



**Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade – Foreign Affairs  
and Aid Sub-Committee (JSCFDAT)**

**Inquiry into the role of Australia's International Development Program in Preventing Conflict**

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network, active in 170 countries and territories. UNDP works with governments, civil society, and the private sector to reduce poverty, strengthen governance, build resilience, and prevent conflict. Australia has been a long-standing partner, supporting UNDP programs that address root causes of instability across Asia-Pacific and globally. Conflict prevention and resilience-building are central to UNDP's mandate. Through programs that strengthen institutions, empower communities, and promote human security, UNDP contributes to both immediate stability and long-term peace.

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**Summary of the submission**

Australia's international development program plays an important role in building resilience, preventing conflict, and supporting stabilisation across the Indo-Pacific. Development assistance that integrates governance reforms, inclusive civic participation, and human capital investment helps strengthen state institutions and social cohesion, reducing fragility and relapse risks. By embedding conflict analysis, climate-security strategies, and digital risk monitoring into programming, Australia enables early identification of tensions and proactive interventions.

Partnerships with UNDP amplify these efforts through tools like risk dashboards, dialogue platforms, and integrated recovery models that link short-term actions—such as livelihood restoration and service delivery—to long-term peacebuilding and resilience. To maximize impact, it is important to:

- ☐ **Embed conflict sensitivity and risk analysis** across all development programming.
- ☐ **Strengthen governance and justice systems** to restore trust and institutional legitimacy.
- ☐ **Promote inclusive participation** of women, youth, and marginalized groups in governance and peacebuilding.
- ☐ **Integrate climate-security strategies** and resilience-building into aid programs.
- ☐ **Expand early warning and foresight tools** for proactive conflict prevention.
- ☐ **Invest in rapid recovery and stabilisation measures** to prevent relapse and deliver peace dividends.
- ☐ **Leverage Australia's catalytic role** to mobilize additional donor resources for resilience and climate adaptation.
- ☐ **Scale digital peacebuilding initiatives** to counter misinformation and hate speech.
- ☐ **Link short-term interventions to long-term development** for sustainable peace.

UNDP's global and regional presence, neutrality, and ability to operate in politically sensitive and hard-to-reach environments provide Australia with a trusted platform to advance stability, resilience, and

inclusive governance. This partnership enables Australia to support communities and institutions in contexts where bilateral engagement may be limited, ensuring continuity of development and peacebuilding outcomes.

**Inquiry question 1: The role of Australia's international development program in building resilience in fragile states, including by strengthening community and civic participation, governance, security reform and human capital.**

Crises are becoming increasingly protracted, cyclical and rooted in multidimensional development deficits. Disruptions like the collapse of institutional systems, lack of access to resources and services, exclusion of certain groups, economic crises and displacement can exacerbate feelings of distrust toward state institutions, eroding the social contract, fuelling violent extremism, forced displacement and irregular migration, and other ripple effects. Australia's international development programme is central to addressing these drivers of fragility, building resilience and strengthening the social contract and trust between state and society.

**Governance and Responsive State Institutions** - Australia's long-term development engagement supports government capacity at national and local levels, an essential factor for building resilience. By investing in public sector capabilities and leadership, governance reforms, and local planning capacities, Australia contributes to stronger institutions that can manage external pressures and deliver essential services consistently. Electoral integrity programs improve democratic participation and reduce electoral conflict. Anti-corruption and public administration strengthening programs can enhance support transparency, accountability, and effective public service delivery. UNDP is a crucial partner in these efforts, providing technical assistance that embeds risk-informed planning and conflict-sensitive approaches into national systems, ensuring reforms endure beyond short timeframes and individual project cycles.

**Inclusion and civic participation** - Experience shows that exclusion from the planning and delivery of basic services can quickly generate grievances, particularly where communities already feel marginalised. Australia's development programme works to address this by investing in civic institutions, supporting democratic processes, and promoting accountability—critical for fragile states where governance systems may be under strain. UNDP complements this approach by reinforcing inclusive governance structures, empowering local communities to participate in decision-making during recovery and reconstruction. Community-based mechanisms, community-led planning and local institution-building serve as vital anchors for participation, but also practical platforms for economic recovery and resilience (e.g. supporting livelihoods, rebuilding community infrastructure etc.).

**Security and stability** - Security is shaped largely by human security pressures, climate stress, disrupted services, land and resource pressures and weakened justice and/or governance systems. These factors put pressure on community cohesion and public institutions. Security-development programs integrate local justice and policing to enhance public trust, mitigate tensions and reduced conflict risk. Gender-based violence prevention also improves human security, strengthening community resilience and support safer, more inclusive environments. UNDP's partnership with Australia contributes directly to the soft security dimensions that underpin stability. This includes strengthening the rule of law, justice services, and community security initiatives - systems that help countries manage stress, prevent disputes from escalating and maintain cohesion during recovery.

**Investing in human capital and social cohesion** - Resilience against conflict is not only about institutions and infrastructure—it is also about people. In the Pacific, where populations are young and opportunities limited, investing in human capital is essential. Australia's development programme supports education,

skills training, and employment pathways that give young people alternatives to negative coping mechanisms. UNDP builds on this by fostering civic leadership and community engagement among youth, ensuring they are active contributors to peace and development. Gender equality is another cornerstone of stability. By empowering women economically and socially, and by supporting services that prevent and respond to gender-based violence, Australia and UNDP help strengthen the fabric of communities. These investments in people reinforce social cohesion, making societies more resilient to shocks and less likely to experience conflict.

**Post Disaster Recovery** - Disasters frequently overwhelm national systems, with states often in survival mode and, in some cases, move from one recovery to another. In the immediate aftermath of crises, national and subnational systems may face constraints in rapidly absorbing and deploying large volumes of assistance. Communities often lack the systems to manage large inflows of aid quickly and equitably. By working through UNDP's early recovery systems, Australia helps governments demonstrate rapid, transparent and equitable service delivery after crises. This visible responsiveness strengthens legitimacy and reduces the risk of disenchantment that can deepen fragility. UNDP, as a trusted multilateral partner, coordinates early recovery efforts across the Pacific and beyond, ensuring that resources are deployed effectively, transparently, and in alignment with national and regional priorities.

Australia's support also plays a catalytic role in mobilizing wider donor contributions for resilience. In the Pacific—where financing needs far exceed domestic resources—Australia's commitment to climate adaptation, governance, and human capital often unlocks additional investment from other bilateral partners. This multiplier effect strengthens resilience across the region by expanding resources for early warning systems, disaster-resilient infrastructure, and community-driven recovery.

➤ *Refer to Annex I for select country examples, to illustrate the above points.*

### **Inquiry question 2: The strategic use of Australia's international development program to prevent conflict in the Indo-Pacific.**

Risks of conflict and instability are no longer confined to fragile states; middle-income countries in the Indo-Pacific face governance fragility, climate shocks, and exclusion. The region faces a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, climate-related shocks, youth-dominated populations, governance challenges, and increasing subnational conflicts. Initiatives that support early warning analysis, civic engagement and dialogue are crucial.

UNDP's conflict-prevention approach links three mutually reinforcing pillars: strengthening institutions to manage stress, empowering communities to resolve disputes peacefully, and addressing climate- and digital-related risks that can accelerate instability. This integrated model aligns closely with Australia's strategic focus on upstream prevention, resilience, and inclusive governance across the Indo-Pacific.

**Preventing conflict through civic engagement and dialogue** - In the Pacific, fragile contexts often emerge when communities feel excluded from decision-making or when governance systems struggle to deliver services equitably. Australia's international development programme, working in close partnership with UNDP, plays a vital role in strengthening local institutions so that they are transparent, accountable, and responsive to citizens' needs. By investing in inclusive governance and electoral support, Australia helps ensure that communities have a voice in shaping their future. UNDP complements this by creating platforms for dialogue and participation (such as in Fiji and Solomon Islands), enabling women, youth, and marginalized groups to engage meaningfully in civic life. Together, these efforts reduce grievances and provide peaceful avenues for resolving disputes before they escalate into broader instability. For example,

UNDP-DFAT election support contributed to efforts aimed at promoting peaceful and inclusive electoral processes.

**Addressing the climate–security nexus** - Climate security recognises the growing link between climate change and risks to peace, stability, and human security. Climate impacts—such as resource scarcity, displacement, and livelihood disruption—can exacerbate existing grievances, heighten competition over natural resources, and weaken already fragile institutions. Australia’s development program helps reduce these risks by funding natural resource governance and adaptation initiatives that reduce competition over land and water, mitigating potential sources of conflict. These investments protect communities from displacement and economic shocks that might otherwise heighten tensions.

**Risk Monitoring and early warning** - Early warning and risk monitoring are already integral features of Australia’s international development program and form an important part of its conflict-prevention efforts in the Indo-Pacific. Through long-standing partnerships with UNDP and national institutions, Australia supports systems that track political, economic, climate and social risks, enabling governments and communities to identify emerging tensions early and respond before they escalate. Investments in disaster-risk information platforms, community feedback mechanisms, and governance strengthening have enhanced local capacity to analyse risks, mediate disputes, and manage shocks without violence.

➤ *Refer to Annex II for select country examples, to illustrate the above points.*

### **Inquiry question 3: Options for effective support through Australia's aid program in pre-conflict and/or post-conflict zones.**

#### **Pre-Conflict**

##### **Early Warning and Risk Analysis**

Investing in anticipatory action, risk analytics conflict sensitivity, conflict analysis and evidence generation to support innovating programming to address conflict drivers and impacts of conflicts. These investments can support Governments to undertake analysis, present viable policy options to national and international counterparts and partners, as well as propose and implement development solutions to mitigate risks.

##### **Examples include:**

- ❑ UNDP’s Crisis Risk Dashboard provides data aggregation and visualization for risk analysis, and to inform decision-making processes on policy and programme priorities and solutions.
- ❑ UNDP’s Conflict and Development Analysis (CDA) and digital monitoring platforms enable governments to detect tensions early.
- ❑ The UNDP-run Myanmar Development Observatory (MDO) produces regular socio-economic analysis, which helps development partners understand how overlapping shocks are affecting different population groups. These products keep critical issues like youth exclusion, rising urban precarity, and climate vulnerability on the table, even when conflict limits access to affected communities.
- ❑ Early warning systems allowed proactive interventions around elections in Fiji and Solomon Islands.

##### **Addressing Displacement**

In situations of protracted displacement resulting from conflict, development programmes should address the needs of both those who are displaced and the local communities receiving them, in particular through

strengthening local governance, urban planning, service delivery systems, livelihoods and access to justice.

**Examples include:**

- UNDP supports countries with the formulation of national and local strategies that provide durable solutions for displaced populations and local communities. These strategies focus on strengthening local governance, urban planning, and service delivery systems; expanding access to housing, social protection, and sustainable energy; creating livelihood and job opportunities - including digitally enabled livelihoods; and building the capacity of local leaders for integration and preparedness. They also promote social cohesion, access to justice, and inclusive governance to ensure stability and resilience.

**Conflict Prevention Mechanisms/Infrastructure for Peace**

Strengthening community governance structures provides locally legitimate foundations for preventing conflict, enabling communities to participate in decision-making and navigate local disputes. Collaborative dispute resolution within these structures helps address underlying grievances and reduce resource-based tensions. By investing in these community-anchored, “small p” peacebuilding approaches, Australia can help mitigate conflict drivers early.

At a national level, Australia can also invest in national prevention strategies and strengthen systems for early detection of risks so countries can take action before tensions worsen.

**Examples include:**

- Community dialogue platforms in Sri Lanka prevented local grievances from escalating into violence.
- The [Joint UNDP-DPPA Programme](#) supports UN Country Teams and national stakeholders on conflict prevention and sustaining peace, including: capacities for mediation, dialogue and consensus building.
- Papua New Guinea National Peacebuilding Strategy.
- Youth engagement networks in Melanesia foster cross-community peacebuilding
- Bangladesh (Rohingya crisis): Mediation reduced resource-based conflict between host communities and refugees.
- Youth empowerment initiatives in the BARMM, aligning with Youth, Peace and Security programming.
- Accompaniment of women peacebuilders and mediators (e.g. Bangsamoro Women Insider Mediators-Rapid Action and Mobilization Platform) in undertaking conflict prevention and peace mediation initiatives at the community level.
- Community peace and security platforms for early warning, prevention and response to conflicts in marginalized and vulnerable communities.
- CSO accompaniment platform in the BARMM helped to bring together Muslim, Indigenous Peoples and Christian settler communities to advocate for Peoples Peace Agenda in the Bangsamoro transition.

**Prevention of Violent Extremism**

Invest in countering misinformation and hate speech through tools and promote inclusive digital transformation to prevent polarization.

**Examples include:**

- UNDP implements digital peacebuilding initiatives to address mis- and disinformation, including through fact-checking efforts, and to counter hate speech by promoting a culture of peace in

online spaces, engaging religious leaders, youth advocates, and social media influencers. (e.g. Prevention of Violent Extremism in Digital Spaces in the Asia Pacific Programme and UNDP's iVerify. More details: IVERIFY | United Nations Development Programme).

## **Post-conflict**

### **Recovery**

In the aftermath of a conflict, it is important to prevent loss of development gains and build peace dividends through the earliest possible recovery interventions. These include strengthening government response capacity, enabling local actors to restore essential services, and implementing quick-impact measures such as cash-for-work programmes, cash transfers through employment guarantee schemes, debris removal, rehabilitating housing and infrastructure. To ensure sustainability, these early actions must be underpinned by transformative approaches that link immediate recovery to longer-term resilience.

#### **Examples include:**

- **Afghanistan:** UNDP is supporting area-based recovery across Afghanistan's hardest-hit regions, connecting jobs, essential services, and social cohesion so communities can rebuild and recover. Since 2021, UNDP programmes have reached 25 million people, ensuring women, youth, returnees, and local communities shape recovery efforts. Over 85,000 women-led micro and small enterprises have been supported, creating jobs for half a million people and improving livelihoods for 2.7 million. UNDP's integrated approach, tested through programmes such as the UN Participatory Action for Integrated Development Assistance to Areas of Return (PAIDAAR), jointly implemented by IOM, UNDP, UN-Habitat and UNHCR in Northeast Afghanistan, demonstrates that delivering livelihoods, housing, social services, and community cohesion together, helps reduce pressure on fragile districts and strengthens self-reliance. In a context where over 4.5 million Afghans have returned since 2023, these approaches help communities absorb the pressure by supporting MSMEs with renewable energy, expanding access to finance, and linking immediate livelihood support with investments in shelter, infrastructure, and community services.
- Social protection and emergency livelihoods programs (e.g., **Yemen:** 400,000 households supported).
- In **Nepal**, UNDP's post-conflict local governance programs implemented 36,000 community infrastructure projects, improving dispute resolution and civic trust.
- In the **Philippines**, UNDP has accompanied the strategic review, reorganization and planning of new ministries, offices and agencies under the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, enabling partner BARMM ministries, offices and agencies to develop their respective conflict-prevention and peacebuilding programs. In addition, in the aftermath of the siege of Marawi in 2017 (regarded as the longest urban warfare in Philippine modern history), UNDP Philippines supported the Provincial Government of Lanao del Sur in formulating its Peace and Development Roadmap, later integrated in the Peace and Order Public Safety (POPS) Plan and Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) of the province.

### **Stabilisation**

Conflicts often leave institutions weakened, trust eroded, and basic services disrupted - conditions that can quickly lead to renewed violence if not addressed. By supporting inclusive local governance, community security, and urgent livelihood recovery, stabilisation reduces the risk of relapse into conflict and lays the foundation for sustainable peace and development, ensuring that subsequent investments by partners such as Australia are effective and durable.

#### **Examples include:**

- UNDP's **Iraq** Stabilisation Facility: Supported 8.3 million people, restored services in 31 liberated cities, enabling 4.8 million returns
- In **Somalia** and **Syria**, UNDP implemented quick-impact projects restored human security and facilitated safe returns.
- In the **Philippines**, UNDP implemented food security and livelihood initiatives through the provision of agricultural and other livelihood equipment and facilitation of private sector partnerships for marginalized and vulnerable communities in the BARMM.

### **Restoration of Rule of Law and Justice Sector**

Weak rule of law, impunity, inequality and injustice are at the root of most protracted conflicts. It is therefore important to support countries in rule of law and human rights promotion, constitutional support, anti-discrimination, people-centered justice and security, transitional justice, armed violence reduction, accountability, and support to human rights defenders and national human rights systems.

#### **Examples include:**

- In **Liberia and Sierra Leone**, UNDP worked with national authorities on justice and policing reform to restore institutional legitimacy and reduced risk of relapse into conflict.
- In **Bangladesh**, UNDP has been a key partner in advancing a comprehensive rule of law and justice sector reform agenda under the current interim Government, with momentum accelerating following the launch of the Chief Justice's Judicial Reform Roadmap. UNDP supported nationwide consultations to build broad-based ownership for reforms, to strengthen judicial processes, and enhance access to justice. . In particular:
  - A major institutional milestone was the promulgation of the Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance 2025, establishing an independent administrative and policy secretariat to reinforce judicial self-administration, institutional autonomy, and separation of powers. UNDP also played a catalytic role in advancing the operationalisation of specialised commercial courts, convening the judiciary, private-sector stakeholders, and development partners to promote efficient, transparent, and predictable commercial dispute resolution. In parallel, UNDP supported people-centred access to justice reforms, including EU-supported digitisation of legal aid services, amendments to the Legal Aid Act, and the establishment of e-Family Courts, in line with SDG 16.

### **Inquiry question 4: The impact of international development in the maintenance of peace and prevention of conflict, including for early identification and mitigation of conflict.**

Development assistance that includes conflict analysis, climate-security assessments, and monitoring of digital risks has helped identify tensions early in the Asia Pacific region. When this is combined with community mediation, PVE approaches, and the participation of women and youth, the risk of conflict escalation is reduced. UNDP's integrated programming directly contributes to these resilience factors, supporting long-term peace and stability and Australia's support helps sustain these efforts. Development is a cost-effective investment in prevention. According to the IMF, every \$1 not invested in prevention costs \$103 in response and recovery. Inclusive development reduces relapse risk - a 1% increase in peacebuilding's share of aid lowers relapse probability by ~4%.

#### **Examples of impactful interventions:**

- **Integrated development solutions**—linking governance, livelihoods, and climate resilience—create systemic change that sustains peace. A compendium of eight case studies documenting lessons from UNDP conflict prevention approaches has highlighted that, across contexts, UNDP initiatives strengthen institutions to deliver inclusive, transparent, and accountable services. UNDP interventions are grounded in local ownership and rooted in national legal and policy frameworks, fostering national ownership and sustainability. UNDP programmes are designed to address both the



immediate triggers of conflict and the deeper structural factors and grievances that allow violence to emerge and persist.

- **Early identification and mitigation:** UNDP embeds conflict analysis and risk anticipation in all programming, leveraging digital tools and participatory approaches to detect and address emerging risks. Foresight and scenario planning are integral to this process, allowing UNDP to anticipate future challenges, assess potential impacts, and proactively develop strategies to mitigate risks before they escalate. By using these forward-looking methodologies, UNDP enhances its capacity to respond effectively to evolving contexts and promote sustainable development outcomes. In **Sri Lanka**, UNDP has introduced monthly diagnostic exercises to track emerging trends in misinformation and hate speech. These early-warning mechanisms use social media analytics and narrative mapping to identify risks to social cohesion, enabling timely policy responses and preventive action.
- In conflict-affected settings like **Yemen or Myanmar**, UNDP interventions via the Small Grants Mechanism target grassroots stakeholders with the dual objectives of providing concrete peace dividends and strengthening local capacities for the implementation of future peace agreements. The most impactful projects combined rapid improvements in daily living conditions—such as infrastructure restoration or community awareness initiatives—with inclusive, dialogue-driven processes addressing root causes of grievances.

In conclusion, UNDP’s work aligns closely with Australia’s development priorities, including strengthening democratic institutions, supporting climate resilience, promoting gender equality, and enhancing regional stability. By combining Australia’s strategic vision with UNDP’s operational reach and technical expertise, the partnership can deliver sustained peace, stronger institutions, and long-term resilience across the region and globally.

## ANNEX I

### ***Examples of Australia supported UNDP initiatives, relevant to Inquiry question 1:***

Bangladesh	<p><b><i>Strengthening Governance and Electoral Resilience in Bangladesh:</i></b> Through support to the BALLOT Project, a joint initiative of UNDP, UN Women and UNESCO, the Bangladesh Election Commission has benefited from enhanced institutional, technical, and operational capacities in preparation for the February 2026 national elections. The programme has focused on strengthening core electoral management functions, improving planning and coordination, and supporting nationwide civic and voter information efforts targeting women, young people, minorities, persons with disabilities, older citizens and first-time voters.</p> <p>These efforts aim to promote inclusive participation, strengthen the enabling environment for voter engagement, and help mitigate risks associated with misinformation and social exclusion. The BALLOT Project also supports longer-term institutional development by reinforcing electoral frameworks and processes in line with national priorities. Australia is among the partners contributing to this initiative, alongside others committed to supporting national institutions as they work toward strengthening electoral governance and public trust.</p> <p><b><i>Australia’s support to the Social Protection Policy Support (SPPS) Programme in Bangladesh</i></b> demonstrates how governance-focused development assistance can strengthen resilience in a fragile context. Through UNDP, Australia has invested in long-term reforms of Bangladesh’s social protection system, starting with support to develop and adopt the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) and subsequently backing its implementation. By working with the Cabinet Division and the General Economics Division, the programme improves policy coordination, institutional capacity and transparency across almost 100 social assistance schemes, reducing fragmentation and discretion in one of the most politically sensitive areas of public policy.</p>
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	<p>These reforms enhance the social contract between the state and citizens. The Central Management Committee now provides a high-level, rules-based forum for decision-making, with publicly available minutes that increase transparency and predictability. Tools such as the social protection dashboard, Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) assessments and government-owned NSSS Action Plans improve information flows and accountability, enabling more evidence-based and inclusive decisions. At the same time, the universalization of the disability allowance, expansion of the Old Age Allowance and preparations for a national social insurance scheme reduce exclusion and perceived unfairness—key structural drivers of grievance and fragility. By institutionalising grievance redress mechanisms, supporting digital payment processes and promoting transparent, rules-based beneficiary selection in place of quota-driven systems, the SPPS Programme helps to reduce local conflict around beneficiary lists and strengthen social cohesion. Together, these measures support human capital development by stabilizing household incomes, particularly during shocks, and ensure that vulnerable citizens can access fair and predictable support, thereby reinforcing resilience in a fragile setting.</p>
	<p><b>Australia's support for the Institutional Strengthening for Promoting Accelerated Transformation (ISPAT) Project underscores its commitment to governance and civic space as foundations for resilience in Bangladesh.</b> By modernizing the NGO Affairs Bureau's (NGOAB) core regulatory functions, the project strengthens transparency, accountability, and efficiency in managing foreign-funded NGO activities—often a politically sensitive area in fragile contexts. Through digitalizing services, introducing a web-based monitoring and evaluation system and MIS platform, and streamlining procedures, ISPAT reduces delays, arbitrary decisions, and rent-seeking. These reforms build trust between the state, civil society, and citizens, enabling NGOs to deliver essential services more reliably to marginalized and vulnerable populations—advancing health, education, social protection, and livelihoods.</p> <p>The project also fosters civic participation by institutionalizing NGO–Government policy dialogue and making NGOAB services more client-friendly. These platforms give NGOs and communities a voice in shaping regulations and development priorities, promoting inclusive governance. Australia's emphasis on gender-responsive systems within NGOAB further supports a people-centred administration that addresses diverse citizen needs. Collectively, these measures strengthen governance, empower civil society, and bolster resilience, with positive spillovers for stability and progress toward the SDGs.</p> <p><b>Australia's partnership with UNDP Bangladesh on judicial reform, including support for the establishment and operationalisation of commercial courts,</b> directly contributes to building resilience in fragile states by strengthening governance, promoting transparency and reinforcing the rule of law. By helping to build a more independent, accessible and accountable justice system, Australia addresses structural drivers of conflict that often stem from perceptions of politicisation, delays or denial of justice. Strengthened judicial institutions provide credible avenues for dispute resolution, reducing the risk that grievances escalate into unrest or instability. This is especially important for women, marginalised communities and vulnerable groups whose exclusion from justice can erode trust and weaken social cohesion. Australia's support advances a shared commitment to democratic governance, inclusive institutions and human rights in Bangladesh, ensuring that justice reforms function as a foundation for broader resilience.</p> <p>The development of commercial courts further enhances conflict prevention by improving economic confidence, strengthening fair competition and supporting private-sector growth, all of which are essential to long-term stability. Efficient and predictable resolution of commercial disputes encourages domestic and foreign investment, reduces uncertainty in trade and helps businesses operate within transparent and reliable legal frameworks. By reducing case backlogs, digitising procedures and improving overall judicial efficiency, commercial courts support both</p>

	<p>economic resilience and peaceful dispute resolution, lessening the likelihood that commercial conflicts spill over into broader tensions. Australia's investment, therefore, contributes simultaneously to upstream conflict prevention and to Bangladesh's economic transformation, demonstrating how governance-focused development assistance can advance stability across the Indo-Pacific.</p>
Myanmar	<p><b>Data, analysis and thought leadership in Myanmar:</b> UNDP strengthens data and analytics ecosystems for conflict-sensitive programming in fragile settings. The Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) – supported by Australia, amongst other donors - provides a neutral, trusted platform for humanitarian, development and peace actors, including local CSOs, offering access to geospatial data, township profiles and data and baselines that would otherwise be unavailable. MIMU is a critical public good, ensuring reliable, conflict-sensitive information remains accessible even in highly complex and evolving environments with varying levels of access. Its products, such as mapping resources and operational dashboards, enable evidence-based decision-making and coordinated action, supporting both crisis response and long-term resilience.</p> <p><b>Socio-economic recovery and resilience programming/area-based programming</b> is critical in conflict-affected and politically contested contexts. In Myanmar, UNDPs localized, area-based programmes are tailored to meet the specific needs of the most vulnerable, ensuring support reaches all communities across urban, peri-urban, and rural areas, including locations impacted by conflict and shifting territorial control (irrespective of who controls the territory). The community-driven approaches create practical entry points for participation, local governance, service delivery and economic resilience, in places where formal systems are weakened or contested. Support from Australia can reinforce these approaches enabling UNDP and partners to reach people consistently and inclusively across highly diverse contexts.</p>
Philippines	<p><b>Programme on Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Resilience to support the Bangsamoro Peace Process in Southern Philippines.</b> With support from Australia, UNDP Philippines implements PROSPER-Bangsamoro, which strengthens post-conflict governance, community stabilization, and normalization in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The program builds on Australia's longstanding partnership, supporting peace agreements with Moro revolutionary groups and fostering resilient communities.</p> <p>PROSPER-Bangsamoro enhances institutional capacity and convergence among regional and local government institutions, promoting inclusive, accountable, and responsive governance. It strengthens platforms for the participation of civil society organizations, women, youth, Indigenous peoples, and former combatants in governance and peacebuilding, reinforcing community resilience and social cohesion to prevent radicalization and violent extremism. Key interventions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enhancing community early warning and response mechanisms</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Convening civil society platforms for a Tri-Peoples Agenda</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Supporting women peacebuilders and mediators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engaging youth leaders in community peacebuilding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Supporting security and resilience for non-Moro Indigenous People</li> </ul> <p>The program also provides technical and operational assistance for joint peace process mechanisms, enabling the implementation and sustainability of peace agreements. Through the School of Peace and Democracy-Bangsamoro, over 500 MILF officers have been trained in leadership, peacebuilding, and community development, transitioning to roles as community leaders and public servants.</p> <p>PROSPER-Bangsamoro has facilitated critical interventions under the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, including transforming MILF camps into peaceful communities and supporting key policy and legislative documents on peacebuilding in BARMM, such as the Bangsamoro Indigenous Peoples Act and action plans for women and youth, peace, and</p>

	security.
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## ANNEX II

### ***Examples of Australia supported UNDP initiatives, relevant to Inquiry question 2:***

Pacific	<b>Early Warning and Foresight in the Pacific:</b> The UNDP Pacific Office, covering 10 countries, ensures that lessons learned in one context inform strategies elsewhere. Australia's partnership amplifies this regional approach, supporting coordination with Pacific regional organizations and UN platforms. Together, they strengthen early warning systems that monitor risks across governance, climate, and economic indicators. This allows governments and communities to anticipate and respond to potential triggers before they escalate. Importantly, UNDP's role in early recovery coordination bridges humanitarian response and long-term development, ensuring that aid gaps do not fuel instability. Australia's support for these mechanisms ensures that prevention is not fragmented but sustained across the region, reinforcing peace and resilience in fragile states.
Myanmar	<b>Data and analysis for Early Warning in Myanmar:</b> Strengthening early-warning capacities is essential in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. The above-referenced (inquiry question 1) mechanisms in Myanmar (MIMU and Myanmar Development Observatory, which have received support from Australia) provide impartial, real-time data and analysis that highlight emerging risks and vulnerabilities (e.g. climate security), differentiated impacts on women, youth and low-income households, and equip partners with the evidence required for anticipatory, context-specific responses, even in highly complex and evolving environments.
Bangladesh	<p><b>Australia has been supporting the Cox's Bazar Analysis and Research Unit's (CARU)</b> work in monitoring the non-humanitarian impact of the Rohingya crisis on both Cox's Bazar District as well as Bangladesh and the region more generally. In addition to providing support for CARU's regular monitoring of events and early warning research, Australia has also supported in-depth research looking at issues such as people smuggling and the trafficking of illegal narcotics and firearms. This work has ensured that humanitarian and development actors in Cox's Bazar are briefed on political and security developments as related to the Rohingya as well as benefiting from a more in-depth understanding of specific challenges faced by the Government of Bangladesh and the wider humanitarian and development community.</p> <p><b>Institutional Strengthening for Promoting Accelerated Transformation (ISPAT):</b> In the Indo-Pacific, Australia's support to ISPAT is a strategic investment in conflict prevention through strengthened civic space, accountable governance and constructive state–society relations. By helping Bangladesh build a predictable, transparent and technology-enabled regulatory system for NGOs, the project reduces tensions that can arise from opaque approval processes, perceived bias in the treatment of civil society actors or allegations of misuse of foreign funds—all of which can erode trust and fuel controversy in fragile contexts.</p>