



THE POWER OF LOCAL PEACEBUILDING IMPACT 2022



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Cover image: Local children supported by partners in Nigeria look out atop Dala Hill – a hillcrest considered to be the first site of settlement in Kano that provides views of the entire city – Kano Nigeria, May 2017. *Photo by Greg Funnell.*

Foreword

2022 was a year of change – for better and worse. The Covid-19 pandemic’s hold declined as vaccines became more widely available and restrictions eased. But global peacefulness deteriorated, with new conflicts destroying lives and livelihoods around the world.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has dominated Western headlines, but the resurgence of violent conflicts in places like eastern DR Congo have also caused devastation and displacement for thousands of people. In the face of such crises, the work of Peace Direct and our partners has been vital in preventing violence, addressing the causes and consequences of conflict, and building long-term, sustainable peace.

In 2022, we worked directly with 25 partners in 13 countries around the world. This includes partner organisations that have, through our flexible sub-granting models, supported hundreds of grassroots initiatives to strengthen the ecosystem of peacebuilders in their respective countries.

Our partners’ work has spanned the spectrum of peacebuilding, from early warning networks that directly prevent violence, to strengthening the livelihoods and agency of women and young people in conflict-affected communities.

Responding to emergencies

Peace Direct has always believed that the people affected by conflicts are best placed to address them, and to respond to humanitarian needs created by disasters local to them. But it can be easy to underestimate how much local peacebuilders are themselves

affected by these crises. In 2022, historic floods in Pakistan and the violent resurgence of rebel group M23 in eastern DR Congo are two examples of emergencies that have directly impacted our partners’ lives, as well as their work.

These emergencies emphasised the vital importance of **flexible funding models that support peacebuilders to sustain themselves, as well as their work with conflict-affected communities.** In 2022, we provided five rapid emergency grants to our partners in eastern DR Congo and Pakistan to support them in responding to the needs of communities impacted by outbreaks of violence and natural disasters.

Against impossible odds

The resilience that peacebuilders worldwide have shown this year is an inspiration to all of us at Peace Direct. **In Afghanistan, for example, our partner Equality for Peace and Development (EPDO) supported 25 civil society organisations** and women’s rights organisations across the country, despite the challenges posed by the Taliban’s takeover of Afghanistan.

Every year, Peace Direct has the privilege of supporting the incredible, effective and sustainable work of local peacebuilders. We also strive to show the international community how much better placed these local peacebuilders are to respond to the conflicts in their contexts than international actors. **This year, by amplifying the voices of our partners across all aspects of our work, we have pushed for radical changes across the peacebuilding system to better enable them to create a more peaceful world.**



Dylan Mathews
CEO of Peace Direct

A YEAR IN REVIEW

At the heart of Peace Direct's mission is the leadership of local peacebuilders. In 2022, these peacebuilders yet again proved the unique effectiveness and sustainability of their work.

Our impact and reach

25
peacebuilding
partners supported

13
countries

**Over
85,000**
estimated people were
directly reached by initiatives

Areas of work

Youth participation in
local governance and
peace processes

Preventing
identity-based
violence

Tackling
gender-based
violence

Education

Supporting
women's
leadership

Economic
empowerment for
conflict-affected
communities

Community
reintegration for former
combatants

Defending
human rights

Early warning and
early response

Funding

Peace Direct prioritises funding sources and structures that enable our partners to respond flexibly and rapidly to unexpected changes in their contexts. This approach enables us to provide emergency grants in times of crisis – like this year's floods in Pakistan.

£1.78m
total funding channelled to
local peacebuilders

£37k
in emergency grants

Strengthening local peacebuilding ecosystems

In 2022, we worked with our partners to evaluate, redesign and expand our two major flexible funding models: the Local Action Fund (LAF) and Youth Action for Peace Programme (YAPP).

In both LAF and YAPP, Peace Direct channels funding to partners acting as hub organisations. The hubs identify smaller grassroots initiatives that often operate below the radar of most donors, and offer them subgrants, training and opportunities for wider collaboration. **This model supports local peacebuilders to collaborate, overcome obstacles, and increase their impact.**

Between 2019 and the end of 2022, 669 small grants totalling over \$2m had been awarded to local groups working for peace and social cohesion across 8 countries – including informal, unregistered groups and individual activists. This work is ongoing and expanding to new countries in 2023, including Colombia. ■

DIVERSE LOCAL PEACEBUILDING

The peacebuilding work of our partners forms a spectrum of practices – from direct violence prevention at one end, to long-term efforts to create the conditions for a peaceful society.

These two ends of the spectrum are known as **negative peace** (the absence of violent conflict) and **positive peace** (the conditions needed for sustainable peace). In 2022, our support to locally-led activities across the spectrum has helped communities prevent violence, address the roots of conflict and build a better future.

Strengthening networks to prevent and respond to violence

In eastern DR Congo (DRC), our partner Beni Peace Forum (BPF) is at the sharp end of peacebuilding, actively working to prevent violence from breaking out. In 2022, BPF worked to reduce identity-based violence through Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) Networks.

Through this project, our partners strengthened civil society networks and increased their capacity by creating Local Protection Committees (LPCs) that could monitor and respond to violence. These networks of local people succeeded in preventing identity-based massacres

and protecting human rights – substantial evidence for Peace Direct's belief that **local people are central to the resolution of their own conflicts**.

BPF also integrated rapid response activities into larger networks that increased social cohesion, established new community conflict resolution mechanisms, and tackled root causes of conflict – such as land ownership, poor infrastructure, impunity, weak governance and unemployment.

Holistic approaches for positive peace

Building sustainable peace requires a long-term approach, working towards a vision of a society built on attitudes, institutions and structures that are conducive to peace. This includes initiatives to limit corruption, distribute resources equitably, support education and economic empowerment, defend human rights, and more.

This year's positive peacebuilding initiatives have been extremely diverse. Many focused on economic empowerment, political participation and other activities that support and sustain the agency of individuals affected by conflict. In Syria, for example, our partners supported children affected by the conflict to return to school.

Through our flexible funding programmes, grassroots initiatives met a huge variety of community needs to address causes of tension. In Pakistan, youth-led initiatives involved building community spaces, opening doors for transgender people, and bringing diverse groups together for peaceful debates. In eastern DR Congo, young women trained people affected by violence to develop livelihood skills, but also mobilised the community to work together to clean up the environment. And in Mali, one group installed solar lights to support the education of girls. **In contexts where communal conflicts are rife, supporting community cohesion and resilience building are essential components of positive peace.**

These positive peace projects have a tangible impact on not only the participants, but whole communities. ■





CASE STUDY

Building bridges

Burundi's topography is one of a thousand hills, with each hill or *colline* acting as its own community. Travelling between hills can require hours of descending into deep valleys and climbing up steep inclines to neighbouring hills.

Women walk for hours to fetch water and are at risk of being attacked, especially when they must leave before dawn or return after dark. Children, who may travel several hours by foot to get to and from school, are also vulnerable.

Following a conflict analysis process with key stakeholders in the local community, **young people from opposing political**

parties decided to work together to address gender-based violence and school dropout rates.

They did so by building bridges between hills. These bridges helped women access water and health centres more safely. They enabled students to get to school more easily. And social cohesion was reinforced as the community came together across political divisions to work towards a common goal.

This solution was not imposed by an external NGO. Instead, it was entirely born out of community participation, which increased buy-in from communities and enabled youth leadership.

CASE STUDY

Aman Chaupal

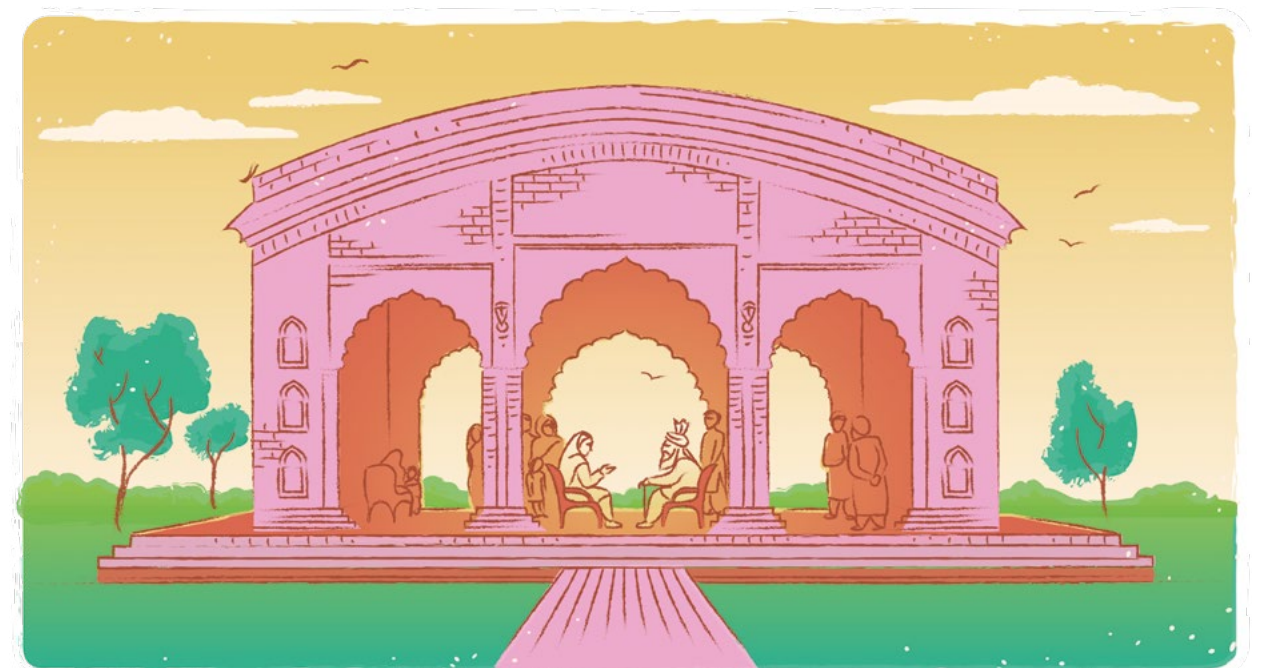
In Sanda Kalan, Pakistan, mosques have replaced communal social spaces as the sites for community gatherings and decision-making processes. This shift has led to the exclusion of religious minority groups, and women and girls. But a youth group wanted to change this. Through a Youth Action for Peace Programme (YAPP) grant from our hub partner HIVE, **they established Aman Chaupal – a space to promote the culture of inclusivity through dialogue and to recognise the voices of marginalised communities.**

The community came together to support the initiative, donating land and support for Aman Chaupal's eco-friendly construction: Hive reported that *"for the first time in the history of Sanda Kalan, landowners and peasants gathered for one common goal – to establish a communal and inclusive space to revive the old tradition of Chaupals (community spaces) in Punjab which has gradually disappeared."*

Because their project was rooted in cultural tradition, the young people were able to get buy-in from community elders, while simultaneously challenging the marginalisation of minority individuals.

Since its creation, Aman Chaupal has hosted diverse discussions and events. Economically disadvantaged villagers sat together with key local influencers to discuss and participate jointly in Chaupal's management. **For the first time in the village's history, women were included, and women's issues were discussed publicly.** As women saw that it was inclusive, they mobilised other women in the village to attend community discussions that had previously been exclusively for a male audience.

There are proposals to replicate Aman Chaupal in all 125 union councils of district Kasur, and a local politician has made this goal part of his platform in the upcoming election.



AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS

Afghanistan faces one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, with pre-existing challenges exacerbated by the Taliban takeover in 2021. Yet international humanitarian support isn't reaching those who need it most, while the Taliban are steadily eradicating the rights and freedoms of women, girls and other marginalised groups.

In such times, civil society organisations and human rights defenders are lifelines for their communities. Many are continuing their work despite the danger it poses, often in hiding. But their funding is drying up, with most international donors believing it impossible, or too risky, to channel in the funds that these organisations need to survive. **Against these impossible odds, Peace Direct and our partner, Equality for Peace and Development (EPDO), safely and rapidly dispersed thousands of dollars of vital funds across Afghanistan in 2022.**

The Afghan Solidarity Fund

Shortly after the Taliban takeover, Peace Direct began working with and providing core funding to EPDO, which is an NGO dedicated to enhancing women's rights and promoting social cohesion in Afghanistan. Together, we and EPDO **secured \$800,000 USD in funding to launch the Afghan Solidarity Fund** – a flexible funding initiative based on our Local Action Fund (LAF) model.



OUR ONLY HOPE IS THAT WOMEN'S CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS CAN CONTINUE TO WORK AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

— Ruqaiya, Programme and Gender Specialist at EPDO

As well as supporting EPDO's organisational needs, the Fund delivers small-scale grants to local organisations identified by EPDO, enabling them to address conflict in their communities and protect the rights of people most at risk. **These grants reach vital organisations that would otherwise have to cease operations;** they have been critical in building civil society resilience to adapt to the Taliban's ever-increasing restrictions.

Across 2022, Peace Direct and EPDO delivered **25 grants to CSOs and women's rights organisations** engaging in peacebuilding and social cohesion initiatives in 5 regions across the country. ■



CASE STUDY

Reducing poverty among women in Afghanistan

In 2022, EPDO initiated a women-centred livelihood development programme as part of efforts to reduce poverty and food insecurity among vulnerable women and girls.

EPDO identified women from nine provinces, learning about their existing vocational skills and interests to establish what kind of initiative and resources were needed. EPDO created a project that supported women to undertake training – enabling them to channel their talents into economically viable businesses.

This kind of support can radically change the future of families, even in the harsh

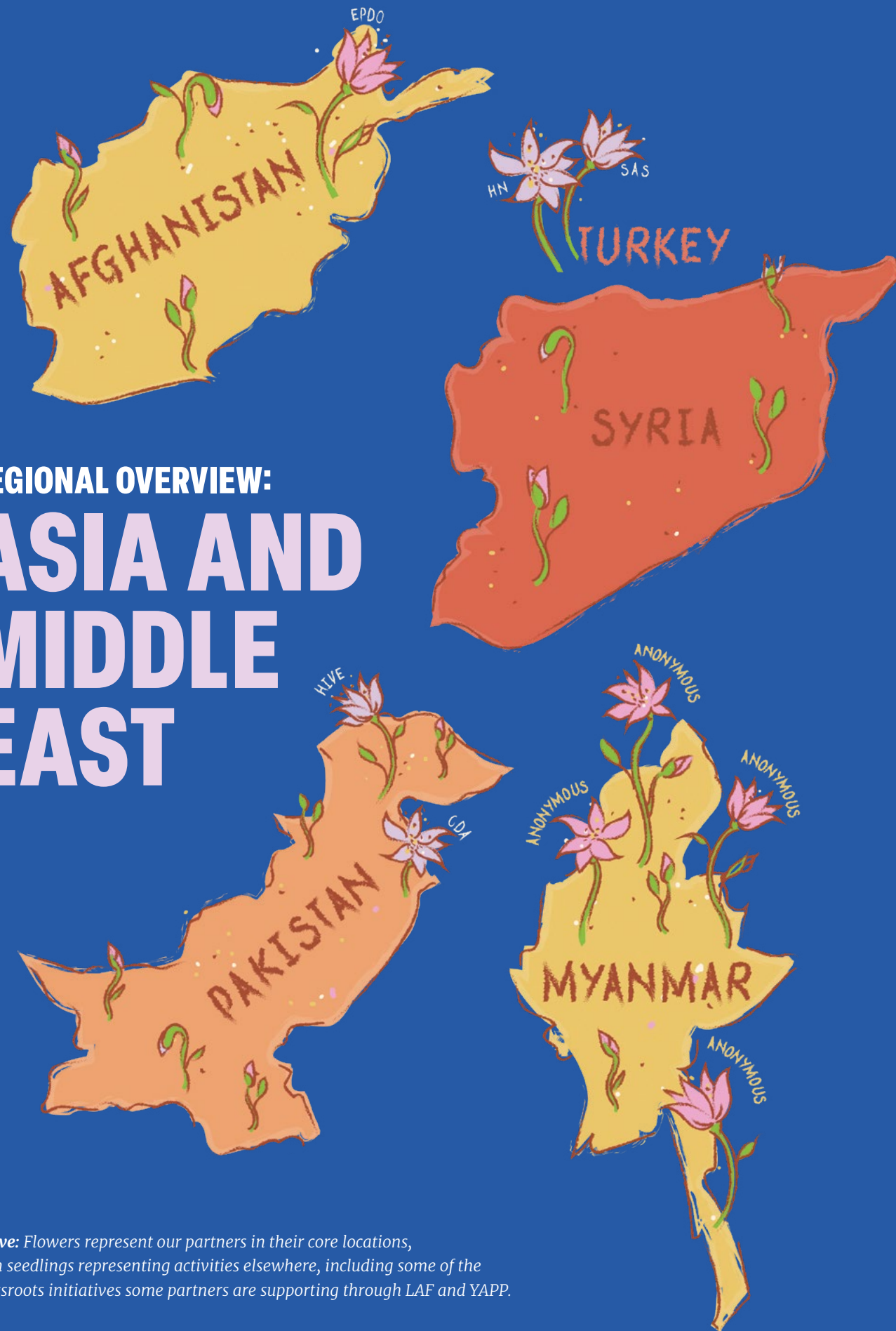
context of Taliban rule in Afghanistan.

As one of the participants explained: *“I have four children and I do not have money to buy food for them; usually, we are reliant on the income from my husband's job for food for my family and children, but he is currently unemployed. If the help is permanent, it will be very good, because my husband has no employment prospects in the current situation.”*

Initially implemented in the Bamyan and Nangarhar provinces, 60 women participated in the skills training programme with the help of ‘Master Trainers’, and the use of case studies from similar women's projects.

EPDO has also strengthened connections with the country-wide Provincial Women's Network (PWN), which was established to advance women's rights and participation in decision-making processes. A mentoring centre is also now offering business advice to women entrepreneurs.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW: ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST



Above: Flowers represent our partners in their core locations, with seedlings representing activities elsewhere, including some of the grassroots initiatives some partners are supporting through LAF and YAPP.

Pace Direct has nine partners across Asia and the Middle East, with those in Pakistan also supporting smaller organisations to reduce violence and build sustainable peace through the Local Action Fund (LAF) and Youth Action for Peace Programme (YAPP). We provided £780,000 in funds to partners across this region in 2022.

These partners have demonstrated extraordinary resilience under conditions extremely hostile to civil society. In 2022, the Taliban's de facto rule of Afghanistan didn't stop our partner EPDO from supporting women's rights groups. Partners in Myanmar, forced to work in secret for their



PARTNERS IN MYANMAR HAD TO WORK IN SECRET FOR THEIR SAFETY

safety, still addressed hate speech, bolstered civil society, and provided livelihood support to marginalised groups. And when historic floods devastated Pakistan, Peace Direct provided emergency funds to enable our partners to pivot their peacebuilding activities to better support people in need. ■

CASE STUDY

Khatoun's story

Over a decade of conflict in Syria has driven more than 2.4 million children out of school. But in 2022, our partner Swaadna reintegrated children into education in north-east Syria, providing them with food, shelter, and the chance for a brighter future.

Khatoun is ten years old. The conflict in Syria disrupted her family's lives, forcing Khatoun to miss school for three years. She was unable to read or write.

But then she joined Swaadna Education Centre's first level programme, which helps to improve the educational skills of children who have not had access to school. Khatoun began to read and write words in Arabic and English, and learn numbers. With the support of the Education Centre, she passed her exams and moved to the second level.

Khatoun wants to continue her education at a formal school next. She has dreams for the future: "I wish [to] become a doctor, to treat my grandmother's heart and all the elderly people's hearts. I don't want to see them suffering."

Not only does Swaadna's support for children give them the tools to achieve their dreams, it also reduces their vulnerability to recruitment by armed groups, and provides them with a safe space to recover from the trauma of the conflict.



REGIONAL OVERVIEW: AFRICA



Above: Flowers represent our partners in their core locations, with seedlings representing activities elsewhere, including some of the grassroots initiatives some partners are supporting through LAF and YAPP.

Across the continent of Africa, we have 13 partners – including hub organisations implementing the Local Action Fund (LAF) or Youth Action for Peace Programme (YAPP) to strengthen the ecosystem of peacebuilding. Over 2022, we provided around £870,000 in funding to our partners in Africa.

In 2022, their work spanned the full spectrum of peacebuilding – including reducing the risk of identity-based violence, responding to resurgences in rebel group fighting, empowering young people, and providing rapid humanitarian relief after violence and natural disasters.

A large cohort of our partners are in eastern DR Congo, which saw a resurgence of armed groups and displacement in 2022. In Nigeria and Zimbabwe, our partners have been addressing the causes and consequences of gender inequality. And as we write this in early

2023, our Sudanese partner is pivoting its peacebuilding activities to respond to escalating violence.

As always, Peace Direct and our partners have found innovative ways to continue our work in the face of changing contexts. ■



WE AND OUR PARTNERS HAVE FOUND INNOVATIVE WAYS TO CONTINUE OUR WORK

CASE STUDY

Adeela resists

In October 2021, a military coup in Sudan derailed the country's path to democratic civilian governance, giving way to an oppressive regime. In response, our youth-led partner Adeela used a Local Action Fund grant to support peaceful resistance efforts and protection for groups and individuals under threat.

Adeela mobilised their media platform for knowledge-sharing to provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and simplified information on the fast-changing

political context, in order to increase youth engagement. Over 4 months, they produced and published 16 infographics, 8 pamphlets, 5 videos and 4 reports that reached youth groups, members of resistance movements and other civil society actors.

Adeela also established safe spaces in Khartoum for individuals from grassroots and political groups who were vulnerable to persecution and harassment by the regime. Adeela provided safe housing for many individuals, as well as safe spaces for communication between anti-coup groups and for the monitoring of rights violations.

Peace Gold in Ituri

Two decades of conflict in the DR Congo has left 5.4 million people dead, and over 1.5 million displaced. In the eastern region, ongoing violence continues to destroy lives and people's livelihoods.

Mining for natural resources is seen by many as their only route out of poverty, but mines often have unsafe working conditions and there are few legal avenues for export – making it hard for communities to prosper. The mines are also a driver of conflict, often controlled by armed groups to fund their activities.

Recognising these challenges, our partner Centre Résolution Conflits (CRC) created the initiative 'Peace Gold'. Working with two mining cooperatives in the Ituri province, the project supports people affected by violence to use ethical mining practices to produce conflict-free gold. **Peace Gold not only strengthens miners' livelihoods through sustainable income, but it increases the resilience of connected communities and consolidates peace.**

The project has enabled former fighters to generate an income that doesn't contribute to violence, receive psychosocial support, and reintegrate into their communities.

The cooperatives are aligning their activities with key international standards of due diligence and supply chain responsibility. Thanks to the improved mining practices, the local population will also benefit from a less polluted environment due to fewer chemicals being used. And as we write this, they are applying for an accreditation that will enable them to begin legally exporting gold and help their communities prosper.

In an area struggling with active and ongoing ethnic tensions, this project is one example of what local peacebuilders do all around the world: help communities affected by violent conflict to heal themselves and build pathways to sustainable peace. ■



Above: Some members of the mining cooperatives in Ituri, photographed by Joel Embati during a Peace Direct visit, 2022.



CASE STUDY

Stella's story

In Stella's community, most people work in the local gold mine and many women are poorly paid. But the decades of conflict in the area have left hundreds of women like her as the sole earner in their households. At one point, she fell into debt despite trying to provide for her family.

But Stella's life changed when she met our partner, Centre Résolution Conflits (CRC). They offered her the skills and financial support to set up her own business. She now enjoys a stable income and is saving for her own vehicle. *"Thanks to CRC, I have a job that supports my family... I sell sugar, water and soap... [My business] allows me to pay my children's school fees on time, feed my children and cultivate my fields... May CRC do the same [for many] other women!"*

60%

Improved mining practices enabled miners to increase their monthly income by 60% and set up a community social fund.

950

Over 950 children have been supported to return to school.

2,000

Around 2,000 cooperative members have received conflict resolution training.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF PEACEBUILDERS

Young people are highly affected by conflict, and vulnerable to exploitation and radicalisation. They are also frequently excluded from political and peace processes.

To enable more young people to engage in peacebuilding work in 2019, we co-created the **three-year Youth Action for Peace Programme (YAPP)** with five youth-focused hub organisations, supported by funding from Sida.

YAPP involved these hub organisations identifying local young peacebuilders and distributing small grants to enable them to undertake initiatives they designed. The hubs also provided mentoring, helped set up bank accounts, and built networks between youth



[YAPP] HAS DONE WHAT OTHERS HAVE FAILED TO DO. TODAY THROUGH MY JOB I AM REINTEGRATED INTO THE COMMUNITY

— 18-year-old male former child soldier, DRC

YAPP in numbers

4 countries
5 hub organisations
US\$1m of funding distributed

950,375 estimated people reached indirectly

305,293 people reached directly

218

local young peacebuilders received grants for their innovative projects

peacebuilders. Through YAPP, **Peace Direct and our partners AJCAD, CDA, HIVE, NPCYP and URU, distributed US\$1m through 218 small grants to local young peacebuilders.** Because YAPP was predicated on flexibility and trust, the peacebuilders could create innovative, responsive initiatives that were grounded in their lived experience and inclusive of marginalised groups.

Together, by the end of 2022 we'd reached over 305,000 people directly and at least

950,000 indirectly in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and Pakistan.

Our YAPP experience has demonstrated to the sector the value of youth-led, intersectional and context-driven peacebuilding. In every country involved, young people are increasingly seen as agents of peace, and many young peacebuilders have been elevated into positions of leadership and visibility. ■

CASE STUDY

Opening doors for transgender communities

Pakistan is one of only 12 countries that recognise transgender identities on national ID cards. But there is a gap between the legal protections transgender people are entitled to and reality, in which they are often not afforded basic human rights. They are discriminated against, excluded from public life, and are at risk of harassment and violence.

Nadra is a transgender person who tells us that a few years ago, “no one could have imagined” a transgender individual having a job considered “respectable” by mainstream Pakistani society. Yet today, **Nadra is proud to work in a government office, thanks to the work of Transgender Rights Consultants Pakistan (TRCP).**

TRCP is a small organisation that fights stigma and promotes tangible inclusion for

the transgender community in Pakistan. They received flexible funding from Peace Direct in 2022, via our YAPP programme in partnership with Chanan Development Association (CDA). The support has opened doors for TRCP, allowing them to engage in talks with government departments about creating a Pakistan which offers real protection to transgender people, and leading to improved opportunities for transgender citizens, like Nadra.



WOMEN'S VOICES IN PEACEBUILDING

Women are among the most affected by conflict, particularly as targets of gendered violence. They can also play monumental roles in addressing conflict – as mobilisers, peacebuilders, mediators, and human rights defenders.

But despite the experience and diverse perspectives they can bring, women still face systemic barriers to participating in, let alone leading, efforts to address conflict in their communities. When women's voices aren't heard, peace efforts are often less sustainable, and can neglect the specific needs and priorities of women and girls. Peace Direct's partners have worked to change that.

Our women-led partners, including LEGASI in Nigeria and AJCAD in Mali, work to address the barriers to women's participation in social and political participation, as well as tackling broader conflict drivers in their communities, including inter-ethnic divides.

Other partners' work is centred around uplifting women's voices. In Zimbabwe, Envision Zimbabwe Women's Trust has taken a holistic approach to conflict transformation through the advancement of women's rights. They've changed the way traditional leaders approach gender-based violence, and reduced gender biases.

In 2022, our partners supported women's agency to address the concerns of their communities, tackled gender-based violence and shifted the dial on gender equality. Kaltumi, who leads LEGASI, has also advocated for women-led peace internationally, and Adam, at AJCAD, has been a strong voice calling for the decolonisation of the sector.

These peacebuilders have shown yet again that women are powerful agents of peace and transformation at local, national and international levels. **Their voices must be heard for lasting peace to be achieved. ■**



WOMEN ARE POWERFUL AGENTS OF PEACE AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

CASE STUDY

Envision's impact: informed local leadership in Zimbabwe

In 2022, Envision Zimbabwe Women's Trust delivered Conflict Transformation Training for traditional community leaders in Hurungwe, Zimbabwe. **They transformed the role of women in conflict resolution in their communities.**

Mrs Kaundura, one of very few female village heads, told Envision how pleased she is that all traditional leaders were involved and trained, as having informed leadership is crucial in ensuring women receive fair treatment in local peace courts.

One of the village heads, Mr Gandawa, told us the training will change his treatment of women and girls:

"I now have wisdom to deal with conflicts and also respect the rights of women and girls. I have been helped a lot in terms of some of the harmful cultural practises that brought women down and perpetuated violence and conflict towards them as an inferior gender, I thus vow to use my leadership skills to transform attitudes and behaviours of people in my village."

Community participants also expressed their appreciation for this project's recognition of women as capable leaders. Mrs Gamanya highlighted that for a long time in her community, women were never on equal

footing with their male counterparts in community decision-making platforms.

Mai Honye expressed that thanks to this training, women in her community feel better protected against all forms of violence and are in a position to fully enjoy their rights.

Thanks to Envision's efforts, traditional leaders now feel in a better position to maintain peace and cohesion in their community as well as to use conflict transformation techniques in their traditional courts.



- Reduced incidences of conflict reported to village chief
- Fall in incidences of domestic violence
- Change in perception of women to be equal partners
- Reduced political violence around elections
- Increased power within households for women

CHANGING THE PEACEBUILDING SYSTEM

Pease Direct believes those who are directly impacted by conflict are best placed to seek out and implement solutions, if only they are afforded the resources, decision-making power, and space to do so.

Unfortunately, the current peacebuilding, humanitarian and development sectors do not support this model of local leadership. Instead, our systems disempower local experts, privilege the perspectives of international actors, and undermine the sustainability of peacebuilding efforts.

To shift power to those who can best address conflict and support the needs of their communities, **these systems must change**. Our research has highlighted that this cannot happen without an acknowledgement of the way in which structural racism is embedded in the system of international intervention. To that end, **we've worked with our partners to lead the call for that acknowledgment and for real change – to decolonise, shift power, and create sustainable peace worldwide**.

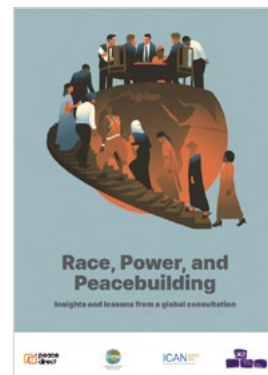
While there is still much work left to do, our message is being heard; and 2022 saw more sector-wide buy-in on local leadership than ever.

Decolonising the peacebuilding sector

In 2022, we followed up on our landmark 2021 report, *Time to Decolonise Aid*, with a new report focused on the peacebuilding sector. Based on a consultation involving over 160 people from 70 countries, ***Race, Power and Peacebuilding* exposed the ways that Global North peacebuilding approaches are underpinned by structural racism and neo-colonial worldviews:**

“The unequal power dynamics between Global North and Global South actors reinforces the continued prioritisation of the interests of those removed from the conflict, reducing the effectiveness of peace efforts and their sustainability.”

The report encourages the peacebuilding sector to address these dynamics and embrace the decolonising agenda. **Ultimately, that means investing in local peacebuilders, uplifting local voices, and making funding practices more flexible and trust-based.**



The report has been widely read and referenced by our peers, policymakers and international institutions, including staff of the United Nations. For example, a peer's paper providing guidance for INGOs in 'becoming locally led as an anti-racist practice' drew explicitly on our insights. **And Peace Direct and our partners have been invited to speak to several policymakers and peers about the report's findings.**

This report was produced in collaboration with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) and United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY). We are also indebted to all those who participated and contributed to the findings of the report through their insights, experiences and analysis.

Working with our partners to speak truth to power

We do not – and cannot – work to change the system alone. We are led by, and work with, local peacebuilders and advocates from around the world. Historically, it has been difficult to convince powerholders in the Global North to hear directly from local peacebuilders, but more and more of our partners are engaging with policymakers at the highest levels, supported by our staff in London, Brussels, Washington DC and New York.

In 2022, our advocacy work has focused on elevating voices usually excluded at the international policymaking level, including supporting our Afghan partners to participate in a UK parliamentary event. In total, 9 of our partners visited the UK, EU, UN and US to meet with policymakers and INGO practitioners, in addition to at least 5 virtual engagements. This included one of our partners,

from Sudan, being invited to speak before the UN Security Council.

In September, **we brought Global South practitioners and international funders** – including USAID Administrator Samantha Power – **together around a table to discuss local leadership**.

The discussion was a high-level side event to the United Nations General Assembly, called “Doing Aid Better: Actions to Support Local Leadership in Policy, Funding, and Practice”.

The conversation focused on the direct actions that the international community can and should take to shift power to local peacebuilders. It addressed problematic practices and approaches that continue to exclude diverse local voices.

Practitioners were able to hold international institutions to account and highlight how **much further the international community must go to decolonise the sector.** ■

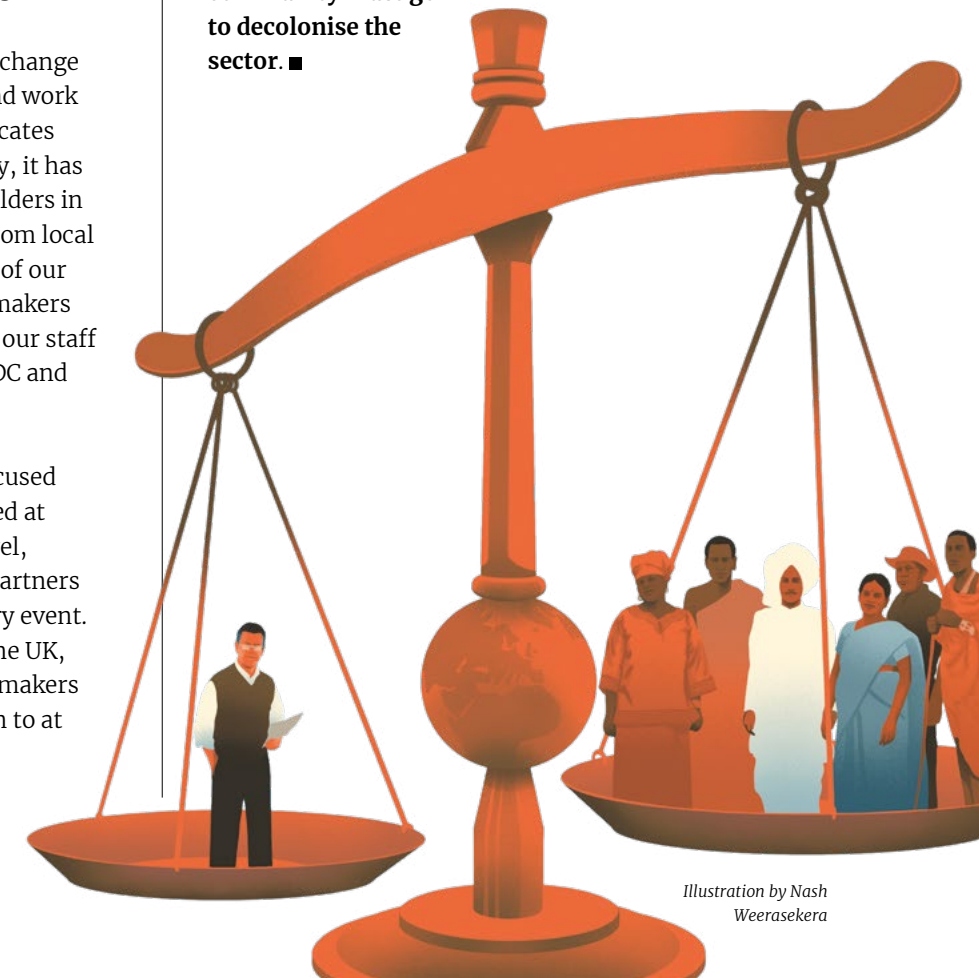


Illustration by Nash Weerasekera

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: WHAT'S NEXT FOR PEACE DIRECT?

We've spent a significant part of 2022 thinking about how to increase our impact in the future.



Rebranding for greater reach

The design of this report is a first taste of Peace Direct's new look, as we transition to new branding over the summer of 2023. Our rebrand is intended to create a distinctive visual language that creates greater awareness of Peace Direct and our partners, improves understanding of what we and our partners do, and allows us to support more local peacebuilders.

While Peace Direct's profile has successfully grown within our sector with our current branding, we know we need to extend our reach further, particularly with the public. We need a clearer, bolder and more engaging public profile to achieve mass support for locally led peace. If we can achieve more support from the public, we can direct more unrestricted funding to our partners, supporting them more flexibly than ever.

A huge amount of work went into the rebranding process in 2022, and we're excited to launch our new brand to further our mission in 2023 and beyond.

Decolonising partnerships

In the aftermath of publishing our reports on decolonisation across the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors – *Time to Decolonise Aid* and *Race, Power and Peacebuilding* – we have seen shifts in sector thinking and the beginnings of sector change.

But there hasn't been enough progress. We know that for some practitioners, donors and institutions, the work of decolonising still seems abstract, without a clear path to operationalise these efforts.

To address that, **Peace Direct began research in 2022 to create practical guidance on how to decolonise sector**

attitudes and practices. The first will be a guide to decolonise partnerships between local actors and INGOs, as well as donors.

Our research has also prompted us to reflect on our own relationships with partners, leading us to continually review and restructure our role in the sector and in our partnerships.



WE ARE RESPONDING TO AND AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF OUR PARTNERS

Crucially, as always, we are not speaking alone on decolonising peacebuilding. Rather, we are responding to and amplifying the voices of our partners. Our thinking has been shaped by peacebuilders from the Global South; including Nargis Nehan, who has been a voice for women and girls in Afghanistan, and Adam Dicko, a peacebuilder and activist in Mali who has been a crucial part of our conversations about decolonising the sector:

"It's about solidarity...collaboration. But mostly, to put oneself in the shoes of [local organisations] and [believe]: 'We are not worth more than others just because we are funders. We are not more knowledgeable than the communities.' The communities understand their issues more than anyone else. [...]" **Adam Dicko, Executive Director of AJCAD-Mali,** speaking at our Decolonising Partnerships Webinar. Translated from French. ■

MEET OUR PEACEBUILDING PARTNERS

CASE STUDY

Meet our partner: Kaltumi at LEGASI

Kaltumi Abdulazeez is a dynamic and passionate leader and a changemaker in Kaduna, Nigeria. As a young woman from a minority tribe (Ebira), Kaltumi faced harassment from her local community and on social media. She was told to abandon her ambitions and get married in her early twenties. Such socioeconomic barriers for women go back generations – her mother was denied an education because of her gender, and quickly gave up on her dreams. Kaltumi was determined to break these generational cycles: *“I had the desire to empower myself and my community, by [training] a generation of highly educated, independent, and fearless women and girls.”*

Later, in 2017, she met survivors of the Boko Haram conflict who had found safety but had no source of income or basic amenities. Initially, Kaltumi used her own resources to support these

women. She paid for relief materials such as food and clothing, but also managed to get policymakers to donate relief items to over 500 women and children. Supporting survivors was the turning point in Kaltumi’s journey. She knew she could change the future for women and girls in Kaduna.

Kaltumi founded Ladies Empowerment Goals and Support Initiative (LEGASI), providing trauma counselling, supporting internally-displaced communities and running women-led projects. LEGASI also works with women and young people to promote peace between ethnic groups and increase political participation.



Our local peacebuilding partners in 2022*

 <p>Adeela</p>	 <p>L'Association des Jeunes pour la Citoyenneté Active et la Démocratie (AJCAD)</p>	 <p>Beni Peace Forum (BPF)</p>
 <p>Bureau du Soutien</p>	 <p>Chanan Development Association (CDA)</p>	 <p>Centre for Conflict Management and Transformation (CCMT)</p>
 <p>Centre for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation (CPBR)</p>	 <p>Centre Résolution Conflits (CRC)</p>	 <p>Envision Zimbabwe Women's Trust</p>
 <p>Equality for Peace and Development (EPDO)</p>	 <p>Foundation Chirezi (FOCHI)</p>	 <p>Hive</p>
 <p>Hurras Network</p>	 <p>Ladies Empowerment Goals and Support Initiative (LEGASI)</p>	 <p>National Partnership of Children and Youth in Peacebuilding (NPCYP)</p>
 <p>Peace Initiative Network (PIN)</p>	 <p>Réseau des organisations des Jeunes en Action pour la paix, la réconciliation, et le développement (REJA)</p>	 <p>Research Initiatives for Social Development (RISD)</p>
 <p>Social-life and Agricultural Development Organisation (SADO)</p>	 <p>Swaadna Al Souria</p>	 <p>Association Uru</p>

*Some of our partners are not listed here, as their work is anonymised for their safety.



INCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGE- MENTS

Pease Direct cannot do its work alone. By our nature, we are led by and dependent on the life-changing work of our partners around the world. Operating on the frontlines of conflict and at great risk to themselves, their efforts to prevent violence and build peace create a better world for us all.

But we are also indebted to the support of the public, who provide invaluable funding for unrestricted use, essential to not only keep Peace Direct running but, most importantly, allow us to provide flexible grants to partners at short notice, and to reduce the administrative burdens partners face.

Our funders in 2022

Alan & Nesta Ferguson
Charitable Trust

Blandford Lake Trust

Carnegie Corporation
of New York

CB & HH Taylor 1984
Charitable Trust

Edelman Foundation

European Partnership
for Responsible Minerals

Global Affairs Canada

Guernsey Overseas Aid &
Development Commission

Eva Reckitt Trust

Harbinson Trust

Humanity United

Ifa Zivik

Joseph Rowntree
Charitable Trust

Jubitz Family Foundation

Jusaca Charitable Trust

JA Trust

LBM Jem Charitable Trust

Network for Social Change

Open Society Foundations

People's Postcode Lottery

Polden-Puckham Charitable
Foundation

PRBB Foundation

Rhododendron Trust

Robert Bosch Stiftung

Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Sir James Reckitt Charity

Skoll Foundation

Swedish International
Development Cooperation
Agency

Sulney Fields Trust

UK Foreign Commonwealth
and Development Office

UN Peacebuilding Fund

U.S. Agency for International
Development

William P Bancroft
Charitable Trust

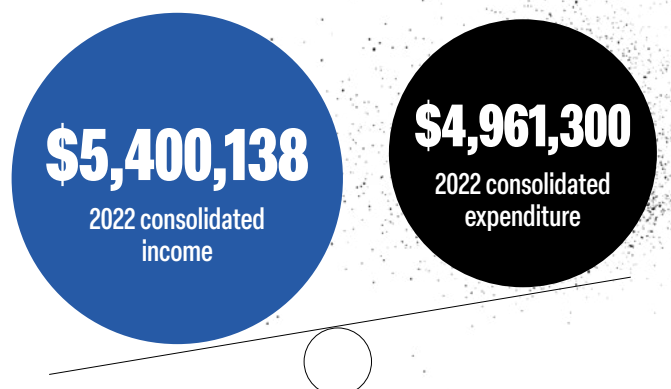
We are grateful for the financial support of various governments, foundations, and companies who supported our work in 2022. We have been particularly encouraged to see the willingness of many donors we've worked with in shifting practices and power to improve the sector and better enable sustainable local peacebuilding.

These include the Trusts and Foundations providing multi-year funding – Humanity United, Robert Bosch Stiftung, Open Society Foundation and the People's Postcode Lottery – and those that provided project funding.

As in previous years, we would like to thank Google for providing us with free advertising, which helps drive traffic to our website. We also received pro bono support from Pracedo, a Salesforce consulting firm.

Last but not never least, Peace Direct's staff and Board should be recognised for the way that they drive our mission forward day after day, with genuine dedication to locally led, lasting peace. ■

Money matters



PEACE DIRECT'S PARTNERS ARE CHANGING THE WORLD FOR THE BETTER. STAND WITH US. STAND WITH THEM.



Far left: Josephine, from eastern DRC. CRC helped her leave a militia group and find work and a home – now she helps them secure the release of child soldiers from militias. *Photo by Greg Funnell.*

Left: Members of a Peace Gold cooperative in Ituri, eastern DR Congo.

Above left: Students learn at the Abdulkareem Arabic Primary School in Kano Nigeria, 2017. *Photo by Greg Funnell.*

Above right: A social cohesion session with girls organised by young peacebuilders – CDA Pakistan.



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