

The Nexus Center for Conflict Resolution

Summary Work Plan and Budget Options

Introduction

The proposal is to establish the **Nexus Center for Conflict Resolution** in Vienna, Austria. The overarching objective of the Center will be to analyze the factors that contribute to conflict and – working closely with key decision makers – develop innovative solutions to reduce the threat of instability that can harm health, development, and social harmony.

While armed conflict and instability undermine health goals, the opposite is also true. Investments in health, conflict resolution and statebuilding can be **mutually reinforcing**. Conflict resolution and peacebuilding measures can help prevent or lessen the impact of the negative outcomes of armed conflict on public health. At the same time, the position of medical professionals in society, given their neutrality, credibility, and equality, can be a precious resource during negotiations, as are health-related cease-fires. The fact that health issues are of interest to all warring parties can contribute to this advantage. Moreover, health investment can contribute to statebuilding and legitimacy of the institutions. In the long term, stronger health systems can improve the health of the population, leading to greater productivity, stronger economies, less violence, and state stability.

The ultimate goal of the Center is to encourage **adaptive leadership** in order to reduce the potential harm caused by conflict and instability on health and to be better prepared to capture the mutually reinforcing benefits of investments in health, conflict resolution, and good governance.

The Center will take a **multidisciplinary approach**, bringing together experts from diverse backgrounds including the private sector, academic institutions, think tanks, and civil society, as well as governments and multilateral organizations. This will **strengthen networks** among experts from around the world across a wide area of disciplines.

1. Priority Areas

Short-term independent initiatives are necessary but not sufficient. In order to be sustainable, preventive and remedial measures need to be part of a **coordinated, comprehensive, and long-term global process** that unites all stakeholders and ensures a multidisciplinary and evidence-based approach. To be effective and sustainable, this process should be **centralized and institutionalized**.

For these reasons, the Nexus Center for Conflict Resolution will prioritize **building partnerships with major health donors and actors in the field** to support their programming. In particular, the Center will provide:

- 1) Political analysis and support in mediation and conflict resolution;
- 2) Conflict assessment and analysis of areas of vulnerability and impact analysis; and

- 3) Training in conflict-sensitive approaches to health and conflict resolution.

The Center will also prioritize the construction of a **Web-based community of practice** (including the private sector, foundations, academia and think-tanks, civil society, specialized institutions, inter-governmental organizations, and governments) with the aim of sharing **best practices and case studies** in order to identify factors that promote resilience. The aim is to offer to practitioners and policymakers **evidence-based research** and assist with targeted knowledge and services in order to enhance the positive **impact and minimize negative consequences of health programs on peace and stability**.

2. Summary Work Plan

The work plan includes priority activities for the **first five years of programs (2013-2017)**. Further details will be developed based on the financial model that will be adopted, as illustrated below in this document.

Year One (2013)

It is projected that the first six months of activity will be devoted to **establishing the Center** in Vienna and **recruiting its initial dedicated staff**. Following the establishment of the Center, activities will include a major **policy conference** to launch the Nexus Center and to begin connecting the community of practice. A first **mapping exercise of vulnerability areas** at the nexus between health, security, and development, through a set of policy papers, will be presented at the conference.

In the first year, the Center will also begin to establish strategic partnerships with major global health and development actors in specific regions and countries, offering political analysis and mediation services in support of health programs to create a virtuous circle between **improved healthcare, sustainable development, stability, and security**.

Year Two (2014)

The second year will focus on two thematic areas, with a mix of **policy research papers, field studies, and seminars**:

- 1) What steps can be taken to improve the chances of implementing the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in cities**, as well as what lessons can be learned from safer, rather than failing, cities, with a special focus on the Health Goals (Goal 4 on child mortality, Goal 5 on maternal health, and Goal 6 on HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases); and
- 2) What new strategies and policy ideas can be developed for **building the post-2015/post-MDGs development agenda**, with particular focus on state fragility. This is an especially important focus for global efforts, since no low-income fragile or conflict-affected country is likely to

achieve a single MDG and poverty rates are, on average, more than 20 percent higher in countries where violence is protracted than in other countries.¹

To accompany activities in these areas, the Center will launch a **Web-based community of practice** (including the private sector, foundations, academia and think-tanks, civil society, specialized institutions, inter-governmental organizations, and governments) with the aim of sharing best practices and case studies, as well as enhancing dialogue among different players in the health and conflict-resolution fields.

The Center will also begin to look into **specific cases and countries**, in partnership with health actors, where conflict, instability, and fragile governments impede the full accomplishment of health objectives. In this context, it will examine confidence-building measures and promote conflict prevention and resolution with a particular focus on reducing the impact of conflict on health and development, and vice versa.

Finally, during the second year, the Center will begin developing **training modules** for health practitioners and policy makers on the nexus between conflict, instability, and health, as well as on conflict analysis and resolution, and on impact assessment of health and development programs on instability risks and governance.

Year Three, Four, and Five (2015-2017)

In its third year of activity, the Nexus Center will begin delivering **annual training courses** for health practitioners and policy makers, as developed in the previous year.

The Center will also expand its activities, looking into more specific challenges to health, security, and development. In particular, it is anticipated that three areas of priorities will be addressed:

- 1) It will look at what steps can be taken to reduce the threat posed by **transnational organized crime**, with particular focus on **unregulated dumping of hazardous waste, counterfeiting of medicine, and degradation of the environment**, for example through illegal logging or fishing.
- 2) Through strategic partnerships with major global health and development initiatives, the Center will provide policy analysis and recommendations to promote **aid effectiveness, reduce inequality**, and create a virtuous circle between **improved healthcare and sustainable development in conflict-affected and fragile states**, based on the initial work developed in the second year.
- 3) The Center will focus on what steps can be taken to improve **disaster prevention and relief** in order to reduce the health risks to the population in humanitarian crises, particularly the most vulnerable. It will also look at the factors that contribute to famine, as well as the special needs of displaced persons.

Finally, the Center will continue to boost its **Web-based community of practice**, providing additional services such as chat-rooms, peer-review opportunities, funding-project proposal matching, Web-seminars, and job announcements.

¹ World Bank, *Ibid.*

3. Budgetary Options

The Center will be organized within the framework of the International Peace Institute (IPI) in Vienna as an International Organization (IO). For financial support of the Center and its wide-ranging activities, the attached presents three budget scenarios based on (1) a permanent endowment; (2) a fixed grant term; and (3) a hybrid of endowment and fixed term.