produce inclusive institutions.
- Creating conditions conducive to income-generating activities at national and local levels can help support economic inclusion.
- Existing resources and social networks should be used as a starting point for reconstruction measures.
- Maintaining flexibility and willingness to learn during implementation is essential to adapting ongoing measures to changing contexts based on conflict analysis.

5 The World Bank. (2020). *Building for Peace — Reconstruction for Security, Equity, and Sustainable Peace in MENA The World Bank.*

How does this relate to Germany?

German Development Cooperation is explicitly committed to positive peace. As an important donor in fragile contexts, Germany plays a pioneering role internationally. Conflict-sensitive design of development cooperation is an indispensable element in realizing this claim. For the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), a commitment to conflict sensitivity (doing no harm and doing some good) has been defined as a quality criteria of development cooperation. This binding criterion applies globally and across all sectors.

The commitment to positive peace is value driven. It also reflects the commissioning parties' conviction that projects that contribute to a peaceful environment will achieve more sustainable development impacts overall. In other words, from the commissioning parties' perspective, applying a peacebuilding lens to project design is not an onerous additional concern but a central element of good project planning and implementation.

At this stage, it should also be emphasized that commissioning parties do not expect that specific development projects (including construction projects) will single-handedly create peace or transform specific societies. As discussed above, the goal is merely to make a distinct contribution to peace. This is a much less daunting and decidedly achievable task, for which there exists many experiences and a myriad of tools that can be employed.

The findings and ideas sketched so far have also become reflected in recent key German policy documents. Both the 2017 Federal Government guidelines *Preventing crises, managing conflicts, promoting peace*,[6] and the *2020 BMZ Strategy on Transitional Development Assistance*[7] prioritize the close connection and coordination of humanitarian, development, peace, and security-relevant measures and actors. While both policies underline the importance of providing short-term assistance to local communities, they call for connecting this assistance with transformative long-term approaches to building livelihoods, strengthening resilience, and supporting peacebuilding. Similarly, the current *BMZ 2030* institutional reform agenda[8] will result in a new *Core Area Strategy on*

6 Federal Government of Germany. (2017). Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace.

7 Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2020). Strategy on Transitional Development Assistance, *BMZ Document*, 02, 2020.

8 Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2020). *BMZ 2030 Reform Strategy. New Thinking – New Direction.*

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies, which focuses in an integrated manner on the three areas of intervention: good governance, peacebuilding and conflict prevention, and displacement and migration. The reform agenda *BMZ 2030* also establishes the partner category *Nexus and Peace Partners* as part of a new partnership model for German Development Cooperation. In these Nexus and Peace Partnerships, approaches in all sectors are to be focused on supporting long-term peacebuilding objectives by making use of the HDP-nexus.

Based on these policies, German Development Cooperation applies the multisectoral concept of *Rehabilitation and Crisis Prevention (Krisenpräventiver Wiederaufbau)*. It is based on the **building back better** approach to development and seeks to support physical reconstruction while also focusing on social and economic recovery. It aims at strengthening the capacities of people and local institutions after violent conflict or extreme natural events through already existing resources and local knowledge — thereby fostering development and peace. In this approach, sound contextual knowledge is key to effectively supporting capacities for self-help and local administration. It also provides avenues for the participation of the local population, civil society organizations, and state institutions at all levels.

Linking construction and peace

Construction alone is not the perfect solution towards achieving peaceful and inclusive societies or overcoming ethno-religious conflicts which often have a long history within the local context. However, construction can be an important cornerstone of peaceful and inclusive societies. For that to occur, it first needs to be embedded in a broader network of social and economic reconstruction that restores local capacities for the provision of social services and local economic cycles. Secondly, it needs to be implemented with carefully defined quality criteria in place. If done right, we argue, such activity can serve as a tangible manifestation of peacebuilding efforts.

Linking construction and peace means adopting a broader perspective on the outcomes and ripple effects of development measures.[9] Construction is more than bricks and mortar. It creates lasting perspectives for a better future, jobs, and develops capacities while the infrastructure is being built. When completed, it delivers basic service provision for people and creates physical space for the capacity development of civil servants. The prospect of being provided with infrastructure, especially in post-conflict contexts, creates access to stakeholders and

9 IEP. (2020). *Global Peace Index*. Institute for Economics and Peace.

might sideline veto players in the peace process. It can also have psychological effects as construction is tangible and can give people hope that there is a change for the better. So, when planning projects, these multiple layers and effects should be kept in mind — even if they cannot necessarily be measured with exact numbers. We will have a deeper dive into these effects in the following chapter, *Linking construction and peacebuilding*.

Linking construction and peacebuilding

2

Linking construction and peacebuilding

A complex relationship

Rebuilding previously destroyed infrastructure and alleviating some of the physical legacies of violent conflict are an essential part of international humanitarian and development cooperation. This does not, however, automatically lead to the absence of organized physical violence or the establishment of positive peace. Peacebuilding requires more than removing the consequences of violence: it requires addressing and transforming the structural, underlying causes of violent conflict. Indeed, these causes are extremely specific to each context. Rarely is a violent conflict driven by only one issue.

Broadly speaking, the specific causes of violent conflict can often be found in two overly broad categories: The first is the **scarcity of public goods to satisfy basic human needs**. This includes competition for income and jobs, access to limited educational opportunities, land, and other resources. The second is a **lack of social cohesion**, which often implies a sense of difference between social groups and a lack of common identity. If identities are set in a way to create a dynamic of us against them, this can result in violence.

These two broad categories are interdependent and overlapping. Existing divisions and gaps within these categories can lead to or be mobilized for violence. In both categories, a crucial variable is the capacity of the state to provide public goods in an equitable manner and protect the rights of its citizens.

We argue that conflict is less likely to occur if extreme divisions and mounting factions are redressed and minimized. Equal access to public services and a feeling that all people share a common identity are strong safeguards against conflicts turning violent. Construction projects can make a tangible contribution in this regard if they respond to the specific conflict fault lines that are present in

each context. Put another way, there are always entry points for construction projects to address specific issues locally which are conducive to peace. Those entry points are referred to as **peace needs**.

Leveraging construction for peacebuilding is neither easy nor automatic. But construction combined with capacity development is potentially a strong instrument to support peace beyond the simple rebuilding of infrastructure and homes. **Construction can transform the underlying causes of violent conflict by addressing context-specific peace needs**. This enables transformative development and societal progress that finally lead to sustainable peace. Every investment made in tackling the root causes of the conflict and increasing social cohesion also supports the long-term sustainability of infrastructure.

Alleviating grievances: Scarcity and competition

Fragility means that the state is not able to provide sufficient public goods for its population. This sets in motion a **vicious cycle of deprivation and increasing vulnerability**. The lack of access to or exclusion from public goods such as security, health, and education makes life harder and consequently leads to a lack of resilience for the most vulnerable people. They are less able to overcome external shocks such as extreme weather events or economic downturns. Grievance, competition, and finally conflict about access to public goods, can be the result.

In the long run, infrastructure measures can play a significant role in addressing the structural dimensions of fragility and thereby contributing to increased resilience. For example, a high level of unemployment is often one of the main drivers of fragility in conflict. Supporting the (re)activation of the economy by rehabilitating the necessary productive infrastructure is therefore a key contribution to peacebuilding. Here two strands can be addressed: (i) productivity itself (for example, by the rehabilitation of irrigation systems), or (ii) access to markets (for example, rehabilitating feeder roads or local market sites). Similar entry points exist in all sectors and all sectors can contribute to peacebuilding.

However, caution is needed not to rebuild the past but rather build towards an inclusive future. Otherwise, there is a high risk of reinforcing existing old inequalities and grievances. This means that **we need to be flexible and construct based on the results of a profound context analysis** (see Chapter Two: *Building blocks for construction and peace*). Often that means finding new sites rather than rebuilding where buildings have tradi-

tionally been located or varying their design and construction from previous styles and methods. For example, sometimes building a few smaller decentralized health units might improve service access for patients who previously found it difficult to reach a large hospital in a secured zone.

In fragile and conflict-prone settings **where, how, and what is built** determines, to a great extent, who has access to basic social infrastructure and hence the positive impact on peace:

- The **location** of a building should enable inclusive access. The rehabilitation or construction of infrastructure might lead to grievances of other regions or societal groups with no access to needed infrastructure. Under no circumstances should groups be excluded from supporting others.
- The question of **how** something is built focusses mainly on the building process itself and who is engaged in both construction as well as decision-making before and during the process. For example, humanitarian assistance to refugees might make the host community feel left out or create a sense of competition for scarce infrastructure and services. Or in the case of existing tensions between two villages, a water well that only one village can use, and where only workers from one village were hired for the construction is likely to increase the potential for conflict. It is important to consider such effects in the planning phase and to mitigate possible unintended negative impacts wherever possible. A profound and in-depth analysis of the context is key in doing so (see Chapter Three: *Building blocks for construction and peace*).
- Finally, **what** is built certainly should focus on the needs of the target group, but again also maximize the inclusiveness of access. To increase the impact of infrastructure on peacebuilding, it is important to ensure the **quality of the services** (for example, by capacity development) and that all population groups can equally access the services provided. If well designed, these projects can thereby even contribute to improved inclusion by specifically taking care of the needs of the most vulnerable population groups who are often excluded from these services.

Strengthening social cohesion

Diverging identities and a lack of a shared sense of belonging can cause violent conflict. People's identities and sense of belonging are multilayered and include many aspects, such as religion, language group, football club, or even profession. Strengthening bonds between people and communi-

ties, in turn, can be a remedy against violent conflict. Simply put, close social relations, a fundamental attachment to the community and a focus on the common good are crucial aspects of social cohesion.

Construction projects can be instrumental in strengthening social cohesion if designed accordingly. We argue that this can best be accomplished by combining construction activities with supporting the **legitimacy of a public service provider**, for example the government. Construction should complement service provision to support peaceful and inclusive societies. Service provision that respects democratic and human rights can help legitimize state institutions. This can build social cohesion by strengthening the relationship between the state and various societal groups.

Furthermore, in the context of widespread destruction, rebuilding **public infrastructure may serve as a peace dividend.** This underlines the immediate benefits of peace and improves the standing of actors in favor of peace. Well-designed projects need to be available soon after violence has ended and need to be clearly identifiable with peace actors for this peace dividend to be visible and felt. In fragile contexts, there could otherwise be a risk of projects being instrumentalized by armed groups or misused for war economy.

Another main driver for peacebuilding through infrastructure provision can be the creation of public spaces that allow **dialogue and interaction** within communities. In this context, the best outcomes can be achieved when the construction of infrastructure is combined with the facilitation of dialogue processes. The selection of building sites, for example, should be the result of a participatory approach with the involvement of relevant local stakeholders. This can also ensure ownership for future maintenance and the inclusion of projects in development planning down the road.

The creation of public space can be **combined with capacity development** of mandated local peace actors or civil society organizations working in this field. This also allows for a specific focus on vulnerable population groups (for example, children or youth) not only **creating a safe space** (for example, a school in a destroyed area) but also by contributing to their increased political and societal participation. **Construction itself can transmit a message for peace and inclusivity** through the form of buildings or the process of being built. The engagement of communities within the construction can therefore strengthen ownership and shared identity — the building becomes “theirs” and therefore worthy of protection.

Inter-religious celebration at the Hamdanya Christian monastery after a nearby school was renovated by people from different religious groups

Foundations for peace: what to build?

There are multiple areas in which construction in development cooperation can be found. Key examples are:

- **Public utility infrastructure** to provide essential services such as energy supply, water supply or transportation infrastructure.
- **Social infrastructure** to accommodate social public services such as educational institutions, health-related facilities, or public housing.
- **Economic infrastructure** to enable business activities such as market halls, business hubs, or industry parks.

Within these areas, construction measures can potentially address peacebuilding needs, both by alleviating grievances and supporting social cohesion. By increasing the supply of accessible services, competition for the satisfaction of basic human needs may be reduced. The state, being able to deliver on the needs of the population, increases the government's legitimacy.

What exactly is required and appropriate for peacebuilding in a specific context merits elaborate evaluation of the context and the needs of the target group. We describe how to do that in the next chapter, *Building blocks for construction and peace*.

Building blocks for construction and peace

3

Building blocks for construction and peace

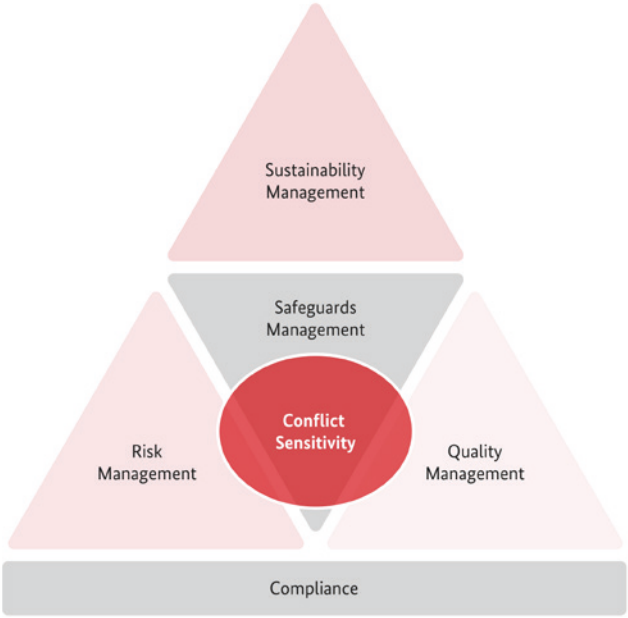
As discussed in the previous chapter, construction projects can support efforts to restore peace and prevent conflict by addressing the root causes of conflicts. They can also strengthen the resilience of individuals, communities, and local structures. However, how construction measures can contribute to peacebuilding depends on whether certain requirements are fulfilled. There are no magical "silver bullets" or "one-measure-fits-all" solutions to put an end to problems. We argue that the contribution of construction projects to peacebuilding is biggest if projects apply certain quality requirements, use participatory approaches, combine construction with capacity development, have a rigorous Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system, and show high technical quality.

Quality requirements

GIZ deploys a comprehensive set of quality requirements that should be especially applied in fragile contexts. This includes a safeguard, compliance, and sustainability management system, context and conflict sensitive approaches, as well as extensive risk management.

Safeguards: Identify risks already in the planning stage

A comprehensive **Safeguard System** must be applied in the planning phase. It detects possible risks and potential unintended negative impacts of projects in the areas of environment, climate, conflict and context, human rights, and gender equality. This allows a risk-informed approach and the identification and design of respective mitigating measures. For example, using context- specific methods of construction and materials can not only help protect buildings during earthquakes, storms, and floods (building back better); if local materials, producers, contractors are being used, this adds another layer to a sense of belonging and inclusivity.



Comprehensive set of quality requirements

Compliance: Doing things the right way

A thorough **compliance system** ensures that construction projects respect German, national, and international standards and relevant legal requirements. To be beacons of hope for a better and more peaceful future, construction projects should be an example that processes can be worked on in an inclusive and transparent way. This will further increase the legitimacy of public authorities engaged in the process, and hence decrease potential for conflict.

Sustainability management

The **Sustainability Management System** works to avoid negative effects on the environment, climate, and society. It also checks for factors that contribute to a sustainable, inclusive, and peaceful population. Sustainable construction can bring several social and economic benefits, which are key to contributing to peace in conflict-affected societies. The construction industry's crucial contribution to economic sustainability is evident. The sustainable and efficient use of local resources and materials contributes to the construction of affordable houses, provides income opportunities for local supplying businesses, and creates sustainable

employment in the maintenance of infrastructure.

Context and conflict sensitivity: From do no harm to do some good

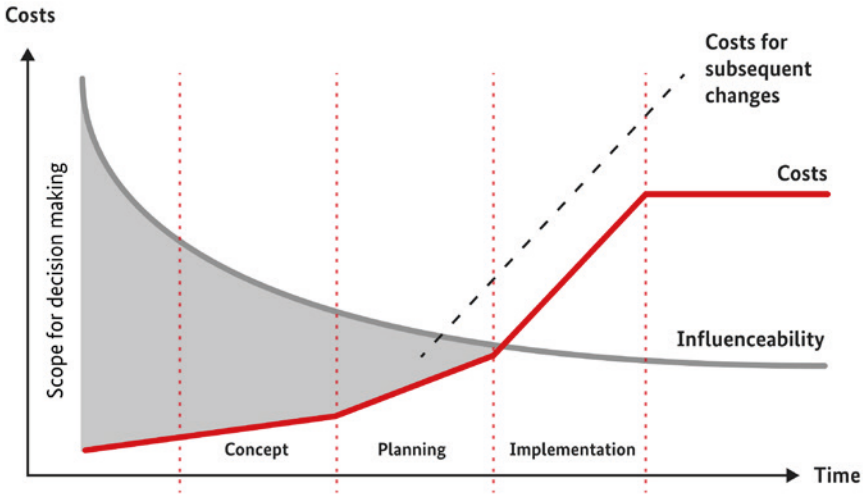
Construction is like any other development project: intending to do good things is not good enough. On the one hand, rebuilding houses, reconstructing basic social infrastructure, and repairing destroyed roads and bridges can have a positive effect on peace and strengthen resilience. On the other hand, infrastructure projects can accelerate power disputes, increase corruption, or aggravate existing inequalities. If poorly implemented, construction — again, as any other development project — can hinder peace efforts, increase tensions within societies, and even escalate conflicts.

Therefore, a **conflict sensitive approach** to construction is key. This means minimizing, as much as possible, unintended negative impacts of construction projects on society and aiming at maximizing the positive effects. To ensure that the desired peacebuilding outcomes can be achieved, we need to know what and where we construct (based on a profound knowledge of the context). Rather than using a one-design-fits-all approach, interventions need to be tailored to the specificities of each context. In addition, the construction process itself is key (the how). For example, a construction project which employs only workers from one ethnic group risks further escalating existing ethnic tensions.

The starting point and first step for designing conflict sensitive projects is the **integrated Peace and Conflict Assessment (iPCA)**. It provides all the necessary background information and data needed to address local peace needs. As such, the iPCA identifies crucial political, social, cultural, historical, and economic conditions. It identifies key actors and institutions. It maps the dynamics of power and exclusion. It also provides information about the needs of the most vulnerable people, for example the groups who do not have access to infrastructure and places that can potentially reunite people.

Based on the iPCA, infrastructure projects can be designed to contribute to peacebuilding. However, it is important to **continuously monitor the context** since power dynamics between actors frequently change. The more volatile the context, the more effort must go into a continuous monitoring system. This can be delegated as a task for the Risk Management Offices (RMOs) or be integrated into the project. On this basis, potential peacebuilding effects can be addressed, and unintended negative effects will be avoided.

While flexibility is important in volatile and fragile contexts, it is a particular challenge to change large construction



Steering of cost vs. impact over time and implementation phases

projects once they have begun. The scope for adapting implementation diminishes with time and changes become more costly. Therefore, the planning stage is the crucial point at which the results of the iPCA need to be considered.

Security and risk management

Security and risk management structures monitor external risks for projects. In addition to risks from natural hazards, such as earthquakes, extreme weather events and floods, this includes risks emanating from violence, societal tensions, and political fragility. In addition, however, these structures can also play a proactive role in facilitating successful project implementation.

As such, RMOs can provide information about a community's perception of projects and facilitate information-sharing and outreach. This could include bringing together elders, civil society organizations, and those community members who will benefit directly from the construction activity. While this is an important contribution to participation (see below), having the local community on board in project implementation is also an important contribution to security.

In Afghanistan, for example, GIZ used the traditional element of holding a *shura* (Arabic word for consultation in affairs with those who will be affected by the decision) to first explain the construction procedure. Information was provided on the type of building,

possible implementing agencies such as engineers, and the impact logic behind the project. It was also explained to the community that there are limits to what can be achieved in any given project, for example, the number of houses that can be connected to an electricity grid. Finally, project managers explained operating procedures and that they would need community support in keeping the staff safe by active cooperation with the RMO system.

Furthermore, security and risk management systems are the prerequisites for **business continuity management** in case the security situation drastically escalates. Longer term suspension of construction measures can have a negative effect on people's perceptions and undermine the goal of providing a swift peace dividend after violent conflict. Therefore, good business continuity management is needed to ensure that in volatile contexts, and in times when international staff must be relocated, the construction work can continue.

To maintain project activities, GIZ uses the instrument of remote management and largely relies on national staff. In remotely controlled projects, various methods are used to ensure the quality of implementation, including construction. This encompasses conflict sensitive recruitment systems for local staff and in-depth monitoring to ensure compliance with contractual processes and specifications. Continuous capacity development for local staff enables the continuous engagement of GIZ in extremely fragile contexts.

Participatory approach

Bottom-up and top-down approaches ensure that people's needs are addressed. Ownership at local and national levels is necessary for a lasting impact on peacebuilding. In the context of large-scale destruction of infrastructure and housing, one key challenge is that most infrastructure programs are funded through pledging conferences. These in turn are based on the results of centrally conducted needs assessments, which contributes to a **top-down approach**.

To embed projects in the local context, **bottom-up** elements must be integrated in the project design. The key is to prioritize local and decentralized development, and to allow for community participation. The perceptions of those people who have an active role dealing with the legacies of the conflict are also needed to bring together formerly estranged (sometimes hostile) communities to work towards a common goal: the infrastructure that they all desire. Only then can infrastructure truly be embedded in an integrated approach towards rehabilitation of the livelihoods of affected communities and the healing of social fabric.

By applying an effective participatory approach, violent conflict can be minimized, and common responsibility as well as ownership be increased. This can **strengthen the social contract** on the local level or towards the state and thus contribute to stability and social cohesion. Applying a **people-centered approach** and focusing on the most vulnerable groups (for example, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)) ensures their specific needs are responded to. Inclusive community participation further strengthens social cohesion and accountability and may close gender gaps in community decision-making about construction.

Participation manifests on different levels of planning. Inclusive participation of both the official partners of the project (for example, ministries, state agencies, etc.) and the target group itself in construction planning, implementation, and evaluation can help balance different interests at the local level. Many reconstruction measures are designed as **community-based** development processes and actively involve local and traditional structures on the ground. **Target group-specific impact monitoring** helps to prevent unintended effects on local distribution conflicts (see *Nigeria case study* — community development planning).

Capacity development

Local, regional, and national structures in fragile contexts are often weak or non-functional. This means that vulnerable people are hit hardest by crises. Capacity development has the potential to empower individuals, local communities, and institutions and increase their resilience in potential future crises. **In the context of construction projects, GIZ provides capacity development at three levels**: (i) individual, for example human capacity development; (ii) institutional, such as organizational development; and (iii) framework, for example, policy advice. These three levels are either aimed directly at the target group to enable it to use the opportunities provided by the infrastructure, or indirectly through intermediaries that will provide (public) services to the target group.

Relevant activities can include, for instance, the capacity development of construction workers, vocational training, or training in the maintenance of infrastructure. Further examples of combining infrastructure and capacity development include training for skilled staff to ensure the provision of basic services in a conflict-sensitive way (see *Nigeria case study* — vocational training center Mafoni).

Construction worker training is a particularly important element of linking construction and peacebuilding. Skilled workers will be positive role models in their community, presenting

a positive incentive to others on how to live their life. However, GIZ operates in an area of tension between the need to deliver fast results, on the one hand, and implement projects complying with high technical and financial standards, on the other. This becomes apparent when working with subcontractors who must prioritize getting the job done as fast as possible, but at the same time have limited options to invest in further training for employees. The challenge is to set incentives, for instance in the contracts with construction companies, to ensure capacity development — both during and after the construction.

Short-term and longer-term interventions should be combined as early as possible. To have sustainable effects, for example, **training should be integrated in national policies and curricula that sets the relevant frameworks**. This means, for example, that construction measures should always be linked to strengthening the capacities of national staff and should be embedded in national plans to create a more lasting impact on peacebuilding. Limitations do occur due to the fact that most projects — especially in conflict or post-conflict scenarios — are implemented at the sub-national level and the described positive aspects of infrastructure measures manifest themselves on this level (in a province or district). However, they can trigger policy changes within the national government as well.

Capacity development needs longer-term engagement to achieve results. Building and sustaining trust with the target group takes time. New staff or consultants constantly flying in and out are less trusted — and would not be accepted as trainers. Stopping construction when the security situation decreases might be harmful to the trust of partners and the target group. The positive psychological effects of construction, such as building hope and trust, or showing that there is an improvement in living conditions, can then turn into disappointment. Unfulfilled hopes can create a situation far worse than it was before. Continuous peacebuilding is particularly important in these tough moments. Since it can be difficult for development organizations to maintain international staff in fragile settings, the above-mentioned measures to ensure business continuity, especially in high profile construction projects, are key to having a positive effect on peace.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is an instrument used to gather data and provide a framework for measuring impact. The most frequently observed impacts of construction are identified on the economic, ecological, and social level.

ECONOMIC IMPACT:

- Income-generating measures, increasing productivity and quality.
- Participation of population groups in economic processes.
- Job creation through the construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure, contribution to the qualifications of staff in the construction sector.
- The use of local materials has a direct impact on the reactivation of local markets.
- Infrastructure measures contribute to structural change processes relating to economic development at the municipal level.
- Adapting construction to natural hazards such as floods.

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT:

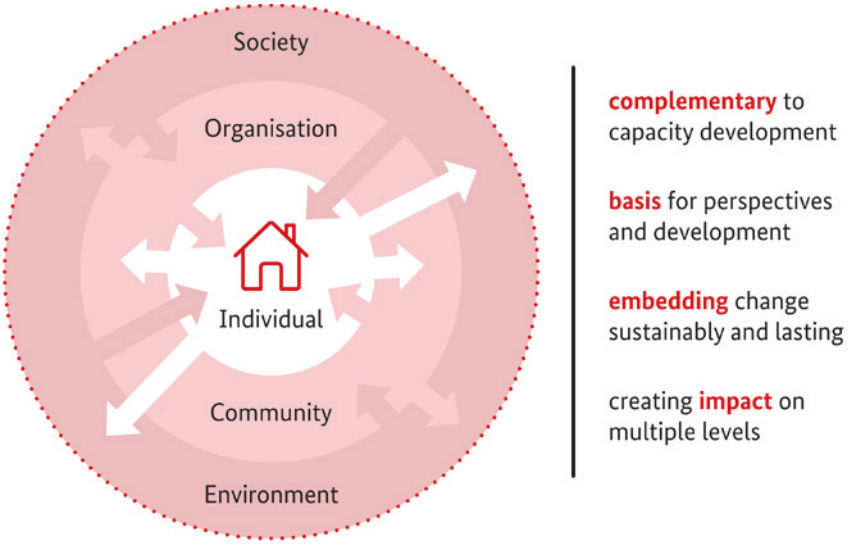
- Compliance with national minimum standards within the framework of infrastructure measures and orientation of international environmental standards.
- Potentials for improving the environment and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, for example, by considering energy-saving opportunities in the design and planning of infrastructure measures while using renewable energies and locally available materials.

SOCIAL IMPACT:

- Improving the living conditions of vulnerable populations in a violent region and strengthening their resilience.
- The possibility of income generation has a positive impact on human development and self-help capacities and allows us to actively participate in the local community.
- Human rights are promoted through respect for international labor standards, gender equality in the use of buildings, or the participation of People with Disabilities (PWD).

Linking construction and peacebuilding requires a look beyond these construction impacts. It follows a holistic understanding of construction that influences different societal levels and relationships.

It is necessary to complement standard project monitoring with broader, interconnected knowledge-sharing and evaluation of the project to measure impacts of how construction contributes to achieving the desired peace dividend. During project conception, the development of a theory of change as well as directly-related indicators, opens the possibility to measure impacts on peacebuilding.



Interdependencies of construction and context

Consequently, we argue that developing an M&E system for construction projects should focus on the following elements:

1. **Establish constant monitoring of the context** and more specifically of the peacebuilding needs identified in the iPCA. These should include both observing changes in the context and our (negative and positive) contribution to these changes. During implementation, the expected interactions between the project and the context are continuously and jointly observed. It is helpful to develop separate indicators for these effects as part of the internal project monitoring and to collect these jointly with the indicators in the impact matrix.

2. **Use monitoring to support the commissioning party in political communication**. The results of context monitoring are of particular importance for the commissioning party for the construction project. Hence, it is important that the project itself prepares the results in a user-friendly way. This could be through tools that include quarterly reports, ad hoc reporting, and the annual report.

3. **Measure the increased capacity of the government to sustainably and inclusively provide public services with the infrastructure provided**. The progress of

capacity development can easily be measured throughout implementation. However, a major limitation for projects linking construction and peacebuilding is the absence of ex-post evaluation. The construction process itself will — in most cases — only be concluded towards the end of a project. The impact on peacebuilding set in motion by improved access to public services can only be witnessed well after the conclusion of the project.

4. **Joint learning.** A community of practice to exchange good practices, mistakes, and other experiences greatly facilitates implementation. The GIZ Network International Cooperation in Conflicts and Disasters is a good forum to reach out to peers for joint learning. For collaboration, resources are required to support design, implementation, monitoring, and supervision, including third-party monitoring and digital solutions, and support for a learning transfer from other country cases. **Lessons learned** and **knowledge management** across different units are part of a holistic learning approach. Conflict sensitivity platforms such as those in Libya and Yemen can host a cluster learning hub or promote exchange among different donors and implementing agencies.

Technical quality

One essential requirement for construction projects is the quality of the infrastructure itself. To ensure the highest possible standards regarding technical quality, durability and sustainability, and holistic quality management covering all phases of the construction process should be in place. Nevertheless, quality of construction is always a matter of compromise to allow adaptation to the local context, but without compromising legal processes.

GIZ considers the following points during the preparation, design, award procedure, construction phase, and project closure as part of an adapted **quality assurance system**:

1. Preparation and conception

   - **Technical assessments on the ground** are needed to assure identified and contextually feasible measures are also technically feasible.
   - Implementation concepts need to be developed for each construction measure.

2. Design and planning

   - **Design solutions adapted to the given environmen**t and the local context under consideration of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) need to be developed.

- Accessibility, fire safety, and safe and accessible gender-sensitive sanitary environments are an absolute minimum standard. Local technical regulations need to be considered if feasible.
- GIZ headquarter experts assure close monitoring of the design process and support to develop best technical and design solutions.[1]

3. Award procedure

- Award procedures must follow **internationally acknowledged standards and procurement laws** and need a thorough process of control and supervision.[2]
- Quality is assured and approvals given by two independent units of GIZ, technical and contractual. In addition, processes are thoroughly controlled by internal and external audits. This is also an important lever to actively and effectively fight corruption.
- **A focus on local construction companies** (where feasible) benefits from local knowledge, reduces conflict risks, and boost local economies. The qualifications of contractors, their economic suitability, and the approval of the company in the country are extensively checked.

4. Construction phase

- **GIZ acts as temporary building owner** on behalf of partnering ministries and directly steers and oversees the construction processes with qualified national and international personnel.
- Strong focus on proper construction supervision, assured by qualified independent experts, preferably on a permanent basis, is needed. In specific cases, construction supervision can be assured directly by personnel of GIZ.
- Assurance of clear communication lines, including relationship management, is key to the process and should aim for mutual trust and understanding.
- During construction, GIZ ensures knowledge transfer and capacity development for partners and construction companies.
- Site safety and health and environmental aspects need to be supervised to ensure a do no

1 German standards (DIN/EURO Code) for building security DIN EN 1990 — DIN EN 1999 Eurocodes — European Standards (en-standard.eu), GIZ Inclusion Note, GIZ Mandate & Supervision Handbook, National technical codes, etc.

2 German Construction Contract Procedures — VOB/A (obligatory for GIZ) in connection with the national procurement law, etc.

harm approach and safeguard principles.[3]

5. Project closure

   - **GIZ ensures warranty management** and accompanies the finalized measures throughout the warranty phase.
   - User committees are trained in operation and maintenance to ensure the durability of the infrastructure provided.

With this setup, GIZ can assure the direct implementation and construction of high-quality infrastructure; from simple and small structures to bigger and complex infrastructure projects as shown in the case study section.

3 International Labor Organization (ILO) regulations, International Labour Standards on Occupational Safety and Health, international and national environmental standards, GIZ safeguard standards, etc.

Case studies: What does all this mean in practice?

Case studies: What does all this mean in practice?

In the first three chapters, we have developed a conceptual foundation for linking construction and peacebuilding. But what does that mean in practice? We answer this by providing deep insights into four cases.

Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine have much in common. They are affected by violent conflicts, have experienced massive destruction of basic social infrastructure and service provision, and continue to be challenged by widespread social mistrust between and within different population groups.

However, these four crisis contexts show important differences. While the violent conflict in Ukraine is restricted to the eastern part of the country, more and more Afghan provinces are at least partly under control by the Taliban or other insurgent groups. Iraq, while also infamous for violent conflict, terrorist attacks (at least since 2003) and being highly fragile, is rich with natural resources. However, their usage in favor of the Iraqi population is hindered by the conflict. Nigeria still struggles to escape the poverty trap because it is confronted with the swelling conflict of Boko Haram in West and Central Africa.

Germany implements reconstruction and peacebuilding projects through GIZ in these four countries. By selecting these cases, we want to show that linking construction and peacebuilding can make a meaningful contribution if tailored to a specific context. There is no solution that fits all approaches. Extensive contextual knowledge, technical expertise, and formalized implementation processes, paired with the ability to apply this knowledge in the steering of the project, have been key to successful implementation.

But, as no plan — no matter how carefully developed — survives first contact with reality, the ability to stay flexible is a basic requirement in these contexts. These case studies are more than success stories as they offer in-depth insights into the challenges faced before, during, and after

implementation. While some challenges can be resolved, others must be continuously dealt with. All of them, however, provide the chance to learn and progressively develop GIZ's approaches to linking construction and peacebuilding.

The following four chapters describe for each case study — Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine — what it means for a construction project to use contextual knowledge and address peace needs. We write about achievements resulting from linking construction and peacebuilding, and the steps taken to get there. How were compliance needs met? How can construction be used as a door opener, and why is capacity development so important? All kinds of challenges, trade-offs, and solutions are offered here. Furthermore, the reader gains insights into the projects of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO) and finds ideas about ways to support political communication with the commissioning party. The closing section of each case concludes with lessons learned for future engagement when linking construction and peacebuilding.

Nigeria: Support to strengthen resilience in North East Nigeria

4

Nigeria: Support to strengthen resilience in North East Nigeria

Background: Why are we here?

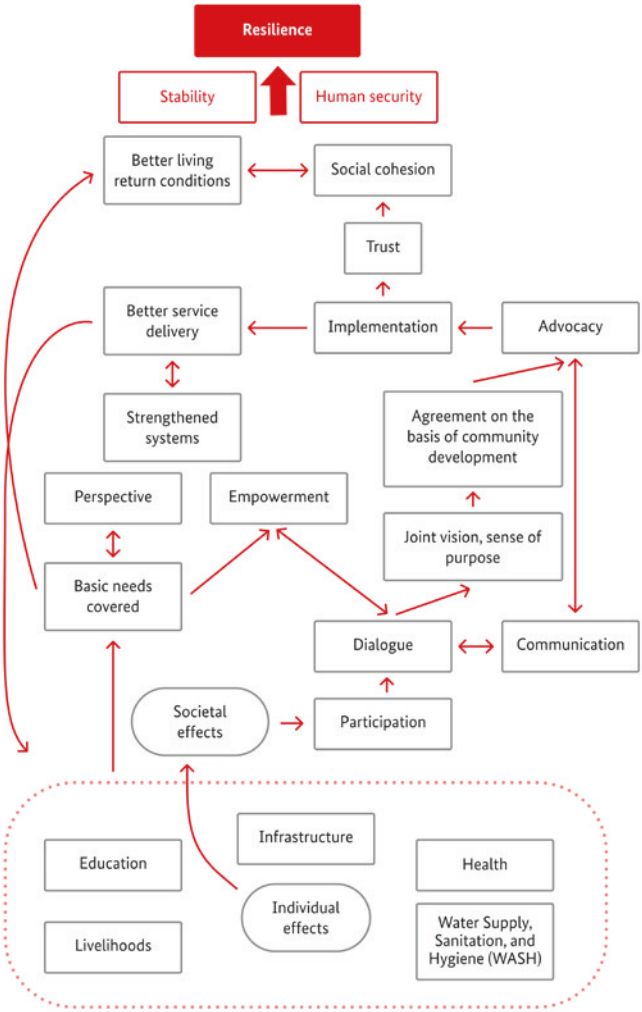
With 180 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. It also suffers from high economic inequalities and conflicts with extremist groups. Poverty, food insecurity, and inadequate access to education and health care are particularly severe in the northeast. Since 2009, repeated violent attacks by the terrorist organization Boko Haram have drastically exacerbated the situation, especially in Borno State — leading to over 27,000 dead and more than million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Most IDPs are now living in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, and the neighboring states of Yobe and Adamawa.

The ongoing attacks by Boko Haram, as well as the influx of IDPs, have further strained the already weak healthcare and education system. Basic infrastructural facilities such as potable water, energy, and sanitation are overstretched, and the local markets can no longer provide sufficient food supplies for the population. The humanitarian crisis has also resulted in increasing conflicts over scarce resources.

What did we build and how is it connected?

Working at the **interface of emergency relief and development assistance**, by the end of 2016, GIZ established a project co-financed by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union (EU). The first construction measures were achieved in 2018 and the last measures are planned to be achieved by the end of 2021. We refer to this as *the project* in this chapter.

Encompassing a **holistic approach**, the project consists of four units: governance, livelihood, education, and infrastructure. The project aims to strengthen local institutional capacity to improve

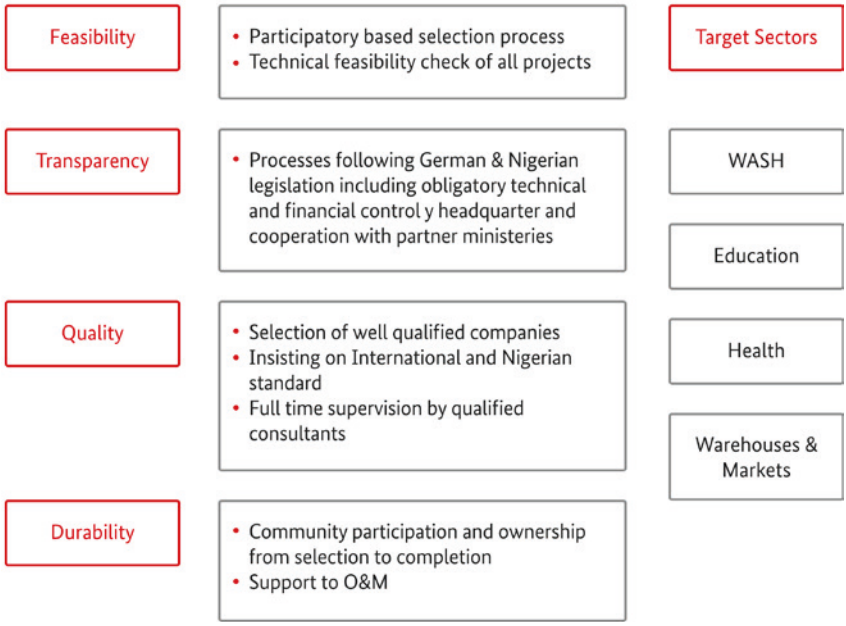


Theory of change of the project: Strengthening resilience in North-East Nigeria

service provision in the long run, and to promote self-reliance by boosting the resilience of the most vulnerable households. The construction intervention supported three thematic units, improved **access to basic service infrastructure,** and promoted the resumption of agricultural and economic activities. Vocational training support fostered youth economic empowerment. By addressing significant needs in the education sector, the project was

aimed at improving access to and the quality of basic education, strengthening support provision, and including young people's perspectives.

The target set for the infrastructure unit was a fixed number of 200 measures to cover several sectors. These measures were participatively identified through Community Development Planning processes (CDP). They included the construction of vocational training centers (VTCs), markets, warehouses for agricultural products, public healthcare centers, a maternity ward and water supply measures (both solar powered and hand-pump borehole-based). The water measures were supplementary to social infrastructure to assure safe hygienic situations at these sites, but also were built as stand-alone measures to support local and especially rural communities. The project took the aspects of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) into consideration to keep the infrastructure as simple and user friendly as possible. In addition, user committees were established, and members were trained to be able to ensure day-to-day O&M as independently as possible.



Infrastructure approach

Outcomes: What has been achieved?

The latest external Social Impact Assessment (SIA) from October and November 2020 reveals the GIZ approach to be an outstanding implementation:

> *"GIZ infrastructure measures differ from other interventions in terms of size, scale, dynamics, quality, delivery, and sustained utilization, considering that it is provided unconditionally without counterpart inputs."*
>
> SIA, 2020

Due to established liaison with the stakeholders, the measures of the project fitted seamlessly into government and community dynamics — both at the level of strategy and the level of implementation.

> *"The infrastructure unit contributed to the validation and legitimacy of the CDP process and the community-based committees in remote communities."*
>
> SIA, 2020

Key informants mentioned the renovation of the Lokuwa 1 Primary School in Mubi North as such an example.

Girls fetch water at Lokuwa 1 Primary School

Going beyond supporting development physically, the infrastructure measures **promote community-driven work and initiatives, thereby reducing divisive tendencies**. For example, a key informant observed how peers from within the communities were able to establish and synchronize routines and tasks because of the water supply measures provided by GIZ.

Engaging and liaising with the stakeholders through CDP had a positive impact on the communities beyond considering the needs and concerns of the beneficiaries regarding infrastructure measures.

> *"Using the platform established within the community for representation, negotiation, dialogue and participation, reduced tension and more amicable settlement of disagreements and disputes resulted."*
>
> SIA, 2020

> *"Building back better has become associated with GIZ in Borno and Adamawa States and has been reflected in the perception of the delivered infrastructure measures."*
>
> SIA, 2020

People coming together at a collection point connected to a solar powered borehole

Solar powered water supply system, Adamawa State

A local community leader from Mubi North Local Government Area (LGA) considered the **infrastructure measures provided as social security investments.** The measures would be more than just public utilities, they also contribute to other forms of development, including education, health, livelihood, and well-being.

Voices from the target group

Schools in Mubi North — addressing parents' security concerns

In Mubi North, Mubi South, and Maiha LGAs, parents were satisfied with the conditions of the schools and the fact that children were learning in safer and more secure places. They also appreciated the nearby boreholes which reduced the dangers of sourcing water from distant and possibly contaminated points. This **reduced stress and risks** faced by households and reduced vulnerabilities to hazards, violent attacks by bandits, and potential kidnapping.

> *"Having such measures in our community gives us a sense of belonging and places us also on a pedestal in the scheme of things."*
>
> Community Member of Maiha LGA, Adamawa State

The VTC in Mafoni — construction with a livelihood component

One of the first measures achieved was the VTC in Mafoni ward in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. It was officially commissioned in the presence of Dr. Gerd Müller, German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Governor of Borno State, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum. The town is surrounded by Boko Haram and has only one temporarily reliable road connecting it to safer areas in neighboring Yobe State.

VTC Mafoni classroom block after renovation (initially built 100 years ago)

The center was not only rehabilitated but also fully equipped with furniture and training materials, a new solar-powered water supply system and toilet blocks to ensure a safe hygienic environment. The neighboring community was also supplied with water. The livelihoods unit of the project further supported the center in their educational work and has developed new curricula for solar power technicians together with the Nigerian Energy Support Project of

Minister Dr. Gerd Müller during commissioning of VTC Mafoni

Abba Modu in action

German Development Cooperation, implemented by GIZ.

Abba Modu, a 24-year-old man living in Mafoni ward of Maiduguri, is one of the beneficiaries of the rehabilitated VTC Mafoni. Abba has become self-reliant ever since he learned cabinet making from one of the workshops in the training institute. Coming from an extremely poor background, he inherited the responsibility of taking care of his siblings and mother. He struggled through hardship and financial challenges for a long period.

"I have really achieved a lot after completing my training on cabinet making in VTC Mafoni, because I now work independently and support my younger ones financially. The rehabilitation process and equipping the training center with standard tools had a huge impact on my life as my living condition has changed dramatically. I was given a starter pack kit when I completed my training and that really motivated me, and I remain grateful."

Abba Modu, cabinet making trainee, VTC Mafoni

At the VTC in Maiduguri, participants in the training became friends and jointly set-up a business after graduation. These interactions, the informant observed, improve understanding and appreciation of fundamental differences as well as similarities, strengths, and collaboration, and yield positive outcomes.

> *"Infrastructure measures have greatly enhanced social cohesion, because as a center for learning, people from the different religious and ethnic groups came here to learn together. They formed friendships which sometimes extended to their families."*
>
> Community member, Mafoni Ward, Maiduguri

Linking construction and peacebuilding: How did we get there?

Participatory approach: How did we get all stakeholders on board?

All measures were planned through **Community Development Planning.** This approach strengthens relationships between local communities and leaders, government institutions, and civil society. It further builds trust between different ethnic groups as well as between citizens and the government. The overall aim was to build a common vision for community development. Running from 10 to 12 months, this covered:

Ongoing CDP process: Mutual judgement on community priorities

- Dialogue forums between local political and traditional leaders.
- Large-scale sensitization in the communities through civil engagement.
- Participatory planning in the communities in CDP sessions, resulting in development plans.
- Set-up and capacity development of community-based follow-up committees (Ward Project Support Committees) for the implementation of the plans.
- Handover of plans to local and state governments.
- Follow-up to ensure integration into state and local government planning and budgeting.

The construction unit of the project followed the community development priorities. Implementing the first measures shortly after community development plans had been developed further fostered trust in the participatory planning process. This ensured alignment and the creation of synergies between the four units, underscoring the holistic approach mentioned above. The implementation of infrastructure measures identified through the CDP process lent credibility to the process and bolstered communities' confidence (see also testimonials).

However, in some instances, full identification via CDP was not applicable as planned. Instead, measures were identified by the Nigerian Government. A focus was put on water supply as the water ministries were able to offer the clearest idea of needs at the local level. The CDP process confirmed this priority later.

The **CDP process was paramount to getting all stakeholders on board**. With this process, GIZ was able to create a huge level of local trust. The infrastructure implementation largely benefitted from that.

To further increase local ownership, all suppliers and construction companies were supposed to originate from the benefitting states. The **contractors were also requested to employ local workers** as much as possible to create economic benefits for the community. However, borehole drilling required skilled and well-trained people. To further ease the process, standard designs were developed for the different types of infrastructure targeted.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Measuring our impacts and communicating them

The overall project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system follows the logical framework set out in the EU

Description of the Action and the BMZ Results Matrix. However, to offset gaps regarding intermediate outcomes, additional indicators were developed which emphasized the outcomes and impact of the project.

For the infrastructure unit in the project, data collection focused on finalized measures and their beneficiaries — defining on whom to count for which kind of measure was one of the first steps. This was complemented by the **Social Impact Assessment** (SIA). The SIA aimed to collect stories and testimonials (see above examples) to showcase the impact that infrastructure has on communities and social relations. The SIA conducted in 2020 was the first for the project, also since a significant number of infrastructure measures have only been finalized in that year.

While especially useful and recommendable, it should be noted that assessments conducted by external consultants, such as the SIA, required strong guidance from within the project, to ensure alignment with the project's frameworks. For an assessment planned in 2021, the M&E team will build on the SIA 2020, but also add quantitative methods. The SIAs can provide useful evidence regarding the contribution of construction for peace, which can also be used for political communication.

Challenges: How did we resolve them?

Speed versus participation

The time frames set for both CDP and infrastructure realization were not realistic from the start and needed to be adapted during the project. It was not possible to identify all measures through the CDP process as initially planned, because this process itself takes about a year to complete. Thus, the infrastructure unit started with a first set of measures which were identified by the partner ministries. This could be considered a design error in the overall project approach. Luckily, projects identified by state ministries were later validated by CDP processes conducted by GIZ.

Overall, the CDP process provided a very solid basis for identifying measures and creating local ownership. This was also crucial for sustainability, including operation and maintenance of infrastructure. Thus, we recommend not refraining from such participatory approaches but instead designing realistic projects that consider the timelines needed for high-quality implementation.

Speed versus quality

Good technical and implementation quality is the only way to make a sustainable difference and deliver well

on the aims set. To clearly distinguish from other actors, the infrastructure unit insisted on a high-quality approach in both formal and design aspects. It should ensure the highest possible construction quality and lay a strong foundation for durability and long-lasting functionality.

This approach was challenged by the need and expectation of rapid implementation, especially in the changing context. Due to GIZ's high-quality standards, the project lost some already assessed measures as other (humanitarian) actors were able to implement changes faster. Implementation can be hampered if partners expect unreasonably rapid results, which is often the case in crisis contexts. Initially, partners were skeptical and considered the processes long and painful, but later concluded that **quality takes time to achieve.** Even state level partner ministries recognized the quality of GIZ measures and that the time needed to deliver such quality is worth taking.

With regards to quality assurance and having continuous support from commissioning parties, **factual communication and transparency are key**. Creating a common understanding of good quality in construction is crucial. Constant effort is required to keep all stakeholders on board and make sure this understanding is implemented, especially by contractors and supervision consultants. We must be aware that good quality might have different meanings and is perceived differently. Thus, a constant effort needs to be made in the supervision of all measures, to enable steering of the process as fast as possible and where necessary.

A clear commitment to quality and process fidelity should be the core of any construction intervention. If the quality is good, not meeting set targets on time can be justified. It will be possible to find a solution. **Construction quality makes the difference, not the fast implementation of poor quality.** Sticking to standards, making sure this is paramount and insisting on high-quality construction supervision can make a real difference.

Local content versus quality and procurement rules

Sourcing materials locally, using local companies and labor force are important, especially if the construction process itself is undertaken to support the local economy and communities. In turn these foster local buy-in and ownership. The project insisted on this criterion throughout all procurement and construction processes, even though it posed challenges at the same time. Finding the best locally available quality might not match the ideally desired quality. Hence it is crucial to take on other considerations and estimate the extent of compensatory measures which need to be taken. Given the benefits mentioned above

(do no harm or promoting ownership) we recommend sticking to a support local strategy, as it also supports the sustainability of measures.

Lessons learned: What was effective and what will we do differently in the future?

- **A participatory approach through CDP is a key success factor:** This project assured community involvement and local ownership. However, to unfold its full potential, this approach requires an extremely high level of flexibility from both implementors and partners. If the decisions resulting from CDP are taken seriously, construction can only start after the completion of the CDP process and following feasibility checks by the infrastructure experts. This means that time and budget planning stay unclear for a substantial period. Yearly budget flexibility is helpful in this regard. Further, such a participatory approach needs proper communication and expectation management to ensure acceptance by partners and donors.
- **Superheroes communicate:** Honest communication and expectation management are key for a successful construction process, the functionality of the infrastructure and the construction project's impact on peace. Time was needed to identify the right activities to reach the targeted 200 measures. Strong steering, thorough planning, emphasizing Water, Sanitation Supply and Hygiene (WASH) measures, and a no-cost extension of the project made it possible to achieve the target. The project communicated this challenge early on. This helped in communication with the EU to manage the commissioning party's expectations. Expectation management is key for communicating with state-level partners and beneficiaries, especially given the longer timeframe of GIZ-implemented activities in comparison to those implemented by other actors in the same context. Kick-off meetings held before starting the construction process were perceived very positively by the stakeholders involved.
- **Find your place in the post-conflict situation:** GIZ has a limited capacity to respond to acute needs in a humanitarian crisis, which is due to the long duration of our processes against the pressure to deliver quickly in such crises. Key strengths of GIZ are the high-quality for the delivered measures with a strong focus on sustainability, including processes for O&M. To achieve these aspects, **a certain level of stability and security is needed.** In the case of the project in Nigeria, Maiduguri, the

state capital of the most-affected state in the crisis, Borno, was the center of humanitarian intervention. As the surroundings of the city were still rather unstable, humanitarian (and development) actors focused on the city itself, resulting in overlapping interventions. Here, the project faced the greatest challenges regarding coordination and loss of measures due to other actors being able to implement at a different speed. Implementation was running more smoothly in the neighboring state, Adamawa, and the south of Borno State itself. Here, the security environment is more stable and fewer implementing organizations are present. Thus, the project could more effectively and efficiently implement its approach. We recommend keeping this in mind when planning similar interventions. **It can reduce the potential for frustrations of partners, donors, and staff.**

Afghanistan: Infrastructure for stabilization

5

Afghanistan: Infrastructure for stabilization

Background: Why are we here?

After 17 years of civil and proxy wars (1979 to 1996), and a further five years (1996 to 2001) of rule by the Islamic Taliban regime, Afghanistan was considered a **classic failed state** — politically, economically, and socially. To date, the multi-ethnic state of Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world.

The **infrastructure in Afghanistan** — especially in rural areas — continues to show major deficits which the Afghan Government cannot address and finance on its own. This particularly applies to public facilities and projects relating to social and technical infrastructure. This further undermines the legitimacy ascribed to the Afghan Government by the population.

What did we build and how is it connected?

The GIZ project — financed by the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO) and running since 2010 (phase one from 2010 to 2016, phase two since 2016) — was aimed at strengthening the government agencies in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. Through an improved infrastructure they were supported to perform their sovereign tasks, especially regarding **providing basic services** for the population. Through these basic services, state structures begin to regain legitimacy, making it harder for violent groups to gather support from the local population. The infrastructure development was also aimed at **preventing conflicts and furthering de-escalation** through offering a physical space of dialogue.

Construction measures were very visible and intended to make the peace dividend tangible. They covered the sectors of education, health,

public infrastructure as well as public administration, transport and traffic, sports and leisure, archaeological protection measures, water supply, sewage disposal, law, communication, and emergency accommodation. In the northern provinces, for example, elementary and secondary schools, universities, health centers, roads and bridges, dormitories for female students, courthouses, multi-purpose sports fields, assembly halls and dwellings for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), were built. All construction measures were intricately linked with other projects within the GIZ Afghanistan portfolio such as supporting rule of law or IDPs to tackle overarching peace needs and create synergistic effects.

Outcomes: What has been achieved?

Infrastructure measures were focused on the basic needs of the people in the region and were designed to lay the ground for further development. In particular, the construction of public areas, meeting halls, and judicial buildings increased transparency and participation in political decision-making processes as well as legal security. In this way, the infrastructure measures helped to ensure that **efficient, legitimate, and citizen-oriented state structures** were built up and strengthened at the sub-national level in the provinces and districts. Overall, this fostered the **trust of the population** in state institutions and their elected representatives.

The outcomes of these construction measures included, but were not limited to:

- Traffic routes in the city of Kunduz and thus mobility between the centers and the surrounding area were improved. To date, more than 14.4 million vehicles (approximately 6,500 daily) have passed the newly paved 5.7 kilometer long Dawra Street. This makes it easier for users to get to the airport from the city center of Kunduz and the surrounding area. Overall, in the provinces of Kunduz and Samangan, around 45 kilometers of road network was created.
- The number of legal decisions in Takhar Province increased to 175[1] per month. From January 2012 to March 2017, over 12,000 cases were finally settled.[2]
- Qualified specialists were trained for the further development of Afghanistan. Since 2011, around 5,000 students, engineers, and economists, as well as 50 lecturers

1 According to government register, Takhar Province Judiciary
2 For further elaboration on the processes that ensure quality assurance and safeguards, please have a look at Chapter Three: *Building blocks for construction and peace*.

and employees have used the new building of the university's engineering faculty in Taloqan. In the evening hours, the local population learned to read and write through literacy measures.

- Around 4,000 girls and boys in primary and secondary education are now taught in nine newly built or completely renovated schools in the provinces of Samangan, Balkh, and Kunduz. The proportion of girls is at the same level as that of boys, thus making a decisive contribution to reducing gender disparities in rural areas.

Voices from the target group

Imam Sahib — a street not only stimulates traffic but also trade

In winter, the roads in Imam Sahib in Kunduz Province are hardly passable. The traffic routes in and around the small town near the border with Tajikistan have sunk in the mud every year. In 2013, with the support of GIZ, **road connections** with a total length of 9.5 kilometers were rehabilitated and graveled. They now connect markets, the hospital, public institutions, and schools in the city center.

> *"After the completion of the streets, trade in our city has increased significantly. Children can now safely go to school, women to the markets — and I myself to the Buzkashi tournament site in Kunduz. Thanks to the newly renovated streets, trade in our city has increased significantly. I am sure that this is just the beginning and that the importance of the city as a goods trans-shipment point will continue to grow."*
>
> Sofi Manan, Mayor of Imam Sahib City, Kunduz Province

Imam Sahib Road, south view

Imam Sahib Road connecting Kunduz city with the airport

Dormitory for female students at Sheberghan University

The construction of a dormitory for 256 female students enabled and improved educational opportunities for female students, especially those from more remote areas, and for women in the province. The architectural design of the two-story dormitory combines Afghan design standards with innovative approaches to energy efficiency and accessibility.

"I am very happy that I no longer have to take the difficult route from my home village to study. As one of the first students, I got a place in the beautiful new dormitory. The atmosphere here is ideal for us to read and study and there is even a nice garden to spend time together outdoors and relax."

Nesrin, Sheberghan University student, Jowzjan Province

Female dormitory view with sports field in the front

Female dormitory, front view

Refugee shelter

The component included the construction of 74 shelters of type III resistant Shelter according to the 2016 standards of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). A total of 518 people were accommodated there. The lifespan of this type of shelter is approximately ten years, and a house measures about 35 m² living space. Concrete foundations ensure protection in the rainy season. Windows and doors were made of wood and in local standard, as is customary in the area. According to Afghan customs, the latrines were erected outside the shelters.

Refugee shelter, inside view

> *"I got accommodation for my family and now we have a roof over our heads again and feel safe. We are very happy that we were able to move into permanent accommodation before the severe winter."*
>
> Muharem, IDP, village of Rabat, Chimtal District, Balkh Province

Refugee shelter in Chimtal District, front view

Takhar University Library

Takhar University in the city of Taloqan in Takhar Province currently has 7,500 enrolled students. The university did not have a central location from where the technical books necessary for the courses of study could be stored and accessed. Students can now read and learn beyond the library. Outside, numerous seating areas invite prospective academics to read and exchange information about the curriculum.

> *"In our university we have to find connections to international standards. The new library with specialist literature, for example, on management issues and administrative law in English, Dari, and Pashto, is an important step in this direction. In this way we can further formalize the training and convey modern specialist knowledge that was not previously available."*
>
> Qudratullah Danyar, Deputy Dean of Takhar University, Takhar Province

Takhar University Library, front view

Students during self-study. Takhar University Library, inside view

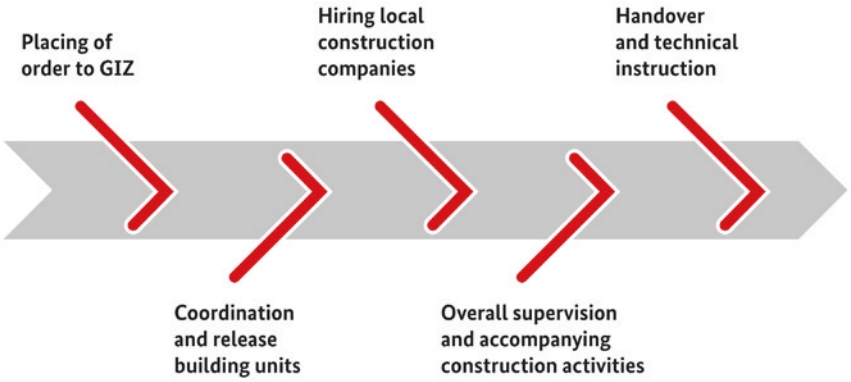
Linking construction and peacebuilding: How did we get there?

An essential condition for the demand-oriented alignment of the construction components was the **proposal system of the Provincial Development Council** with local administrative structures. After identification of the measures, they were checked based on technical feasibility as well as their alignment with the overarching impact and stabilization logic of the project before being handed over to the FFO for commissioning. Working within the stabilization logic of the FFO, a main goal for these infrastructure measures was to increase the output legitimacy of the government.

Some of the proposed additions to the project, from 2013 onwards, were based on the measures written down in the development plans of the districts and provinces. Another factor contributing to sustainability was that the components proposed by the local administrative structures were **systematically evaluated and selected.** This was done according to criteria of development relevance, a do no harm approach (avoiding the creation of disparities) and the feasibility and impact of a measure.

The **early involvement of the partner institutions** in the project identification process ensured that the measures were tailored to meet the needs of the population. Furthermore, it ensured that the ownership necessary for the sustainability of the measures after completion was created by the partner administrations. The local authorities' own contributions, for example through the provision of building plots or personal know how, also encouraged the local authorities to **take responsibility**. The involvement of local community development councils helped to strengthen the existing local administrative structures.

It is essential to consider operational concepts for the sustainable use and maintenance of the systems in advance and agree on these with the partner institutions right from the start of the project. When partner structures and target groups feel their needs are well represented within the planning and construction process, it leads to ownership and subsequent motivation to care for these measures. In addition to written agreements (for example Memorandums of Understanding), extensive partner communication is needed to ensure that the necessary human and financial resources for personnel costs and maintenance of the infrastructure measures are quantified and set in the financial budgets at provincial level with the partner ministries.



Execution concept for quality assurance

Participatory approach: How did we get all stakeholders on board?

The support of the German Government and GIZ was highly valued by stakeholders, especially given that Germany is one of the last remaining donor countries with stabilization projects in northern Afghanistan. This also reflected the commitment of and cooperation with the partner institutions, which was consistently forthcoming. Specifically, the strength of this cooperation was that approaches offered were not just tolerated, but accepted, cooperated on, and ultimately understood and reflected.

Considerable **contributions by the partners**, such as the provision of land and building plots, the securing of construction sites for public transport and against criminal attacks, and the official approval of the construction measures, contributed significantly to the timely and smooth progress of the measures. Creating an understanding of the approach and shaping common goals helped to minimize the abuse of systems for personal gains. The partners showed a high level of appreciation and understanding of the measures. This minimized abuse by office holders for private purposes (corruption), a behavior that is culturally legitimate in the target context.

On reflection, various interrelated factors influenced this **trustful and close cooperation** with partners and target groups. One was the clearly communicated and coordinated rules of the cooperation and responsibilities, such as the formalized procedures of GIZ when handling projects with construction measures. Another was that regular training courses about

construction and the procedures for implementation were offered to share knowledge and understanding. These mechanisms as well as checks and balances in the stabilization context of northern Afghanistan have developed exemplary character over the years of cooperation.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Measuring our impacts and communicating them

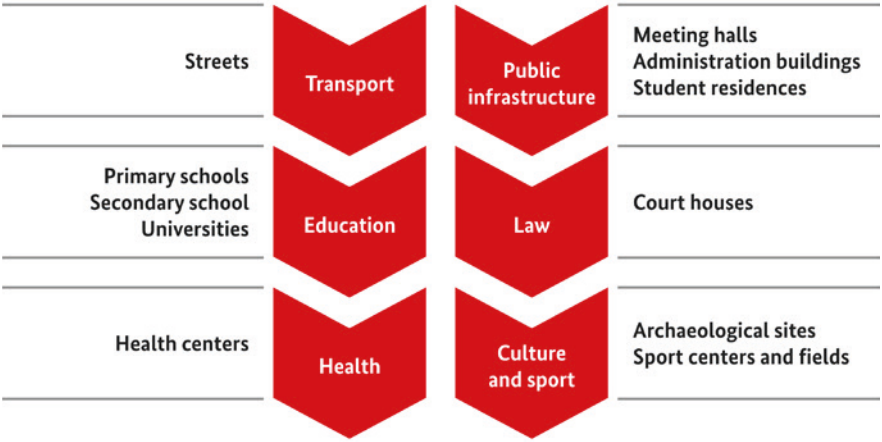
During preparation, as soon as the partner announced the requirement, a feasibility study was drawn up for each individual measure in preparation for a new project activity or a change offer with the commissioning party. This included the examination from a development policy perspective as well as a construction and structural engineering perspective. If the conditions were met, individual measures were proposed to the FFO and the commissioner on site was required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the construction activity.

Close monitoring by national and international construction experts ensured that the individual measures met the requirements in terms of time, costs, and quality while applying contractual compliance. In regions where GIZ employees were denied access due to the current security situation, qualified national short-term experts were called upon to document progress and quality on site and report to GIZ.

Once the information had been evaluated by the GIZ staff on site, adjustments were initiated by the short-term expert if necessary. During the implementation phase, the project cooperated closely with the technical staff of the partners. After completion and handover, individual measures were checked at regular intervals to monitor the extent of their usage as previously agreed. Maintenance by the partner was also part of the review and results were documented in knowledge management.

Talking about what we do: Political communication

GIZ has been active in the construction sector in Afghanistan since 2002 and has been continuously expanding its expertise, both in steering these projects as well as communicating the results. GIZ's engagement since 2002 has been marked by success, but also by challenges and setbacks. These **experiences have always given the impulse and opportunity to critically reflect on the approach**, to integrate conclusions into work processes, and to serve as practical advice for the commissioning party.



Fields of action for stabilization in Afghanistan (output legitimacy)

There has always been a close exchange with the FFO, but also with the commissioner on site. On the one hand, the exchange took place with the aim of adapting to changing political requirements during implementation; on the other hand, to advise the client in the context of construction. For this purpose, evaluations and recommendations for projects were regularly drawn up for the commissioning party to decide whether the individual measure reflected the stability logic of the German Government or not. Furthermore, reports were drawn up regularly, which showed progress and presented the contribution of the partners. Digital data on the project was collected through the German Development Tracker for Afghanistan, summarized nationwide, and made available to the German Government for political communication at both national and international levels.

The initial impact logic worked as intended. All the construction measures implemented in the project created the intended effects — usability and visible structures — relatively quickly. With such evident results, these measures created tangible space for legitimate government services for the population, contributed to the creation of safer environments, have improved living conditions in the short-term, and have provided alternatives to economies of war and violence. With this **contribution to stabilizing, restoring, and securing the basis of life**, these individual projects have strengthened individual and social resilience.

Challenges: How did we resolve them?

Speed versus participation

A major challenge was always the limited time available for preparing the individual measure, technical planning, and implementation. As a result, the planning phase often suffered both generally and technically. Errors that were based on the planning phase had to be compensated for by taking appropriate adjustments while still following the framework of the regulations. This required a certain creativity and solution orientation.

Speed versus quality

Procurement rules play a crucial role in high-quality construction. Assuring compliance requires appropriate time and regularly leads to the adjustment of the time schedule for implementation. Accordingly, time has been calculated in advance to have a buffer. Local opposition groups also had an influence on construction progress in the context of Afghanistan. Infrastructure measures were often built within occupied areas and local groups tried to take advantage of the construction processes. Therefore, implementation and the overall project aim had to be secured though stricter time planning and quality control, as well as by strengthening safeguards against potential obstruction.

Local content versus quality and speed

In Afghanistan, compromises regarding quality had to be considered as the project always built with locally available material. Since this material usually did not meet international standards, the entrepreneurs and their employees had to be intensively instructed on how to use such material to maximize quality. Due to the long military conflicts in the country itself, there was a massive interruption in the development of the construction industry. This is reflected in the fact that the construction companies almost always work with outdated construction techniques. Partners show little interest in alternative construction methods, instead holding fast to their old traditions. It takes time to persuade them to implement alternate methods.

Lessons learned: What was effective and what will we do differently in the future?

- **The consistent pursuit of the do no harm approach** meant that conflict potentials were recognized and minimized in advance and the creation of disparities was avoided. Moreover, **conflict resolution approaches have been developed** and followed-up in close coordination and cooperation with the local

partners in the Khanabad district. This led to resolutions for tensions at an early stage. In the two provinces of Kunduz and Takhar in particular, the project was able to draw on grown networks with municipalities, provincial, district, and city administrations and their representatives, as well as with heads of institutions (universities and associations) — an essential factor for successful implementation of the measures.

- **Capacity development of staff is essential for the project success** — both at GIZ as well as in partner institutions. All staff must be professionally trained to accurately assess whether the reported needs of the governmental institutions also meet the requirements of the commissioning party and reflect the needs and potential of the target groups. A set of different management instruments enables GIZ's business continuity if remote control becomes necessary. To be prepared, the in-depth capacity development of the partners regarding technical equipment, technical understanding, and assessments, is key. This also counts for training to meet international standards and procedures to ensure that quality standards are applied.

- **A cross-sectoral approach, as well as a flexible project design addressing the changing context has proven to be decisive for the success of the project**. An essential condition has been to include not only formal but also traditional structures, including the councils of elders. We recommended a participatory approach in which local structures are already involved in the project identification and later in the implementation of the measures. This also ensures that the local context and conditions are considered and that the measures actually meet the needs of the population (demand-oriented). We recommend flexible approaches that enable a quick adaptation of measures to a changing environment. This is especially important for fragile context. For the same reason, we recommend measures with a short to medium-term duration, as these can be expanded in modules if necessary.

Iraq: Stabilization of livelihoods, recovery, and reconstruction

6

Iraq: Stabilization of livelihoods, recovery, and reconstruction

Background: Why are we here?

After the liberation of the territories occupied by the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) in Nineveh Governorate and its capital city Mosul, the **public and private infrastructure** was largely destroyed. The occupation and later military liberation had caused massive displacement of the local population and deepened already existing distrust between the different ethno-religious groups.

What did we build and how is it connected?

The German Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) commissioned GIZ with the project Stabilization of Livelihoods in Nineveh (SLN) in 2016, directly after western Nineveh was liberated. The main settlement area of the Yezidi community had suffered most under ISIS and was largely destroyed, most of its population had fled, and there was huge mistrust between those who fled and those who stayed. The later (Sunni Arabs) were accused by the first group (Kurds, Christians, and Yezidis) of being ISIS supporters; this led to forced displacements during the liberation from ISIS.

The Recovery and Reconstruction in Mosul (RRM) project followed in 2017, just a few weeks after the city was declared liberated. The western part of the city in particular — the last hideout of ISIS — was basically left in rubble. The reconstruction of public social infrastructure was a top priority as more than 750,000 people had no access to medical treatment and nearly all schools were destroyed.

The joint projects were based on three components: The first was meant to deliver public social services and infrastructure. The second aimed at income

generation for the people of western Mosul. The third component piloted activities towards peacebuilding. The projects ran until 2020 and 2021, respectively.

In line with comprehensive approaches to peacebuilding and reconstruction, these two projects focused on an **integrated approach** by linking all components instead of them running independently. Because of the early stage of intervention, the initial focus was on social public infrastructure to respond to the most pressing needs, focusing on education and health facilities (as opposed to a focus on productive infrastructure).

The underlying idea was that **strengthening the social and political fabric of society** — especially in fragile contexts — should be understood as a cross-cutting goal which guides all measures taken. Context analysis, continuous assessments, behavioral insight approaches, and consultations with partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries were key to design and steering of activities to ensure a **meaningful and lasting impact**. The construction measures proved to be significant as the partners were highly motivated to see the construction completed, and they needed to show the people of Mosul that the Iraqi Government would provide basic services that ISIS had taken from them.

Outcomes: What has been achieved?

Impact through reconstruction and education

Schools were the first construction measures completed. There were two reasons for **prioritizing schools**: firstly, the construction sites were decided upon quickly by the partners and the rubble could be cleared in good time. Secondly, the return of 12,000 children to education was not only in line with the goal of preventing the loss of pupils (*no lost generation*) but was also identified as a peace need. After the years of ISIS occupation and manipulation in ISIS kindergartens and schools, as well as the traumatizing experiences children had during the occupation and liberation of Mosul, the key was to first to provide a structured **daily routine**.

A good partner relationship with the Ministry of Education was built in a short time due to the close cooperation in the building and rehabilitation of the schools. The first school year post-ISIS began with measures for peace education and dealing with the past that were included in the school curriculum for almost 6,000 children. In total:

- 6 prefabricated schools were **built to replace** some destroyed schools
- 12 schools were **rehabilitated**

New schools in Mosul

Parallel to the construction process, around 100 **teachers were trained in peace education** from which almost 5,800 students benefitted. The general objective of this education was to foster peaceful coexistence and to increase the local capacity for conflict transformation, thus facilitating the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to their areas of origin. This has been preceded by peacebuilding activities on a community level which was positively received.

Voices from the target group

Accelerated Learning Centers (ALCs)

In western Nineveh, a total of 30 schools were built or rehabilitated by the SLN project, enabling around 9,000 students to attend school and receive a good primary school education. 11 **ALCs** were opened, enabling more than 1,000 students to complete the primary education they were denied during the ISIS occupation. ALCs catered to children and youth aged 12 to 18 years who had left primary school and/or had no primary school certificate. In addition, more than 1,100 teachers and nearly 100 principals were trained in advanced teaching methods to better respond to the exceptional circumstances of the students.

ALCS

In crises children and youth frequently miss entire years of schooling and exams and find themselves over-aged and over-mature to resume their education in the same class in which they had to interrupt it. ALCs are offered to youth in such a dilemma, allowing them to re-enter the education system and acquire the principles and skills of primary education in a shorter time. Topics and methods are adjusted to the interests and needs of their age group. Through ALCs, children acquire a primary education certificate and even pursue their education.

> *"From a control group of 21 ALC students (18 young men and three young women) who were denied formal secondary education as they were too old after ISIS, 20 of them now have jobs and aim for higher education as teachers, doctors, lawyers, and engineers. Also, some behavioral changes could be observed while the students were still in training: they became used to routines, looked after themselves more, boosted their morale and style, and developed plans for the future which they followed through."*
>
> From a Report about the ALCs done by Mercy Corps

Health facility in western Mosul

Western Mosul had no emergency medical treatment capabilities left and priority was given to improve the medical services. With the Ministry of Health, it was agreed to build a new health facility on the site of the former Al-Shifa medical complex, formerly one of the most famous health complexes in Iraq.

During the liberation of Mosul, ISIS had used this complex as their headquarters and last line of defense. It was destroyed during the last days of fighting. **Building at this spot would have a great psychological effect on the people of Mosul.** Also, the decision was made not to build a complete hospital but a health facility instead. While a health facility has all the medical capacities of a hospital, it does not have the support facilities of a fully-fledged hospital (such as laundry and dining facilities). As these services must be provided by the surroundings, the health facility also creates job opportunities for the local people.

> *"I returned as soon as Daesh was gone to find my house completely destroyed. Since the work on the hospital started, I sold food to the workers. I´m now repairing and renovating my house to have a restaurant in it so that the doctors and visitors of the hospital can come and eat."*
>
> Neighbor to al-Shifa Medical Complex

Technical planning done jointly with the Ministry of Health

Construction site of the health facility in West Mosul

Construction site of the health facility in West Mosul

Linking construction and peacebuilding: How did we get there?

In the case of Mosul and Nineveh, the conflict with ISIS was leading the news and attracted high political attention. Donors made resources available to support Iraq, especially the city of Mosul after the liberation. Furthermore, GIZ had been active in Northern Iraq since 2014, had established good partner relations, an in-depth understanding of the context, and an operational base in the Kurdish Region Iraq from where the first steps of the project could be taken.

The approach outlined above – **using widely visible infrastructure not only to address the direct needs of the population but also as an entry point for building up strong and resilient relations to important stakeholders** – was used to get the space needed for the implementation of the first peacebuilding activities.

Participatory approach: How did we get all stakeholders on board?

A major community-based activity was the participatory identification of procedures for **community action planning**. Community roadmaps for the implementation of construction and rehabilitation measures were

developed, including action plans decided by the beneficiary communities themselves. Through balanced negotiation processes and the participation of various interest groups including women and People with Disailities (PWD), the strengthening of municipal consensus building was achieved by using **Local Peace Committees** (LPCs). They served as steering structures and platforms for community action planning. The LPCs were complemented with activities for maximising local awareness and involvement between the LPCs and the communities they represent. On this basis, the LPCs' plans and initiatives were designed at a local level to **facilitate dialogue** relating to issues that directly affect the community. Further, the community consultation processes informed and supported the project's construction unit in identifying suitable rehabilitation measures at the local level.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Measuring our impacts and communicating them

The key to monitoring in a volatile environment such as Iraq is to work out the consistencies within an inconsistent context. The security framework to ensure the duty of care for the staff is thereby not only used as a mere means of an isolated internal service, but rather as an additional measure to shed light on the overall context. To do so, the monitoring of security related events needs to go beyond reactive measures. Digging deep into access negotiations and human terrain analysis, and taking a proactive approach to an acceptance strategy based on in-depth knowledge on the ground, is crucial.

The interconnectedness of these aspects into the work of the projects enables to strengthen the footing and knowledge on the micro-level of (non-) state actors and armed groups. This in turn improves the project's contribution of information to the macro level policymaking. A solid footing **between macro and micro level** is especially essential for carrying out construction work. Here the project's vital interest comes into play: to be able to access conflict-affected areas and communities regularly to deliver crucial services and infrastructure.

IMPACT EVALUATION

The focus of the context monitoring and impact evaluation system lies in the creation of a better understanding of the joint project contexts and information about the interaction between context and projects. It provides the necessary contextual understanding for project planning and the conflict-sensitive implementation of the project activities. It provides information

regarding indications for unintended negative consequences stemming from the project activities (so far) or for the discontinuation of the basic underlying assumptions and conditions.

Long story short: Gaining knowledge is needed to gain access, access is needed to gain understanding about how to deliver services, information is needed about what works, to be able to learn from it.

The project's **Context Monitoring System** is a dashboard-based monitoring tool. It provides continuously updated information regarding instability and conflict, and local dynamics. **Ongoing mapping and analysis** inform a better understanding of the context and the projects' possible impacts. It feeds into the intervention design, and the refinements of methods of implementation, such as the background for the transparent selection of areas and regions of intervention or target groups. We follow a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods with a context appropriate sampling strategy that collects data at sub-district and community or village level. The system accounts for 68 drivers of conflict and instability, divided into six categories:

- Population flow (migration, return, and displacement)
- Livelihoods and markets
- Community tensions
- Services and aid focus
- Security
- Governance

Based on the drivers, 98 indicators were identified to be monitored monthly. The information is summarized in a narrative report, divided into five different areas of intervention in Nineveh,[1] and fed into a matrix accessible through the dashboard. If one of the drivers of conflict hits a critical threshold, the traffic-light matrix flagged a **changing dynamic or potential risk** for the implementation. The dashboard further contained an interactive map that visualized the gathered information, including project activities, predominant ethno-religious composition, and returnee dynamics.

CONTEXT MONITORING SYSTEM

The methodology employed a mixed-method approach, using both quantitative (household-level survey) and qualitative tools (Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)). The quantitative component was implemented in two stages: a first round or baseline, followed by a second end line round after five months. This was complemented by a qualitative component including KIIs and FGDs at the end line, to provide a nuanced

1 Mosul, Al Hamdaniya, Tel Afar, Tel Kaif, Sinjar

perspective on capacities and needs of conflict affected populations in areas of implementation.

The sampling of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods was stratified by the district of implementation, and findings were presented at both district of implementation and project level, as needed. This data was triangulated with secondary sources (desk review) such as partners' project monitoring documentation and findings from monitoring systems of subcontractors such as IMPACT. IMPACT conduced monthly context monitoring in Nineveh for GIZ and evaluated the change in resilience indicators in areas of project implementation over time.

The Context Monitoring System included third-party monitoring of the project's implementing partners' activities — beyond qualitative measurement — to capture context information on, for example, the perception of the activities and on the implementation status. This provided a better understanding of the suitability of the activities implemented and thus supported the development and evaluation of activities tailored for a specific context.

Talking about what we do: Political communication

Projects not only need to provide success stories but also need to be able to explain the circumstances and challenges on the ground. Only when donors **understand constraints and deeper layers**, do they agree with meaningful contributions that might not seem obvious in the beginning. Particularly in sensitive political contexts, honest and inclusive **communication** between the project and the commissioning parties is critical for successful design, implementation, and constant adaptations and changes. Communication needs to be a dynamic interplay underpinned by interest, goodwill, pragmatism, and sympathy for the cause, but as well as for the political constraints of donors.

In the summer of 2017, the liberation of Mosul was in the headlines of every news agency. In response to the political importance of all German development measures, GIZ discussed first findings and concepts already during the fact-finding mission with the commissioning party BMZ. Ideas for meaningful intervention were jointly developed. Consequently, the project had a very deep buy-in from the BMZ from the beginning.

During implementation, the project has witnessed an evolution in commu-

Meeting of the Peace and Reconciliation Working Group

nicating and exploring the political needs of the commissioning party. This was addressed through inclusive and transparent working relationships with increasing accuracy. While the context did not get less volatile and the political situation remained complex, the project management established very direct communication with the commissioning party. This proved to be immensely helpful to give the commissioning party a deep understanding of the context and enabled them to react to questions from the German Parliament on short notice. It also helps the project when adjustments to the implementation must be made.

The project received from the start **high political attention**. Consequently, there were many demands for information from the German political realm which had to be answered at quite short notice. Furthermore, the high political attention led to regular visits from German high-ranking politicians who also had to be briefed in advance and during the visit. It was helpful to have the desk officers from BMZ always up to date on the actual situation and the development of the project.

More than that, in fragile contexts the promised support from partners (in our case the Iraqi Government) does not always come or at least not on time. The direct link with BMZ can help to get **support via diplomatic channels** between the German Embassy and our partners in Mosul.

Challenges: How did we resolve them

Speed versus participation

After the liberation of Mosul, all responsible government officials were besieged by the many aid organizations active in Iraq. Consequently, officials had to decide which organizations would be most useful in **addressing their direct and most urgent needs** for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of public social infrastructure. Officials also faced the **challenge of harmonizing the agendas** of the different stakeholders (commissioning party, Iraqi Government, Nineveh Governorate, and Directorates). The resolution of these challenges involved site visits to solve one problem after the next. This quickly became a sort of shuttle diplomacy by balancing the competing logics and policies. By doing so, the project was able to secure the support of all partners in Iraq.

Speed versus quality

Participation, coordination with other stakeholders, and sound analysis are time consuming and hamper speedy implementation. However, the commissioning party wants to see quick results on the ground and needs on the ground are dire. For instance, **identifying the right spot** seems simple at first glance but is a cumbersome effort with many loops and details. What are the other donors doing? What does the National Development Plan entail? Which political (military) actor will make political gain? Where is the highest need? Will patients have access (bridges, streets, traditional affiliation of neighbourhood)? Are stakeholders making a personal profit? Are land rights unambiguous? Has the subsoil the right consistency? Nevertheless, taking the necessary time is worth the effort. It is also worth **allocating all resources to get everybody on board** because even simple negligence might lead to flaws or complete failure of the project.

Local content versus quality, speed, and procurement rules

In fragile settings there is a need to worry about the sustainability of the new infrastructure. Obviously, the sustainability of any infrastructure is increased when levels of conflict and distrust diminish. So, **every investment made in tackling the root causes of the conflict and increasing social cohesion also supports the sustainability of the infrastructure**. Participatory and community-based approaches encourage the recognition of shared needs and provide both a framework to jointly decide on priorities, such as the type of infrastructure, and a useful framework for further negotiations and dispute resolutions at community level. **The sustainability of the project's schools**

and hospitals increased with the engagement of the local community and their ownership and responsibility for management, maintenance, and security. The schools were handed over to the Directorate of Education to run at full capacity. These participatory approaches and processes helped to safeguard sustainability of project outcomes after the project personnel had departed.

Lessons Learned: What was effective and what will we do differently in the future?

- **The achievement of high-quality outcomes needs time and sufficient resources** allocated by the implementing organisations as well as partners on the ground. It may not always be clear in the beginning what and how much of it is needed. But as the project moves ahead, flexible and just-in-time allocation of resources (human, logistics, financial, attention) is necessary. As these resources are in high demand on the ground and their allocation must meet expectations from donors and partners, it is important to keep track of progress, follow a realistic schedule, and communicate with the stakeholders.
- **Peacebuilding activities need an incredibly careful vetting and selection of participants**. Allowing certain actors to join the table might spoil the process. However, excluding a particular actor may risk support for a particular construction project. In Mosul, there was a situation where the project needed to exclude a local leader due to their political affiliations and reputation in local peace negotiations. It was crucial to seek alliances with key figures and networks that could be consulted on when a course of action could be communicated and to discuss not so popular decisions in depth.
- **We must be able to explain the *why*, *what*, and *how* of our projects**. The taxpayer has a right to know that GIZ is doing reasonable things with the funds provided. However, compared to physical (re-)construction, the effort of strengthening the social and political fabric can seem a bit difficult to explain to people not as deeply involved in the context as the project staff is. Therefore, the project staff should be trained in communication and supported by experts in producing explanatory documents. In this case the project produced some explanatory short films which show our approach in Mosul.

- **Visible results of development projects such as buildings are a favorite amongst visitors from the political arena,** such as parliamentarians and senior staff from the commissioning parties. These visits are time consuming in an already tight schedule. However, they provide an opportunity to directly expose decision makers to stakeholders and communicate realities on the ground. Sound preparation that considers what needs to be communicated with attention to detail is worth the time. It facilitates better understanding and improved decision making in the future.

Ukraine: Peace through social inclusion

7

Ukraine: Peace through social inclusion

Background: Why are we here?

The protracted armed conflict in eastern Ukraine began in March 2014 and continued for six years with an estimated 5.2 million people bearing the brunt, according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. More than 1.6 million people were forced to leave their homes, and at least 14,000 were killed. Millions of people, including over one million children, needed urgent assistance and support, particularly in the immediate eastern conflict regions.

Local governments and municipalities were overstretched with the high influx of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and did not have the capacity and resources to provide adequate social services or accommodation. The existing public social infrastructure was old and underinvested and could not accommodate this surplus of people. The quality of all public services decreased for the host communities, leading to growing discontent and potential for conflict between the two groups as well as between the citizens and the local authorities.

What did we build and how is it connected?

Launched in late 2015, the Strengthening Social Infrastructure for Absorption of IDPs project together with the Strengthening of Ukrainian Communities hosting IDPs project (both commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)) werewere envisioned as rapid, large volume responses. The projects' aims intended to alleviate the effects of the conflict among communities in eastern Ukraine and assist the overburdened public social services institutions to cope with the influx of IDPs. The parallel implementation of two projects ensured that activities to

improve physical infrastructure were undertaken in parallel with capacity development, and technical assistance measures focusing on IDPs and host communities.

After an analysis of the distribution pattern of the IDPs, the focus of the projects was in the five eastern oblasts (Ukrainian administrative district) within Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Zaporizhzhia. In 2017 measures could be extended to the areas of Luhansk and Donetsk, controlled by the government.

Most of the public social infrastructure in eastern Ukraine was old, dysfunctional, and in need of repairs. However, **the basic structure of the buildings was intact and still usable**. A combination of these circumstances and the need to achieve cost efficiency led to the decision to focus on rehabilitation and reconstruction of existing social public infrastructure. This approach means providing for additional space, improving quality and fitting for purpose — for example gender-based women's shelters offering protection from violence.

This decision proved worthwhile as it could be planned for the establishment of coordinated measures, drawing on GIZ's own technical experience and the expertise of peacebuilding and social experts who were engaged in fact-finding missions. While examining the pressure that the IDP influx had put on the social ecosystem of the intervention areas, for example, all rehabilitation measures were combined with the provision of equipment and capacity development. The local authorities were empowered not only to make full use of the buildings again, but also to extend and improve their services for the IDP and host communities.

In the example of the activity, *We Make Nikopol Better,* citizens discussed proposals for urban infrastructure development before they were submitted to the city council for decision.

> *"It turns out that we, IDPs and local residents, have the same pains in our public spheres; and we have to resolve these problems instead of taking the negative experiences personally."*
>
> Lyudmila, who moved to Kryvyi Rih from Luhansk in 2017

Outcomes: What has been achieved?

The goal was to provide municipalities, institutions, and people in Eastern Ukraine with knowledge, resources, and instruments required to deal with past experiences, to organize life in the present, and to lay the basis for a future that is worthwhile both for the local population and for IDPs. From 2016 to 2019:

- **244 rehabilitation and reconstruction measures** were completed in 88 cities.
- Much needed **public social and socio-economic infrastructure** was rehabilitated and restored, including public administrative buildings, schools, kindergartens, hospitals, clinics, and housing, thereby benefiting both the IDPs and the hosting communities.
- In total up to 1.7 million people benefited from **improved social services**. More than 75 schools and kindergartens were renovated and equipped, in which around 40,000 children were cared for and taught.
- **Furniture and sports equipment** were provided in some cases, benefiting around 35,000 children and young people, more than 1,400 of whom were internally displaced persons.
- **20 hospitals and nursing homes** were renovated and equipped, giving around one million people access to better medical care.

Voices from the target group

Renovation of schools — to provide additional spaces and improved schooling environments

Most of the school buildings in the eastern city of Dnipro were rundown and, in many cases, only partially in use, with sections of many premises being unoccupied for decades. The influx of

Renovated school no. 29, Dnipro

IDPs highlighted these existing structural problems. Children from IDP families required places at schools that were not available or unsuitable.

> *"The work [three schools were renovated in Dnipro in 2017] benefits the 1,350 schoolchildren who can now study in a child-friendly environment – with new windows and roofs, modern heating systems, LED lights, and adjustable tables and chairs. New sanitary facilities give children with disabilities access to toilets, too. And we can have more children in the premises of our schools."*
>
> Halyna Ponomarenko, Headmistress at school no. 29, Dnipro

Sports hall of a school in Berdyansk

Inclusive kindergarten no. 100, Zaporizhzhia

Kids playing in the kindergarten no. 100, Zaporizhzia

"The quality of renovation works and furniture is twelve out of twelve points. We still do not believe that this happened to our school. It is a miracle."

Yulia Malkevich, Head of School no.68, Dnipro

"The financial assistance from the German Government enabled us to create excellent opportunities for the children with special needs. The implementation of this project has made it possible for us to create a cozy home atmosphere in the orphanage, and, what is most important, has created a fuller life for many girls with special needs!"

Grygoriy Doroshenko, Director of the Bohodukhiv Orphanage for Girls with Special Needs, Bohudukhiv

Apostowole, orphanage for children with special needs; a pool was modified to reduce operating costs

Improving a special care facility – the Oskil Psychoneurological facility

The psychoneurological facility in Oskil is the largest of 18 similar institutions in the Kharkiv region, where People with Disailities (PWD) as well as elderly people receive full-time care. It is the largest employer in a poor rural area. Approximately 400 patients as well as their families and more than 200 staff members of the facility live and work in Oskil.

> *"Four years ago, we opened a small chapel on the second floor – it now looks like our prayers have been heard."*
>
> Maryna Morosovska, Director, Oskil Psychoneurological facility, opening ceremony speech

Oskil Psychoneurological facility workshop and gym

Mayna Morosovka laying the foundation stone, Oskil, psychoneurological facility

Capacity development — training measures for kindergartens and construction companies

The project worked with local partners to support and enable them to independently assess their needs and gather necessary information to draw up small project plans for sustainable and unassisted usage of the buildings. There was an enormous demand and need for continuous training amongst the owners of the buildings, including municipalities, schools, hospitals, and kindergartens.

Vocational training center (VTC), Kharkiv

VTC, Kharkiv

Linking construction and peacebuilding: How did we get there?

It was particularly important that the infrastructure measures benefited not only IDPs but also the local population of host communities. Even though the population was initially very willing to support the IDPs, tensions arose over time when it became clear that the conflict would not end in the foreseeable future and the IDPs would stay. The measures helped to strengthen the municipalities in the **provision of social services**, thereby removing pressure from the system, improving living and working conditions, and increasing the satisfaction of people with the government. Meeting places such as youth centers, playgrounds, and sports fields made an important contribution to integration of IDPs.

Construction measures are visible. In many cases it was visually perceived by the population that there is support for them and that they were not forgotten in difficult times, regardless of whether they benefited directly from the measure or not. The combination of construction measures and improved services was ideal, especially for those who are usually excluded from measures such as disabled persons and orphans.

In a significant number of measures, training and advisory support were focused on the construction sector, such as construction companies. For example, civil society, their partners, and the local population were included in the urban planning process. New and transparent tendering procedures, billing processes and quality control approaches were also introduced. This approach proved worthwhile on two levels: It brought IDPs and host communities to **work together on a common goal** and **empowered the local authorities** to be effective. This increased their feelings of ownership and responsibility.

While reconstructing and refurbishing social infrastructure, several measures with a view to energy efficiency, usability and safety were incorporated. For example, the insulation of buildings, introduction of ventilation systems with heat recovery mechanisms, and water taps with automatic stop functions, ensured not only significant energy reductions and warmer buildings, but also eco-friendly social infrastructure.

The project promoted and supported the implementation of the Government of Ukraine's policy of Inclusion of PWD. Barrier-free access was specifically designed for handicapped persons or persons with disabilities. Moreover, the provision of kitchen equipment ensured that PWD could access and utilize the inclusive kitchen equipment. Finally, the project introduced improved fire safety and security measures, such as fire escape doors with panic fittings, and hygiene improvements, like non-slip tiles in bathrooms and wet rooms, and wall-mounted water closets and toilets to facilitate cleaning.

Improved project planning, management, and implementation methodologies towards partners led to several positive spill-over effects. After receiving training in new insulation materials and techniques, the project's partners started using these techniques in other governmental buildings. The project's partners also started implementing energy saving measures in their other activities. Public administrators appreciated the **transparent and inclusive project planning concepts so much that they became used as new standards**.

As shown above, conflicts around access to public services were on

the rise. By providing more efficient services, for example through the citizens' service offices or the social service offices, and better physical infrastructure in the form of renovated housing, schools and kindergartens, **potential tensions between host communities and IDPs were successfully minimized**.

Participatory approach: How did we get all stakeholders on board?

To identify construction projects that fit the needs of the host communities and IDPs, only cities in the project area hosting registered IDPs would qualify for the identification of construction sites. Furthermore, the identified buildings had to serve the general public, the necessity of the extension had to have a connection to the existing IDPs, and a concept of use had to be presented while the local authorities would guarantee the provision of staff for the building and its maintenance. Within the project, the topic of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) was prioritized in each construction activity.

To ensure stable work relations with stakeholders from the beginning, some procedures had to be established quickly. These included the written consent of the property owner and confirmation of the assumption and calculation of operating costs in the case of the rehabilitation of empty buildings. Once a construction activity was selected for further development, additional stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, were involved in the process.

The approval or registration with the building authorities and the procurement of the necessary documents was in the hands of the partners. The process of tendering and selection of local construction companies was completely taken over by GIZ. Consequently, transparent tendering processes could be implemented and local authorities trained on these procedures. During construction, small measures were carried out combined with an extensive capacity development program for municipalities or non-governmental organizations, thereby implementing training on the job.

Quality monitoring on the construction site was guaranteed by GIZ. There were usually **weekly tours during construction, with representatives of the community and the future users** present. Decisions that were made during the construction phase were taken jointly with the local partner. In case furniture procurements were necessary, decisions were taken with the target users. This proved to be particularly important for equipping hospitals, as existing equipment lists provided by authorities often did not correspond to what doctors and nurses considered to be useful.

Public forums to discuss social housing, Nikopol

Monitoring and Evaluation: How do we measure impact?

Monitoring addressed mainly two areas: **(i) impact monitoring** evaluated the ways in which the population was affected; **(ii) technical quality monitoring** regarding construction quality and costs for construction measures and equipment was set-up from the start. Due to most construction measures being implemented in parallel, it was immensely important to establish a comprehensive monitoring system for cost control. All payments and procurements were recorded, and the management system included real-time cost flow monitoring, which was important for budget steering.

While the GIZ project was the largest client for the construction industry in the region, it introduced standards and transparent processes complying with the provisions of the Federal Audit Office to tackle the risk of corruption and other non-compliant actions. To better predict the workload of the construction companies, and to involve local companies as much as possible, the awards were also monitored.

Challenges: How did we resolve them?

Speed versus participation

The level of participation needed was time consuming. Local authorities contributed to every step, from identification to proposition, ultimately obtaining the documents required, while being advised and supported by the project. Increasingly, partner

contributions were demanded, agreed in Memorandums of Understanding, and implemented. Whenever these related to construction measures, quality assurance measures ensured that processes were properly implemented. Parallel to this, extensive participatory processes were carried out to clarify needs before implementation began, for example in some hospitals.

Nevertheless, partners and the target group still expected quick results as their needs were urgent. To meet exceptions for quick results whilst ensuring the necessary participation, it was important to **put together a quick-starter construction portfolio to show some quick-wins**. Projects in which only the building envelope was affected were implemented rapidly, for example leaking roofs and windows were replaced.

Speed versus quality

The selection of the target activities had to be done very quickly at the beginning of the project to kick-off implementation. Proposals submitted by the municipalities were evaluated based on technical feasibility and then followed by economic feasibility before further planning. Due to time constraints, it was decided not to carry out an evaluation in the cities to determine whether one proposed school was more suitable than another. This decision remained with the responsible authorities in the cities which certainly sometimes led to more political decisions.

Local content versus quality and speed

All construction measures were carried out by local companies. This required training the companies at various levels, starting with the tendering procedure, the type of tender, bill of quantity, and the accounting modalities. Capacity development was also required on the construction site as part of quality assurance. The specified tender deadlines were complied with and tenders were also sometimes repeated if no adequate offers were submitted. Even in the very closely monitored small-scale measures, which were implemented via local grants, compliance with tendering rules and transparency were always the main principle to safeguard the quality pledge of German Development Cooperation. This pledge also included measures that incorporate energy efficiency, inclusion, and fire safety and security.

Lessons learned: What was effective and what will we do differently in the future?

- **Considering both host communities and IDPs as target group was key in reducing tensions between these groups**. For example, there were regulations that children of IDPs should be given priority kindergarten places, so parents would have the time to reorganize their lives. To make up for this, some of the kindergartens created by the project being mainly for children of the local population. Although difficult to communicate some queries, it was an essential contribution to a local peaceful coexistence.
- **The multi-level approach** — including different levels of the local government and administration — **proved valuable in raising legitimacy** for the allocation of public services such as places in kindergarten. However, different processes and approaches required quite different capacity development measures at Oblast, Rayon (administrative level beneath the Oblast), and municipal level. This increased the administrative effort needed and raised the implementation and transaction costs.
- **Every context analysis prior to a project should include recommendations for possible complementary projects with other international organizations.** One big challenge proved to be the combined pressure to spend substantial parts of the total budget within the first 18 implementation months with planning processes for social infrastructure that usually take much longer. Therefore, we recommend identifying possible synergies with other organizations as early as possible and agree on complementary measures to be implemented accordingly.
- **Resources, staff, and time required for O&M measures should be included in the overall construction measure from the start.** The project-initiated approaches for developing O&M monitoring, such as O&M manuals and trainings, only came in late in the implementation phase. Given the sheer number of infrastructure measures that needed to be covered, this was quite time consuming. We recommend that any future project linking construction and peace already prepare O&M training and materials during the planning phase of the construction process.

Constructing a better future

8

Constructing a better future

Infrastructure makes visible changes and contributes to peace beyond physical construction. A school as a solid physical structure providing a space that people then walk into and experience as a new but safe environment is a haptic reminder of change and hope. In this book, we have shared examples of the ways in which linking construction and peacebuilding can work under certain conditions. These examples have underlined the fact that the capacity development of individuals and institutions is an important way to contribute to peace. If local communities participate in relevant decision-making processes, and if they are involved in actual construction activities, peacebuilding efforts become more credible.

At the same time, we need to be conscious that one project alone cannot achieve overall peace through construction measures. Such measures are deeply embedded in local contexts, and typically face a particularly challenging operational environment in which implementing agencies need to be able to effectively navigate. Projects that link construction and peacebuilding need to further interconnect components that are specific to the context. Furthermore, it takes time to rebuild infrastructure and reach peaceful and inclusive societies.

With this book, we have made a first attempt to identify what construction is able to deliver for peacebuilding, as well as to point out its limitations. Our case studies of Nigeria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Ukraine have shown that GIZ is already using a set of tools that allows for infrastructure development in diverse contexts. We use tailored approaches, jointly implemented with local partners. In this last part of the book, we present some overall lessons learned regarding our practical experience in linking construction and peacebuilding. We then highlight some reflections on the tensions that linking construction and peacebuilding might inherit. While these tensions are trade-offs in practice, they provide avenues for further discussion and development of the approach to link construction with peacebuilding.

Lessons Learned

One key experience emanating from the case studies is: when linking construction and peacebuilding, **governmental development actors such as GIZ are often the first to implement activities that link humanitarian assistance, development, and peacebuilding**. In this sense, they can be considered early movers in addressing the humanitarian-development-peace-nexus (HDP-nexus). To be able to play this role effectively, implementing agencies need to ensure high financial and technical standards whilst constantly realigning project implementation to a fragile and dynamically changing context:

1. **Consistent quality standards as guidance for implementation:** Standards that must be applied in projects which link peacebuilding and construction need to be communicated in advance to all stakeholders (see Chapter Two: *Linking construction and peacebuilding*). The standards cover (a) the hard elements, such as the physical construction itself, because better quality leads to better project outcomes, (b) the soft elements, such as peacebuilding and capacity development that determine whether the construction element is properly utilized; and (c) the auxiliary services of a project that help to manage all risks related to project implementation, for example financial or security risks. Additionally, non-negotiable agreements and exit strategies, that are triggered if the project falls short of certain quality criteria, need to be developed and communicated to all stakeholders.

2. **Strong in-house support structure for project implementation**: No project manager can be expected to implement quality standards alone — a support structure is needed. This includes a state-of-the-art risk management system, a well-established procurement process, financial services for project implementation and, finally, strong in-house technical expertise in peacebuilding and other relevant development sectors, for example governance, energy, or health.

3. **A one-stop-shop approach to limit transaction costs:** As an early mover in addressing the HDP-nexus, projects need to manage interfaces with a diverse group of cooperation partners while maintaining quality standards. To limit transaction costs, the soft and hard elements, as well as the auxiliary services of the project, should be managed by one organization. Here the in-house availability of both construction and peacebuilding experts is key.

4. **Political support is necessary:** Peacebuilding is a political process that is often beyond the technical scope of any given project. For

example, a political partner might decide to divert funds and not provide the agreed-upon electricity supply for a hospital. Or rebuilding infrastructure can result in even more benefits for peacebuilding if it is linked to a high-level diplomatic peace process. To address these challenges and use these potential leverages, a project linking construction and peacebuilding needs to communicate closely with the commissioning party that will then engage with the political partner on the ground. Regular and ad hoc communication lines need to be actively established beyond the needs of reporting periods, such as quarterly reporting or briefings. These must be tailored to support the political communication of commissioning parties.

Navigating three areas of tension

When reading the case studies with the background of our conceptual discussion at the beginning of this book, three specific areas of tension emerge. We would like to suggest ways to successfully navigate them.

Area of tension one: Adjust the timing of construction and peacebuilding

Construction and peacebuilding follow a different logic of time. Infrastructure can be built quickly with visible results, which makes it comparatively easy to measure. Once a building is constructed or rehabilitated, the project is finished and has delivered its result. Peacebuilding, by contrast, takes time. Societal transformation does not occur overnight. Activities aiming at capacity development, trust building, and social cohesion do not have such a clear end point and their impact develops over a longer period. Assessing how infrastructure is perceived by the local community, how it is used, and how it is beneficial for peace, requires a longer implementation period.

So, how can we bring both logics of time together? We recommend **establishing a separate monitoring unit or instrument** for projects linking construction and peacebuilding. Monitoring teams should revisit sites five years after

project closure. This unit could also be instrumental in establishing baselines before the project starts and in developing joint Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) standards for all such projects.

Area of tension two: Whose needs, expectations, and interests?

Both conceptual analysis and case studies have shown that a participatory approach is crucial for acceptance, ownership, and success of a project linking construction and peacebuilding. These elements contribute to better communication, dialogue, and consideration of the needs of the population. However, the **communities' needs might not be identical to the perceptions and views of the local administration or our political partners**. This is even more complex when we add the commissioning parties' interests and requirements.

Participatory approaches as well as assessments need to balance the diverse and sometimes divergent requirements of commissioning parties, political interests of partner governments, and the multiple perceptions and needs on the ground. Only when we translate those different views into technical implementation can we construct an effective and sustainable contribution to peace.

We follow a bottom-up approach, in which the needs of the target group should be reflected in the decisions of the commissioning parties. **We therefore strongly recommend open communication to address diverging interests.** As we have showed here, GIZ brings significant experience to the table in this regard. Acting as mediator between different stakeholder groups is key to GIZ's development projects.

Area of tension three: Stick with the plan or adapt to the context?

Development projects are typically planned with a time-horizon of three to five years. Peacebuilding, however, operates in a highly dynamic context. As argued previously, implementation must respond to changes in the context to be conflict-sensitive and to effectively support peacebuilding. This, of course, poses a challenge with larger construction projects that cannot easily be redesigned once started.

If we discover that a construction company is involved in corruption or employment patterns that could do harm, for example, preferences for specific ethnic groups, we must adjust elements to avoid negative effects. Changes in the construction due to the changed needs of the target group might increase costs, for example, if an additional unit is needed at a hospital. Also, construction costs might be relatively low at the beginning of projects in conflict contexts. If the efforts of linking construction and peacebuilding are successful, other actors will move into the area, increasing demand and

consequently raising the costs for additional construction projects.

We argue that potential changes in budget and approach need to be considered part and parcel when linking construction and peacebuilding and need to be factored-in from the start. We recommend **openly addressing potentially harmful effects** and the consequent changes in the project design and implementation **with all relevant stakeholders, including the donors**. Overall, building infrastructure that addresses peace needs in a highly dynamic context requires flexibility and can only be achieved in close cooperation with the commissioning party.

We hope that with this book we have made a useful contribution to building peace around the world. In any case we believe it was worth a try; as John F. Kennedy stated at his final address to the United Nations General Assembly in 1963:

> *"Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures. And however undramatic the pursuit of peace, that pursuit must go on."*
>
> John F. Kennedy