

Towards a Peace-Promoting Private Sector

A World Bank Fragility Forum Side Event

March 3, 2020

7:45 am to 9:00 am

World Bank Headquarters, Room MC 12-700

In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition of the role that the private sector can play in fragile and conflict affected situations (FCAS). Peace positive investments in people and countries to foster prosperity and equal opportunity is essential for maintaining international peace and security.

The International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS)'s 2019-21 Peace Vision, which was launched in July 2019, included supporting a peace-promoting private sector as one of its three priority themes.

The private sector's role in FCAS was noted at the Ministerial Meeting of the g7+ group of fragile and conflict affected states' in June 2019. The ensuing [Lisbon Communiqué](#) noted that "resilient economic foundations are indispensable for sustaining Peace and development," and called upon "Development Partners, as well as on all private actors committed to Peace, to support us in realizing our potential, becoming self-reliant and creating jobs."

The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) commissioned a publication by Oxfam Novib and the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations entitled "[Ready to Engage](#)," which brings together knowledge on the private sector's role in FCAS, as well as practical guidance on civil society's engagement with the private sector in these settings.

Separately, in the development of the World Bank Group (WBG)'s Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) Strategy, the WBG noted that "[in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence, the private sector plays a critical role in providing jobs and income.](#)" The WBG and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) have made supporting stability and inclusive growth in fragile situations a top priority. The IFC is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries, and it, together with the wider WBG have, committed to delivering 15-20 percent of its program to countries classified by the International Development Association (IDA) as "low income" and "fragile and conflict-affected situations" by 2030.

Finally, economic security has been identified as a key priority for Canada's chairing of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2020 and in its campaign for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council for 2021-22.

A peace-promoting private sector, including peace-positive investments represents an interest shared by the IDPS, its constituents, the WBG, and the Government of Canada. The session will identify and explore options for operationalizing a peace-promoting private sector within the context of the IDPS Peace Vision, the upcoming WBG's FCV Strategy, the Ready to Engage report, and Canada's 2020 chairing of the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

Guiding Questions

- What are the main challenges and opportunities faced by private sector in FCAS?
- What are the necessary conditions that are needed to facilitate private sector investment in FCAS but that ensure investments are not only conflict-sensitive but peace positive?
- What is the role of multilateral IFIs to help in creating conducive environment for strengthening Private sector in FCAS?
- What is civil society's role in supporting a peace-promoting private sector in FCAS and how can this bridge between civil society and the private sector be enhanced?
- What are the particular needs, priorities and areas of focus for fragile and conflict affected states with regard to a peace-promoting private sector?
- What innovative instruments could be used to engage the private sector as full partners in sustaining peace and development in FCAS?
- Are there examples of a peace-promoting private sector engagement and international or national private sector regulation best practices in FCAS that can be learned from and possibly replicated elsewhere?