

IEP BRIEF

Positive Peace: The lens to achieve the Sustaining Peace Agenda



INSTITUTE FOR
ECONOMICS
& PEACE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The April 2016 resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly introduced the concept of “Sustaining Peace”. This represents a fundamental shift in the way the United Nations approaches peace and conflict. Underpinning the shift is a new focus on preventing conflicts via the identification of the factors that foster peace.
- This new agenda requires a change in mindset from reactive to proactive. Ideally, it should provide a framework with short as well as longer term strategies for building resilient societies. But there are few practical guidelines, tools or measurements currently in place for conceptualising, tracking and supporting the key drivers of peace.
- The Institute for Economics and Peace’s (IEP) Positive Peace framework provides a lens through which to track and identify the multitude of factors that underpin this agenda.
- IEP’s Positive Peace framework has been derived empirically and has a rigorous, well-documented set of materials to explain how it has been developed.
- IEP defines the drivers of peace as Positive Peace or the “attitudes, institutions and structures which create and sustain peaceful societies.” Positive Peace shifts thinking from an overt focus on what makes countries violent to what makes them peaceful and resilient.
- One of Positive Peace’s value-adds is its applicability for empirically measuring a country’s resilience, or ability to absorb and recover from shocks.
- Countries with high Positive Peace are more likely to maintain their stability and adapt and recover from both internal and external shocks, thereby reducing the risks of conflict relapse.
- Well-developed Positive Peace represents the capacity for a society to thrive. Societies with high Positive Peace have better outcomes on a range of factors that are considered important, such as better per capita growth, better environmental performance, less civil resistance movements or violent political shocks but also better infrastructure to weather the impact from natural disasters.
- IEP’s analysis demonstrates that resilience is built by building high levels of Positive Peace. It is also an effective way to reduce the potential for future violence.
- Globally, Positive Peace has been improving since 2005. 118 of the 162 countries ranked in the Positive Peace Index (PPI), or 73 per cent, improved over this period, largely outweighing the 44 whose scores deteriorated.
- Positive Peace is associated with many of the indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda. It therefore provides a useful analytical framework for orienting international action that can serve to sustain peace.

UNDERSTANDING POSITIVE PEACE

Positive Peace represents an ambitious and forward looking conceptualization of peace that moves beyond conflict and violence. It creates better economic and societal outcomes, as well as lessening the number of grievances and the levels of violence associated with them.

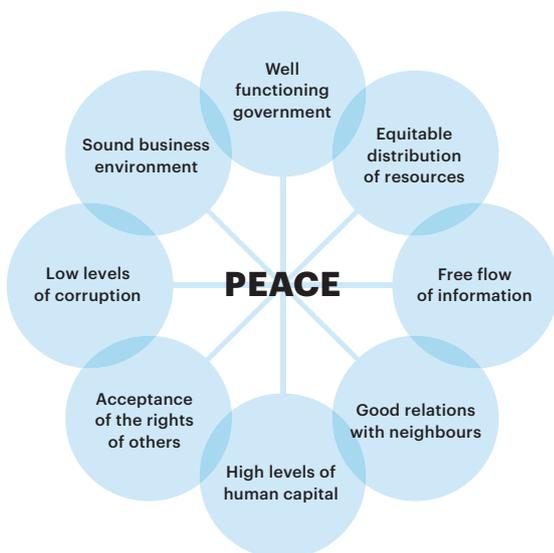
In addition to the absence of violence, Positive Peace is also associated with many other societal characteristics that are considered desirable, including better economic outcomes, measures of wellbeing, levels of gender equality and environmental performance. IEP defines Positive Peace as the “attitudes, institutions and structures which create and sustain peaceful societies.” By providing a comprehensive taxonomy that breaks down into eight distinct but interdependent pillars, Positive Peace serves to facilitate the work of policymakers. It does so by identifying what makes some countries more peaceful than others, thereby highlighting why certain countries experience higher levels of violence - or political instability more generally. Positive Peace can also be used to define the risk of future falls in peace, thereby providing better targeting for peacebuilding efforts.

Positive Peace has been empirically derived by IEP via the statistical analysis of thousands of cross-country measures of economic and social progress to determine what factors have a statistically significant association with the absence of violence. It is measured by the Positive Peace Index (PPI) which consists of 24 qualitative and quantitative indicators that capture the eight factors of Positive Peace. Covering 162 countries, or 99.5% of the world’s population the PPI provides a baseline measure of the effectiveness of a country’s capabilities to build and maintain peace. It also represents a tangible metric for policymakers, researchers and corporations to use for effective monitoring and evaluation purposes.

One of Positive Peace’s value-adds is its applicability for empirically measuring a country’s resilience, or ability to absorb and recover from shocks. It can also be used to measure fragility and to help predict the likelihood of conflict, violence and instability. The eight factors of Positive Peace represent a complex set of interdependent social dynamics and as such are best thought of systemically. As an example, high levels of human capital can act as a driver of economic growth, while a strong business environment can be a driver of improved education. Analysis of corruption demonstrates that 80 per cent of countries scoring poorly in low levels of corruption also score poorly in high levels of human capital, highlighting the interconnected nature of the factors.

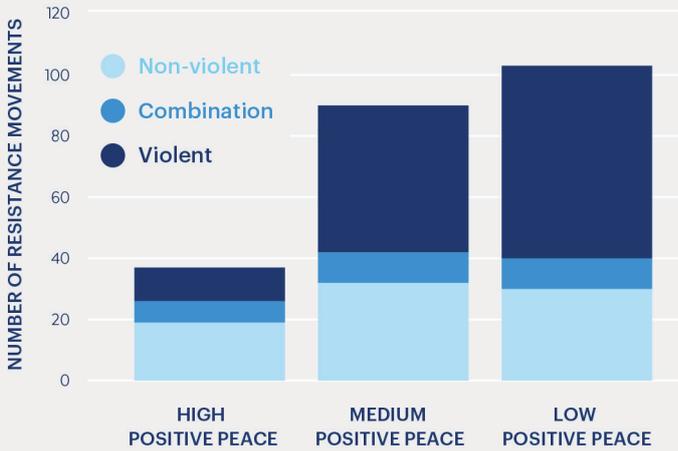
THE PILLARS OF POSITIVE PEACE

The pillars of Positive Peace describe the *attitudes*, *institutions* and *structures* that underpin peaceful societies.



PREVALENCE AND NATURE OF RESISTANCE CAMPAIGNS

Between 1945 and 2006, 91 per cent of violent resistance campaigns have occurred in countries with weaker Positive Peace. The proportion of resistance movements that are non-violent is higher in countries with stronger Positive Peace.¹⁸



Source: University of Denver, IEP

However, overhauling all aspects of corruption or governance structures in a country at once is seldom politically feasible. Through stimulating the whole system of peace, it is possible to start or enhance a virtuous cycle, whereby conditions act in a reinforcing manner, continually improving each other. All systems (countries) are different, therefore the actions must match the state of the system. Positive Peace translates into more opportunities for nonviolent conflict resolution. Indeed, from 1945-2006, 91 per cent of violent resistance campaigns occurred in countries with weaker Positive Peace.

The distinguishing feature of IEP’s work on Positive Peace is that it is empirically derived through quantitative analysis. There are few known empirical and quantitative frameworks available to analyse Positive Peace. Historically, it has largely been understood qualitatively and based on normative concepts of a peaceful society. Instead, IEP’s Positive Peace framework is based on the quantitatively identifiable common characteristics of the world’s most peaceful countries.

In order to address the gap in this kind of quantitative research, IEP utilises the time series data contained in the Global Peace Index (GPI), in combination with the existing peace and development literature to statistically analyse the characteristics peaceful countries have in common. An important aspect of this approach is to avoid value judgement and allow statistical analysis to explain the key drivers of peace.

PILLARS OF POSITIVE PEACE

IEP’s framework for Positive Peace is based on eight factors. The Positive Peace pillars not only sustain peace but also support an environment where human potential flourishes. They interact in complex ways, are multidimensional and are generally slow moving.



Sound Business Environment



Low Levels of Corruption



High Levels of Human Capital



Free Flow of Information



Good Relations with Neighbors



Well-Functioning Government



Acceptance of the Rights of Others



Equitable Distribution of Resources

WHY IS POSITIVE PEACE CRUCIAL TODAY?

Conflict prevention and Positive Peace are two sides of the same coin. One important difference, however, is the way in which these two concepts can be used to define frameworks that are useful to policymakers.

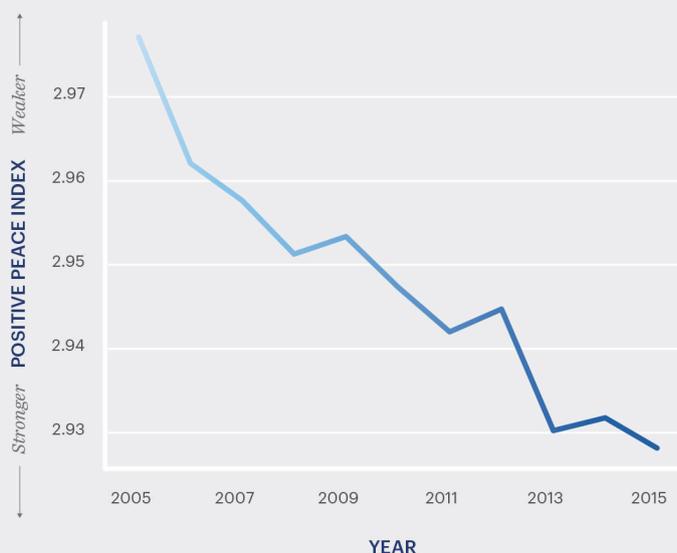
Conflict prevention remains caught in ambiguity, arguably as a result of competing approaches over the type of action or set of policies that fall under its conceptual remit. Actions toward Positive Peace can however be measured, tracked and conceptualised as an ongoing process.

IEP's analysis demonstrates that resilience is built by building high levels of Positive Peace. It is also an effective way to reduce the potential for future violence. Globally, Positive Peace has been improving since 2005, with 118 of the 162 countries ranked in the PPI, or 73 per cent, having improved over this period. This largely outweighs the 44 whose PPI score deteriorated.

Countries with high Positive Peace are more likely to maintain their stability and adapt and recover from both internal and external shocks. Low Positive Peace systems are more likely to generate internal shocks, with 84 per cent of major political shocks occurring in these countries. Similarly, there are 13 times more lives lost from natural disasters in nations with low Positive Peace as opposed to those with high Positive Peace, a disproportionately high number when compared to the distribution of incidents.

TREND IN POSITIVE PEACE, 2005-2015

There has been a 1.7% improvement in the average PPI score between 2005 and 2015.



Number of countries where Positive Peace score deteriorated



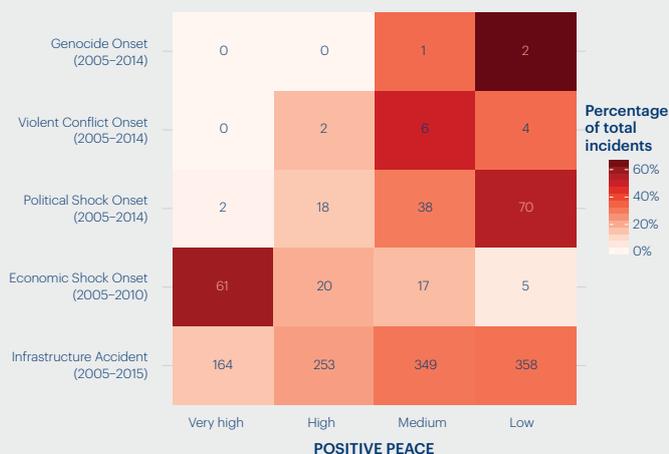
Number of countries where Positive Peace score improved



Source: IEP

DISTRIBUTION OF ENDOGENOUS SHOCKS, 2005-2015

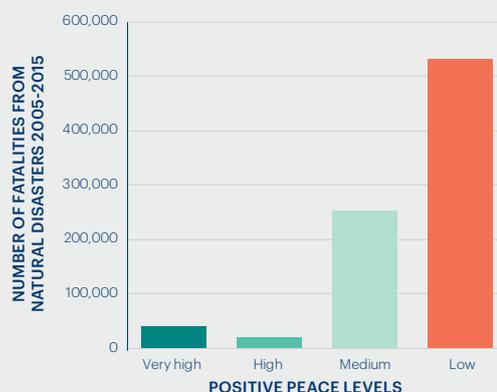
Lower Positive Peace countries experience more industrial and political shocks while higher Positive Peace countries suffer more economic shocks.



Source: EMDAT, INSCR, Reinhart and Rogoff, UCDP, IEP

TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS FROM NATURAL DISASTERS, 2005-2015

More people are killed by natural disasters in low Positive Peace countries than high Positive Peace countries.



Source: EMDAT, IEP

Violence and conflict continue to thwart efforts to meet humanitarian goals and tackle major challenges such as climate change or poverty reduction. In 2015, the economic impact of containing or dealing with the consequences of violence was 13.3 per cent of global GDP. Yet, in comparison, far less is devoted to supporting the underlying conditions that lead to peace.

Peacebuilding activities, for example, are a critical way in which donors and governments can tackle the sources of violence and address the weak institutional and state capacities that contribute to internal conflict and violence. But peacebuilding is a relatively overlooked aspect of official development assistance (ODA).

Conflict-affected countries do not represent the main beneficiaries of ODA. In 2013, they received only slightly more than 24 percent of total ODA, or US\$41 billion. These countries received US\$6.8 billion for peacebuilding activities, which represents 16 percent of their total gross ODA allocation. With the global cost of violence reaching a staggering \$13.6 trillion in 2015, just \$15 billion was spent on peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities. This means that efforts to consolidate peace constituted a mere 0.12 per cent of the total cost of violence.

IEP has constructed a global model of peacebuilding cost-effectiveness that shows increased funding for peacebuilding would be hugely beneficial; not only to peacebuilding outcomes but in terms of the potential economic returns to the global economy. Using 20 years

of peacebuilding expenditure in Rwanda as a guide for establishing a unit cost, IEP estimates the cost-effectiveness ratio of peacebuilding at 1:16.

This means that if countries currently in conflict increased or received higher levels of peacebuilding funding to appropriate levels estimated by this model, then for every dollar invested now, the cost of conflict would be reduced by 16 dollars over the long run. The total peace dividend the international community would reap if it increased peacebuilding commitments over the next ten years (from 2016) is US\$2.94 trillion. Based on the assumptions of this model, the estimated level of peacebuilding assistance required to achieve this outcome would be more than double what is currently directed toward peacebuilding for the 31 most fragile and conflict affected nations of the world.

Without an understanding of the systemic nature of peace and the factors that support it, it is impossible to determine what policies actually work and what programmes need to be implemented to support them. International actors need new paradigms to shift the deadlock in their approaches to avert conflicts before they break out. The combination of Positive Peace and systems thinking therefore provides a factual framework that fosters our common understanding of the interdependent nature of peace and the sort of action required to sustain it.

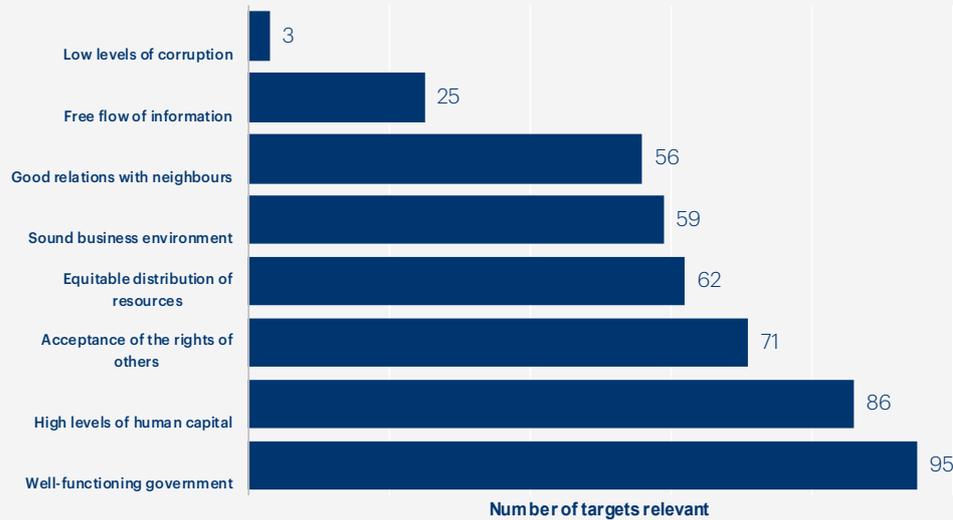
BOX 1 POSITIVE PEACE AND THE SDGs

Beyond Goal 16, there are other aspects of the SDGs that are related to the drivers of peace. The SDGs are integrated, interlinked and universal, working together to bring about development outcomes. Goal 16 cannot be separated from the other goals, and, like Positive Peace, it does not apply only to conflict-affected countries.

The bar graph below shows the relationship between the SDGs and Positive Peace. It demonstrates that there is an unequal distribution of Positive Peace factors among the SDGs. Eighty-five per cent of the SDGs have relevance to at least two Positive Peace factors. The single factor lacking in significant coverage for the SDGs is corruption. All of the SDGs will be more achievable with lower levels of corruption.

COVERAGE OF POSITIVE PEACE FACTORS IN SDG TARGETS

Of the 169 targets in the SDGs, 85% are relevant to at least two Positive Peace factors. Low levels of corruption is only relevant to three targets.



Source: IEP

POSITIVE PEACE IS KEY TO PREVENTING CONFLICT AND REINFORCING DEVELOPMENT

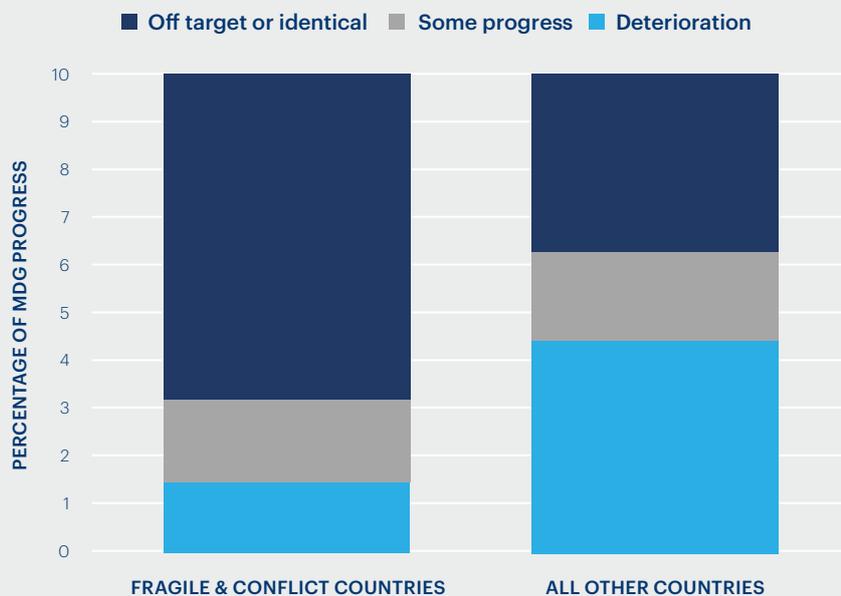
Through Goal 16, the SDGs recognise the long reaching consequences of violent conflict for development outcomes. Not only is violence a severe hindrance for development, it can reverse many years of development gains as well as reducing foreign direct investment, education, life expectancy and poverty.

Conflict has prevented many countries from reaching their development goals. Losses from conflict in 2015 were estimated to be nearly US\$742 billion in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms. As conflict impacts the economy in the immediate term, potentially destroying entire industries, the impact of conflict is also long term, reducing future development opportunities.

These fragile and conflict-affected countries achieved significantly less progress than other developing countries in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On average, only 16 per cent of these countries met or made progress on their MDGs targets.

AVERAGE PROGRESS IN MDGs FOR FRAGILE AND CONFLICT AFFECTED COUNTRIES VS COUNTRIES

On average, fewer countries that were in conflict situations achieved their MDGs when compared to other countries.



Source: WorldBank

“ Conflict has prevented many countries from reaching their development goals. Losses from conflict in 2015 were estimated to be nearly US\$742 billion in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms.

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF PEACE

As a response to the growing demands for measuring the costs of conflict, IEP has developed a framework called the Economic Value of Peace (EVP). It employs quantitative methods to estimate the economic impact of violence on the global economy, as well as the potential additional economic benefits from improvements in peace.

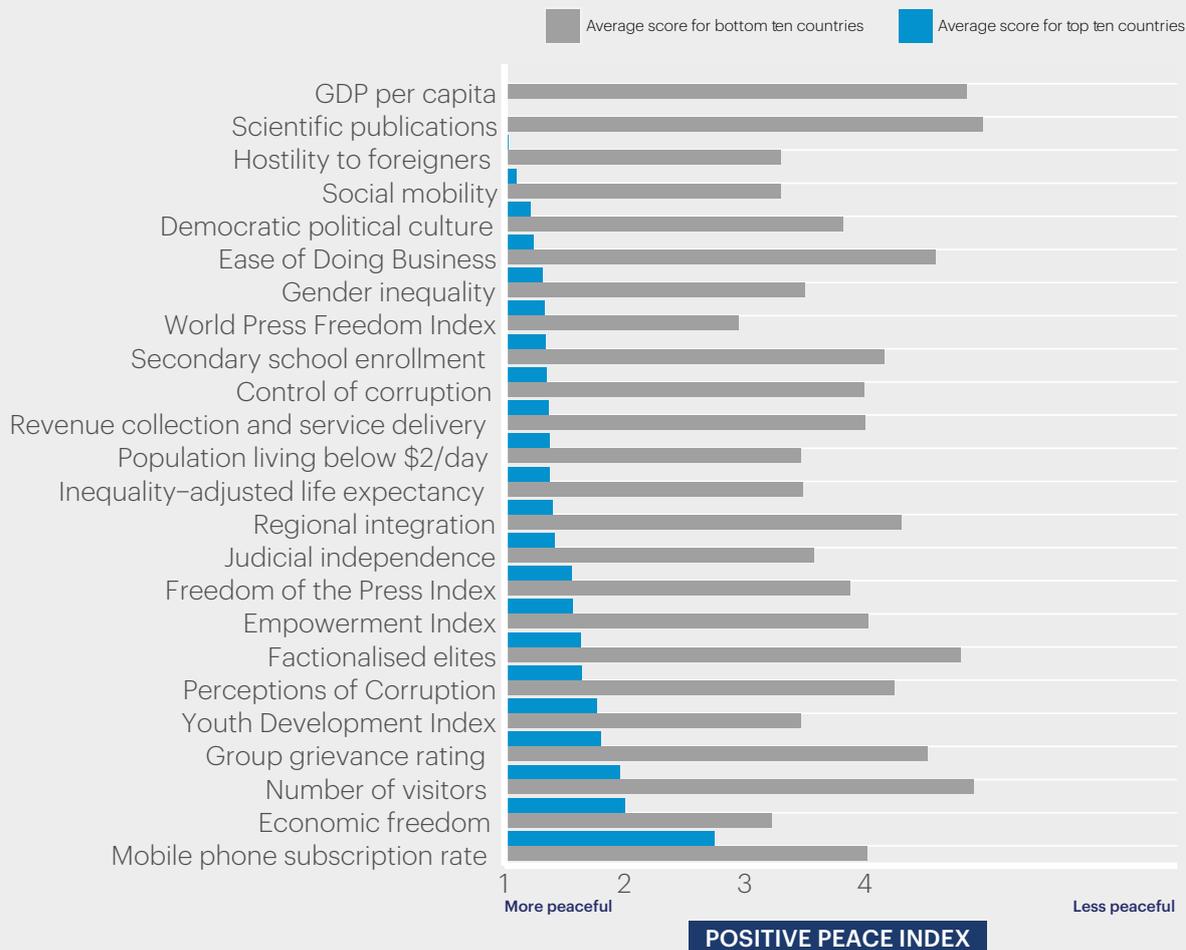
The Economic Value of Peace framework covers 163 countries and independent territories - representing 99.5 per cent of the global economy and population. There are at least two major trends in the cost of violence. Firstly, where countries have experienced dramatic increases in violent conflict, there is a corresponding impact on their economies. The primary example of this is the case of Syria where the civil war has devastated the country and economy, with violence and conflict costs equivalent to 54.1 per cent of GDP in 2015. Conversely, countries that have achieved peace have reaped significant economic gains. The economic impact of violence in Sri Lanka has decreased 66 per cent since 2009, resulting in a peace dividend of \$48 billion PPP, which is equivalent to 20 per cent of the country's 2015 GDP.

Through understanding the economic losses caused by violence and which types of violence have the greatest effect on Positive Peace indicators, governments and policymakers can better understand how a lack of peace is affecting not only economic growth but also poverty levels, social mobility, education, the control of corruption or life expectancy. Indeed, results from the 2016 iteration of the PPI show that the average score across these indicators were much higher in the top ten ranked countries than the bottom ten ranked. This highlights that by identifying the right violence containment strategies, policymakers may be able to lower economic costs of violence by nurturing the tangible drivers of peacefulness.

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AVERAGE PPI INDICATOR SCORES FOR 10 COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST AND LOWEST SCORES, 2015

A consistent feature of the most peaceful countries is that they score highly across every PPI indicator. This shows the need to focus holistically across pillars of peace to promote peacefulness.



Source: IEP

BOX 2 BACKGROUND TO THE SUSTAINING PEACE AGENDA

Despite multilateral stabilization efforts, violent outbreaks are a recurrent reality in conflict-ridden countries like Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Mali or Somalia. In South Sudan and the Central African Republic, where UN peacekeepers have been deployed with a mandate to protect civilians, non-combatants continue to bear the brunt of violence perpetrated by government forces and factional armed groups. These cases highlight the shortcomings of international action aiming to restore peace in highly volatile environments. They are a stark reminder of the need to shift away from reaction and towards prevention.

Widespread and resurfacing risks of conflict relapse have raised questions over the suitability of current practices

aimed at building or restoring peace. This is in part driven by the fact that there is little prevailing guidance on how to conceptualise, measure and support the key factors that foster peace. However, the April 2016 resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council and General Assembly on sustaining peace represent a promising step to address the problem. They demonstrate an international impetus to frame new ways through which to reinforce peace, as opposed to merely attempting to respond to large outbreaks of violence.

Positive Peace represents an actionable framework on which to guide efforts to sustain peace.

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IEP is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to shifting the world's focus to peace as a positive, achievable, and tangible measure of human wellbeing and progress.

IEP has offices in Sydney, New York, Mexico City, The Hague and Brussels. It works with a wide range of partners internationally and collaborates with intergovernmental organizations on measuring and communicating the economic value of peace.

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