Who Keeps the Peace? Reconceptualizing Aid Actors through Networks of Influence and Support

Jessica Maves Braithwaite*[2], Alex Bruens†[2], Susanna P. Campbell‡[1], Cecilia Cavero-Sánchez§[3], Madeline Fleishman¶[5] and Hatem Zayed‖[1]

[1]American University
[2]University of Arizona
[3]Pennsylvania State University
[4]University of Nebraska Omaha
[5]University of Virginia

Abstract

International peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and development actors are increasingly focusing their efforts in conflict-affected states. In any single fragile or conflict-affected country, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of international actors operating with the aim of building peace, preventing violent extremism, reducing poverty, saving lives, or rebuilding infrastructure that was destroyed by conflict. They are connected to each other and to domestic state and non-state actors through formal contracts, informal relationships, and regular coordination meetings. Existing scholarship on international intervention in conflict-affected states largely ignores these networks and contractual relationships, instead treating all intervening actors as a single monolith, investigating only the behavior of a single type of intervenor, such as peacekeepers, or identifying the impact of a single peacebuilding intervention (Autesserre, 2009, 2010, 2014; Blair et al., 2022; Doyle and Sambanis, 2000, 2006; Fortna, 2008; Narang, 2014). Using original data collected on the networks of influence and support in Colombia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), we argue that it is important to redress this gap in the literature by examining the effect of networks among intervening actors and their domestic counterparts on peace and security outcomes in conflict-affected states.

*jbraith@email.arizona.edu
†bruens@arizona.edu
‡susanna.campbell@american.edu
§ccaveros@psu.edu
¶mfleish@umd.edu
‖hz7452a@american.edu

1 Introduction

When countries experience civil war or protracted violent conflict, international and domestic aid actors attempt to provide goods and services that the state, alone, cannot. As a result, in any single fragile or conflict-affected country—whether Iraq, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Colombia, or Nepal—there are hundreds of international and domestic non-governmental actors that operate with the aim of building peace, preventing violent extremism, reducing poverty, saving lives, or rebuilding infrastructure destroyed by conflict. In fact, the international aid industry—and the bilateral donors, Intergovernemntal Organizations (IGOs), International Non-Governmental Organizations, and private aid contractors that constitute it—is increasingly concentrated in states experiencing fragility and violent conflict (OECD, 2022).[1]

Rather than operating in isolation, these international aid actors are connected to each other via formal contracts, informal relationships, and regular coordination meetings that extend beyond the boundaries of any single organization (Autesserre, 2014; Kahler, 2016). These networks are not confined solely to international actors, but are increasingly dependent on a range of domestic actors within the conflict-affected country, including civil society organizations, local and national government offices, national non-governmental organizations (NNGOs), journalists, and even armed

[1]The World Bank defines Fragility and Conflict Situations (FCS) along two axes: (1) violent conflict using a conflict-related death threshold; and (2) institutional and social fragility using public quality of policy and institutions measures as well as other specific metrics. The countries which fall into the conflict-affected category for FY2023: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Republic of Yemen. Institutional and social fragility for FY23: Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, West Bank and Gaza (territory), Zimbabwe (The World Bank, 2022).

groups. International aid actors' connections to domestic actors not only determine whether or not international aid actors can operate within the host-state's sovereign territory, they shape international actors' access to information about the "local" context, their ability to reach the country's population, and their ability to design and implement aid efforts that are responsive to the country's conflict and recovery dynamics (Campbell and Matanock, 2024; Campbell, 2018).[2]

Existing scholarship on aid actors in conflict-affected contexts has largely analyzed these actors in isolation of their broader networks. The predominant literature has focused on UN peacekeeping missions, analyzing the effects of the number of troops, their country of origin, their location, and their mandates without examining UN peacekeeping operations' partnerships with other UN actors, member state offices based in the host country, domestic non-governmental actors, or the host government (Cil et al., 2020; Di Salvatore and Ruggeri, 2017; Doyle and Sambanis, 2000, 2006; Fortna, 2004; Howard, 2019; Hultman et al., 2019; Ruggeri et al., 2017, 2013; Walter et al., 2021).[3] Accounting for these broader aid networks may be particularly important given the UN's move away from deploying large multidimensional peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and toward deploying more Special Political Missions (SPMs) (Clayton et al., 2021; Dorussen, 2020).

The scholarship on international aid has largely focused either on aid allocation patterns across country contexts, without focusing on the particular behaviors of bilateral donors in conflict-affected contexts (Findley, 2018). Some scholarship has acknowledged the importance of autonomy of

[2]Of course, most international aid actors also have numerous staff who work for their offices based in the host country, ensuring that few international aid actors are solely "international" (Carruth, 2021). Host state/government/country refers to the government hosting the external actor on its territory (Muller, 1995)

[3]Notably, several scholars have analyzed the role of peacekeepers in fostering community conflict or peace although they have not examined the effects of networks among domestic or international organizations and UN peacekeeping operations, seeDuursma and Smidt (2024), Nomikos (2022), and Smidt (2020).

country-based donor staff, in part so that they can interact with other aid actors, but has not examined their network relationships (Honig, 2019). Scholarship on INGOs and NNGOs has focused on their relationships with their host states, their dependencies on donors, or their broader global advocacy efforts, but has not examined them as part of broader multi-actor aid networks (Campbell et al., 2019; Chaudhry, 2022; Cooley and Ron, 2002; Murdie, 2014; Murdie and Davis, 2012).

The broader global governance literature acknowledges the important networks among these diverse aid actors but focuses on their global networks, not their networks within or with conflict-affected countries (Avant et al., 2010; Kahler, 2011, 2016). Much of this literature also assumes a hierarchical relationship among aid actors. At the top of the hierarchy are powerful states who decide on the mandate of the UN peacekeeping operation and determine its budget (Allen and Yuen, 2014; Howard and Dayal, 2018). The scholarship generally assumes that UN member states maintain this upper hand during the deployment of the peace operation and any other IGO service delivery activity (Hawkins et al., 2006a,b; Lake, 2007). Some scholarship acknowledges that the host government—also a member state—can also play an important role in shaping IGO behavior on its territory (Campbell and Matanock, 2024; Johnstone, 2011; Passmore et al., 2022). The scholarship on INGOs, NNGOs, and broader civil society actors largely assumes they are subservient to the bilateral or IGO donors that fund them and the states that govern them, largely characterizing them as pawns of these more powerful actors (Chaudhry, 2022; Cooley and Ron, 2002). Several scholars examine the general behavior of aid actors but focus on capturing their shared culture rather than examining the variation in these networked relationships (Autesserre, 2014; Mac Ginty, 2010).

We argue that even though hierarchy may exist within a network, many aid network relationships defy this hierarchical assumption. Rather than a well-coordinated network of aid actors, the aid networks that exist alongside and around UN Peace Operations (UNPOs)—including both Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) and Special Political Missions (SPMs) without peacekeepers—are often highly fragmented and clustered around sectoral groupings made up of a range of IGO, INGO, state, and NNGO actors. Furthermore, we argue that by failing to capture the simultaneous presence of the range of aid actors and the ways in which they interact, existing scholarship misdiagnoses the dominant structure of aid actors and undermines our ability to understand their collective effect on war and peace outcomes or accurately estimate the effect of any individual type of actor.

The use of social network analysis is by no means novel in the study of international relations and conflict dynamics (Dorff and Ward, 2013). Hafner-Burton et al. (2009, p. 560) define networks in the international relations context as "sets of relations that form structures, which in turn may constrain and enable agents." Network techniques have already been applied in contexts of conflict resolution processes by third-party states (Aydin and Regan, 2012; Böhmelt, 2009; Hannigan, 2019); troop contributions to peacekeeping operations (Ward and Dorussen, 2016); the role of transnational advocacy networks in post-conflict development projects (Ohanyan, 2010); and humanitarian aid following natural disasters (Moore et al., 2003). Critically, network approaches allow us to move beyond dyadic analyses by considering extradyadic relationships between myriad actors (Dorussen et al., 2016). In spite of these important scholarly contributions, networks among different types of international actors operating in fragile and conflict-affected states, as well as their relationships with domestic actors in these contexts, are largely unexplored (Maoz, 2012).

In this paper, "networks of influence and support" refers to the direct and indirect relationships among different international and actors in the peace, development, security, and humanitarian space and with their domestic counterparts, whether governmental or non-governmental. These networks capture two components: the actors themselves and their relationships. In the language of network analysis, actors are referred to as "nodes" and relationships are referred to as "edges." While these relationships can be conceptualized in formal and informal ways, in this paper we focused on relationships created and sustained through aid contracts. We use an original dataset on the United Nations' (UN) Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MPTF) networks. MPTFs are pooled funds managed by the United Nations but funded primarily by UN Member States. Multilateral pooled funds offer at least two advantages to bilateral donors: 1) they are flexible funds that circumvent bilateral donors' heavy aid administration and 2) they allow donors to mitigate the risk of giving aid to unstable contexts.[4]

For the purpose of our analysis, the MPTF data enables us to understand who the United Nations works with in fragile and conflict-affected states and how these networked relationships challenge assumptions in the existing literature. We focus our analysis on the MPTF funds in Colombia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), enabling us to investigate whether these networks vary when there is a Special Political Mission—such as the UN Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC)—as compared to a large multidimensional peacekeeping operation, such as

[4]The United Nations defines an inter-agency pooled fund as having three characteristics: 1) it is focused on a specific thematic or geographic purpose and the financing is co-mingled, not earmarked, providing flexibility; 2) the decision on the allocation of the fund is made by a UN-led governance mechanism, not solely by the individual contributors to the fund; and 3) the UN and non-UN organizations that receive the fund assume the programmatic and financial accountability for the resources received. See "The importance of pooled funds," United Nations MPTF Office Partners Gateway, https://mptfportal.dev.undp.org/basic-page/what-pooled-fund [Accessed: March 7, 2024].

the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). By focusing on the broader networks that are present during the deployment of UN Peace Operations, we are able to examine one of the most common assumptions in the third-party intervention literature: that UNPOs in general, and UN Peacekeeping Operations in particular, are the dominant (or at least the most important) international aid actor in fragile and conflict-affected states (Walter et al., 2021). It also enables us to describe the aid actor networks in the contexts in which international aid and its implementers are increasingly concentrated: fragile and conflict-affected states (Corral et al., 2020). Of course, by limiting our investigation to networks that relate to UN pooled funds, we bias our networks toward international, as opposed to domestic, actors. As we will indicate below, it is particularly surprising then that domestic state and non-governmental actors play such important roles in the MPTF networks, particularly since much of the scholarship has largely overlooked their influence on donor, INGO, and IGO behavior.

In this paper, we use the MPTF network data to examine the network relationships in our data for each of the types of aid actors discussed above—UN Peace Operations, IGOs, INGOs, host government ministries, and NNGOs—to demonstrate the prevelance of each actor in our network and the types of contractual relationships it holds with other actors in the network. This descriptive analysis allows us to address the assumption in the literature that we can effectively study these actors in isolation. We then examine the hierarchical assumption in the literature by describing the relationships among these actors in two MPTF projects, one focused on ex-combatants in Colombia and the other on youth in the DRC.

Our analysis has several implications for the existing scholarship. First, by focusing on a single

type of aid actor, without accounting for other actors with similar aims in similar contexts, the existing scholarship overlooks how substitution might play out and may attribute outcomes to one actor when they were actually facilitated by another. Second, by focusing only on a single type of actor without accounting for the other actors in its network, existing scholarship is unable to examine the dynamics of cooperation and how they contribute to the success or failure of international or domestic aid actors. Crucially, this focus also leads international relations scholars to overlook the central role of the host government and non-governmental actors in shaping the success of international efforts. Third, much of the peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and aid literature overlooks the competition that might exist among sub-networks of aid actors in spite of increasing evidence that global geopolitical competition is increasingly playing out at the sub-national level (Swedlund, 2017b). Fourth, by showing that aid actors are structured via networked rather than solely state-focused hierarchical relationships, we point to the importance of studying the role of IGOs, INGOs, and NNGOs in shaping state behavior and peace and security outcomes. Scholarship on civil war has long argued that non-state armed groups and their alliances affect war outcomes, might the incorporation of the range of aid actors into our analysis of peace be similarly consequential?

2 Establishing Aid Actor Interdependence in Contexts of Civil War and Political Violence

The existing scholarship on civil war and third-party intervention has emphasized the importance of IGOs, INGOs, and domestic actors, but has not examined how they are connected to each other. Much of the existing quantitative, cross-national literature on post-conflict dynamics, such

as democratization or the durability of peace, focuses on characteristics of the civil war itself or the former combatant actors (the government and rebel groups), without accounting for the complexities of international and domestic engagement other than by including a variable indicating the presence of peacekeeping missions (e.g., Flores and Nooruddin, 2009, 2012, 2016; Quinn et al., 2007). Actions and traits of international donors, INGOs, and civil society groups are rarely, if ever, considered in these analyses of post-war dynamics, and certainly not in any meaningful level of detail. Instead, scholarship primarily focuses on the use of violence by non-state and pro-government actors during and following civil wars to "spoil" peace agreements between the state and non-state armed groups, without examining the interactions between these potentially violent actors and aid actors (Blaydes and De Maio, 2010; Creary and Byrne, 2014; Findley and Young, 2015; Greenhill and Major, 2006; Maher and Thomson, 2018; Newman and Richmond, 2006; Pearlman, 2009; Reiter, 2015; Stedman, 1997; Steinert et al., 2019). Even though this scholarship has increasingly measured these micro-dynamics, and convincingly argued for their centrality, omission of the networks that connect domestic and international aid actors prevents us from understanding these micro-dynamics in contexts where conflict and cooperation coexist and coevolve (Campbell et al., 2017; Kalyvas, 2003).

In the broader civil war literature, there is also limited systematically collected data on the actions and engagement of non-combatant civilian actors and domestic organizations during and after civil wars. Some new initiatives, including the Nonviolent Action in Violent Contexts dataset (Chenoweth et al., 2019) and the Anatomy of Resistance Campaigns dataset (Butcher et al., 2022), will aid our ability to assess engagement of non-combatant actors in these conflict environments,

but the direct bearing of domestic groups and non-peacekeeping actors on peacebuilding efforts remains obfuscated by our lack of comparable data across this range of actors in conflict-affected states.

The literature on third-party intervention in civil wars largely ignores the heterogeneity of actors concurrently intervening to establish peace and security in conflict-affected and fragile countries. Instead, these literatures remain siloed, only focusing on one type of actor – whether peacekeepers, aid donors, or INGOs – without considering the networks among intervening actors and with state and non-state actors in the conflict-affected country, or the effect of these networks on peace and security outcomes. In other words, much of the existing literature seems to assume, either intentionally or for more practical purposes of parsimony, that aid actors only work with fellow aid organizations, peacekeepers only work with other peacekeepers. We commonly address the presence of another type of actor by including a control variable for peacekeepers or for aid, without accounting for the other actors who cooperate with or work alongside peacekeepers, the heterogeneity within aid actors, the influence of domestic governmental and non-governmental actors, or the relationships among these diverse actors.

The scholarship on third-party intervention in civil wars is dominated by analyses of UN peacekeeping. It examines the effect of different configurations of peacekeeping troops on conflict-related outcomes, but rarely considers the actions and traits of other UN actors, international donors, INGOs, NNGOs, or governmental agencies in concert with these operations (Cil et al., 2020; Di Salvatore and Ruggeri, 2017; Fortna, 2004, 2008; Hultman et al., 2013, 2014, 2019; Kathman, 2013; Ruggeri et al., 2013). Furthermore, much of the literature on third-party intervention in general,

and UN peacekeeping in particular, has focused on the post-conflict period, even though peacebuilding efforts can be underway long before civil wars terminate (e.g., Hultman et al., 2014; Ruggeri et al., 2017). UN peace operations have been implemented during conflicts to provide material support to humanitarian efforts carried out by NGOs or regional IOs. Thus, by not knowing which domestic and international actors are actively participating in ongoing peacebuilding processes, we are considerably limited in our ability to assess timing and efficacy of these efforts (Beardsley et al., 2019; Campbell et al., 2017; Findley and Teo, 2006). The mobilization of different domestic and international actors in spaces proximate to and beyond the battlefield almost certainly influences the trajectories of unrest and of conflict management (Jarstad and Sisk, 2008; Matanock, 2020; Parkinson, 2013; Uvin, 1998).

By failing to adequately explore variation in the engagement of international and domestic civilian actors with UN peace operations, much of the existing peacekeeping scholarship effectively puts these non-peacekeeper and non-combatant actors in a "black box." This prevents us from fully understanding the roles these domestic actors play in the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping or the broader peacebuilding effort. Existing theories of peacekeeping effectiveness rest on the premise that the presence of peacekeepers increases the costs of war and reduces the costs of cooperation (Fortna, 2008; Fortna and Howard, 2008); however, the costs of cooperation may not be easily ameliorated if a large number of organizations are active in peacebuilding environments. They may work at cross purposes and/or in similar areas such that they may develop negative, competitive relationships with one another that undermine efficiency and the flow of information necessary for mission success. Failing to observe and account for the organizational diversity, as well as the

positive and negative interactions between these actors, leaves us with an incomplete understanding of how peace operations succeed or fail, and can place undue credit or blame on the peacekeeping forces themselves.

International aid actors affect the trajectories of conflict and post-conflict recovery, in part, because they condition the opportunities for combatants to manage their incompatibilities away from war zones (Fortna, 2008; Walter, 2002). Particularly in environments where there may be limited to no trust in formal state institutions (as well as comparable institutions offered or imposed by rebel groups), these non-state and international organizations can help establish order and promote good governance (e.g., Campbell, 2018; Lake, 2014, 2018). In some cases, they can also limit the ability of (former) combatant actors to abuse civilian populations and engage in corrupt election practices (Bove and Ruggeri, 2016; Hultman et al., 2013; Kathman and Wood, 2016; Smidt, 2016). There is also a wealth of research suggesting that UN peace operations and other peacebuilding efforts struggle to improve conditions in conflict-affected countries, and may even exacerbate conditions in unstable environments (e.g., Autesserre, 2010, 2014; Di Salvatore, 2019; Kathman and Wood, 2011; Murdie and Davis, 2010; Reno, 2008). A better understanding of the constellations of these diverse aid actors, and the networks that connect them, is necessary to fully appreciate when, where, and how they condition the behavior of armed combatants and, consequently, contribute to peace and security outcomes.

The international aid literature has focused on the motivations for donor aid allocation, in general, largely without investigating how donors respond to the dynamics within conflict-affected countries or how they interact with other donors or aid actors. A handful of studies have begun to

explore the effect of aid allocation on conflict outcomes, and the effect of conflict on aid allocation, but have not differentiated between different types of donors or captured their relationship to other domestic or international aid actors (Campbell and Spilker, 2022; Findley, 2018; Zürcher, 2017). Several scholars of international development have isolated the relationships between and among aid donors and the recipient government (Gibson et al., 2005; Martens et al., 2002; Swedlund, 2017a), but have not examined donor interactions with other international or domestic actors or focused on these relationships in conflict-affected countries. Much of the scholarship on aid in conflict focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of particular aid projects, with a focus on security-sector reform and community-driven development (e.g., Beath et al., 2013; Lyall et al., 2020), but has not considered the effect of the broader relationships among aid projects, aid actors, or other international and domestic actors working toward similar aims.

The literature on post-conflict peacebuilding often includes a larger variety of actors, such as civil society organizations, UN agencies, and NGOs, but they are largely treated as a monolithic unit without differentiating their unique characteristics or networked relationships (Autesserre, 2014). The peacebuilding scholarship, notably, points out that the relationships among these international actors and domestic stakeholders in the conflict-affected country also are likely critical to mission success (Autesserre, 2014; Campbell, 2018; Doyle and Sambanis, 2006; Walter, 2002). But who are these local stakeholders, and is there important variation in which domestic actors are (more) efficacious partners in pursuing intended peacebuilding outcomes? How are they connected with international aid actors?

Existing scholarship shows that "local" and "international" actors may work at cross purposes,

some striving to bolster peace while others endeavor to undermine it. On one hand, various actors including host governments, local organizations, activists, and even former combatants may work to prevent conflict (Leonardsson and Rudd, 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013; Nilsson, 2012; Paffenholz, 2010; Smidt, 2020). On the other hand, the interests of these actors often diverge and might ultimately undermine peacebuilding efforts (Belloni, 2012; Dorussen and Gizelis, 2013). These connections between domestic and international actors—non-state and state-based organizations, IOs, INGOs, and donors—engaged in peacebuilding are likely critical to understanding when missions "succeed" or "fail," yet we have limited data on the identities of relevant actors in many conflict-affected contexts, and even more limited information about the relationships among these actors.

3 Case Studies of Peacebuilding Networks in Colombia and DRC

To depict these networks of influence and support, we use the data from the UN-managed Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTFs) in Colombia and DRC—during the period of deployment of UN Missions—namely the UN Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC), a UN Special Political Mission, and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO) in the DRC—a UN Peacekeeping Operation.

Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTFs) are pooled funds with contributions from multiple bilateral donors. MPTFs are unique in that funds provided by MPTFs typically require involvement of multiple actors and are managed by a UN Agency, the UN Development Program (UNDP). By relying on official project documents, we are able to extract information that is not available in other

data sources on aid disbursement including information on local partners, government signatories, and the geographic focus of the project. This information allows us to learn more about how in-country aid actors interact with one another on a single project. We used information extracted from the MPTF portal to build a dataset and conduct preliminary network analysis. In addition to a presentation of aggregated data on MPTF contractual agreements, we use two projects funded by MPTFs in Colombia and DRC to demonstrate the different ways through which actors can work together in a single project.

We analyze MPTF networks in Colombia during the deployment of the Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC)—a United Nations Political Mission. In 2016, after over 50 years of civil war in Colombia, the central government signed a peace agreement with one major challenger, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, by its Spanish acronym). In 2017, following the closure of its first Peace Operation in Colombia, the UN Mission in Colombia (UNMC) special political mission, the UN established the Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC) to verify the implementation of sections 3.2 and 3.4 of the agreement: focus on the reintegration of FARC members into civilian life and security guarantees for those that participate in the accords and peacebuilding activities (S/RES/2366, 2017).

The UNVMC and UN's development and humanitarian agencies—comprising the UN Country Team (UNCT)—were tasked with collaborating on coordination arrangements that included co-location between the mission and UNCT coordination teams in 2017 (UN Secretary-General, 2017). These coordination mechanisms continued into 2019, with the UNVMC working closely with the UNDP and other UN agencies to accelerate reintegration through multi-partner trust

fund (MPTF) disbursements and broader UN Humanitarian Cluster coordination mechanisms (UN Secretary-General, 2019). Secretary-General reports to the Security Council highlight that the mission regularly liaises with the host government, civil society, and INGOs in addition to its work with the UNCT (e.g., UN Secretary-General, 2019, 2021).

As many of the active UN peace operations are peacekeeping operations (PKO), we also present data on MPTF networks in the DRC - where there is an active PKO. The United Nations has deployed three missions to DRC—the latest of which is the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), renamed after the closure of a separate mission in 2010. That mission was initially authorized to observe and implement a 1999 ceasefire without focus on institution-building or multidimensionality (S/RES/1279 1999). Over time, it became tasked with DDR and resettlement, along with a number of other objectives (S/RES/1355 2001; S/RES/1376 2001). The 2010 mission marked a shift in the type of peace operation in DRC, recognizing a consolidation of peace over the decade-long first mission. Its mandate called on MONUSCO to collaborate with the myriad of in-country aid actors, including PKO personnel, UN organizations, INGOs, NGOs, and civil society organizations (S/RES/1925 2010). Alongside MONUSCO, the Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (STAREC), managed by the Congolese Government, oversees the implementation of the peace agreement and coordination among aid actors in DRC.

In the next section, we first describe the breadth of the MPTF networks during the deployment of the UNVMC and MONUSCO. We then provide examples of the delegation chains in two MPTF projects from Colombia and DRC. We do this to show the different networks contained in just a

single MPTF project, providing the necessary fine-grained detail to discuss the multitude of actors and relationships contained in the full MPTF and cluster networks in Colombia and DRC.

4 Nodes and Edges Surrounding UN Peace Operations

Here we use network graphs to illustrate the broader relationships between the single actors on which the existing literature focuses, and the broader networks contained in the MPTF data. It is important to note that these data are but a small subset of the overall networks that exist in and around UN Peace Operations.

As depicted in 1, the UNVMC is connected to a broader set of actors, like the United Nations Development Programme. This is particularly apparent when you see this single UNVMC node in comparison to the complete MPTF network depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 1: UNVMC Single Node

Even though UNVMC is not influential in the formal coordination network, the UNDP is extremely central due to fact that it is an intermediary recipient of the majority of MPTF projects. Concurrent to the UNVMC, Multi-Partner Trust Fund projects by the Colombia Peace MPTF (COMPTF) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) total over $160 million USD in expenditures. Nodes are colored based on the organization type and sized by betweenness centrality. The node labels refer to the organization acronym, either the official acronym when available or a shortened version of the full name.

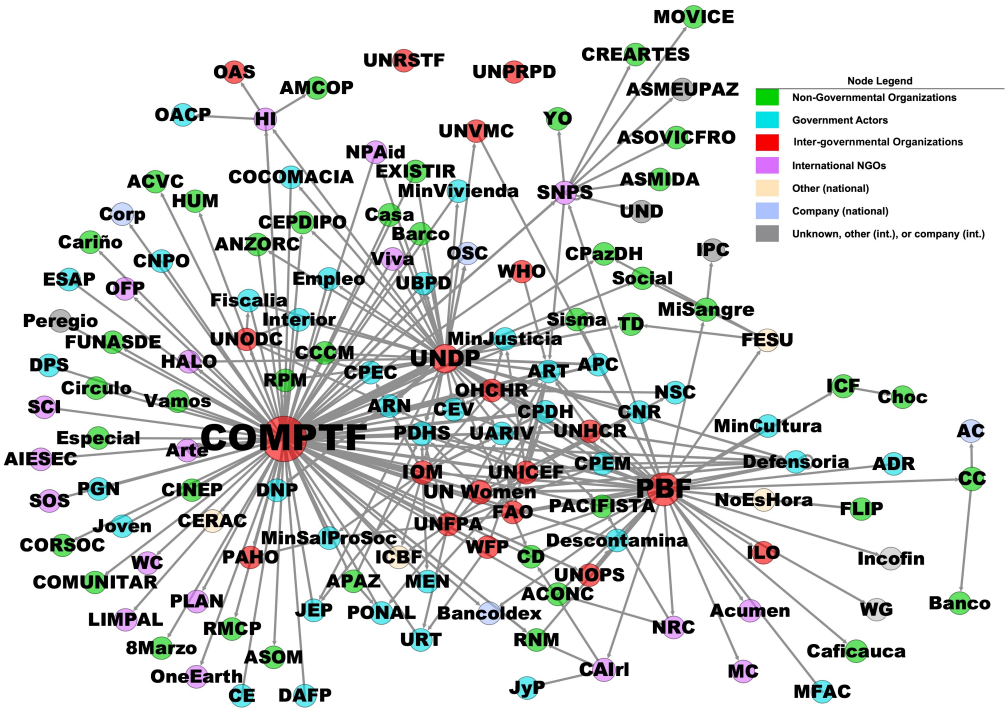
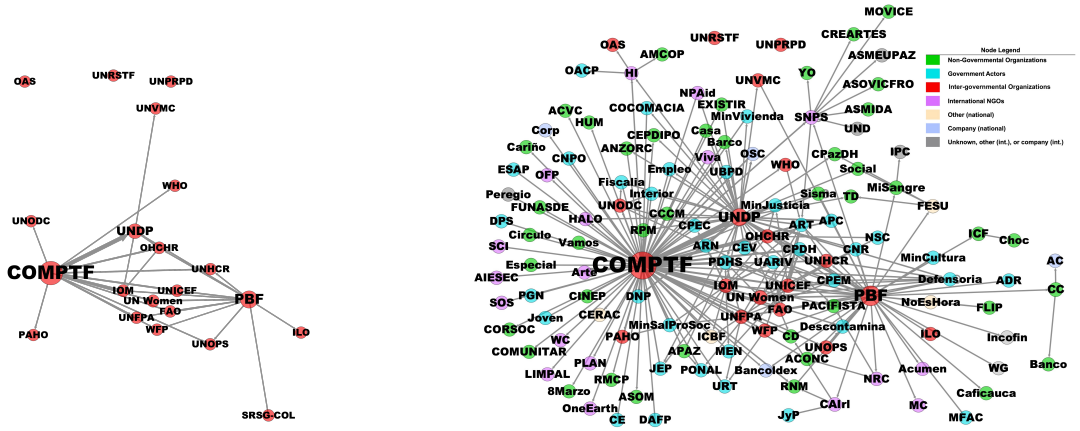


Figure 2: Complete MPTF Network in Colombia

By focusing on peacekeepers only, the literature misses other UN agencies, INGOs, NNGOs, and donors. Expanding to our beyond the UNVMC, the MPTF data reveals that there are more actors directly connected to peace and development programming undertaken by the UN. Existing literature examines UN peace operations separately from UNDP or its broader network, as well as the larger network of aid actors. Figures 3 through 6 visually represent networks among sets of actors: IGOs, INGOs, NNGOs, and government actors.

Existing literature silos actors by type, and these graphs highlight the presence or lack of linkages between similar nodes. This exercise demonstrates what we lose by focusing on any single type of actor alone, as much of the existing scholarship has done. INGOs comprise 13% of the MPTF network, IGOs comprise 15%, National NGOs are 31%, government actors are 30%, and other node types comprise about 10% of the organizations. Without considering all of these actors, we are

missing large swaths of peacebuilding, development, and humanitarian activity in these contexts.



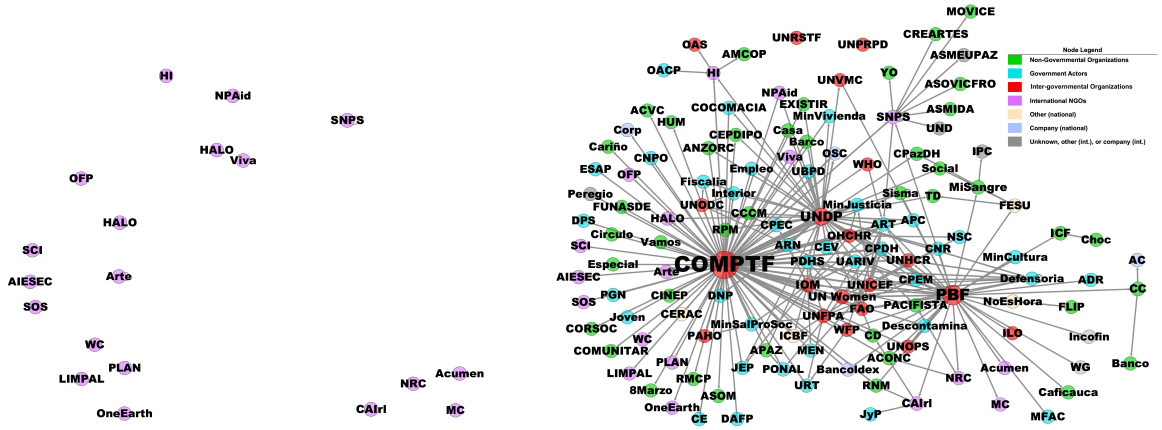
(a) Isolated IGOs in MPTF Projects

(b) Complete MPTF Network

Figure 3: Comparison of Colombian IGO Network and Complete MPTF Network

Existing literature examines UN peace operations separately from other *Inter-governmental Organizations (IGOs)* (See figure 3a), which constitute an important group of actors. There are dozens of UN country offices that work with or alongside UN peace operations, including the UN Development Program (UNDP); UN Children's Fund (UNICEF); the World Health Organization (WHO); the World Food Program (WFP); UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); the UN Population Fund (UNFPA); the International Labor organization (ILO); International Organization for Migration (IOM); UN Woman; UNAIDS; UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR); and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The International Financial Institutions (IFIs) also often have a presence in conflict-affected states, although the World Bank usually has an office in the country while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) representative is based at its headquarters in DC. The IGO graph in Colombia is highly connected, as the funding structure of UN humantiarian affairs through MPTFs centralizes the UNDP. Even as the UNDP plays a central role and likely weilds considerable influence in this peacebuilding space,

literature that focuses on UN peace operations, specially, would overlook the centrality of UNDP and instead focus only on the relevant mission, UNVMC.

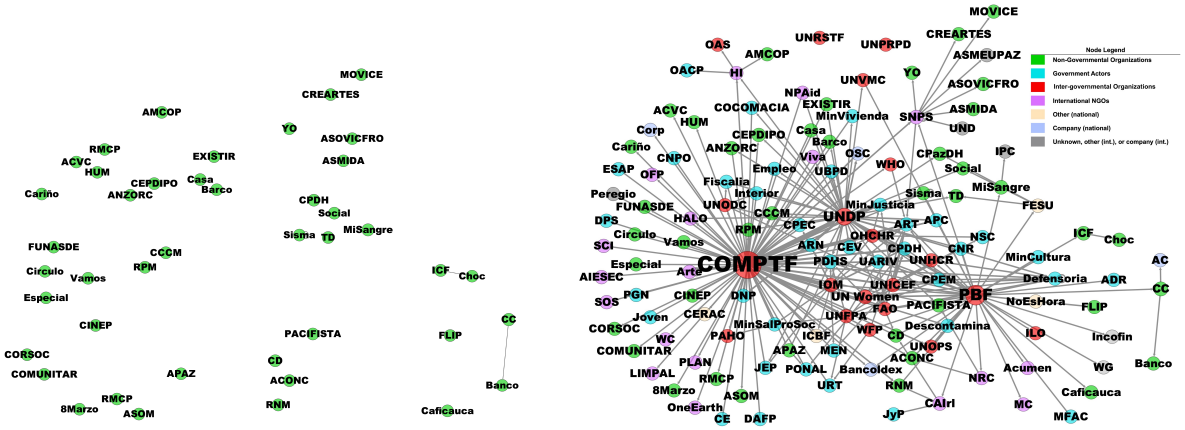


(a) Isolated INGOs in MPTF Projects (b) Complete MPTF Network

Figure 4: Comparison of Colombian INGO Network and Complete MPTF Network

Many bilateral donors and IGOs depend on *International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs)* (see Figure 4a) and private contractors to deliver their goods and services in fragile and conflict-affected countries. In the MPTF network, these actors are primarily connected to IGOs. There are also INGOs, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and World Vision, that have large amounts of internal funding and implement their own service delivery activities, without depending on funding from bilateral donors or IGOs. The cumulative effect has been a steady pattern of deployment of a range of INGOs to fragile and conflict-affected countries. These INGOs include those that focus primarily on humanitarian relief, such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the broader Red Cross and Red Crescent Society. They also include what is a growing group of multi-mandate INGOs—CARE International, Mercy Corps, Oxfam, among many others—or those that have the capacity to implement some combination of humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, or human

rights activities. These multi-mandate INGOs are likely to build formal and informal relationships with a wide array of international and domestic actors and adapt their type of service delivery to changes in the country context and donor demand. INGOs in the MPTF network bridge the network of IGOs and government actors/national NGOs.

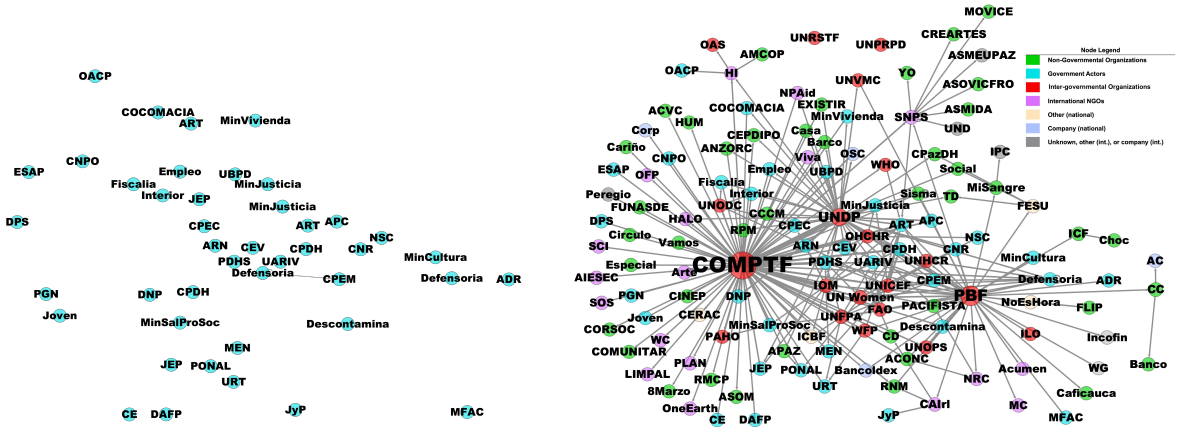


(a) Isolated NNGOs in MPTF Projects (b) Complete MPTF Network

Figure 5: Comparison of Colombian NNGO Network and Complete MPTF Network

In addition to INGOs, many bilateral donors, IGOs, and INGOs work directly with *National NGOs (NNGOs)* (see Figure 5a)—sometimes referred to as civil society organizations or local organizations—in carrying out their peacebuilding, development, humanitarian, and human rights activities. These NNGOs range from those that are relatively large and well-established, to newer organizations consisting of a handful of staff. Some of these organizations were founded with the support of INGOs, such as Studio Ijambo in Burundi, which was founded by Search for Common Ground, a US-based peacebuilding INGO. Some NNGOs focus on high-level political dialogue and reconciliation, and sustain strong relationships with high-level government officials; others focus on community-level development projects and maintain strong networks within the specific communities in which they work. These NNGOs, often referred to as "local partners," frequently implement

activities in locations within the country where their international partners are unwilling or unable to go because of violence or other access-related issues. As a result, NNGOs often face greater potential security risks than their international counterparts at the same time that they have access to valuable information and "local" knowledge that their international counterparts may lack.



(a) Isolated Government Actors in MPTF Projects (b) Complete MPTF Network

Figure 6: Comparison of Colombian NNGO Network and Complete MPTF Network

All of the international and national actors listed above operate within the fragile and conflict-affected country with the permission of the *host government*. The territorial sovereignty of the host government gives it the authority to determine which actors are able to establish country offices, implement service delivery projects, and move about its territory (Campbell and Matanock, 2024). This is true even for most Chapter VII peacekeeping missions, which do not strictly require the consent of the host government to operate on its territory (DPKO and DFS, 2003). The IGOs, bilateral donors, and INGOs have varying degrees of direct and indirect collaboration with the host government and its ministries.

Many IGOs collaborate directly with the host government, which is often a member of the IGO, and related line ministries—health, security, education, rural development—depending on

the IGO's specific mandate and aims (see Figure 6a). The UN development and humanitarian agencies, for example, have to secure the signature of the host government on their country-level plan before they are allowed to implement any activities. INGOs often have less direct contact with national-level government officials and ministries, except when these officials help coordinate their activities or give them permission to establish an office, issue their visas, or release necessary goods from ports. INGOs may have more direct contact with local and regional governmental officials whose permission they must secure to operate within their communities. NNGOs often have strong connections to governmental and non-governmental officials at national and local levels, both because their permission is required for NNGOs to operate and because part of their comparative advantage is their strong connections to these officials and actors.

A growing number of states are also allocating international development and humanitarian aid to conflict-affected countries, often via a diplomatic or development office established within the conflict-affected country. These *bilateral donors* often include the full range of traditional donors, or members of the Organizational for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – ranging from the US to the UK to Japan and Korea (OECD, 2020). Bilateral donors also include donors that the aid literature often refers to as newer donors, or the BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Although each of these donors has different aid strategies and approaches, they almost always have a country office representative that is charged with coordinating with other international, state, and non-governmental actors. In addition, an increasingly wide range of donors, such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, allocating aid to conflict-affected countries and often charging their country-office representatives with facilitating the delivery and coordination of this

aid within the recipient country.

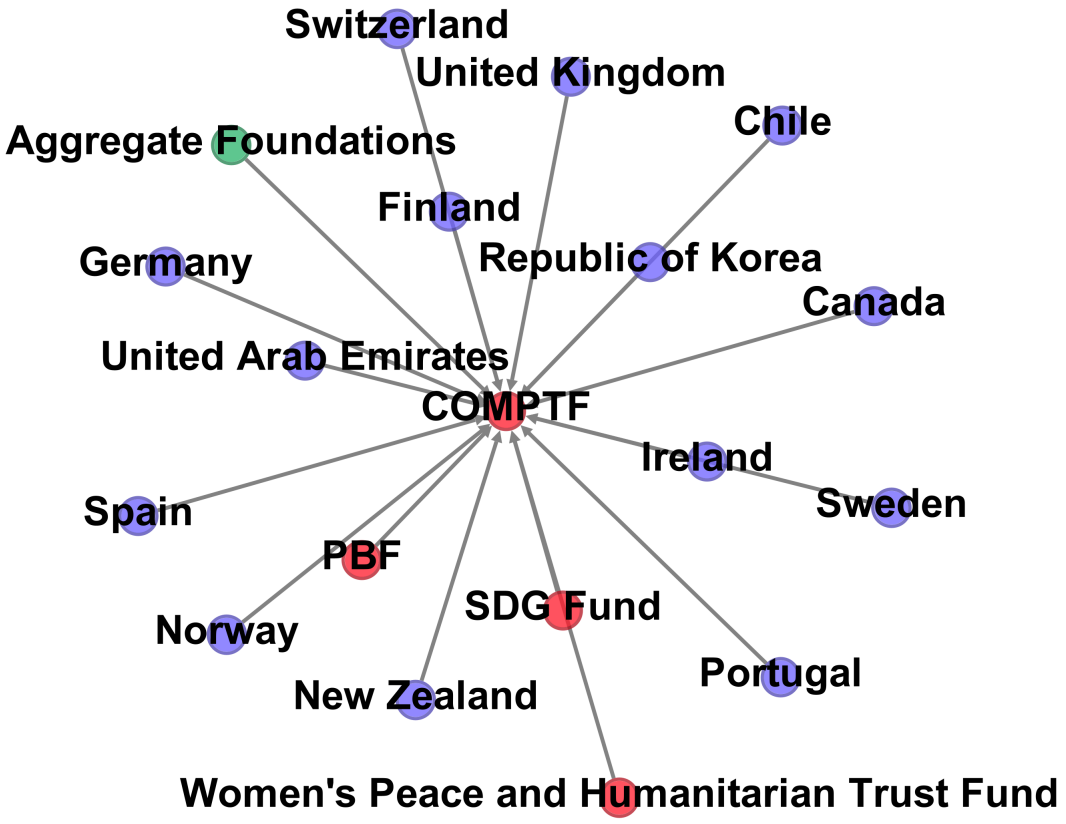


Figure 7: Colombian Peace MPTF (COMPTF) Network of Contributors

Bilateral donors are represented in the Colombia MPTF network through their contributions to pooled funds. Bilaterals can channel funding to the state directly or bypass the state through IGOs, INGOs, or NNGOs. In the context of MPTFs, donors do not play a role in project design or implementation. Existing literature focuses on aggregate amounts of aid, or distinguishes between bypass and government-to-government (Dietrich, 2013). In reality, this misses that these actors are often so connected that, even when the primary recipient is a third party actor or the government, there is interdependence among these different actors.

The UNVMC in Colombia has a narrow mandate and lacks peacekeeper presence. In comparison,

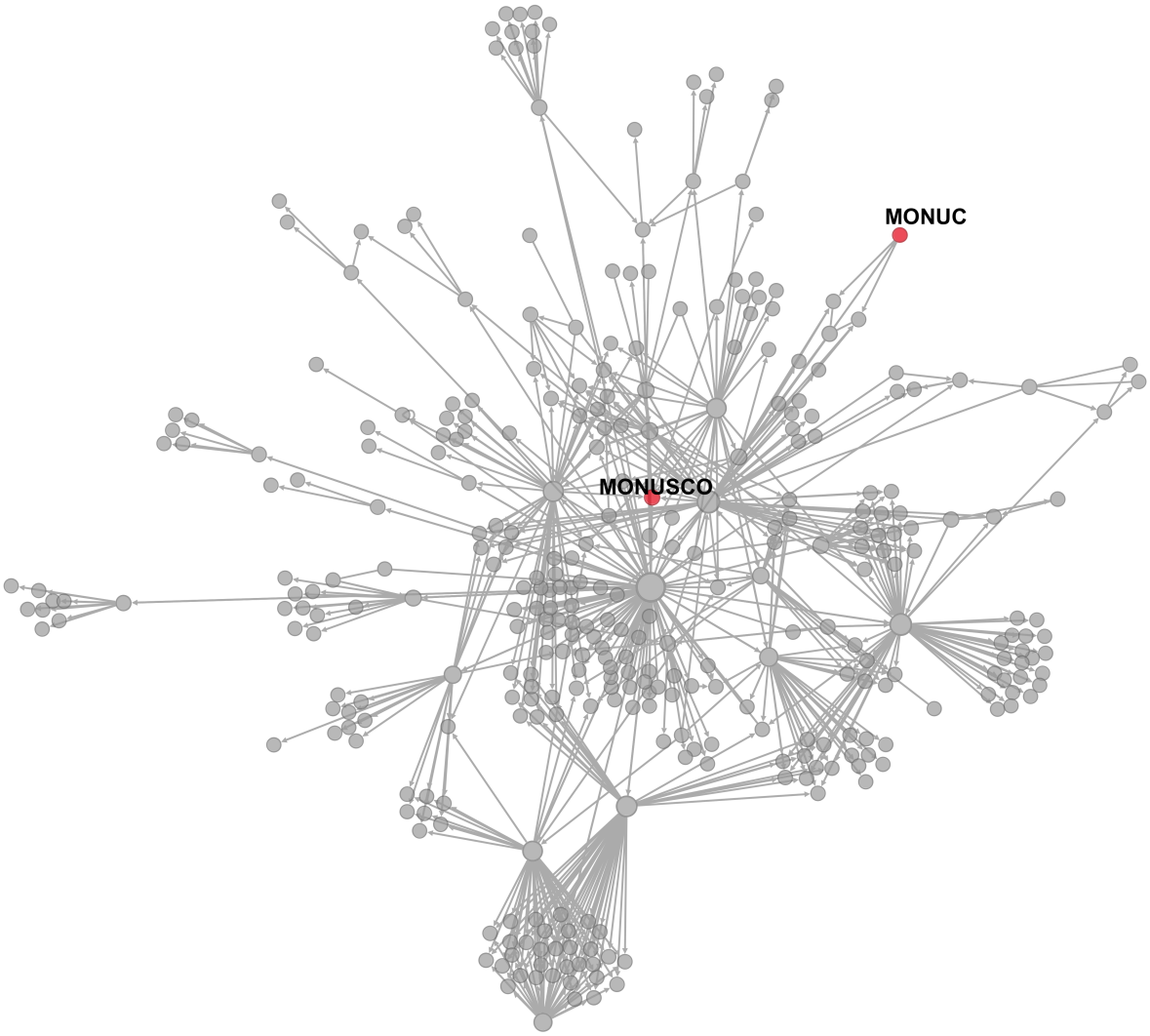


Figure 8: Democratic Republic of Congo MPTF Network with Missions in Red

MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has a more extensive mandate with a large peacekeeper contingent; further, MONUSCO partners with more actors than UNVMC. Thus, one may expect the structure of the MPTF network in the DRC to look much different than that of Colombia's network. Figure 8 depicts the network of actors in the DRC MPTF network, with the UN peace operations in red. (Please note that we will include full, actor-coded DRC MPTF graphs in future versions of this paper.) This challenges the assumption that MONUSCO as a robust PKO may not be as reliant on networks as the UNVMC; while MONUSCO, and its predecessor MONUC,

participate in more projects than the mission in Colombia, they are far from central in this network.

The Colombian MPTF network data are based on a substantially smaller number of projects, just 65 total, whereas the DRC MPTF data are drawn from 607 projects. Additionally, this network is responsible for over $390 million USD in budget commitments. As described by these MPTF network graphs, existing literature completely misses the majority of funding to, and the actors participating in, these peace, development, and humanitarian programming in these contexts.

5 Who is in Charge? Coordination and Delegation in Networks

Examination of peacebuilding networks also challenges assumptions about hierarchy among these actors, and the delegation chains that connect them (Lake, 2007). We refer to these connections as the "delegation chain," which we define as being the directed and undirected power relationships among a multitude of actors working together on a single or group of initiatives. When the term delegation is employed, particularly in the context of IGOs, a principal-agent model is often used, which assumes the top-down delegation of authority from powerful actors to less powerful ones as a function of the distribution of funds and roles in the delegation chain (Lake and McCubbins, 2006; Lyne et al., 2006; Milner, 2006).

With the examples of two MPTF projects below, we demonstrate that relationships among aid actors within a single MPTF project are more complex than depicted in the existing literature, and the power dynamics within these relationships are often ambiguous. We show that a single project involves a range of interdependent actors, challenging the literature's focus on treating IGOs, INGOs, states, and NNGOs as singular disconnected actors. We also show that this range

of actors includes organizations originally established to focus on development, humanitarian, and diplomatic efforts, but in actuality they work together toward a shared peacebuilding aim.

We distinguish among five distinct roles identified in MPTF delegation chains: (1) donor; (2) direct recipient; (3) intermediary recipient; (4) implementing partner; and (5) government signatory. Direct recipients receive funds directly from donors *and* are in charge of overseeing the overall project. When a recipient organization simply passes the funds onto another actor to implement the project, we refer to them as intermediary recipients. We refer to any actor that is listed as an implementer of an activity as an implementing partner, regardless of whether there is explicit reference to this actor receiving funds from the intermediary actor. Host government agencies can both be implementing partners of projects as well as government signatories.[5]

Figures 9 and 10 depict the delegation chains in two projects, funded by the Peacebuilding Fund, carried out in Colombia and DRC respectively.The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in 2006 and has since served as the United Nations' primary MPTF to collect funds that support peacebuilding missions. Over 60 UN member states have contributed to the fund since its inception [6].

The projects presented below show two delegation chains where the UN Mission was involved. In the example from Colombia, the implementers of a Peacebuilding Fund project work in coordination with a group of representatives of the Colombian Government, FARC, and the UN Verification Mission. In the example from DRC, the PBF funds a Congolese NGO that carries out the project on its own. Yet, the NGO worked alongside the UN Mission as well as Congolese government

[5]Host government consent, through signature of each project, is a precondition for the implementation of all MPTF projects.

[6]See the Peacebuilding Fund's about page: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/fund

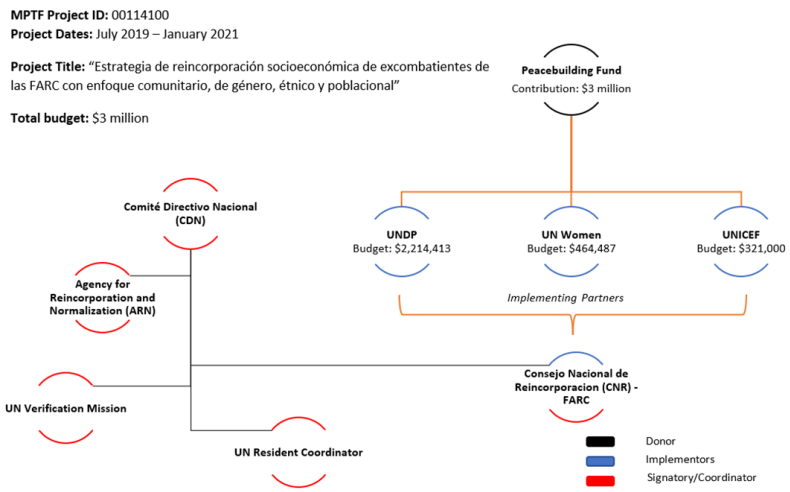


Figure 9: Delegation Chain for MPTF Project - 00120642

actors throughout the design, implementation, and evaluation of the program - showcasing a strong emphasis on coordination between aid actors in conflict-affected settings.

The project depicted in Figure 9 is titled "*Estrategia de reincorporación socioeconómica de excombatientes de las FARC con enfoque comunitario, de género, étnico y poblacional*," which translates to the "Strategy for the socioeconomic reincorporation of ex-combatants of the FARC with a community, gender, ethnic and population approach." This project was designed in a collaboration between the UN Verification Mission in Colombia, the Office of the Resident Coordinator, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, the Colombian Office of the High Counselor for Post-Conflict and the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (*Agencia para la Reincorporación y la Normalización* - ARN) as well as representatives of the FARC component of the National Reincorporation Council (*Consejo Nacional de Reincorporación* - CNR). The ARN, established in 2003, is the Colombian presidential agency mandated to lead the reintegration and reincorporation process in Colombia. The CNR was established as part of the 2016 peace agreement and is composed of two members of the National Government and two members of the FARC who, together, oversee the process of

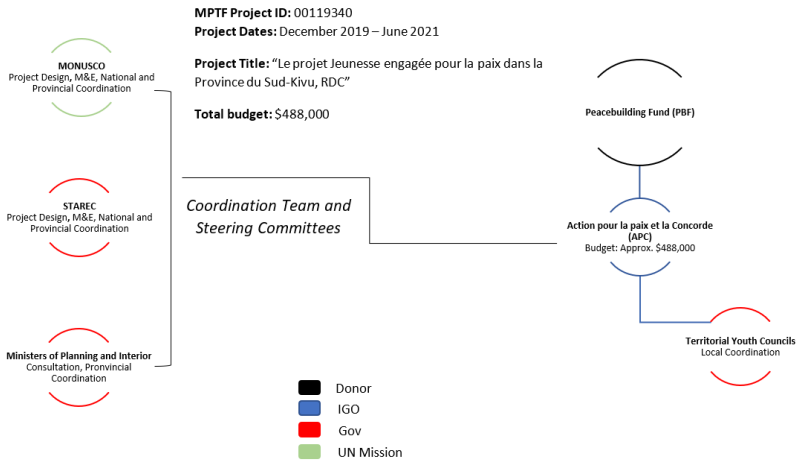


Figure 10: Delegation Chain for MPTF Project in DRC - 00119340

reincorporation of ex-combatants into civilian life. The collaboration between this group of actors continued from the design stage of the project to the implementation stage. While UN Women, UNDP, and UNICEF are the direct recipients of the PBF project, they work in collaboration with the FARC component of the CNR as implementers of the project activities. Further, coordination of the project is done by the Comite Directivo Nacional (CDN) (National Steering Committee in English), composed of the same Colombian government representatives, UN agencies, and FARC representatives who designed the project. This steering committee is tasked with approving project annual plans, budgets, approving management and coordination agreements, and creating synergies with other projects or programs financed by other donors.

The project depicted in Figure 10 is titled "Le projet Jeunesse engagée pour la paix dans la Province du Sud-Kivu, RDC," which translates to the "the youth committed to peace project in South Kivu, DRC." This project had the goal of reducing violence linked to the involvement of young people in armed groups through the engagement of youth in a series of events and capacity

building programs that relate to political or cultural dialogue and mediation events. Funded by PBF, a Congolese NGO called Action Pour la Paix et la Concorde (APC) directly implemented all activities of the project on its own. Yet, APC worked alongside multiple national and international actors to coordinate the activities of the project. In the design stages of the project, APC consulted with MONUSCO, STAREC, local civil society organizations, the Ministers of Planning and Interior, and local government authorities. To implement the project, APC relied on the coordination efforts of MONUSCO, STAREC and the Ministries of Planning and Interior on the provincial level, and on local government-affiliated entities called "territorial youth councils" to coordinate project activities on the local administrative level. MONUSCO and STAREC both had the additional role of carrying out the monitoring and evaluation (ME) of the program. MONUSCO was also tasked with coordinating implementation efforts with those of other stabilization projects carried out in South Kivu, as well as finding areas where synergies are possible between projects.

These two projects allow us to shed light on important features of delegation chains used in MPTF-funded projects in Colombia and DRC, which in turn reveals shortcomings in the approaches of existing scholarship. First, as depicted in both examples, The UN Missions often play an important coordination role with local government actors and other peacebuilding organizations. This is particularly important when a project brings together a large group of actors, as well as local actors that represent different factions of government. Second, as project interventions are often multi-dimensional, they require the cooperation of a multitude of actors, including ones which do not specialize in security-related issues. Development-focused IGOs—such as UNICEF, UNDP, and UN Women—often lead security-themed projects. In doing so, they sometimes rely on in-country

INGOs, who also adopt development approaches to address security-related problems like reintegration of ex-combatants into society. Third, in many cases, projects bring together a wide array of actors, including IGOs, INGOs, NNGOs, and local government actors. These varying organization types can play diverse roles in projects and work together to address multi-dimensional objectives in various geographic locations that one actor will likely be unable to access on their own—cementing the need to create and work in small networks to carry out single interventions. Organization type (e.g., bilateral donor, IGO, INGO, NNGO, host government) does not necessarily determine the roles in the delegation chain. In some cases, as in the example from DRC presented above, national NGOs can play a leading role in the implementation of an aid project. While there are roles that some organizational types may play more frequently than others, our initial interpretation of the data indicate that each actor type is able to act in multiple roles in the delegation chain, although the host government must always appear in the role as government signatory.

Existing scholarship generally fails to account for these varied actors and their (varied) roles in peacebuilding delegation chains. This is potentially problematic because, by focusing on a single type of actor, past work risks attributing blame or praise to actors that are not necessarily or wholly responsible for particular outcomes. For example, are specific projects and overarching mission objectives less likely to be achieved if they are carried out by organizations that are not "purpose-built" for work in a particular sector? Or is the involvement of these diverse sets of actors and their expertise, like the aforementioned development-focused IGOs carrying out security-related initiatives in Colombia, actually beneficial in advancing projects and mission objectives in an efficient and cost-effective manner? Does having a complex delegation chain, with intermediary recipients

and/or many implementing partners (perhaps of many different organizational types), complicate peacebuidling efforts versus make complicated peacebuilding efforts possible? These are the types of questions that cannot be answered with traditional approaches, but that can be explored using network data that includes various types of aid actors and their relationships.

6 Theoretical Implications for Research on International Engagement with Conflict-affected Countries

The first implication is that by focusing only on a single type of international actor, without fully accounting for other actors with similar aims, existing scholarship overlooks how *substitution* might play out. Third party actors–whether bilateral donors, IGOs, INGOs, PKOs, or SPMs–may be regularly occupying roles and networks, but existing analyses would not enable us to pick this up. Accounting for substitution has important methodological and theoretical implications, shedding light on the strategic logic of international aid actors and enabling scholars to more accurately capture the wide set of potential partners at the disposal of the host-government and non-governmental actors that govern war and peace.

Second, by focusing only on a single type of actor, existing scholarship is unable to examine dynamics of cooperation among international or domestic actors. In a context of cooperation, a single actor–say a PKO–may achieve its outcomes only via cooperation with other international and domestic actors. Existing scholarship is unable to capture these cooperative effects because it does not account for the formal and informal relationships that constitute the cooperation, or how these relationships (e.g., networks) vary by PKO, host-country, sub-national location, or time period. By

examining dynamics of cooperation among diverse, or not so diverse, international and domestic actors, scholarship could more accurate capture the micro-dynamics of peace to complement its deep focus on the micro-dynamics of conflict. Furthermore, if peace and conflict outcomes are actually due to cooperative networked effects, then these outcomes cannot and should not be attributed to any single actor.

Third, existing scholarship has largely assumed that competition among international aid actors does not exist. For example, it has assumed that the behavior of international donors, for example, can be accounted for simply by including the aggregate amounts of aid as a control. This assumes that the amount of aid tells us what the aid does, or is intended to do. It overlooks the aim of the aid and how aid actors may compete for alliances with the host-government, other domestic actors, or other intervening actors. In a context of increasing geopolitical competition among the US, China, Russia, and European donors–to name a few–cooperation among aid donors cannot be taken for granted. Instead, there are increasing indications that aid actors compete amongst themselves for the loyalty of the host-government and, even, for contracts with the best NNGOs.

Fourth, existing scholarship has also largely viewed IGOs, INGOs, and NNGOs as actors broadly controlled by states. Close examination of the networks among states and these diverse inter-governmental and non-governmental actors shows how pervasive these latter actors are, forming networks with multiple states that do not have clear networks amongst themselves, potentially serving as crucial brokers (Murdie and Davis, 2012). Furthermore, as demonstrated above, the lines of delegation and accountability between states–whether bilateral donors or the host government–on the one hand, and IGOs, INGOs, and NNGOs, on the other, do not run directly from states to

these "implementing agencies." By accounting for these networks and the types of relationships that define them, scholarship can more accurately capture the role and influence of a growing group of inter-governmental and non-governmental actors on peace and conflict. The literature on civil war has long argued that diverse non-state armed domestic actors and their alliances affect the outcomes of war. Will the incorporation of domestic aid actors into our analyses of peace have an equally consequential effect?

7 Conclusion

Existing scholarship on UN peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and international aid has focused on each singular actor without examining the entire networks of influence and support among these international actors or with their domestic counterparts. We redress this gap in the literature by demonstrating the ways in which bilateral donors, IGOs, INGOs, NNGOs, and host governments are connected in conflict-affected countries, both within and across sectors. In so doing, we introduce a crucial variable—international and domestic networked relationships—that has been omitted from the majority of scholarship on international support to fragile and conflict-affected states.

Using the cases of the UN MPTF networks in Colombia and DRC during the deployment of UN Missions, we demonstrate the existence of these broad "Networks of Influence and Support." We first demonstrate the scope and scale of the MPTF networks within Colombia and DRC by visualizing each individual type of actor and their actual networked relationships.We then use a detailed analysis of two MPTF-funded projects in each country to show that different types of aid actors—IGOs, INGOs, NNGOs, host government ministries—with a development, humanitarian,

and peacebuilding mandate often collaborate in the implementation of MPTF projects through contractual relationships, although their precise role in this delegation chain often varies by project. By illustrating the relationships and organizations that are omitted when we only focus on a single type of peacebuilding actor, as so much of the existing literature does, our analysis shows the importance of analyzing and understanding the effect of these networks of influence and support.

Traditionally, most scholarship on third-party intervention in civil war has attributed on-the-ground observable outcomes to the interveners, like UN missions, themselves. We argue that it is important to conceptualize the broader network supporting the UN mission because other actors or their interrelationships constituting the network may be more directly responsible for particular outcomes.

Beyond thinking about the important topic of when UN peace operations are more or less likely to succeed at achieving their mission objectives, we also speculate that networks of influence and support have implications for broader domestic and international relations as well. These networks likely affect the types of domestic institutions we observe being created or reformed, the dimensions of governance that dictate state-society interactions, the nature of and degree to which the conflict-affected state is subsequently engaged in the international system, and more.

There are a range of ways that existing scholarship could engage these networks. The peacekeeping scholarship could examine how broader conflict and peace outcomes are facilitated by non-peacekeeping actors, beginning with the civilian staff of UN peace operations and extending to other UN agencies, funds, and programs—the most common direct recipients of UN MPTF awards—and continuing to include other IGOs, INGOs, NNGOs, government ministries, and bilateral donors

that so often directly or indirectly cooperate with UNPOs.

The international aid scholarship should also better account for this breadth of actors, which are direct or indirect partners in the range of international aid projects—humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, and stabilization—that they fund in fragile and conflict-affected states (Campbell and Spilker, 2022). This literature could also consider network measures as an alternative to its reliance on project-level commitment amounts. Network measures capture the duration of a contractual relationship that continues regardless of the amount of funds allocated. In a highly political conflict-affected context, these relationships may be more influential for peacebuilding outcomes than the amount of money allocated (Campbell, 2018).

The literature on peacebuilding could focus on understanding how the variation in network characteristics influences peace and security outcomes. In other words, are more dense networks likely to be more effective or is the centrality of a key political actor within the network more important? It could also examine how these organizations are networked with the communities that they purport to serve. Furthermore, the literature on non-state armed groups (NSAGs) could examine how NSAGs are formally or informally connected to these networks, and how this shapes the security context. The literature on socially responsible business could examine how companies—both multinational and domestic—operate within these networks of influence and support, influence both political and economic outcomes. In sum, by accounting for the heterogeneous networks of actors working for and against peace in fragile and conflict-affected countries, future scholarship has the opportunity to give greater credit to the multitude of domestic, governmental, non-governmental, and international actors who play crucial roles in peacebuilding processes, but whose contribution

has, heretofore, been overlooked.

A Appendix

A.1 Creating Network Data

To identify the wider peacebuilding networks in the contexts of UN peace operations, we collected original network data. While we only present the former type of edges, we coded the range of actors described above as well as two types of relationships among them, called edges: formal contractual edges and coordination edges. We initially draw upon information from the UN Multi-donor Trust Funds (MPTF) because they are focused on peace and security aims and engage with a range of IGOs, host government ministries, INGOs, and NNGOs, enabling us to examine the relationships among these diverse actors within a peacebuilding context. We complement these data with information from the UN Cluster System that captures the coordination relationships across a wide range of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors. Here, we use these pieces to more fully realize the peacebuilding network within and around UN missions in Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, demonstrating the importance of a network-focused analysis and the limitations of existing scholarship on a singular actor.

To explore how networks of aid actors develop around and interact with UN peace operations, we look at coordination among international peace and development or humanitarian organizations, including INGOs, IGOs, NNGOs, the host government, and bilateral donors, working in-country during a UN peacekeeping operation or UN political mission. In this paper, we present formal *contractual* ties, rather than all formal ties. We acknowledge that this is still incomplete, as it currently overlooks the potential for informal relationships. This is important material for future work to consider. Formal ties are captured through observable coordination methods like the UN Cluster System, contractual agreements between a donor and its implementing partners, and additional sectoral coordination structures, such as INGO forums or donor groups.

We capture the presence of, and roles played by, aid actors by constructing three distinct, yet, related datasets. First, we collect data on all aid actors present in-country to create an "organization list" dataset. This dataset includes verification of in-country physical presence as well as key organizational characteristics. Second, we collect data on aid actors' involvement in contractual agreements or financial transactions. Specifically, we compile a list of donor-funded projects and capture the roles of aid actors in each project. In this dataset, we identify each organization's role in

a project, relationships that bind involved actors, key details about the project, and information on variables that could represent opportunities for indirect network relationships, such as the sectoral and geographic areas of the project. Third, we built a dataset capturing aid actors' involvement in coordination structures, which we define as formal efforts to coordinate humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development activities in conflict-affected countries. These efforts include actor-specific coordination structures (e.g., donor or NGO coordination structures), sector-specific coordination structures (coordination efforts around specific sectors, like health or education), and involvement in the UN Humanitarian Cluster System, which was established to coordinate multi-agency response to large humanitarian emergencies. After the completion of the data collection process, the three datasets can be combined, and used together, to capture and explore network relationships among aid actors in contexts of UN peace operations.

We are interested in UN peace operations that are international responses to conflict or other unrest, occurring within conflict-affected states. When conflict-affected states host a UN peace operation, they are considered a "host country." There are a number of ways to determine whether a host country is "conflict-affected" or has ongoing violence. We define conflict-affected states as those which have any level of war-related or communal violence within five years of a peace operation. In some cases, this is easy to identify with a sharp rise in battles or violence perpetrated by the state or non-state actors directly before operation mandates. In other cases, this is harder to identify. When unsure, we clarify that the peace operation mandate fits our conditions, which are further detailed below.

Our data are restricted temporally to conflict-affected countries that host UN peace operations with mandates that began after January 1, 2005. This year marked the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, indicating a strong commitment to integrating peacebuilding throughout UN development and humanitarian efforts, and major reforms to the UN humanitarian coordination efforts as part of an effort to restructure how the UN responds to crises (UNSG, 2005). The Emergency Relief Coordinator launched an assessment of the global humanitarian system that culminated in the Humanitarian Response Review, a document that spurred the Humanitarian Reform Agenda (OCHA, 2020) and changed how the UN responds to complex emergencies. Furthermore, UN Peace Operations became increasingly focused on peacebuilding after this time, prioritizing coordination with a range of UN and external humanitarian, development, and peace actors toward a

common peacebuilding goal. Because this year marked a new paradigm for UN peace operations and their interactions with other relevant actors at the heart of our networks of influence and support, we limit our scope to operations with mandates that begin after January 1, 2005.

In addition to the temporal and country scope conditions, we are interested in UN peace operations that have multidimensional mandates related to conflict and peace, development, and/or humanitarian programming. Specifically, we include operations with mandates that address recent or ongoing violence, focus on sustaining past peace agreements, and/or attempt to prevent future conflict. We exclude operations with mandates that are regional or not specific to the host country, limited in scope, too broad or nonspecific in their objectives, unrelated to the ongoing conflict, or last less than one year.

From 2005–2021, a total of 77 missions (26 peacekeeping operations and 51 political missions) were active; however, our exclusion criteria listed above reduce this number to 11 peacekeeping operations and 21 special political missions in a total of 20 countries. Accounting for overlapping peace operations, there are 189 unique country-years covered in our data. The 20 countries in our data are Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Timor-Leste, Yemen, Myanmar.[7] Within each of these countries, we include all organizations that pursue humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, and human rights aims, broadly defined. Although our analysis distinguishes the specific sectors in which each of these actors works, we refer to these actors under the broad category of "aid actors" in this paper because they all aim to contribute to the establish the conditions for sustainable peace (UN Advisory Group of Experts, 2015). Below, we describe the scope of this network data that we present in this paper.

[7]Most countries in our scope overlap with the World Bank Fragility and Conflict Situations (FCS) classifications. The FCS classification was introduced in 2006 through the Low-Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) system using Country Policy and Institutional Performance Assessment (CIPA) scores (The World Bank, 2022). CIPA scores are used today in conjunction with conflict-related death thresholds. All country-years appear in the FCS lists except for Sierra Leone and Sudan in 2005, Lebanon for 2009–2015, Nepal for 2007–2009, Libya for 2011 and 2012, South Sudan for 2011 and 2012, Mali for 2013, and Colombia in all years. For most years, states are listed as "fragile situations," but for 2020 and 2021 some starts are in medium- and high-intensity conflict or have high institutional and social fragility.

A.2 Organizational Names Used in Colombian MPTF Network Graphs

The table on the next page includes the organizational name, acronym, and organizational type for all of the organizations depicted in the network graphs in this paper.

Organization Name	Acronym	Type
ACTED	ACTED	INGO
Acumen Fund Inc.	Acumen	INGO
Agencia Adventista de Desarrollo y Recursos Asistenciales	ADRA	INGO
Agencia de Desarrollo Rural	ADR	GOV
Agencia de Renovación del Territorio	ART	GOV
Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo	AECID	Bilateral Donor
Agencia Para La Reincorporación Y La Normalización	ARN	GOV
Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia	APC	GOV
AgriCapital	AC	Company (national)
Agriculture Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance	ACDI/VOCA	INGO
AIESEC	AIESEC	INGO
Aldeas Infantiles SOS Colombia	SOS	INGO
ALDEAS Infatiles SOS	SOS	INGO
Alianza de Mujeres Tejedoras de Vida	AMTV	NNGO
Alianza Para La Paz	APAZ	NNGO
Alianza por la Solidaridad	AxS	INGO
Alta Consejería para el Postconflicto, los Derechos Humanos y la Seguridad	PDHS	GOV
Alta Consejeria para la Consolidacion y la Estabilizacion	CE	GOV
Americares	Americares	INGO
APOYAR	APOYAR	NNGO
ART	ART	GOV
ASMEUPAZ	ASMEUPAZ	Unknown
ASMIDA	ASMIDA	NNGO
Asociacion Campesina del Valle del rio Cimitarra	ACVC	NNGO
Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios del Norte del Cauca	ACONC	NNGO
Asociación Municipal de Colonos del Pato	AMCOP	NNGO
Asociación Municipal de Mujeres de Buenos Aires, Cauca	ASOM	NNGO
Asociación Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres	RPM	NNGO
ASOVICFRO	ASOVICFRO	NNGO

Associación Nacional de Zonas de Reserva Campesine de Colombia	ANZORC	NNGO
Ayuda Popular Noruega	NPAid	INGO
Banco de Medicamentos	BDM	NNGO
Bancoldex S.A	Bancoldex	Company (national)
Barco Hospitalario San Raffaele	Barco HSR	NNGO
Benposta Nación De Muchachos	Benposta	NNGO
Blumont International	Blumont	INGO
Caficauca - Cooperative de Caficultores del Cauca	Caficauca	NNGO
caja de compensación	comphacoco	NNGO
Campaña Colombiana contra minas	CCCM	NNGO
Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas	CCCM	NNGO
CARE	CARE	INGO
Caritas Alemania	Caritas	INGO
Centro de Investigacion y Educaton Populaire	CINEP	NNGO
Centro de Pensamiento y Diálogo Político	CEPDIPO	NNGO
Centro de Recursos para el Analisis de Conflictos	CERAC	Other (national)
Chocolate Colombia	Choc	NNGO
Christian Aid Ireland	CAIrl	INGO
Colombia Civil Air Patrol	CCAP	GOV
Colombia Diversa (CD)	CD	NNGO
Colombia Joven	Joven	GOV
Colombia Peace MPTF	COMPTF	IGO
Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz	JyP	GOV
Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad, la Convivencia y la No Repetición	CEV	GOV
Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli	CISP	INGO
Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja	CICR	INGO
COMUNITAR	COMUNITAR	NNGO
Consejería para la Estabilización y la Consolidación	CPEC	GOV
Consejeria Presidencial para la Equidad de la Mujer	CPEM	GOV
Consejeria Presidencial para los Derechos Humanos	CPDH	GOV
Consejería Presidencial para los Derechos Humanos	CPDH	GOV
Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato	COCOMACIA	GOV
Consejo Nacional de la Paz	CNPO	GOV
Consejo Nacional de Reincorporación	CNR	GOV
Consorcio Mire	MIRE	NNGO
Corpdesarrollo	Corp	Company (national)
CorpoCampo	CC	NNGO

Corporacion 8 de Marzo	8Marzo	NNGO
Corporación Cariño	Cariño	NNGO
Corporación Casa Amazonía	COCA	NNGO
Corporación Casa de la Mujer	Casa	NNGO
Corporación grupo Trópico Diverso	TD	NNGO
Corporación Humanizar	HUM	NNGO
Corporación Infancia y Desarrollo	LACID	NNGO
Corporación Opción Legal	COL	NNGO
Corporación para el Desarrollo Humano y Social	Social	NNGO
Corporación para la Paz y los Derechos Humanos	CPDH	NNGO
Corporacion Paz y Democracia	CPD	NNGO
Corporación Sisma Mujer	Sisma	NNGO
Corporacion Vamos Mujer	Vamos	NNGO
Corporación Viva la Cuidadania	Viva	INGO
CORPRODINCO	CORPRODINCO	NNGO
CORSOC	CORSOC	NNGO
COSPE	COSPE	INGO
CP&D	CP&D	Unknown
CREARTES	CREARTES	NNGO
Cruza Roja Colombiana	CRC	INGO
Danish Refugee Council	DRC	INGO
Defensoria del Pueblo	Defensoria	GOV
Defensoría del Pueblo de Colombia	Defensoria	GOV
Departamento Nacional De Planeacion	DNP	GOV
Descontamina Colombia	Descontamina	GOV
Development and Peace	Development and Peace	Unknown
Director of International Cooperation Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia	MFAC	GOV
DPS	DPS	GOV
Escuela Superior de Administración Pública ESAP	ESAP	GOV
Federación Luterana Mundial	FLM	INGO
Fiscalía General de la Nación	Fiscalia	GOV
Fondación Existir para la Paz, la Convivencia y la Justicia en Equidad	EXISTIR	NNGO
Foro ONG humanitarias	Foro ONG	NNGO
Funcion Publica	DAFP	GOV
Fundación Acción Social para el Desarrollo	FUNASDE	NNGO
Fundación Antonio Restrepo Barco	Barco	NNGO
Fundacion Bancolombia	Banco	NNGO
Fundacion Baylor	FB	INGO
Fundacion Circulo de Obreros de San Pedro Claver	Circulo	NNGO

Fundación de Emergencia y Ayuda a Colombia	Fundeyaco	NNGO
Fundación de Estudios Superiores Universitarios de Urabá - FESU	FESU	Other (national)
Fundacion El Arte de Vivir	Arte	INGO
Fundación Halü Bienestar Humano	Halü	NNGO
Fundacion Makikuna	FM	NNGO
Fundacion Mi Sangre	MiSangre	NNGO
Fundación Oriana	ORIANA	NNGO
Fundacion Panamericana para el Desarrollo	PADF	INGO
Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (FLIP)	FLIP	NNGO
Fundacion Plan	PLAN	INGO
Fundacion Sahed	FS	NNGO
Fundación Sinú	FSU	NNGO
Fundacion Tierra de Paz	TDP	NNGO
GIZ	GIZ	Bilateral Donor
GOAL	GOAL	INGO
HALO Trust	HALO	INGO
Heartland Alliance International	HAI	INGO
HIAS	HIAS	INGO
HUMANICEMOS DH	HDH	NNGO
Humanity & Inclusion	HI	INGO
Humanity and Inclusion	HI	INGO
IC Foundation	ICF	NNGO
ICCO Cooperacón	ICCO	INGO
iMMAP	iMMAP	INGO
Incofin Americas S.A.S	Incofin	Company (international)
Instancia Especial de Mujeres	Especial	NNGO
Instituto Colombiano de Bienstar Familiar	ICBF	Other (national)
Instituto Popular de Capacitación - IPC	IPC	Unknown
International Labour Organization	ILO	IGO
Intersos	Intersos	INGO
IPPF	IPPF	INGO
IRC	IRC	Unknown
Jesuit Refugee Service	JRS	INGO
Jurisdiccion Especial para la Paz	JEP	GOV
Katastrophenhlife (Diakonie)	DKH	INGO
La Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz	JEP	GOV
Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad	LIMPAL	INGO
Malteser	Malteser	INGO
Médecins du Monde	MDM	INGO
Médecins Sans Frontières	MSF	INGO

MedGlobal	MedGlobal	INGO
Mercy Corps	MC	INGO
Mercy Corps Colombia	MC	INGO
Ministerio de Educacion Nacional	MEN	GOV
Ministerio de Justica y del Derecho	MinJusticia	GOV
Ministerio de Justicia y del Derecho	MinJusticia	GOV
Ministerio de Salud y Proteccion Social	MinSalProSoc	GOV
Ministerio de Vivienda, Ciudad y Territorio	MinVivienda	GOV
Ministerio del Interior	Interior	GOV
Ministry of Culture	MinCultura	GOV
MOVICE Projecto Vida	MOVICE	NNGO
Movimiento Sueco por la Reconciliación	SWEFOR	INGO
MTI	MTI	Unknown
National Steering Committee	NSC	GOV
No es hora de Callar	NoEsHora	Other (national)
Norwegian Refugee Council	NRC	INGO
Norweigan Refugee Council	NRC	INGO
Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights	OHCHR	IGO
Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz	OACP	GOV
OHCHR	OHCHR	IGO
One Earth Future Foundation, Inc	OneEarth	INGO
OPI	OPI	Unknown
Organización Femenina Popular	OFP	INGO
Organization of American States	OAS	IGO
OSC Top Solutions Program	OSC	Company (national)
Oxfam	Oxfam	INGO
PACIFISTA	PACIFISTA	NNGO
Pan American Health Organization	PAHO	IGO
Patrulla Aerea Col	PAC (Aerea)	NNGO
Peacebuilding Fund	PBF	IGO
Peregio	Peregio	Unknown
PMI	PMI	Unknown
Policia Nacional de Colombia	PONAL	GOV
Première Urgence Internationale	PUI	INGO
Procuraduría General de la Nacíon	PGN	GOV
Profamilia	Profamilia	NNGO
Project Hope	Hope	INGO
Red de Mujeres Chaparraluna Por La Paz	RMCP	NNGO
Red de Mujeres Chaparralunas Por la Paz	RMCP	NNGO
Red Departmental De Mujeres De Choco	RDEMUCHO	NNGO

Red Nacional de Mujeres	RNM	NNGO
RET	RET	INGO
Samaritan's Purse	SP	INGO
Save the Children	SCI	INGO
Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social	SNPS	INGO
Sepas Pasto	SP	Unknown
Servicio Publico de Empleo	Empleo	GOV
Solidarites	Solidarites	INGO
Special Representative of the Secretary General in Colombia	SRSG-COL	IGO
Tearfund	Tearfund	INGO
Terre Des Hommes	TDH	INGO
UN Road Safety Trust Fund	UNRSTF	IGO
UN Women	UN Women	IGO
UNDP	UNDP	IGO
UNFPA	UNFPA	IGO
UNHCR	UNHCR	IGO
UNICEF	UNICEF	IGO
Unidad Administrativa Especial de Gestion de Restitucion de Tierras URT	URT	GOV
Unidad de Búsqueda de Personas dadas por Desaparecidas - UBPD	UBPD	GOV
Unidad para Atención y Reparación Integral a las Victimas	UARIV	GOV
United Nations Children Fund	UNICEF	IGO
United Nations Development Programme	UNDP	IGO
United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization	FAO	IGO
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR	IGO
United Nations International Organization for Migration	IOM	IGO
United Nations Mine Action Service	UNMAS	IGO
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	OCHA	IGO
United Nations Population Fund	UNFPA	IGO
United Nations Women	UNWomen	IGO
United Nations World Food Programme	WFP	IGO
United Nations World Health Organization	WHO	IGO
University of Notre Dame	UND	Other (international)
UNODC	UNODC	IGO
UNOPS	UNOPS	IGO
UNPRPD Disability Fund	UNPRPD	IGO
UNVMC	UNVMC	IGO

US Agency for International Development	USAID	Bilateral Donor
War Child	WC	INGO
Wegrou SAS	WG	Company (international)
WFP	WFP	IGO
WHO	WHO	IGO
World Vision International	WVI	INGO
YO PUEDO	YO	NNGO
ZOA	ZOA	INGO

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