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Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

*UNIDO & EBN collaboration: a catalyst for Peacebuilding,
Resilience, and Economic Growth*



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Reference no.

Prepared by Stefania Bait, UNIDO
Ygor Scarcia, UNIDO
Arupjyoti Baruah, UNIDO
Najib Abdi, UNIDO
Bram Pauwels, EBN
Florian Sora, EBN
Dawit Dagneu, EBN
Krystel Khalil, EU|BIC Berytech
Muhamed Rexhepi, EU|BIC Associate ITP Prizren

Checked by **UNIDO Team & EBN Team**

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Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

Background

In today's global landscape, post-crisis countries face numerous challenges ranging from **political instability** to **social unrest** and **economic vulnerability**.

Supporting the **private sector development** and establishing a **robust business ecosystem** have emerged as crucial strategies to address these issues. Fostering peacebuilding efforts and enhancing a country's resilience across economic, social, institutional, and environmental domains pave the way for job creation, sustainable economic growth, and increased connectivity with the international environment, vital to reducing social tensions (Seyle, 2019). Sustainable peace is attained by fostering inclusive processes, such as advocating good governance, poverty alleviation, sustainable development, and adherence to the rule of law (Bull & Aguilar-Støen, 2019). These processes and the necessary conditions that uphold them are not the sole responsibility of any single entity but often necessitate collaboration among various stakeholders, including politicians, governmental bodies, humanitarian organizations, and businesses (Hermes & Mainela, 2014).

Businesses engage in various initiatives, like education and vocational skills training, environmental and health improvements, sports and leisure sponsorship, and cultural and religious heritage activities. Among these initiatives, **education** and **skills training** receive the most attention and active involvement from businesses. In addition, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and community development interventions are believed to foster an environment that promotes conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding in a country.

Indeed, *business ecosystem empowerment has numerous peace-related benefits, such as reducing unemployment, enhancing the employability of young individuals, addressing the technical skills and labor demands of businesses, and enhancing educational institutions' technical profile and infrastructure.*

These efforts are perceived to contribute to *poverty reduction and increase youth participation in mainstream socio-economic activities and society. Consequently, they decrease the likelihood of radicalization and discourage membership in extremist groups and criminal networks* (Ismail & Nursat, 2014).

UN effort in the private sector development

The United Nations (UN) has made significant efforts to support the private sector in many countries, including post-crisis countries, recognizing their role in fostering sustainable development and peace. Some of the key initiatives and approaches undertaken by the UN include:

UN Global Compact

The **UN Global Compact** encourages businesses to adopt sustainable and socially responsible practices. It provides a framework for companies to align their operations with ten universally accepted human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption principles. The UN Global Compact is critical, especially in post-crisis countries, since it promotes sustainable development and responsible business practices. In those nations recovering from the devastating impacts of war and conflict, the Global Compact serves as a vital framework for rebuilding economies, fostering peace, and ensuring social inclusion.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

By encouraging businesses to uphold the abovementioned principles, the Global Compact helps create a conducive environment for investment, economic growth, and job creation. Through partnerships with governments, civil society organizations, and local communities, the Global Compact facilitates the transfer of knowledge, technology, and resources to support post-crisis countries in their journey toward long-term stability, prosperity, and sustainable development. Aligning business operations with social and environmental objectives contributes to a more equitable and resilient future for these nations.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Also, the **SDGs initiative** by the United Nations (UN) is pivotal in supporting private-sector development. By recognizing, recognizing that economic growth and stability are essential for sustainable peace, the SDGs provide a comprehensive framework that guides international efforts. The initiative facilitates partnerships between governments, civil society, and the private sector to foster economic recovery, job creation, and inclusive growth. By prioritizing goals such as poverty eradication, quality education, gender equality, and decent work, the SDGs aim to address the underlying causes of conflict and promote long-term stability. The initiative empowers local businesses, encourages entrepreneurship, and attracts foreign direct investment through targeted investments, capacity-building programmes, and policy reforms.

By leveraging the private sector's innovation, expertise, and resources, the SDGs initiative helps post-crisis countries build resilient economies that benefit both individuals and communities, contributing to sustainable peace and development.

UNIDO in Somalia

In line with the UN's commitment to supporting private sector development in many countries, the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** plays a crucial role in **post-crisis** countries, spearheading economic growth and reinforcing the countries' resilience to shocks. As a matter of fact, a country coming out of post-crisis faces severe restrictions in many areas. The economy is shattered and needs to be built, and the fastest and most effective way is through the private sector development, particularly the SMEs. These agents of change have to face international competition, which brings in goods and services that are qualitatively superior and cost-effective to the ones locally produced. The private sector, having been isolated for years due to conflict, needs support to rebuild its capacities and knowledge through exposure to technology, including best management practices and access to credit.

Among others, UNIDO is working in **Somalia**, which is rebuilding its political and economic institutions after years of civil unrest. This is essential for fostering growth in the productive sector.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

The **UNIDO Somalia Programme**, in collaboration with various line ministries of the Federal Government of Somalia, has been working on more than **11 projects**, having a significant impact through the delivering of training to instructors, revitalizing training centers, providing technical toolkits, and training a great number of individuals. By supporting the delivery of quality technical and vocational education to vulnerable populations, strengthening vocational training institutions, revitalizing micro-enterprises, and restoring community assets and infrastructure, UNIDO has contributed to the country's overall recovery and stabilization.

Among all projects, UNIDO Somalia has been implementing the **PSDP project ("Productive Sectors Development Programme")**, the **"Agro-technology Development for Economic Growth in South and Central Somalia"** and the **"Compact Fund for inclusive financing of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Somalia"** which thanks to the strategic support of Italy, the UN Somalia Joint Fund and UNDP has been contributing to UNIDO Somalia programme technical cooperation funding since 2019.

The PSDP is a long-term initiative that aims to strengthen Somalia's economic resilience while reducing the country's vulnerability to shocks and stimulating economic growth through productive sector development and entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, the "Agro-technology Development for Economic Growth in South and Central Somalia" project aimed to revive productive sectors in these regions by

establishing a network of three agro-technology and Enterprise Development Units (EDUs). These units supported Somali businesses in starting, rehabilitating, and upgrading agro-industrial operations and accessing new technologies, markets, and financing facilities.

The projects also provided technical assistance for delivering technical and vocational skills training to meet local needs in mechanization, tool production, and operating, maintaining, and repairing agro-industrial equipment.

More in detail, the creation of a network of the so-called **EDUs**, which are physically hosted in an Institution with the mandate of supporting the private sector, is a methodology implemented by UNIDO to support the private sector in overcoming its most urgent criticalities in post-crisis market system.

The approach used to create the ecosystem for providing business development services to SMEs and potential entrepreneurs is built from a sustainable perspective and aims at building the capacities of local experts to deliver business management services.

The model has been implemented in countries like Jordan, Iraq, Somalia, and, to some extent, Myanmar.

In the following Figure (1-2) the EDU Service Delivery Circle is explained (1) with a detail on the primary services provided (2).

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

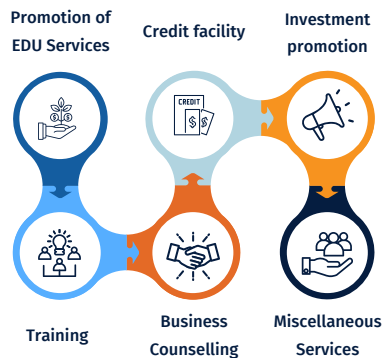


Figure 1.

The experience of UNIDO in implementing this EDU model in various countries has resulted in learnings that can be used to tweak the model to have a better impact.



Figure 2.

- ➔ It has been noticed that the governance of the host institutions of the EDUs matters in terms of project deliverables and the prospect of **sustainability**.
- ➔ The EDU’s sustainability after the project completion must depend on the **quality** and type of services that it will offer to the private sector.
- ➔ A dedicated **credit facility** embedded within the project is vital for its success. The EDU services lead the companies to expand with new capital. The existing banking system is not conducive to receiving credit for enterprises because of a lack of collateral and un-friendly credit terms.

The dedicated credit facility provides loans at lower than the market rate (mainly for trade finance) and significantly lower collaterals, thereby promoting the concept of project financing.

Moreover, UNIDO plays a crucial role in facilitating **partnerships** and **technology adaptation**, aiming to **drive innovation**, modernize traditional businesses, and promote sustainable and inclusive entrepreneurship in Somalia. In line with the UN’s commitment to supporting the private sector development in many countries, including post-crisis countries, UNIDO is collaborating with the **European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN)** in a notable initiative called **African Business Incubator Communities (BIC Africa)**, funded by the **European Union**. The initiative aims to create a regional network to support business incubators to stimulate entrepreneurship and create new innovative start-ups in Eastern and Southern Africa, specifically focusing on youth and women. UNIDO implements the initiative in Madagascar, Comoros, and Somalia. Within the BIC Somali Programme framework, called “**Business Incubators to Support Entrepreneurship and MSME Creation in Somalia**,” UNIDO and EBN seek to create and enhance economic opportunities and jobs for young men and women in Somalia through locally available technology-based business incubation services. It focuses on establishing effective business incubation programmes, improving delivery standards, and expanding outreach through three business incubators and three distance service centers.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

Collaboration with EBN and its EU|BIC community

The collaboration with EBN leverages the organization's decades of experience in developing the capacity of business support organizations and the expertise of its members (the EU|BIC community) in supporting business creation, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Together, UNIDO Somalia and EBN aim to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Somalia by fostering the growth and development of local businesses. By providing technical expertise, capacity-building assistance, and knowledge sharing, the collaboration enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of private-sector support and re-building efforts. The collaboration is built on numerous synergies:

Entrepreneurship Support: EBN and the EU|BIC community support entrepreneurs and startups through incubation and acceleration services, mentoring, and access to funding opportunities. This aligns with our efforts to promote entrepreneurship and foster the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries.

Business Networking and Partnerships: EBN facilitates business networking, collaboration, and partnerships among its members and stakeholders. These networks can serve as platforms for fostering international partnerships and linkages between European businesses and businesses in UNIDO's beneficiary countries, promoting trade, investment, and knowledge sharing.

Capacity Building: EBN provides capacity-building programmes and services to enhance the skills and competencies of entrepreneurs and business support organizations. This aligns with UNIDO's focus on capacity development and skills training in areas such as industrial management, sustainable production practices, and technology adoption.

By leveraging their respective strengths and networks, UNIDO and EBN demonstrate the value of collaboration between international organizations and regional partners in supporting the private sector and fostering sustainable peace in post-crisis countries like Somalia. This initiative serves as a model for how strategic partnerships can effectively mobilize resources and expertise to support growth and resilience.

Lesson learned from EBN experience

For decades, (micro) small and medium-sized companies ((M)SMEs) have played a crucial role in greater sustainable economic growth in Europe. More and more, policymakers notice and rely on the capacity of these newly starting companies, also often referred to as startups, to drive innovation and employment in critical economic sectors. However, it's essential to ensure that innovation serves human well-being, respects ecological boundaries, and promotes inclusivity. Together with EBN partners, it has developed a well-grounded understanding of the diverse types and intensities of innovation for (M)SMEs and policymakers to harness its power as a driver for progress, competitiveness, and sustainable prosperity around the globe. Indeed, within this context, EBN and the pan-European community of quality-certified EU|BICs (EU Business and Innovation Centres) have played a pivotal role in Europe's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Originating as far back as 1984, the network acts as a response to Europe's need to restructure its industrial base and embrace new technologies, innovation, and entrepreneurship. **EU|BICs** support regional economic development by fostering innovative startups and helping existing SMEs modernize and innovate.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

As an international association, EBN represents EU|BICs and stakeholder organizations involved in supporting innovative startups and companies. EBN is the official coordinator of the EU|BIC trademark, a recognized quality system for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Over the years, EBN has expanded its reach, formed strategic partnerships, and developed a rich portfolio of services supporting its members' ever-increasing implementation quality.

Today, EBN remains a constant force in the ever-evolving innovation landscape, supporting tens of thousands of startups and SMEs. Through its EU|BIC certification, quality standards, technical assistance, and innovation community, EBN continues to contribute to regional and local sustainable economic development, competitiveness, and growth in Europe – and, increasingly, knowledge beyond the borders of the EU. Entrepreneurship support and innovation ecosystem building stand at the core of our members' activities, thereby gaining a central place in EBN's daily work.

The Importance of Innovation Ecosystems and Entrepreneurship Support Organisations (ESO)

Establishing robust and dynamic innovation ecosystems drives economic growth, fosters entrepreneurship, and addresses global challenges.

Consisting of networks of organizations and institutions, including enterprises, educational and research institutions, financial entities, and government agencies, they promote collaboration, partnership, and knowledge sharing - an environment that facilitates effective problem-solving.

Typically, business innovation ecosystems

provide a fertile ground for startups to thrive by offering resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities. They are crucial in transforming innovative concepts into successful ventures that address societal and environmental challenges.

Entrepreneurs worldwide recognize the importance of collaborative efforts involving multiple stakeholders, moving away from relying solely on individual creativity. They integrate collective competencies within their **innovation** process to foster **growth, knowledge, and innovation**. Investment from venture capitalists, angel investors, and government agencies remains critical in vitalizing innovation landscapes, enabling the translation of ideas into tangible solutions, and driving the emergence of new industries, job creation, and regional economic growth.

Entrepreneurship support organizations (ESOs), such as incubators, accelerators, science and technology parks, and innovation hubs, are vital actors within innovation ecosystems. They are pivotal in supporting innovation and entrepreneurship by providing comprehensive incubation and acceleration processes for startups and (M)SMEs. ESOs offer physical space, resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities to nurture the growth of early-stage startups.

They also facilitate collaboration and knowledge transfer through science parks and innovation hubs, bringing together diverse stakeholders to co-create and share ideas.

Quality-certified ESOs, distinguished by the EU|BIC label granted by EBN, provide comprehensive incubation and acceleration processes, promoting innovation in startups and SMEs throughout their development stages. This framework positions ESOs as the central and coordinating actors of innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

Even though their primary purpose is identical, organizational characteristics vary and can be summarized in the following categories:

- Incubators, accelerators, innovation hubs, venture-builders, business support organizations
- Chambers of commerce, business, and startup associations
- Universities and Research Institutions
- Business angels, impact funds, seed, and venture capital firms.

Collaboration and partnerships among ESOs, such as the EU|BICs, are key components of innovation ecosystems. As the understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship evolves, a paradigm shift occurs, emphasizing collaboration and collective efforts within ecosystems. **This new approach emphasizes the integration of various stakeholders**, including citizens, social societies, political decision-makers, research institutions, universities, (M)SMEs, startups, large corporates, and business support organizations.

By fostering collaboration among stakeholders, including citizens, decision-makers, research institutions, universities, and businesses, these locally-rooted ecosystems promote **effective problem-solving and combine their capacities to address local and global challenges**. Research and development activities within innovation ecosystems drive the creation of new technologies and innovations. At the same time, the paradigm shift towards collective efforts emphasizes the importance of integrating diverse competencies for fostering growth and innovation.

By actively participating in creating, integrating, and orchestrating ecosystems, these stakeholders facilitate the realization of impactful innovation. This collaborative model aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly **SDG 9, emphasizing resilient infrastructure, sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation**. Strengthening and adapting innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems to global challenges becomes essential for achieving these ambitious and sustainable goals. Overall, by nurturing startups, facilitating collaboration, and fostering innovation, EU|BICs, as orchestrating actors in collaborative innovation ecosystems, seek to contribute to regional economic development, job creation, and sustainable prosperity.

Entrepreneurship as a Catalyst for post-crisis Well-Being: The Pivotal Role of ESOs and BSOs in Economic Growth, Social Inclusion, and Innovation

In the aftermath of conflicts, countries face numerous challenges, including economic instability, internal displacement, social unrest, and lasting trauma. In EBN experience, entrepreneurship has the potential to bring about positive change by promoting economic growth and fostering social development. ESOs and BSOs can play a significant role in creating well-being in post-crisis countries, such as:

- **Creating Economic Opportunities:** ESOs and BSOs can help create economic opportunities by supporting the development of local businesses. By providing resources such as funding, mentorship, and training, they can empower individuals to start their own ventures, generate income, and create jobs.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

This not only boosts economic growth but also promotes stability and reduces poverty levels in post-crisis countries.

- **Promoting Social Inclusion:**

Entrepreneurship can facilitate social inclusion by empowering marginalized groups and giving them a platform to participate actively in society. ESOs and BSOs can support initiatives that specifically target vulnerable communities, including, women, youth, internally displaced people, and minorities. By providing equal access to resources and advocating for inclusive policies, ESOs can help bridge social gaps and promote social cohesion.

- **Fostering Innovation and Technology:**

ESOs and BSOs can catalyse innovation and technology adoption in post-crisis countries. By supporting entrepreneurship, they encourage individuals to think outside the box, develop unique ideas, and leverage technology to solve socio-economic problems. ESOs can facilitate access to tech resources, mentorship programmes, and R&D opportunities, enabling entrepreneurs to create sustainable ventures, contribute to local development, and enhance overall well-being.

- **Building Entrepreneurial Ecosystems:**

A robust entrepreneurial ecosystem is crucial for long-term success. ESOs can play a vital role in building and nurturing these ecosystems in post-crisis countries. By collaborating with government bodies, educational institutions, investors, and other stakeholders, ESOs can create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs.

This involves fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, providing networking opportunities, and advocating for policies that facilitate business growth.

- **Providing Mental Health and Trauma Support:**

Entrepreneurship can be a stressful journey, and in post-crisis countries, individuals may carry the emotional scars of the past. ESOs and BSOs can prioritize mental health and trauma support by integrating counseling services into their programmes. By offering psychosocial support, ESOs can help entrepreneurs overcome the traumas of conflict, build resilience, and foster a healthy entrepreneurial mindset.

EBN partners experience in post-crisis countries

Rising Beyond Borders: EU|BIC Berytech's Impact in Lebanon and the Regional Vision for Social Entrepreneurship Transformation

by Krystel Khalil | Director of Projects Lab at EU|BIC Berytech

As a leading force in innovation and ecosystem development within Lebanon, **EU|BIC Berytech** offers a distinctive perspective on the pivotal role of Business Support Organizations (BSOs) and Entrepreneurship Support Organizations (ESOs) in post-crisis countries.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

EU|BIC Berytech perceives BSOs and ESOs as agents of transformative change, recognizing their substantial potential in rebuilding and revitalizing emerging societies and contributing to economic revival and growth. Positioned strategically, these organizations can effectively address economic instability, promote social inclusion, stimulate innovation, and contribute significantly to the overall well-being of communities in post-crisis environments.

In the context of Lebanon, social entrepreneurship is integral to the economy, playing a pivotal role in creating and sustaining a more favorable socio-economic environment. However, for social innovators to flourish, a conducive ecosystem is paramount—one that facilitates mentorship, financing, and support. Berytech is actively scaling social entrepreneurship startups from Lebanon, equipping them with innovative and impactful solutions for the betterment of communities and the environment.

Berytech provides these startups with exposure, business development assistance, grants, access to markets, and access to funding opportunities, enabling them to expand both regionally and internationally. Our commitment to social entrepreneurs stems from the belief in their ability to shape a better Lebanon.

In line with this commitment, Berytech has launched a support campaign aimed at generating awareness for the social startups supported by the Impact Rise program, managed from 2019 to 2022. This initiative seeks to give visibility to startups and facilitate access to potential clients, donors, and investors, empowering these startups to continue their upward trajectory and make a more significant impact.

From addressing poverty and creating employment opportunities to contributing to environmental conservation, our Impact Rise startups are making substantial differences in Lebanon. Building on the program's success, Berytech is aiming to explore partnerships with stakeholders and donors to scale this programme regionally and contribute to regional impact.

Discover more about our missions, join our causes, and support us in scaling their efforts to make an even greater impact, not just within Lebanon but beyond its borders. Together, let's empower these startups to continue rising and effecting positive change.

More on the programme is available here
<https://berytech.org/programs/impactrise/>

Empowering Futures: ITP Prizren's Role in Cultivating Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Collaborative Ecosystems for Sustainable Development in Kosovo

by Muhamed Rexhepi, Coordinator EU|BIC Associate ITP Prizren

In the specific context of the Kosovo region, **The Innovation and Training Park (ITP) Prizren** emerges as a crucial pillar of support. Through its provision of a nurturing environment and comprehensive programs, ITP Prizren plays a pivotal role in cultivating local inclusive entrepreneurship. The park's unwavering commitment to economic opportunities, social inclusion, and innovation support is tailored to address the distinctive needs of Kosovo as a post-crisis country.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

Furthermore, beyond its dedication to fostering social inclusion, innovation, and entrepreneurship, ITP Prizren **distinguishes itself through a proactive strategy of establishing cooperative linkages among diverse stakeholders within the park.** This inclusive model fosters synergies between key players in the ecosystem, including the private sector (companies, enterprises, and start-ups), the public sector (institutions and agencies), civil society organizations (NGOs), and academia (universities and vocational education providers). By **interconnecting** these segments, ITP Prizren offers a comprehensive perspective on entrepreneurship and the business environment.

Looking ahead, ITP Prizren aims to be instrumental in paving the way for sustainable development, prosperity, and well-being in Kosovo. I believe that together, we can collectively transform the challenges of the past into opportunities, fostering a vibrant and thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kosovo.

UNIDO approach to establish development initiatives

In the approach to development in Somalia, a post-crisis country, UNIDO puts a strong emphasis on actively **engaging with a wide range of stakeholders.** This engagement encompasses collaboration with the government, local authorities, and entrepreneurs who play pivotal roles in the country's recovery and growth. The goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the priorities at the grassroots level, which is crucial for effective and sustainable development.

Through active liaison with these stakeholders, the approach seeks **to bridge the gap between local communities and development initiatives.**

This ensures that the development process is genuinely **inclusive** and **responsive** to the needs and aspirations of the people on the ground.

In essence, **the strategy follows a bottom-up approach, where local voices and perspectives shape the design and implementation of development projects.**

This approach not only fosters ownership and buy-in from the local population but also enhances the relevance and effectiveness of initiatives. It allows for the tailoring of interventions to address the specific challenges and opportunities present in Somalia, thereby increasing the chances of achieving long-term positive outcomes.

The importance of monitoring & system

It is also paramount to monitor the impact of business ecosystem development on peacebuilding creation.

Indeed, monitoring allows assessing whether the project is achieving its intended goals and objectives and effectively addressing the root causes of conflict and instability within the business ecosystem. Gathering data and feedback from stakeholders makes it possible to identify positive outcomes and potential challenges, enabling adjustments and improvements as needed. Furthermore, monitoring provides an opportunity to measure the project's long-term impact, ensuring that it generates lasting benefits and contributes to the peacebuilding process.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

In essence, effective monitoring ensures accountability, promotes transparency, and maximizes the potential for positive change, thereby reinforcing the significance of closely observing the impact of projects supporting business ecosystems on peacebuilding creation.

Key indicators

It is important to note that the selection of indicators should be context-specific, aligned with the goals and objectives of the business intervention, and developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure their relevance and effectiveness in capturing the **positive impact on peacebuilding**. Our focus also shifts towards building regional networks that have the potential to develop into regional business and innovation ecosystems to stimulate enduring impact in the areas where UNIDO and EBN collaborate. Leveraging the local private sector's potential and supporting the ecosystem's quality can be framed around four key areas, each with its unique set of KPIs. The main areas used to assess the impact of its members on their regions are:

- *Regional Sustainable Economic Development;*
- *Quality of Entrepreneurship/Business Support;*
- *Access to Finance;*
- *Scaling Entrepreneurial Innovation.*

Linking the impact of business interventions to the potential of establishing or supporting conflict resolution and peacebuilding sheds light on a growing need for data interoperability.

Ultimately, we seek to create an integrated approach within the local-global innovation ecosystems and across different impact areas ranging from sustainable economic development to conflict resolution and regional stability. Facilitating seamless data exchange, efficient collaboration, enhanced insights, scalability, and regulatory compliance will indicate its significance for unlocking collaboration, fostering innovation, and driving sustainable growth for entrepreneurs worldwide.

Conclusions

The intersection of private sector development, entrepreneurship, and peacebuilding has emerged as a vital strategy in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by numerous countries and, specifically, by post-crisis countries in today's global landscape. *By fostering inclusive processes and collaborating with various stakeholders, including businesses, governments, and international organizations, it becomes possible to create environments conducive to sustainable peace, economic growth, and social development.*

Businesses, through initiatives such as education and **skills training, corporate social responsibility, and community development**, play a significant role in reducing **unemployment, empowering youth, and deterring radicalization and extremism**. International organizations like the United Nations have recognized the importance of private sector engagement in post-crisis countries, as evidenced by initiatives like the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

Furthermore, the partnership between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) **exemplifies how collaboration between international and regional partners can strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems and support economic growth in post-crisis regions.**

The implications of these efforts extend beyond economic development. They have the potential to contribute to peacebuilding and country resilience by addressing the root causes of instability, creating jobs, and promoting sustainable practices.

In addition, the success of the development approach in Somalia relies on **active engagement with diverse stakeholders, including government, local authorities, and entrepreneurs** who hold key roles in the country's recovery and sustainable growth. This collaborative effort deepens our understanding of local priorities, particularly at the grassroots level, forming the foundation for effective and sustainable development.

This engagement constitutes the core of the approach, ensuring that initiatives align with community realities and enable the emergence of solutions that meet local needs.

Additionally, ongoing stakeholder engagement is complemented by effective monitoring and data sharing, which are vital for project longevity and impact. By continuously tracking progress and fostering data exchange, informed decisions can be made, enabling adaptation to change circumstances and fine-tuning interventions.

This maximizes the benefits of projects and integrates them seamlessly into the broader peacebuilding process.

As we look to the future, it is evident that fostering innovation and entrepreneurship within collaborative ecosystems is not only essential for economic growth but also for achieving sustainable peace and prosperity on a global scale. By leveraging the strengths of various stakeholders and embracing a holistic approach, we can drive positive change and unlock new opportunities for entrepreneurs worldwide.

Private sector and business ecosystems development in post-crisis countries

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UNIDO Somalia Programme Office
Chelsea Village - AMISOM AAIA
Mogadishu, Somalia



Twitter @UNIDOSomalia



office.somalia@unido.org



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