JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: **Senior Partnerships and Programmes Officer (Arabic speaking)**
Full time, permanent (35hrs/week)

Salary: **£37,200 p.a.**

Reports to: **International Programmes Manager - Local First**

Location: United Kingdom OR the Netherlands (the role can be based at Peace Direct's office in London or The Hague)

Candidates must have the right to work in the country where they will be based. Hybrid working is available.

For Netherlands based applicants, the salary will be reviewed in line with Netherlands benchmarking data.

Job Purpose:

The Senior Programmes and Partnerships Officer (SPPO) is responsible for developing, accompanying, and coordinating locally-led peacebuilding projects, partnerships and networks in conflict-affected countries, primarily in Sudan and Syria. The SPPO will also support the coordination of partnerships and engagement with local peacebuilders in both countries and across a wider portfolio within our multi-year programme 'Local First: Transforming the Peacebuilding System', funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (more details in the annex below).

The Role

At Peace Direct, we believe in the value of equal partnership. As a key point of contact for our local peacebuilding partners, the SPPO puts this commitment into practice, helping set a strong example of what equitable partnership can mean for Peace Direct and the wider sector. Our work takes place in some of the most challenging and fast-changing contexts across the globe, so the role calls for confidence in navigating uncertainty and adapting in response to partners' needs and priorities. The SPPO also helps balance our commitment to equitable

partnerships with the programme management and compliance requirements of institutional funding, so that our programmes meet funding obligations, remain responsive to partners' priorities, and generate learning that can inform improvements to funding and partnership practices across the sector.

This is an exciting opportunity to work alongside local civil-society, help shape more equitable ways of supporting peacebuilding and contributing to wider change in the sector.

Fluency in written and spoken English and working proficiency in Arabic are essential for this post (tested at interview).

Key Responsibilities:

1. **Develop, coordinate and accompany partnerships with local peacebuilding actors**
    - Manage a portfolio of partnerships with local peacebuilding actors, focused primarily on Syria and Sudan, providing relevant support, advice, accompaniment and mutual learning opportunities.
    - Act as Peace Direct's first point of contact with local peacebuilding partners you manage, ensuring all communication is clear, respectful and supportive.
    - Identify and respond to partners' needs for accompaniment and support, including in emergency situations and for organisational strengthening.
    - Plan, deliver and evaluate networking and convening opportunities that bring partners together to learn and share at both online and in-person events.
    - Undertake regular partnership reflections with partners in your portfolio to identify mutual areas of learning and collaboration, and continuously improve our partnership approach.
    - Collaborate with a Local Peacebuilding Advisor in Syria on mapping and accompaniment of the local peacebuilding ecosystem, including through small granting and potentially development of new partnerships.
    - Accompany local peacebuilding actors in other geographies according to the needs of the Local First programme, and International Partnerships and Programmes team more widely.

2. **Project Management and Coordination**
    - Work closely with Peace Direct's partners to support planning, monitoring and adaptation of locally-led interventions.
    - Ensure effective compliance and due diligence for projects developed under Local First.

- Contribute to the development of high-quality financial and narrative reports and programme updates for the Dutch MfA and other stakeholders.
- Working closely with the Programme Finance Manager, monitor the finances of projects in your portfolio. This includes effective budgeting, monitoring partner's budgets and reviewing financial reports.
- Support the logistics of visits (of Peace Direct staff and/or partners) and online and in-person events involving Peace Direct staff and partners
- Support the International Programmes Manager to coordinate cross-country activities across Local First's focus countries as needed.

3. **Lead programme development**
   - Work closely with partners, local peacebuilding actors and Peace Direct's Local First team in ongoing codesign of the Syria strand, and expansion of existing Sudan portfolio of the Local First programme.
   - Lead in working with local partners and Peace Direct's Programme Design and Development team to develop proposals for wider programme development in the focus countries.
   - Incorporate conflict and gender sensitive approaches in programme design.
   - Conduct conflict analyses to inform programme development and adaptation.
   - Stay abreast of contextual developments and trends in locally-led peacebuilding to inform programme development and adaptation.
   - Develop and maintain relationships with individuals and organisations, both local to the region and international and working in the region, to inform programme design.

4. **Internal Relations**
   - Coordinate with other staff working on Local First - including other Senior Officers - to ensure effective partnership and programme management across the programme's focus countries, and coordinate cross-country activities as needed.
   - Work closely with the Advocacy team to coordinate support for country-focused advocacy and influencing work
   - Coordinate with staff from other teams (Fundraising + Communications, Finance + Operations) to ensure effective project implementation
   - Support Peace Direct's Fundraising and Communications team with the collection of content and case studies, with emphasis on locally-generated materials
   - Perform any other tasks as directed by the International Programmes Manager, Peace Direct Netherlands Office Representative and/or Head of

International Programmes and Research

5. **External Representation**
   - Represent Peace Direct at meetings with external organisations and institutions, and at external events, under the direction of the International Programmes Manager - Local First
   - Represent Peace Direct in relevant networks/communities of practice to share learning and experiences, including contributing to Peace Direct's learning partnerships with peer organisations/funders

6. **Environment and travel**
   - This role is based at Peace Direct's office in London or in The Hague, with hybrid working: a mix of office-based and home-working days.
   - You will be part of a dynamic and friendly team within our International Partnerships, Programmes and Research team, working in a collaborative and supportive culture.
   - The role includes 3-4 overseas visits per year, sometimes at short notice and to remote or high-risk locations; and travel in the UK and Europe to represent Peace Direct externally.
   - Occasional out-of-hours work might be required.

Person Specification

Essential:

- At least four years demonstrable experience supporting peacebuilding, development or humanitarian programmes, or related fields such as human rights or transitional justice, in conflict and post-conflict settings. We welcome relevant experience gained through different roles and career paths.
- Experience working with local partner organisations in ways which are responsible, mutually respectful and mutually accountable.
- Fluency in written and spoken **English** and working proficiency in **Arabic** (tested at interview).
- Excellent organisational and financial management skills, with experience in planning and monitoring budgets and meeting deadlines.
- Ability to work collaboratively and proactively, thinking creatively and seeking/providing support within the team when needed.
- Experience contributing to programme delivery, including on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds and handle sensitive situations and difficult conversations with sound judgement and care.
- Willingness to travel overseas and to perform well in challenging and sometimes difficult areas, conditions and situations.
- A flexible approach, willing to adapt in response to the needs of our partners and the organisation.

Desirable

- Experience of working directly with local actors in Syria and/or Sudan, and contextual knowledge of both countries.
- A commitment to supporting local actors to lead and influence local and global decision-making.
- Experience working in rapidly changing or volatile operating environments.
- Experience managing peacebuilding projects in an adaptive and context-sensitive way.
- Understanding of gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches to peacebuilding.

Job description updated October 2026

Annex: About Local First: Transforming the Peacebuilding System

Conflict continues to affect millions of civilians worldwide, yet peace efforts too often fail because they are designed from the outside, favour short-term fixes, and overlook the people who know their communities best. Money flows mainly to large international organisations, while local peacebuilders — especially women and young people — receive little flexible support, despite being the ones doing the day-to-day work of building lasting peace.

Our Local First programme takes a different approach. Working with local peacebuilders in **Afghanistan, Mali, Sudan, Syria, Palestine and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo**, we provide solidarity, practical accompaniment, flexible funding, and opportunities to connect and learn from each other. **We are looking at expanding our programme in Sudan starting in 2027, which would involve testing new funding modalities to reach local peacebuilders (e.g. locally led pooled funding). While Syria will be a new context to bring into the programme, we have strong and long-term existing partnerships and networks that will be built on.**

Local First also works to shift the wider development cooperation system. We work with local peacebuilders to bring their knowledge and their messages into national and international policy conversations, challenge the unequal and colonial attitudes built into how peacebuilding is done today, and work with power holders who want to do things differently. Learning runs through everything we do, connecting what happens in communities to the bigger policy picture.