

**CONFLICT IS
A NORMAL
PART OF LIFE.**

**VI
LENCE
IS NOT.**

CONTENTS

Welcome from our CEO	4
Our year in numbers	6
Our strategy	8
Early Warning, Early Response and violence monitoring	10
Tackling the root causes of violent extremism	18
Supporting people in countries emerging from conflict to rebuild their communities	26
Amplifying the voices of local peacebuilders	44
Strengthening our existing partners and expanding our reach	56
Deepening our learning and building an evidence base	60
Our finances	64
Acknowledgements and thanks	66

WELCOME FROM OUR CEO



2016 was a year that will be remembered by many as the year that Britain voted to leave the EU and the US elected a new President. Commentators on both sides of the Atlantic noted that both events were shaped by a resurgent nationalist sentiment that swept across both countries, infused with economic insecurity and fear, particularly of migrants. Meanwhile the conflicts in Syria and Yemen raged on, as did violence in many parts of the Middle East. Violence in Burundi, DR Congo and the Central African Republic barely made news headlines, while devastating suicide attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan hardly registered with media outlets. By the close of the year, it was hard to find much to celebrate or find hope in.

While this gloomy narrative is one that many people will recognise, we at Peace Direct also saw many reasons to remain hopeful in 2016. In the following pages you will read some of the stories that inspired us over the year. Our local partners worked tirelessly to stop violence and build peace in their communities, often at great personal risk, and with some exceptional results. The results are transformational for people living in communities affected by war and conflict. They are proof that investment in local efforts can transform violence and build sustainable peace, even in some of the most difficult contexts. In many instances this work is highly scalable and replicable, but this requires willingness from international donors to shift the balance of power in favour of local actors, which includes providing greater levels of funding.

On pages 10–17 we report on our support of Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) activities, which expanded significantly over the year. In Sudan our work with the Collaborative for Peace in Sudan averted widespread violence in a number of flashpoints in South Kordofan. In one instance, over 1,000 people displaced by the conflict in South Sudan were relocated to a safe space by a volunteer led peace committee who rushed to avert violence between two armed groups readying for war in the area. Rapid mediation efforts ensured that this conflict did not happen. In Burundi, we continued our support to a civil society network that is monitoring violence and human rights abuses across the country. Over 5,000 incidents have been reported and shared with governments around the world. This information is saving lives.

On pages 18–25 you will read about how some of our local partners are tackling the root causes of violent extremism, ranging from conducting intensive peer education with young people at risk of radicalisation in Pakistan, to providing young people with civic education, mentoring and livelihood training in Somalia, in an area controlled almost completely by Al-Shabaab. There is no one route to radicalisation and so there is no one route out of it. Our

partners know this, and they did some impressive work to reach out to people at risk of joining extremist groups.

On pages 26–43 you will explore our efforts to help communities living with a legacy of conflict to become more resilient and better able to deal with conflicts non-violently. Spanning five countries, this work ranged from rescuing child soldiers and supporting agricultural cooperatives for people rebuilding lives in the aftermath of war, to establishing local peace courts in Eastern DR Congo and helping young people affected by conflict in Sri Lanka to come to terms with their experiences.

The impact of this work is told through the stories of people like Julianne (page 29) and Patience (page 30) whose lives have been transformed for the better. Sometimes the changes are profound; a life rescued from the bush or a traditional leader who no longer preaches hate. Other times the changes are more subtle; like the story of the Buddhist monk in Sri Lanka (page 38) whose attitude towards Hindus was changed by an encounter with a young Tamil girl.

The transformation may last a lifetime and it reminds me that the impact of peacebuilding isn't just measured in that split second moment when violence is averted and lives are saved. It is also when the Buddhist monk changes the way he views the world, and sees the potential for peace.

These are just a handful of stories of the hundreds that our partners have shared with us. As the front cover of this report reminds us, conflict is a normal part of life. Violence is not. Local peacebuilders are making non-violence a practical reality for thousands of people across the globe, and we are committed to supporting them. I hope you will enjoy reading this report and that you will be inspired to support us as we strive to reach more people stopping war and building peace in their communities.

Dylan Mathews
Chief Executive



Photo: Greg Funnell

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



of violence and human rights abuses across Burundi reported on by our local partners, through nearly 150 reports shared with government, UN and civil society representatives around the world.



in communities affected by war and conflict in DR Congo had improved income and livelihoods in order to strengthen their household and community resilience to the impacts of conflict.

301 child soldiers
rescued and resettled in DR Congo.



young people
at risk of recruitment by extremist groups reached and supported in Pakistan.

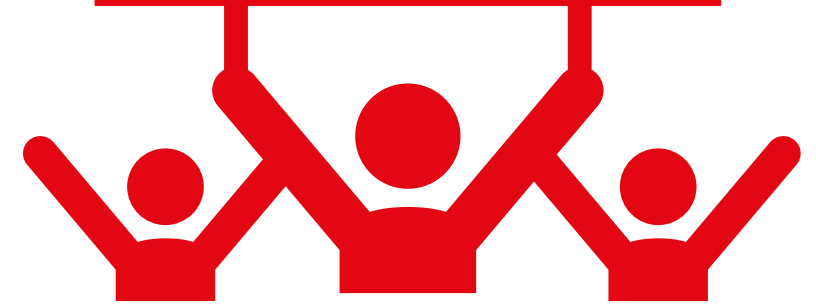


young people
across Pakistan, Afghanistan and Somalia supported to reject violence and become active supporters of peace in their communities.



8,890 people
in DR Congo able to access justice and resolve local conflicts through the establishment of local peace courts.

4,646 people



across Sudan and Zimbabwe able to live safer lives as a result of fast, effective action by local peace committees and groups.



3,907 young people
and their families in Somalia increased incomes and quality of life as a result of improved livelihoods.

1,400 local peacebuilding organisations

mapped on flagship website Insight on Conflict, providing vital evidence of the extent and impact of local peacebuilding.



14,827 people
directly supported through Peace Direct in 2016.

OUR STRATEGY

In 12 years, Peace Direct has grown from an idea in a farmhouse to a dynamic and respected organisation which has supported over 40 peacebuilding organisations around the world. Our strategy aims to build upon our strengths and successes to deliver more impact for conflict affected communities, through the power of local action. We call the people who do this work ‘peacebuilders’ and we will continue to support them to be at the front and centre of efforts to stop violent conflict and build sustainable peace through our ambitious five year strategy.

We will do this by strengthening our existing partners and expanding our reach, deepening our commitment to building strong and sustainable peacebuilding organisations and increasing impact through better collaboration and learning.

We will focus on supporting early/rapid response systems so that localised violence, or the threat of violence, is stopped before it escalates. We will find and support local organisations working to combat the root causes of extremism and extremist narratives in their communities, and support them to find non-violent solutions.

We will give comprehensive support to peacebuilders helping communities emerging from conflict to build sustainable peace through a focus on rehabilitation, reconciliation and development activities.

We will increase our advocacy activities focusing on policymakers from the UK, US and UN and run targeted campaigns to build a broader coalition of support for local peacebuilding.

In line with our commitment to learning with our partners, we will ensure that every major programme has a quality evaluation, we will take time to reflect on what works and what does not, we will share our knowledge widely with the sector and explore new approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation that are appropriate for our partners.



Primary goals



Supporting goals

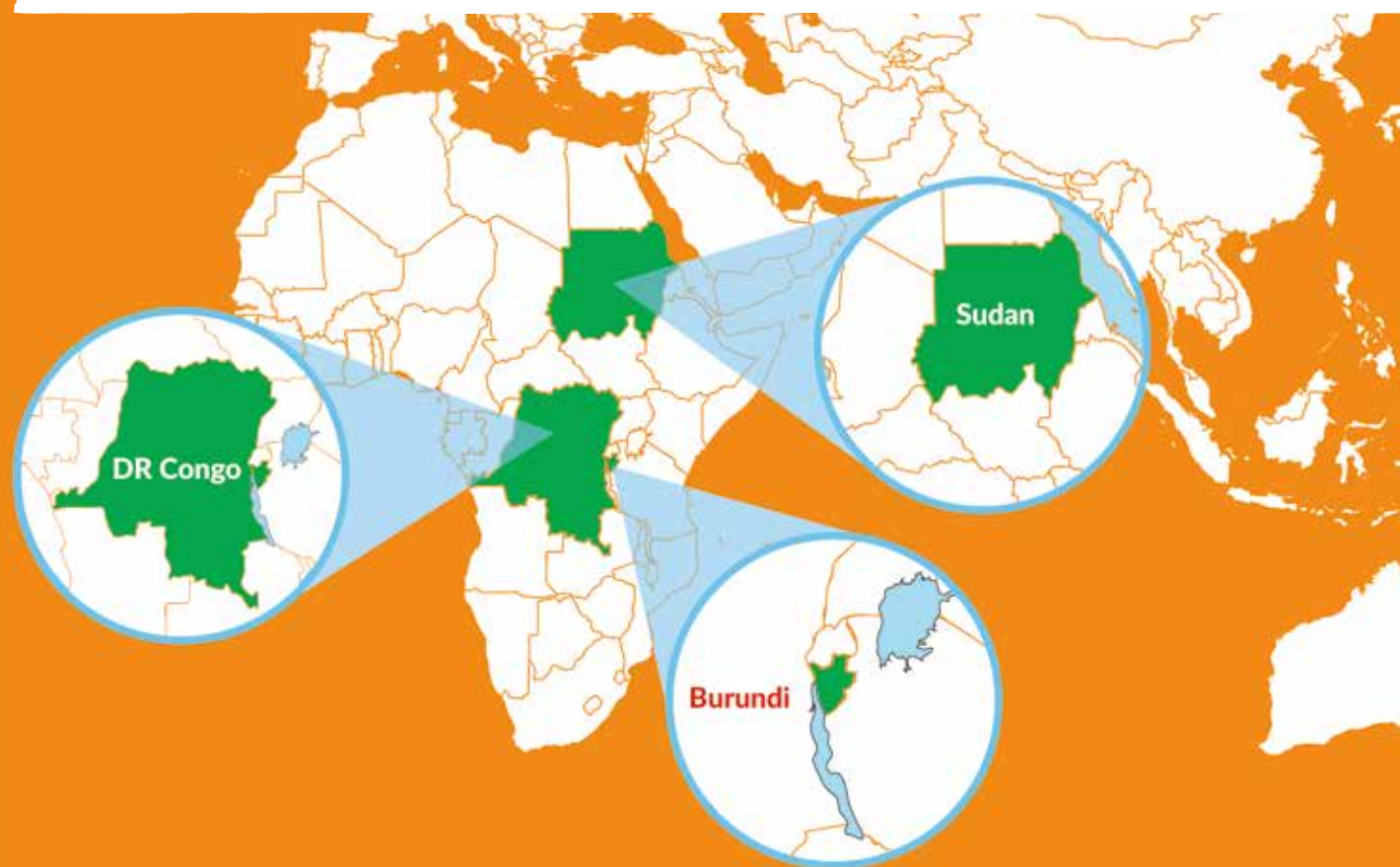
Fundraising and communications

We will invest in fundraising and communications to build strong relationships with supporters and diversify and grow our income so we can achieve more with our partners.

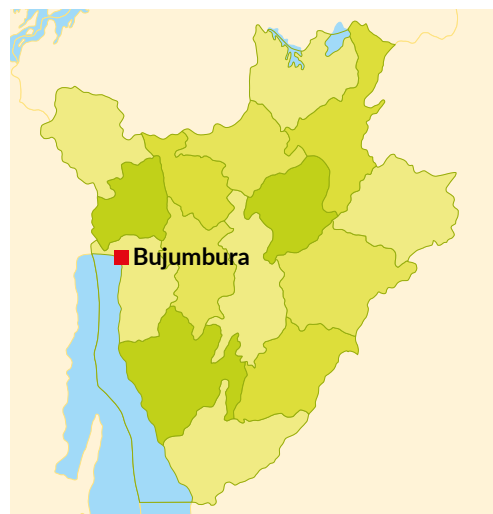
Systems, staffing and structure

We will invest in people, training and learning to ensure staff are motivated, processes are efficient and a high quality of work is maintained across the organisation.

EARLY WARNING, EARLY RESPONSE AND VIOLENCE MONITORING



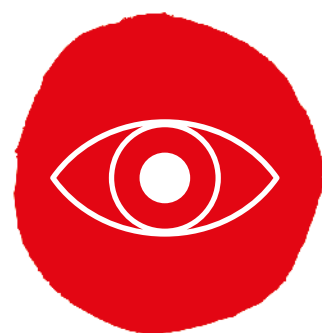
Our work to support Early Warning, Early Response (EWER) and rapid response activities to stop violence increased significantly in 2016. We supported vital projects and activities in Burundi, Sudan and DR Congo, helping local organisations monitor and respond to outbreaks of violence, or the threat of violence.



BURUNDI

Burundi descended into chaos in early 2015. The President's decision to run for a contested third term triggered mass protests across the country. The government's violent response to the protesters, along with the formation of armed opposition groups, has resulted in a spiral of violence and repression which the country is yet to escape from.

Over 1,000 people have been killed and over 400,000 have fled the country. While the international community is trying to break the deadlock between the government and the opposition, violence and human rights abuses continue across the country, and many civil society organisations have effectively been shut down.



Over
5,500
incidents of violence and human rights abuses were logged across the country.



70% of people who received the reports said the information was 'highly valuable' for their policy and planning.

What we did in 2016

Since 2014, we have been supporting a network of 20 civil society organisations engaged in EWER activities. This network monitors violence, hate speech and human rights abuses across the country through trained citizen reporters based in every province. Through this, the local network and Peace Direct have been able to provide the international community with up-to-date information on the situation in the country at a time when the government has closed down almost all independent sources of news and information. Where possible, community led peacebuilding activities also took place, to stop localised violence and tensions from spreading.

Since the start of the crisis, the local network has logged over 5,500 incidents of violence and human rights abuses across the country, representing one of the largest sources of data on violence available. The network has used this information to produce almost 150 reports on the evolving situation in the country, which we have shared with almost 400 government, UN and civil society representatives around the world.

Impact

As part of an evaluation we commissioned in 2016, almost 70% of people who received the network's reports said the information was 'highly valuable' for their policy and planning.

Evidence from the evaluation also suggests the local network has contributed to a greater sense of security in certain communities. In particular, the Community Dialogue and Peace and Security meetings convened by the network have contributed to improved relations between supporters of different political parties, and in some cases contributed to a significant reduction in conflicts related to ethnicity.

"We will be continuing on the ground operations and your reports are really very important for our work."

International NGO which helps protect human rights defenders

"I have found your reports interesting, informative and very useful over this past year. Many thanks."

UK government representative

"Let me thank you for providing us with this very useful insight."

UN Representative

In their own words

When I was invited to take part in the training on non-violence and reconciliation for young people of different political parties, I hesitated. I could not see myself sitting in the room with people I considered my enemies. Two meetings were arranged by the network to convince me to join their initiative.

After long hours of discussions, I finally accepted. I was curious to know who would be there and to hear their views on the ongoing crisis and their ideologies. These trainings changed my mind. During the exchanges with others, I realised that we have the same problems and we are all victims of politicians who take advantage of us for their own interests without worrying about our common future.

Young leader of the ruling party living in the Kamenge neighbourhood



Photo: Igor Rugwiza



SUDAN

The conflict that began in 2011 in South Kordofan achieved a major turning point in August 2016 when four opposition groups signed an agreement with the government charting the way for an eventual peace agreement, brokered by the African Union.

While a major breakthrough, sporadic violence continued across the region, and the erosion of traditional forms of conflict management has led to tensions between communities that often spiral out of control. Violence is seen by many people as the only means to solve disputes. The effects of this are made all the most dangerous by the proliferation of small arms through the State.

What we did in 2016

In Sudan our work with the Collaborative for Peace in Sudan (CfPS), funded by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, entered its fourth year.

This work focuses on supporting local 'Peace Committees' across South Kordofan and Blue Nile that mobilise at the first signs of tensions in an effort to stop violence before it escalates.

Over the year, CfPS continued to support the work of 11 Peace Committees spread across South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

The Peace Committees undertook ten rapid response mediation efforts to stem violence between communities, bringing the total number of such activities to 36 since the Committees were established.

Fast and effective mediation by the Peace Committees directly reached 3,650 people and further supported a community of 51,800 people to live safer lives.



CfPS continued to support the work of **11** Peace Committees spread across South Kordofan and Blue Nile States.

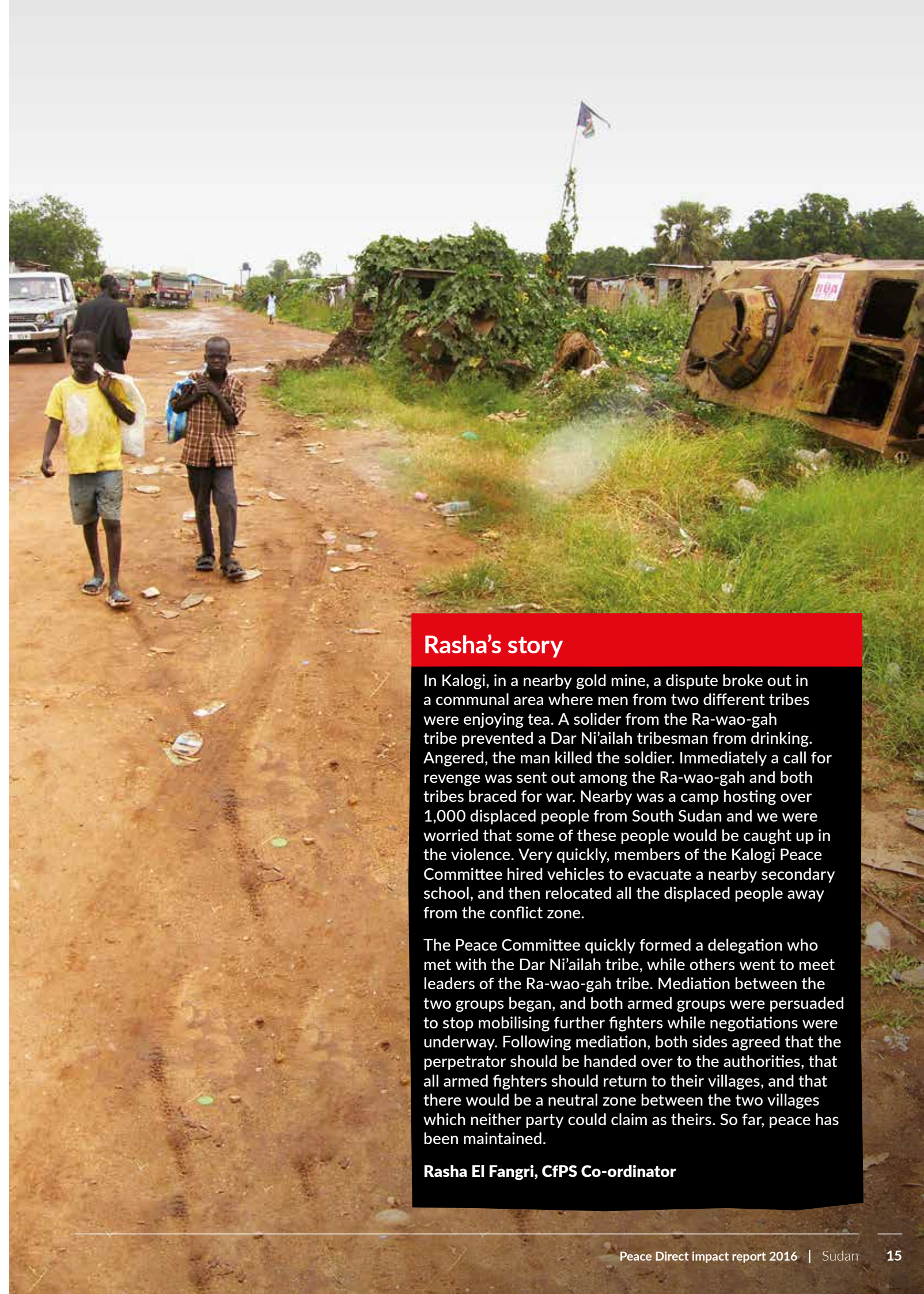
Impact

As part of Peace Direct's efforts to better understand the impact of our work with CfPS, we commissioned an external evaluation of the work with the Peace Committees. The evaluation noted that the majority of interventions resulted in durable local peace with no subsequent incidents connected directly to the resolved conflicts.

The evaluator noted that:

"All direct beneficiaries, local authorities and local peace builders, interviewed during the field work, agreed that the Peace Committee initiatives in reconciliation, mediation, and conflict resolution are the most cost effective and appropriate at grassroots level in the studied areas."

External evaluation

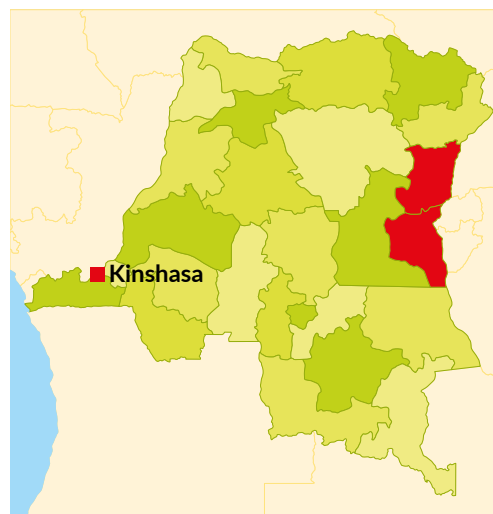


Rasha's story

In Kalogi, in a nearby gold mine, a dispute broke out in a communal area where men from two different tribes were enjoying tea. A soldier from the Ra-wao-gah tribe prevented a Dar Ni'ailah tribesman from drinking. Angered, the man killed the soldier. Immediately a call for revenge was sent out among the Ra-wao-gah and both tribes braced for war. Nearby was a camp hosting over 1,000 displaced people from South Sudan and we were worried that some of these people would be caught up in the violence. Very quickly, members of the Kalogi Peace Committee hired vehicles to evacuate a nearby secondary school, and then relocated all the displaced people away from the conflict zone.

The Peace Committee quickly formed a delegation who met with the Dar Ni'ailah tribe, while others went to meet leaders of the Ra-wao-gah tribe. Mediation between the two groups began, and both armed groups were persuaded to stop mobilising further fighters while negotiations were underway. Following mediation, both sides agreed that the perpetrator should be handed over to the authorities, that all armed fighters should return to their villages, and that there would be a neutral zone between the two villages which neither party could claim as theirs. So far, peace has been maintained.

Rasha El Fangri, CfPS Co-ordinator

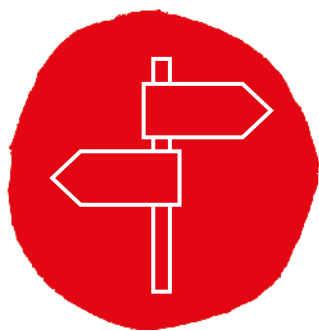


DR CONGO

The civil war that devastated DR Congo lingers in the east of the country. Militia groups active in North and South Kivu target civilians and destroy lives, livelihoods and property.

Military strategies put in place in 2016 by the government and the UN have so far failed to put an end to the atrocities of these armed groups. At the same time, the UN Joint Human Rights Office has documented a 30% increase in human rights abuses.

Beni is one of the worst affected areas in North Kivu. A rebel group known as the ADF-NALU is known to operate there and has carried out many massacres over the years. In August, in the latest of a string of attacks, 42 people were killed with machetes by suspected ADF-NALU fighters, bringing the total number of casualties in the last 24 months to 1,625.



We helped facilitate
4 consultations
during March
– July 2016,
involving
60 leaders
and activists
from across Beni
territory to develop
violence prevention
strategies.

What we did in 2016

In Beni, Eastern DR Congo, in response to escalating violence in the region, we embarked on a new project to strengthen the capacity of local actors to identify the signs of violence and respond quickly and effectively as a coordinated network. This work came about at the request of a local leader from Beni who approached our local partner, Centre Résolution Conflits, for help organising a meeting of trusted civil society leaders to discuss why Beni still suffered a disproportionate number of massacres compared to other areas of DR Congo.

We quickly responded and helped facilitate a series of four consultations during March–July 2016, involving 60 local representatives vetted as having a good local level reputation. Over the course of the workshops participants identified successful past local peacebuilding initiatives, looked at the strengths and weaknesses of current local peacebuilding efforts, discussed threats to peace, and – crucially – identified priority actions they would take together.

Impact

The series of workshops was, for many participants, the first time they had been supported to strategise together to find solutions to the violence affecting their regions. The most important impact of these workshops has been the establishment of the 'Beni Peace Forum' – a coordinated civil society initiative to tackle the violence in Beni. The aim of the Forum is that it becomes the basis for an Early Warning and Early Response network which we hope to support over the next year. We also hope such a Forum will be able to engage with the UN's Stabilisation Strategy for DR Congo to ensure that local perspectives are at the forefront of the UN's thinking and planning.

"The Beni Peace Forum is, for me, a successful example of an initiative that brings together a wide range of actors. The way the Forum is set up enables people who used to have issues talking to one another and sharing to actually sit down together and act for the common good of Beni."

Pastor Juslin Saambili

In their own words

At the beginning, it was difficult for me to understand what we all wanted to do with this new Peace Forum as there had been a lot of similar structures in the past that all failed due to political or ethnic exploitation. Then, when I thought about it, I realized that there had never been such a structure where we could all freely think and share experiences of peace. There has already been a lot of impact since the implementation of the Forum and we can already see that civilians and local/military authorities are increasingly working together to fight insecurity.

Maman Benghe, vice-president of the Forum

I am really grateful for the creation of the Beni Peace Forum because, as a peace activist in Beni, I had never seen such a comprehensive structure emerging before. I really appreciate the work of this Forum and I would like to tell everyone involved or willing to join us to remain committed so that our vision for a peaceful Beni becomes a reality.

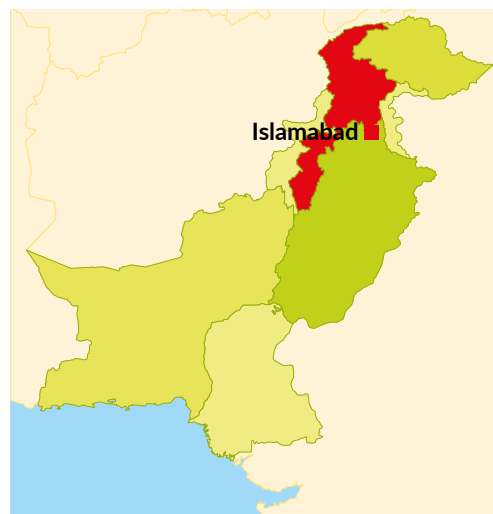
Mme Tantine Mukulu, member of the Forum



TACKLING THE ROOT CAUSES OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM



In 2016 we were proud to support our partners in Somalia and Pakistan to work with young people at risk of recruitment by militant organisations, and others living in areas disproportionately affected by violence and the influence of extremist groups. We hope to encourage a more holistic approach to addressing the problem of violent extremism by ensuring local people can play an active peacebuilding role in their communities, creating a culture of peace and tackling some key drivers of extremist recruitment.



PAKISTAN

Violent extremism has wreaked a terrible toll on Pakistani society and threatens further damage in the coming years. From 2010–2015, more than 10,000 people died as a result of violent extremism, and Pakistan is consistently ranked among the top five countries in the Global Terrorism Index. Attacks by militant groups against military and civilian targets continued in 2016, the most notorious taking place in a park in Lahore on Easter Sunday killing at least 75 people.

In the northwest province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), one of the most violent regions, violence against women is endemic and women's rights and voices are rarely acknowledged.

A mix of religious extremism, economic insecurity, lack of good governance and exposure to a culture that promotes violence puts young people at risk of recruitment by militant and extremist organisations.

In Pakistan we continued our long running partnership with Aware Girls. We were proud to support them to implement three projects which support young people to become peacebuilders in their communities.

Helping young women to tackle extremism

In March 2016 we launched a new pilot project with Aware Girls to empower young women to counter violent extremism and build peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Starting with a small group of just 26 young women, Aware Girls provided intensive five-day training on peacebuilding and leadership, after which action plans were developed with the aim of preventing young people from joining militant organisations.

One of the most important results of the training was the formation of the 'Young Women's Peace Network', one of only a handful of such initiatives across the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and KP provinces. Since the training, members of the network have carried out activities to tackle recruitment by militant groups in their communities, including community peace campaigns, peer education and outreach to local madrassas.

Impact

The impact of this pilot can be measured at the personal and community level. At the personal level, the young members of the Young Women's Peace Network said this was the first time they had been given the opportunity to participate in training designed specifically for young women examining their role in countering radicalisation, preventing violence, and connecting with their peers to address these issues.

Of the 26 women trained, 22 are active and regularly conduct outreach in their communities. One example of impact was the direct outreach to 53 young women who in different ways supported

the idea of violent extremism, not only as mothers to their sons, but also as teachers, as 12 women taught in madrassas.

These women were regularly involved in intensive peer education to educate them about the importance of teaching non-violence and tolerance and the role women can play in building peace, even when society imposes limits on their roles as women. This engagement was critical in changing their mindsets and has reaffirmed the importance of personal one-to-one engagement with people who, up to that point, had been supporters of violence.



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Challenging extremism in Pakistan and Afghanistan

In January 2016 we supported Aware Girls to launch a new programme focusing on dissuading young people from joining extremist groups in the porous border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Building on Aware Girls' existing 'Youth Peace Network' this project strengthened the capacity of 105 young people as peace activists, 60 of whom were new trainees.

Two training programmes were provided to members of the network. The first was a four-day peacebuilding programme for the new trainees, while the second was an advanced leadership training programme, aimed at a smaller cohort of members. Once trained, each young person was tasked with conducting intensive peer education to young people at risk of joining extremist groups.



48 young peace
activists discussed
peace prospects
with over 100 key
government and
local authority
representatives in
the city of Peshawar.

Impact

In total, 700 young people were reached through these activities. These included direct peer education, group education and discussion, and talks in schools, colleges and community meetings.

For many of these young people, the peer education and outreach activities conducted by the Youth Peace Network were the first time they had been exposed to messages of tolerance, inclusiveness and non-violence by members of their peer group. The impact of this should not be underestimated, particularly when set against a cultural and political backdrop that is fertile ground for messages promoting violence and extremism.

Just as important for Aware Girls is the advocacy undertaken by members of the network. At one event organised by Aware Girls, 48 young peace activists from across FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) discussed the prospects for peace with over 100 key government and local authority representatives in the city of Peshawar.

Through this, the idea of developing a youth peace policy was raised by the activists, and the office of the Governor of FATA committed to participating in further meetings to develop the idea further. We look forward to tracking this developing work in 2017.

Jalal's story

When the Taliban started taking over our area, I didn't know what to do. But I knew how to write, so I started writing against them. They used to collect funds for constructing mosques and started conducting three-day trainings which were apparently on religion, but they would preach hatred against the army and other people. They slowly took the best students of my class, brainwashed them and used them for their own gains. I lost most of my friends, one-by-one to these Taliban who were used to carry out suicide attacks in Afghanistan and Waziristan. Then I came across Aware Girls and attended their trainings. The most beneficial part of their training for me was the clarity they gave on the Taliban and their agenda. I sent some of the youth I work with to their trainings as well.

I felt the need to somehow stop these Taliban, so I, along with a few of my friends started to educate youth about peace and conflict resolution. Gradually, I started conducting sessions with the youth who were being trained by Taliban. The first two sessions would be the most dangerous, because I would either convince them of what I was saying, in which case I could save them, but in the cases where I failed to convince them, they might talk to the Taliban about my activities. Their threats turned into attacks, from which I escaped. I hope that all this militancy ends soon.

Aware Girls participant

Strengthening women's participation in political processes in Pakistan

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where women suffer significant violence, discrimination and marginalisation, Aware Girls completed the third and final year of their work to support women's participation in political processes. Over the year 12 community dialogues were conducted in Mardan and Swabi districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These prepared participants to become mentors and activists for the promotion of women's political participation. In total 154 women and 79 men were reached through the dialogues.

To advocate for increased spaces for women in political spheres, two annual policy dialogues led by Citizens Committees, established by Aware Girls, were conducted involving nearly 100 participants. This was complemented by two radio campaigns launched to coincide with National Women's Day and International Women's Day which disseminated messages about the importance of women's political participation in strengthening democracy and governance.

Impact

In an evaluation conducted by Aware Girls at the end of the project, 82% of the women surveyed voted according to their own preference, rather than that of their husband or family.

Remarkably, 58% of women in one rural community said that they had voted for the first time in their lives in the local government elections of 2015. The survey revealed 91% of the women and 86% of men were unsatisfied with the current levels of representation of women in politics, compared to 58% of women and 56% of men at the beginning of the project. The great majority, 93% of women also believed that women should be part of decision

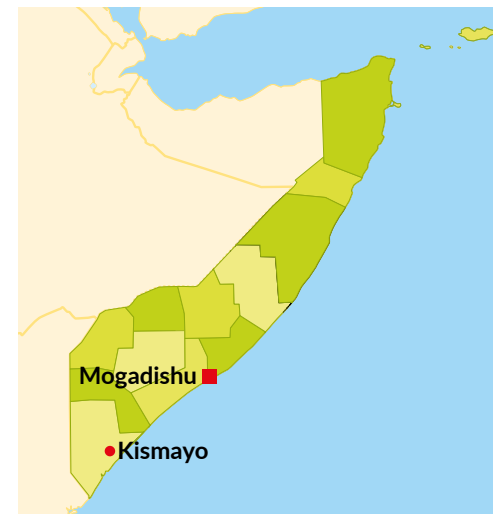
making bodies, up from only 22% at the start. These results are extremely significant in a country where women's role and rights are severely restricted.

Overall the project has been a huge success. A network of female activists has been established and is setting ambitious goals for women's political participation in local communities.

The attitudes of men and women have demonstrably shifted in support of women's empowerment, the proportion of women voting in local elections has increased, and some women have even stood as councillors in local elections. We hope to seek additional funding to expand this work in the future.

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Up from
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SOMALIA

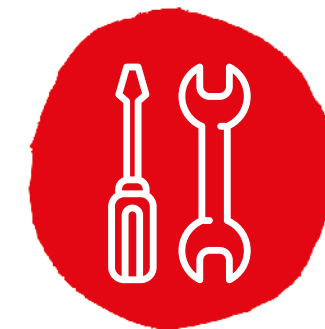
In the last 25 years, civil war, clan-based fighting and violent extremism have destroyed much of Somalia's economy and forced millions to flee. During 1991-2012 there was no functioning national government. In October 2016, in an encouraging sign of progress, parts of the country elected representatives to the federal parliament. Still, the reach of government is severely limited. Clan-based militias compete for control of land and the al-Qaeda-linked militant group al-Shabaab holds large swathes of the country.

Our work in Somalia is based in the coastal city of Kismayo in the southern region of Jubaland. Until 2012, Kismayo was the headquarters of al-Shabaab. The group has now been driven out but remains approximately 30 km outside the city where they remain strong. They declared war against those who participated in recent local elections. With high levels of youth unemployment and the financial temptation of a life with al-Shabaab, many in Kismayo are vulnerable not only to attacks by the group but also to radicalisation and recruitment.

What we did in 2016

In Somalia we entered the second year of a three-year project which aims to support young people at risk of joining al-Shabaab – and other vulnerable groups – to gain a sustainable livelihood and become productive members of their community. The project, implemented by our local partner SADO, also aims to support local peacebuilding efforts made by women's groups and local peace committees so that Kismayo, the once war-torn al-Shabaab stronghold, can rebuild and consolidate peace in what remains a volatile area.

Over the year, 240 people completed their vocational training, 116 of whom started in year one of the project. In addition to those trained, SADO also identified and supported young people who already had their own micro-enterprises but who needed additional support to generate income. As a result 150 young men and women received business management training and a micro grant of \$300 per person to boost their existing businesses.



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Impact

With only a 4% drop out rate overall, the training was very successful. Of the trainees, 68% of trainees either gained employment or started their own business.

The current average income for graduates in employment is \$54 per week, while the average weekly income for those who have started their own business is \$78. This is over double what most young people were earning prior to the training and its importance cannot be overstated. In a city with such high youth unemployment rates, young people in particular often have little choice but to join groups such as al-Shabaab as drivers or manual labourers in order to earn an income that otherwise would be difficult to secure. Once in, young people often find it difficult to leave such groups. Having a viable alternative is vital in order to prevent recruitment into armed groups.



Nimo's story

In October last year I heard about the skill training project which is intended to be implemented in Kismayo by SADO. I inquired how I could get that opportunity. I came to know that beneficiaries will be coming from Kismayo Youth Organization that I was already a member of. They included me in the list they submitted to SADO office. I simply applied and they admitted me to the tailoring skill trainees. The reason I joined was because I was eagerly looking for a live saving skill which I was very keen to find in order to build my future.

Since I joined SADO's skill training a great change has taken place in my life because I was not only learning a skill but also receiving a small amount of money – \$60 per month. For the first time money and skill came together and the life of my family has also changed. Even in the community my respect is growing. They consider me a professional female that can deal with a male dominated activity of tailoring.

The most significant change that happened to me is that now I am able to manage both my life and that of my family too using the skill I acquired. The \$300 SADO paid to me after my graduation helped me to buy a tailoring machine. It gave me the opportunity to create my own business.

If I had not found this opportunity of skill training I would be sitting idle in the house without hope. I would not be anything except an uneducated and unemployed person.

Nimo Omar, female project participant



In their own words

I am 18 years old, one of six in my family. I completed primary education but I couldn't afford to go to a secondary school because my family couldn't afford the fees. After joining the skills training programme, I became totally a new person. I never thought I could be a skilled person as I'm today. Because of this project my life has changed. If this opportunity hadn't come my life would be very dark, hopeless and full of worries. Now I feel very different.

Male project participant

Before the project, I was broken. With no source of income, I couldn't afford tuition fees for my children. Now my family can afford to have three balanced meals in a day and I am able to make little savings to start a small clothing production kiosk. I can now afford to take my children to school.

Female project participant



In their own words

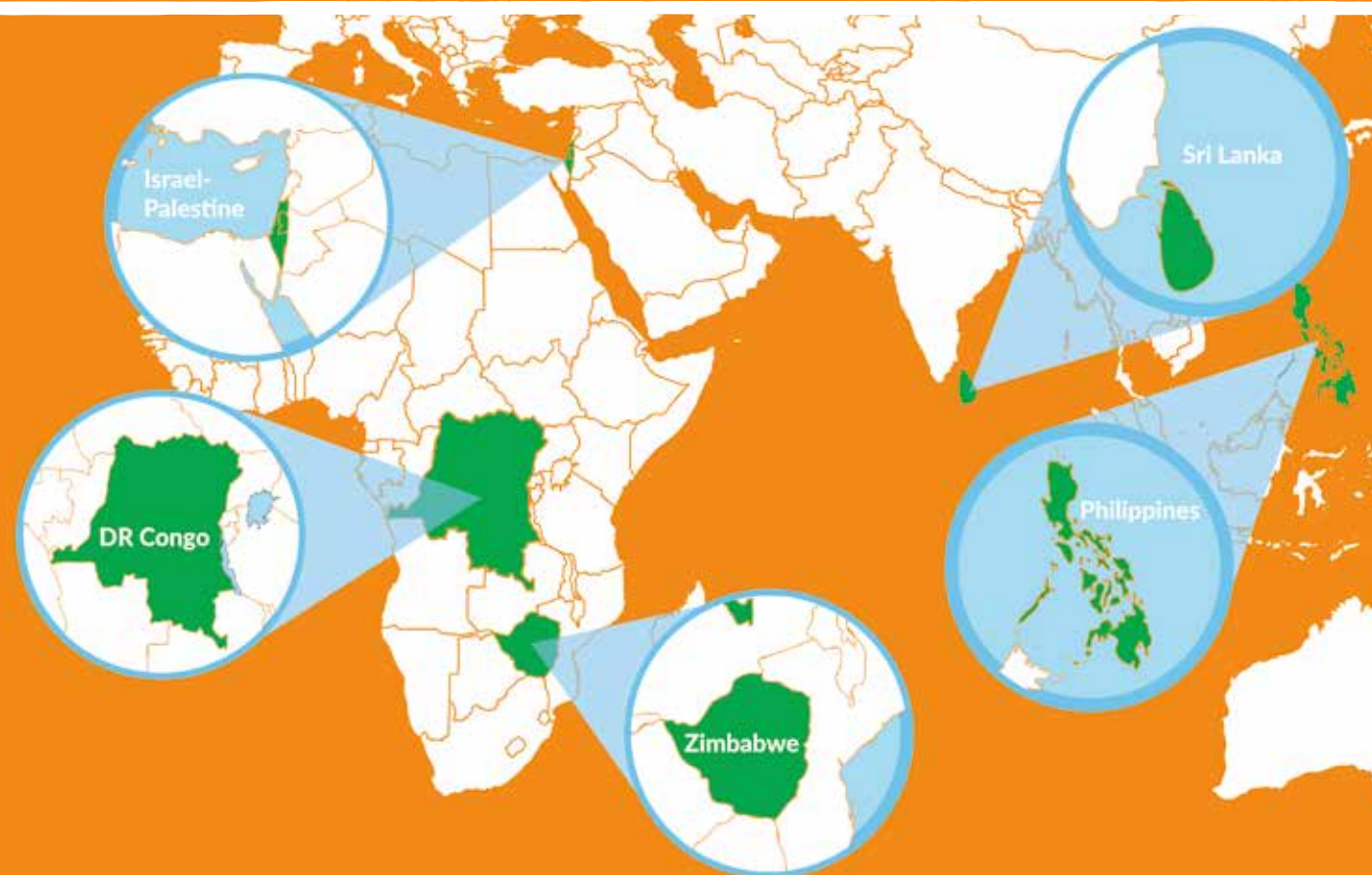
I am so grateful for SADO and Peace Direct who materialized a life changing skills project. I have gained a lot from the project and in my daily work I gain a good income from the plumbing work that I do on daily basis after the graduation, together with the teaching work. The project really inspired me and gave me a motivational spirit. I was committed to the skills training all the time I was unemployed, and now I quickly developed my livelihood and built my future. My wife, my parents, my kids and me are glad for the new life and we are hoping for a better future.

Abdiaziz Hassan Ali, male project participant

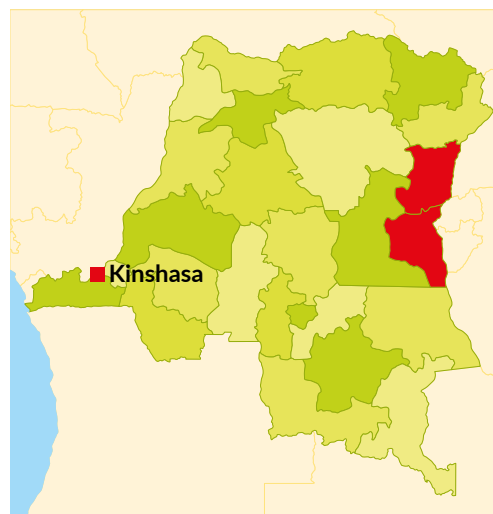
Before I joined the vocational programme my ambition was to join the boat migration to Europe. How to migrate to Europe was my biggest worry. Today such worries have vanished. I am a skilled person and can create my own business.

Abdifatah, trainee

SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN COUNTRIES EMERGING FROM CONFLICT TO REBUILD THEIR COMMUNITIES



In countries that have experienced years of war and conflict, there are often few livelihood opportunities, justice structures are weak and decades of violence have entrenched deep community divisions. People affected by armed violence in countries emerging from conflict need to be given the opportunity to reintegrate in to their communities, and the support to bring about reconciliation, sustainable development and long term peace. In 2016, we supported a range of important work in DR Congo, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Israel-Palestine, and the Philippines, addressing the root causes of conflict and healing community divisions in the aftermath.



DR CONGO

In the unstable east of the DR Congo, peace remains extremely fragile and tensions in local communities can easily spill over into violence. Recruitment of children and adults into militia groups remains a systemic problem and is a key factor in ongoing raids and massacres in local villages. Communities are fearful of returning ex-combatants meaning opportunities for them to reintegrate back into civilian life are often limited, feeding a cycle of violence.

The constant violence is significantly affecting the socio-economic situations of the region's most vulnerable people. Conflicts around land and property continue, perpetuating tensions within and between communities.

North Kivu

What we did in 2016

In North Kivu we continued our support to Centre Résolution Conflits (CRC) whose work to help war-affected communities rebuild and become more resilient entered its second year. Over the year CRC created 20 new agricultural cooperatives, bringing the number of cooperatives to 40 with a total of 1,739 members. CRC have worked with all members to create individual investment plans so they can generate sustainable income from their own land.

During the year CRC successfully identified, trained and supported 120 ex-combatants, bringing the total to 240. The 120 men rehabilitated two markets and more than 25km of agricultural feeder roads, and all were provided with psychosocial counselling to help them reintegrate back into their communities. The young men also developed a code of conduct to share with the community as a trust building exercise. The microfinance component of the project granted loans to 120 women, bringing the total number of women supported to 360.



A total of
954
hectares of
farmland have been
cultivated to date
by cooperative
members.

Impact

Through participation in the agricultural cooperatives, a total of 954 hectares of farmland has been cultivated to date by the cooperative members, leading to improved food security and incomes for 1,204 cooperative members. Of the 240 vulnerable young men provided with a range of livelihood and reintegration support, 87% recorded improved attitudes and wellbeing in their communities.

All the project communities surveyed reported having a more positive perception of these young men and their role in the community, which is a major breakthrough in ensuring their sustainable reintegration. Lastly, 98% of the microcredit recipients report they have improved their ability to cover basic needs such as paying school fees, and buying clothes and food.

Julienne's story

Since the war, life has become more bitter than any of us would ever have thought: no shelter and sometimes no food. For a time we were surviving with donations from some local organisations, but even they stopped coming to our rescue. One day my friend came to visit me and found me crying with my son, she told me that a group of women in the village was receiving help from CRC that I could join. I received my first loan of \$50 which I divided into two parts: one part for my husband's care and the other to invest in farming.

Today my life has totally changed. I sell cassava, beans and rice with a few tomatoes, onions and leeks. Together my husband and I built a small metal house and I recently bought a small solar panel for lighting. My children wear new clothes, I eat very well and I firmly believe in two years I can return to the life that my family had before. I am grateful for what CRC has done for me. I can't imagine the life of my family without CRC.

Julienne



Photo: Greg Funnell

Patience's story

I was helping my aunt with housework, collecting firewood, when I was captured by rebels and forced to join the Mai Mai Simba militia. I was with them for a year before I escaped. My role was to prepare the magic potions they believed would help them in battle.

When I escaped, a local village leader found me. He took me to CRC. They gave me psychological support and trauma healing sessions. They gave me a support kit consisting of skirts, blouses, one pair of shoes and a bag. They found me a host family to stay with while they tried to find my parents. To survive, CRC gave us rice, beans and fish to eat.

I was happy to be out of the militia but at first I would wake up at night, terrified and screaming. After one month of the counselling sessions this stopped.

Now I am learning to become a tailor through the vocational training centre CRC have. I'm learning how to cut and sew dresses and shirts. I am now much more hopeful for my future. I have made friends with other children in the neighbourhood and people ask me to make clothes for them. I feel part of the community. I am also saving to go back to school. I hope to be able to return to my studies in a few years time.

Patience, 13



Rescue and rehabilitation of child soldiers in North Kivu

In October, we launched a new emergency project with CRC aimed at rescuing and rehabilitating 100 child soldiers from an area of North Kivu that is home to multiple local militias, as well as the ADF-NALU rebel group. The project emerged in response to an unprecedented offer made to CRC and Peace Direct by one of the local militia leaders – that he would be prepared to release some child soldiers under his command as long as CRC could guarantee the children would be looked after and rehabilitated properly. Such opportunities are rare. We were delighted that we were able to find the funding from a private donor who responded quickly to our request for funds to launch a 12-month rescue and rehabilitation programme.

Impact

By the end of the year, CRC had rescued 62 children from four armed groups operating in the Kimbulu area of Lubero, North Kivu. Nineteen children at immediate risk of joining one of the local militia groups were also supported. Health checks and psychosocial counselling were provided to all

rescued children and CRC was able to place all 62 children into temporary foster families while the search for the children's families continues. Importantly, the local community came together and helped establish a small psychosocial centre. Land was donated by the local chief and materials were donated by the community as a sign of their support for CRC's work.



62 children
rescued from
4 armed groups.



South Kivu

What we did in 2016

In South Kivu we continued our support for Fondation Chirezi (FOCHI) whose work to strengthen the resilience of war-affected communities in the Ruzizi plain entered its final year, ending in December 2016. Over the course of the year, FOCIH continued to support a network of local peace courts, called Barazas, which serve as an important way for local people to access justice as the formal court system is out of reach for most people. Importantly, each Baraza has a separate women's court, to encourage women to bring cases that would otherwise go ignored.

To strengthen the economic resilience of communities, FOCIH supported the establishment of Village Savings and Loans Schemes (VSLAs) which enabled people (mostly women) to regularly save and access micro loans to support their livelihoods. Livelihood support was also provided to specific groups of vulnerable and war-affected people, including ex-combatants.

Impact

Since the project started in early 2015, the ten Barazas supported by FOCIH have received 589 cases, 84% of which have been resolved successfully. Of the remaining cases 14% remained in mediation. In an evaluation conducted at the end of the project, the evaluator noted: "Through the Barazas, FOCIH created a safe space for community members from diverse and polarised ethnic groups to come together and address their differences and divisions. As such the Barazas became the community mechanisms that fostered respect and equality of people of various ethnic groups and gender."

Looking at FOCIH's efforts to strengthen the economic resilience of communities, by the end of the project 50 VSLAs had been established across 17 communities, supporting 1,261 households. In total these groups saved \$119,664, a remarkable sum given the levels of poverty in the area. This enabled the VSLAs to make 2,170 loans totalling \$58,408, which were used for a range of local needs including school fees and health care. The evaluation noted that FOCIH's support to the VSLAs in particular: "had gone above and beyond expectations of the project's requirements."

"Through the Barazas, FOCIH created a safe space for community members from diverse and polarised ethnic groups to come together and address their differences and divisions."

Mirundi's story

I was 20 when I joined the local militia group. I mainly joined because there was no opportunity of a job for me here. But also my community was continually attacked by other tribes and I wanted to help protect it. Most of the time in the militia we robbed drivers on the road, or other communities, smoked or fought with other rebel groups of different tribes. I saw that there was no benefit to me to stay so when I was 25, I left.

FOCHI's project has allowed me and other ex-combatants to become involved in the community and have given me something to work for. I no longer consider re-joining the militia as I did before. With the money we make from the goat farm me and the other ex-combatants would like to open a restaurant on the roadside. I would also like to continue to breed goats.

Mirundi, ex-combatant

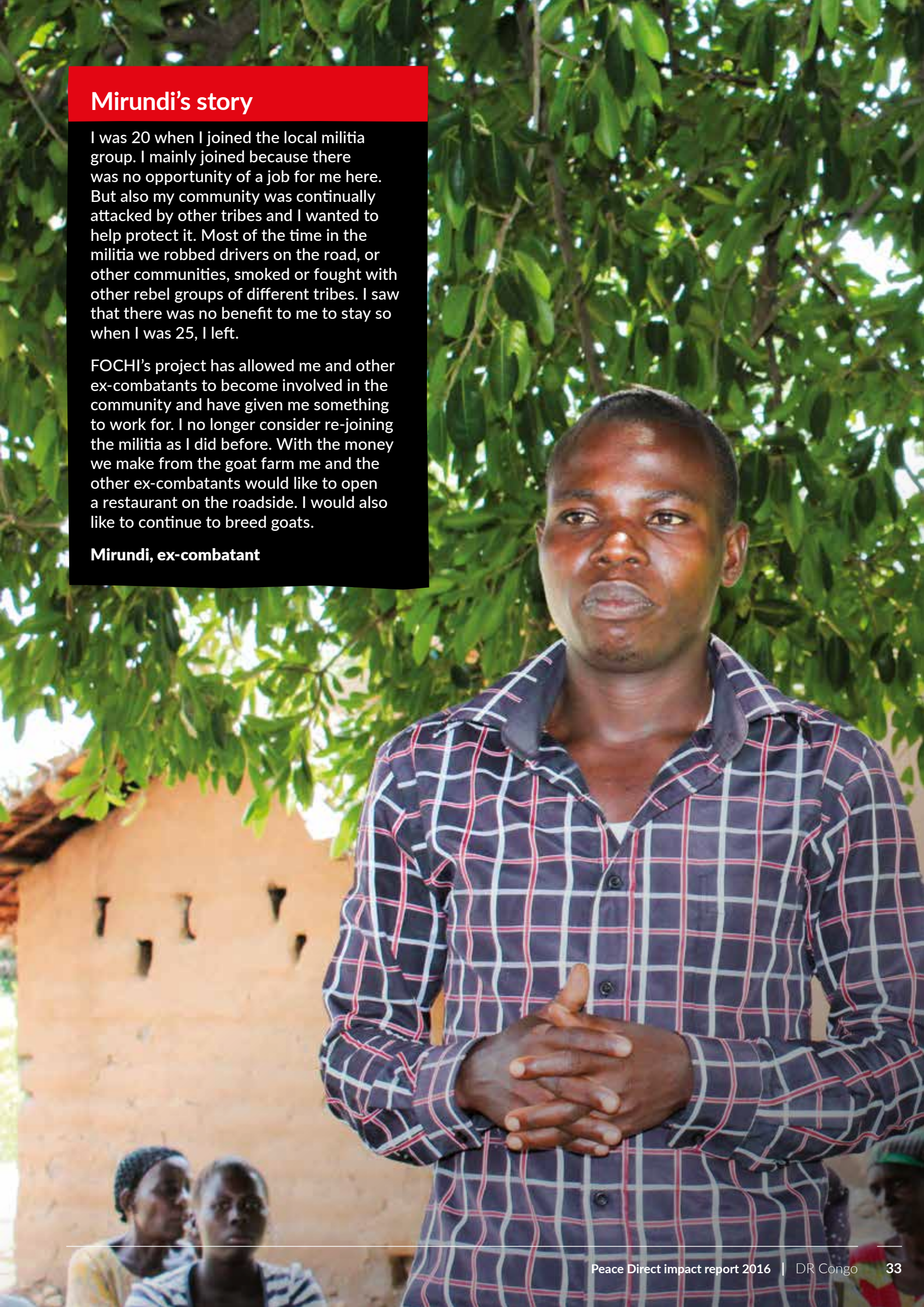
In their own words

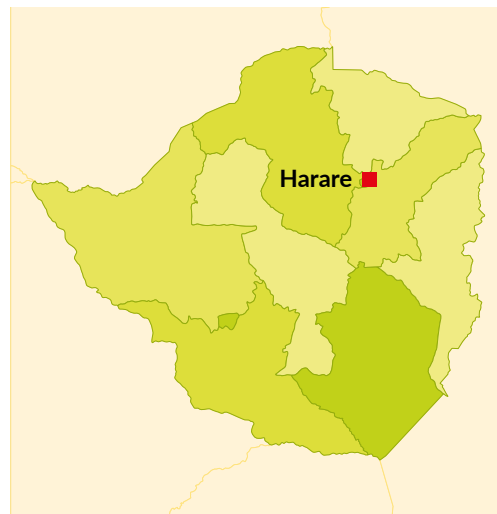
I am very glad to be part of the Baraza...it has had a big impact on my community with many testimonies from people who had conflict troubles but came to the Baraza, got solutions and now people live peacefully.

Neema, Baraza member

Were it not for the peace court, I would be in prison by the Congolese army following a tribal conflict.

Fidele, Baraza user





ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe's protracted fragility and volatility saw no signs of improvement in 2016 with a rise in protests recorded across the country, many mobilised via social media.

Protests were violently broken up, especially in the capital, Harare. Towards the end of 2016 there were increased reports of hate speech and political clashes, particularly in constituencies where by-elections were conducted. Violence against women remains a widespread problem and years of repression have taken their toll on communities, often resulting in escalating violence over resources, political power and identity. As planned elections in 2018 approach and President Mugabe's health deteriorates, the potential for atrocities and violence increases.

What we did in 2016

2016 was a difficult year for our partner, Envision. We struggled to raise funds for their vital work. With a modest grant they were able to continue their core work which focuses on the promotion and protection of women's rights, conflict transformation training for the Zimbabwe Republic Police, support to Peace Committees and Early Warning Early Response platforms, and training of traditional leaders to prevent outbreaks of violence.

Despite the limited funding, Envision made good progress over the year with some of this work. To support the early warning network, Envision carried out refresher sessions on gender, women's rights and conflict transformation with the Peace Committee members. In their work with the police, four conflict transformation training workshops were held for the Zimbabwe Republic Police during the year, and two strategic planning meetings were held with 14 senior police officers from across the six police provinces of Zimbabwe.



4 conflict transformation training workshops were held with police.

Impact

During the year, the Peace Committees who make up the early warning network identified and reported on 37 incidents, most of which were referred to the local police. Of these, almost half focused on domestic violence. It is hoped that the same network will mobilise to monitor and report on a likely surge in violence in the lead up to the 2018 elections.

While the impact of the training of police is more difficult to measure, Envision staff received word that some police officers trained by Envision have reported they are now resisting the use of violence in dealing with the public. Trained senior police officers have expressed the importance of having police officers skilful in peaceful ways of resolving conflicts as this is helping improve the difficult relationship between the public and the police.

Through an Early Warning Early Response platform, Envision have seen an improvement in community relations between the police and communities as well as improved reporting of cases of violence such as gender-based violence and domestic violence to the peace committees, chief's courts, and the police. Envision are confident that if they had the resources to train more police officers, especially senior police officers, this could have a demonstrable impact on the level of state sponsored violence across the country.



Photo: International Citizen Service

In their own words

I am 41 years old and a leader in my community. I was known for being very mischievous. It was very easy for me to dabble in violence at home and almost everywhere you would find me. I grew up seeing my father being violent, though he died early and left us with my mother, who also suffered at his hands.

I am glad I attended Envision's sessions. From day one I never missed them, especially those for village heads. That is when I realised that being a leader meant you have to handle yourself with dignity and unite people in your surroundings. I had to listen and understand others. My mindset began to change with the trainings. I am now aware that violence is not productive. I am a new leader. When I now talk to people I put myself in their shoes so I can understand where they are coming from. I am more hopeful of the future.

Traditional leader

Photo: A man carries a street sign as opposition party supporters clash with police in Harare, Zimbabwe, August 26, 2016. REUTERS/Philimon Bulawayo



SRI LANKA

Although Sri Lanka's civil war ended in 2009, the legacy of war, displacement and years of human rights abuses still remains.

In 2016, following a change of government, four new state institutions were established to carry out peacebuilding, reconciliation and transitional justice. This opened up opportunities to promote peace and reconciliation with participation from both government and civil society. Despite this, mistrust and division between different ethnic and religious communities threatens to undermine longer term peace and reconciliation initiatives. Reports of anti-Muslim sentiment increased towards the end of 2016 through demonstrations and social media, highlighting tensions.

There remains a pressing need to resolve the root causes of the 25-year conflict, to address the abuses committed during the civil war and build understanding and trust between communities that remain deeply disconnected.



What we did in 2016

'Voice of Image' uses photography to empower young people who have been affected by the conflict, and its legacy, to become promoters of peace and responsible citizens.

Our work with longstanding partner, the Centre for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation (CPBR), focused on young people's role as peacebuilders in their communities. The first of these projects, called 'Voice of Image' (VOI) uses photography to empower young people who have been affected by the conflict, and its legacy, to become promoters of peace and responsible citizens. Activities included holding two 'Exhibitions for Dialogue' where young people from different religious backgrounds showcased their photographs as a springboard for community dialogue on reconciliation and religious tolerance.

We also supported CPBR's training of 20 female community leaders from different faiths and regions in interfaith dialogue for peace and conflict transformation. They went on to conduct 15 intra faith and four interfaith dialogues throughout the country.

Impact

In recognition of the important role that CPBR has played in fostering interreligious cooperation and strengthening the prospects for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka, CPBR was awarded the Niwano Peace Prize in May 2016.

In announcing the award, the Niwano Foundation said: "CPBR's methodology and operating principles have led them to win the trust and respect of diverse actors and communities throughout Sri Lanka...let us hope that many more groups and actors in different parts of the globe will follow the example of Sri Lanka's Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation."

In their own words

I am a Buddhist monk from Polonnaruwa District. I am 79 years old. In April 2016, I met a Tamil girl, Shanhari from Jaffna, who came over to my temple as part of a team from the Voice of Image project. Their task was to set up an 'Exhibition for Dialogue' in the premises of my temple. I started talking to her and I found her to be compassionate and committed to her work. I learned about her work in the Voice of Image (VOI) and what she is doing as a photographer.

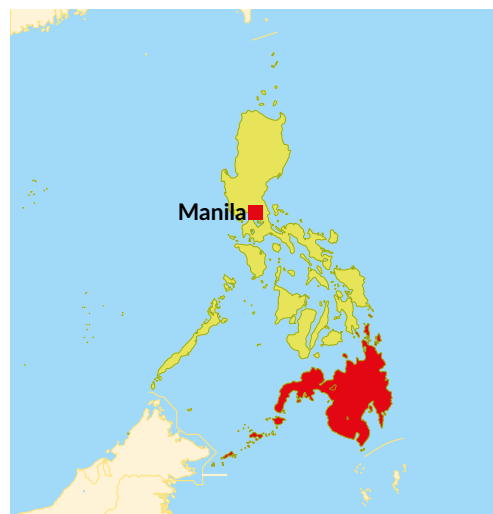
The whole experience of 'Exhibition for Dialogue' was novel to me. The exhibition ended successfully after two days and the whole team including Shanhari said good bye to me. In November 2016, I received a letter by post. When I opened it, I found it to be an invitation – a wedding invitation. It was from Shanhari. She was getting married and she was inviting me to her wedding. I was in a dilemma. As a Buddhist monk, I have never been to a Hindu wedding in my whole life. But I decided to take this trip to Jaffna because it was a tribute to the friendship I had with this young Tamil girl. She is an epitome of compassion. This experience of the wedding in Jaffna is special for me. I experienced the beauty of Hindu culture and its rituals. This is what we all need to see and understand – appreciating and celebrating the diversity of different communities in Sri Lanka.

Buddhist monk and attendant of an 'Exhibition for Dialogue' showcase

VOI has given me a big opportunity to change my attitude and behaviour. Previously, I was not socialising with people or involved in community work. I also got the opportunity to be trained in conflict transformation and interfaith dialogue. Through VOI, I met people from diverse ethnicities, and religions. Before joining VOI, I have not been able to build relations with people but now I have good friends who come from diverse religions and ethnicities. When any newcomer joins the VOI, I support them.

Voice of Image participant





PHILIPPINES

The Philippines has suffered from more than four decades of conflict, with armed groups, Muslim separatist groups, clan militias and criminal organisations still active. Hopes remain that the controversy-courting President Duterte will act on his promise to push forward the peace process and give autonomy to the southern Bangsamoro (Muslim Nation) population. Steps have been taken to implement the Bangsamoro Peace Accords, a milestone agreement in efforts to bring peace to the region. Still, insurgent organisations threaten the hope for peace and government clashes with armed groups allegedly linked to ISIS continue to affect local cities, destroy public spaces and cause widespread displacement.

In Mindanao, one of the worst affected areas, violence has left a legacy of suspicion and hostility between Christian and Muslim communities. This deep rooted mistrust, if not resolved, threatens the chance for a lasting peace.

What we did in 2016

In Mindanao we supported our partner, Kapamagogopa Inc (KI), to continue their core work of placing Muslim volunteers with local organisations in conflict-affected communities. Many of these communities are Christian and the volunteer programme is a key way of fostering greater interreligious understanding. In 2016 the 10th batch of volunteers were placed in NGOs across Mindanao. They undertook activities including participating in a dialogue with communities on the role of women in the peace process, organising and interpreting three voter education sessions with a focus on the rights of people with disabilities, and participation in a 'Listening Process' conducted by the Transitional Justice And Reconciliation Commission (TJRC).

We also supported KI to launch a pilot project which helped 40 female ex-combatants and 10 young people living in Lumbatan, Lanao del Sur, the historic stronghold of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). KI provided human rights training to the group, training in sustainable livelihood practices, and training in business and financial management. KI also helped establish a new civil society organisation (at the request of the ex-combatants) that can better represent the community.



80%
of the volunteers
were taken on as
staff, reflecting
how highly they
were regarded by
the hosts.

Impact

KI measures the impact of placing Muslim volunteers across Mindanao in different ways, including improvements in attitudes towards Muslims among Christian host communities and NGOs, the commitment by KI volunteers to be active peacebuilders after their placement, and the willingness of host organisations to keep the volunteers on as staff.

For the 2016 cohort, 80% of the volunteers were taken on as staff, reflecting how highly these volunteers were regarded by the host organisations. The pilot project for female ex-combatants has also been highly successful, not only in providing livelihoods for the 40 female ex-combatants, but also in the number of requests for assistance that KI has received from neighbouring communities who want to replicate these activities.



In their own words

Having a Muslim volunteer taught us in many ways. Even for me, personally as supervisor, the volunteer has been an instrument for me to reflect deeper on cultural sensitivity. It made me realize that cultural sensitivity is not confined in letting the person pray in their native tongue and to their Allah but also respecting what is Halal [permissible] to them.

I would say without the help of the young volunteer, the output of our organisation would have been lacking. Yes, we are maybe teaching staff and volunteers to do better peace and development work but the Muslim volunteer mirrors the kind of values we hold in our organisation.

Gimaidee Cadotdot, Community Peace and Development Officer, Philippines



ISRAEL-PALESTINE

The situation in Israel-Palestine remained tense in 2016, following the surge in violence in 2015. Animosity between the Jewish Israeli and Palestinian communities is a persistent feature of daily life. This, combined with political stalemate, continues to impede hopes for a just and lasting peace.

What we did in 2016

In 2016 our support to Heartbeat focused on continuing and expanding Heartbeat's youth music education and dialogue programmes for Palestinian and Israeli high school students in Jerusalem and Haifa. As part of this project, the new music studio in Haifa became fully operational and Jewish and Arab high school students in both cities met each week, not only to rehearse and perform together but also to hold dialogue sessions on issues such as Jewish and Palestinian identities, the Holocaust and the Nakba ('Catastrophe' – the term commonly used by Palestinians to mark the establishment of the state of Israel).

As part of this project the musicians also participated in two very successful retreats to delve deeper into issues of identity and the challenges of building a shared future. Overall, these retreats were a huge success and Heartbeat hopes to continue to expand these retreats and weekly meetings in the coming years.



Participants emerge from their experience with greater understanding of history and current realities, increased empathy and respect for one another, and a deeper commitment to working for change.

Impact

Heartbeat measures the impact of its work on two groups. First on the musicians themselves, many of whom had not had any interaction with their peers from the other side of the conflict. Second on the schools and communities where they perform. The changes in the attitudes and behaviour of the Heartbeat musicians is often profound, with many forming lifelong friendships with people they would have previously considered their enemy.

Participants emerge from their experience with greater understanding of history and current realities, increased empathy and respect for one another, and a deeper commitment to working for change. While the impact on Heartbeat's audiences is harder to measure, the musicians strongly believe that the symbolic act of playing together, Israeli and Palestinian, is an extremely important reminder of the possibility of partnership in a society where cooperation between the two sides is increasingly ridiculed and dismissed by politicians, the media and many young people.

In their own words

The biggest thing for me that has come about from my time with Heartbeat is, always try and remember the other side. If something really terrible happens to you, or someone you know, from this other side of the conflict, always to ask: why. Why this kid or this man would do such a thing to some other person. He probably has a reason. I mean, basically, we all want to live a good life, to have a house, to have food for children. We all just want to have a better life.

Heartbeat participant

For me, it was a really big new chapter in my life that started. Heartbeat succeeded in creating a new reality, one community. We are a community today. We share thoughts and have the space for dialogue on topics that you see daily but don't talk about. We succeeded in building dignity, respect and understanding between people and our community. The biggest [thing I learned] is to judge less, or even not to judge. But that's only one of the one thousand things I took from the values Heartbeat passed to me.

Heartbeat participant



AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF LOCAL PEACEBUILDERS



Local organisations rarely have the opportunity to engage with governments and others in power, both in their own country and internationally. There are many reasons for this, including a lack of knowledge among governments, donors and the UN of the presence of local organisations, the logistical difficulties local organisations face in travelling to and communicating with governments, and the dominance of a model of aid delivery that involves donors and governments engaging with a small number of large INGOs.

We are determined to change this. We believe that when local people have the chance to share their knowledge and views with those in power, the policies and practice of governments and others are more likely to address the needs and realities of those on the frontline of conflict. In 2016, we achieved the following in support of this objective:



Advocacy aimed at the US government and the UN

The US remains a critically important focus for our advocacy work. The policies and practice of the US government have a significant impact on the stability and security of many countries around the world and the UN remains the most important platform for international peace and security. For these reasons we strengthened our advocacy capacity in the US by building our US presence in Washington and New York.

What we did in 2016

Throughout the year, our Senior US Representative, Bridget Moix continued to engage throughout the year with US government agencies and donors in Washington, while our UN Representative, Gay Rosenblum-Kumar, helped amplify the voices of local peacebuilders at the UN in New York. Below are some highlights of this work.

- Over the year we arranged for UN and US government officials to meet with peacebuilders from the Central African Republic, Pakistan and Burundi. This is part of a wider effort to ensure we give local peacebuilders the chance to talk directly with people in power. We brought recommendations and information from our partners in Burundi and DRC directly to the US Ambassador to Burundi and the US Special Representative for the Great Lakes at key moments, and facilitated in country connections with the US embassies.
- At the UN we were able to directly engage with a growing number of country delegations to the UN and staff from political, humanitarian, peacebuilding and development units of the UN. This included: organising a closed door meeting between members of the UN Security Council and our local Burundian partner on the situation in Burundi; providing input into the UN World Humanitarian Summit's statement on Peace, entitled the 'Peace Promise', ensuring that attention to local peacebuilders was included; input into the UN's 'Sustaining Peace' resolution; and sharing with UN member states our Beni Policy Brief produced following the massacre of civilians in Beni in August.
- In May we supported our Local Peacebuilding Expert from the Central African Republic, Martine Kessy, to travel to the UN World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. Martine was asked to join various high level panel discussions on the role of youth in tackling complex humanitarian problems, and we were delighted to support her to participate in this important international gathering.

Changing donor practice

Very little funding from international donors makes its way to local organisations. According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, less than 2% of all humanitarian funding is allocated to local organisations. We are determined to change this which is why we invested time and effort in working with donors and INGOs to persuade them to change their practices and funding approach so that local organisations receive more funding directly.

What we did in 2016

With our local partner, we continued to advocate to the UN and other donors for more funding for community-based reintegration (CBR) efforts in support of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants. With many ex-combatants languishing in DDR camps we have been increasingly vocal to donors about the urgent need to support civil society efforts to reintegrate ex-combatants into their communities, based on the very successful work done by our partner, Centre Résolution Conflits in DR Congo. While the CBR model practiced by our local partner is acknowledged as best practice, CBR remains very poorly funded. We will continue to advocate for this so that DDR efforts in DR Congo have a better chance of succeeding.

In the US we arranged meetings between our local peacebuilding partners and various donors, both in New York and Washington. In particular, our efforts to raise awareness of our local partner's work in Burundi

to the US government and various UN member states were very successful, with a number of governments (Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland) praising our Burundian partner's work and signalling an interest in providing financial support.

In May we supported our local partner based in Pakistan, Aware Girls, to participate in the Alliance for Peacebuilding Annual Meeting in Washington. At the conference Peace Direct and Aware Girls were asked to speak on plenary panels, raising awareness of our work and that of Aware Girls. We also linked Aware Girls with the Malala Fund, resulting in direct support for their work and an award to one of their founders.

We were selected by the US State Department to be part of a new expert consortium on peace processes, and we successfully bid on a new USAID research project, Localworks. This aims to improve how USAID missions better work with and support local actors.

As a member of the Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) in the US, we co-led the Local Peacebuilding Working Group we helped establish in 2015. Our work with this group resulted in the inclusion by the PSFG of data from its members on the level of funding going to local organisations in its annual Peace and Security Index, from 2017. We hope that this will provide one of the first benchmarks available for the percentage of funding going to local organisations. With the PSFG we also agreed to jointly undertake research on the barriers that US donors face in funding local organisations directly. This work will begin in 2017.

Mapping Peace

Colombia's peace plebiscite: the 'Yes' movement

22 September 2016: On 2 October 2016, peace agreements worked out through years of negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla group will be endorsed or rejected through a public vote. While Colombians prepare for this decision, youth groups and civil society activists are looking to cut through political divides to advocate for peace.



Colombia

Our Local Peacebuilding Expert for Colombia covered key aspects of the referendum on the historic peace agreement in a series of blog posts, providing a crucial local perspective on this top level agreement.

A portrait of war: returning home to Yemen

30 August 2016: Peace Direct's Local Peacebuilding Expert for Yemen recently returned home after 12 months abroad. In this harrowing dispatch, he describes the trail of devastation he followed, all the way to his family village.



Yemen

Peace Direct's Local Peacebuilding Expert for Yemen recently returned home after 12 months abroad. In this harrowing dispatch, he describes the trail of devastation he followed, all the way to his family village.

South Sudan

Mapping of local peacebuilding capacity in Unity State in South Sudan was funded by the UK government.

With this funding we were able to develop a comprehensive picture of the existing organisations and initiatives that could be supported in this part of the world.



IcSP

The EU and its members are collectively the world's biggest provider of overseas aid and one of the most important funding instruments is the Instrument for Contributing to Stability (IcSP). Between 2014 and 2020, the IcSP has €2.3bn to spend on peace and stability work. We map and profile all IcSP funded projects worldwide.



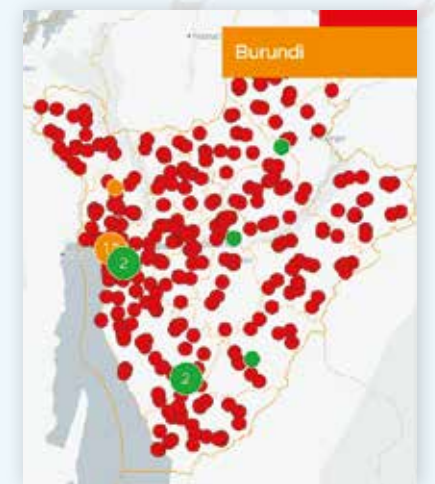
DR Congo

Mapping of Early Warning, Early Response (EWER) capability in Eastern DR Congo was funded by the UK government.

The funding meant we were able to map a large number of local EWER initiatives across North and South Kivu. The purpose of this research was to understand what existing civil society capacity exists, with a view to supporting existing local actors to coordinate their EWER efforts better.

Putting local peacebuilding on the map

We have mapped over 1,400 local peacebuilding organisations across the globe, covering 44 conflicts. A network of 32 Local Peacebuilding Experts contribute in-depth analysis and comment, providing a unique perspective on peacebuilding from the heart of conflicts.



Mapping the work of local peacebuilders around the world is an important pillar of our advocacy work because we know that there is still very little information about local capacities for peace among donors, governments, think tanks and researchers. Our flagship project, Insight on Conflict (www.insightonconflict.org) remains a world leading online resource on local peacebuilding around the world.

During the year, the site attracted 522,750 visits, a 35% increase on 2015. This is an impressive improvement and reflects the very significant effort made by staff to improve the quality of blogs, maps and stories on the site. By the end of the year over 1,400 local organisations had been profiled across over 35 countries, through our network of 30 Local Peacebuilding Experts.

We also produced 126 blogs over the year, including a monthly newsletter, some of which are noted on this map.

Sawssan's story

My story with Peace Direct and Insight on Conflict started in 2014. I worked for years at the foreign desk at a news agency, but also as a war correspondent in Afghanistan and Libya. My work dealt mostly with international affairs and I wanted to open a window on local affairs but not through daily local news. So my being on board with Peace Direct gave me that opportunity, to have professional contact with local peacebuilders and civil society, to write about them, help them, and even learn from them. It also helped me expand my journalistic experience through my blog and the reports I contribute to. I now have another readership to address as most of my pieces were previously written in Arabic for a local and pan Arab readership.

I would like to cite some examples on how this role makes a difference. The North Media Network is a local group that helps young people in North Lebanon by giving them vocational training in the media business. They produce short reports on Tripoli, a beautiful city that suffered from rounds of sectarian violence. When I wrote about them among the organisations in Lebanon section on Insight on Conflict, they were suffering financial issues and thinking of terminating their work. However, we helped them get some exposure and financing simply by writing about them.

Similarly, I was introduced to MAPS, an organisation created by Syrians to help Syrians in Lebanon at a conference in Beirut. I immediately saw they were impressive and wrote about them, long before the Washington Post did when students they support scored high at an international contest in Robotics in Washington. I feel proud about it. There are other groups that ask for my advice in some matters, and consider me, and Peace Direct, as partners and friends. So we do make a difference, together and I think we can do even more. The work is rewarding, I always have fruitful discussions with Peace Direct staff to make things better. It is a partnership, a true team, and a friendship. I am also honoured to have served as a jury member in the Tomorrow's Peacebuilders Awards in 2016.

Sawssan Abou-Zahr, Peace Direct's Local Peacebuilding Expert in Lebanon



Photo: Paul Saad

Local Voices for Peace in Northern Nigeria

The views of local civil society on the causes of violent conflict in the region and the prospects for peace



Local Voices for Peace

Conflict analysis, research and information is dominated by external actors, think tanks and universities. Little of this is based on the experience and knowledge from local practitioners on the frontline of conflict. When the local perspective is missing the context analysis is often incomplete, and can be dangerously misleading. We aim to change this. This is why in 2016 we launched Local Voices for Peace (LVP), a new multi-year initiative to gather and disseminate the perspectives, expertise and knowledge local peacebuilders have on a range of country and thematic issues and to encourage greater collaboration and learning.

The first focus for this initiative was in Northern Nigeria, which has been the location of much of the violence caused by Boko Haram. In July we held a practitioner workshop (also called 'Peace Exchange') in Kano, Northern Nigeria, which brought together representatives of 17 local peacebuilding organisations to discuss the violence in the north of the country. The event was a tremendous success, enabling local organisations to discuss the problems in their communities and providing an opportunity for them to share good practice.

Participants said:

"All aspects of the Peace Exchange were useful, especially learning and sharing of experiences around diverse CSOs [civil society organisations] from Northern Nigeria working on issues related to peacebuilding. The end result product will enhance my organisational capacity to design and implement impactful projects in my community."

"This will facilitate and promote greater collaboration /partnerships for the long term. It was also useful as an advocacy and training tool."

"The joint analysis will be useful in our work, because it will help us a lot in the area of sharing of useful ideas and strategies in countering violence/conflicts in our communities."

"The Peace Exchange has made a great impact, and strengthened my thinking about the need for partnership, networking. A big thanks to Peace Direct for this wonderful chance and training."

The report from this meeting was disseminated widely in the UK and US, and we were able to share it with governors from the Northern States in Nigeria who were in the US at the invitation of the United States Institute of Peace.

Towards the end of the year we ran our second LVP consultation, this time for peacebuilding practitioners and academics based in Pakistan working on addressing violent extremism.

The exchange was held entirely online, using an innovative platform designed to facilitate collaboration and rapid analysis from participants. In total, 54 participants took part in the week-long consultation, producing 400 contributions analysing the situation in Pakistan.

This method, which is cheaper and quicker than in-country consultations, offers great promise for us in our work. It will allow us to solicit the views of local peacebuilders, both in more locations and more frequently, in the coming years.

The online consultation was a resounding success with participants commenting that they felt very comfortable commenting on this very sensitive topic through a moderated online platform.

We expect to finalise and disseminate the report in 2017.

Participants of the online consultation said

"The engagement has greatly helped me enhance my understanding on the subject."

"In fact, the platform I found very useful (more pragmatic) to help understand the issues around VE [violent extremism] in Pakistan. I feel enthused to know how other practitioners involved in VE work in Pakistan."

"The engagement led to more clarity and in depth understanding of the causes/solutions of violent extremism in Pakistan."

"The engagement is fruitful and an excellent opportunity to learn from others and share my own insight. I do hope to interact with them in future."



Jaya Luintel from The Story Kitchen receives the Women-led peacebuilding award at a ceremony held in London, one of the three 2016 winners

Tomorrow's Peacebuilders Awards

Now in its fourth year, our 'Tomorrow's Peacebuilders' Awards is one way we try to ensure that local organisations can be acknowledged, profiled and supported by Peace Direct and, in the long term, by the international community. By running an open application process designed to be as accessible as possible, we aim to remove the barriers that often prevent local organisations from receiving support. In the last four years we have received 963 entries from 91 countries, demonstrating how popular this awards programme is.

This year's winners were:



Environmental Peacebuilding Award: Association Burkinabè d'Action Commaunitaire (ABAC)

In Burkina Faso, conflict is growing between different rural communities over the use of land and other natural resources. In recent years this has been exacerbated by the effects of climate change. In the face of this, ABAC is working to empower diverse communities, particularly farmers and herders, by giving them the skills, resources and techniques to effectively manage conflict. This peacebuilding work includes providing training, facilitating dialogue, producing information materials in local languages, and working with local government.



Women-led Peacebuilding Award: The Story Kitchen

Using an innovative, bottom-up approach, The Story Kitchen partners with local women, and invites them to experience the power of narrative journalism, helping to share their stories nationally. The Story Kitchen also focuses on sharing the stories of women who are survivors of sexual violence, to highlight this issue. They train women as civilian Justice Reporters who then go out and collect testimonies from other women. They also help women to access Nepal's transitional justice commissions following the 1996–2006 civil conflict.



Inter-religious Peacebuilding Award: Adamawa Peacemakers Initiative (API)

In 2013, following a rise in tensions between Christians and Muslims in northeastern Nigeria, a coalition of local faith leaders, business leaders, and civil society came together to promote peace and tolerance as API. The emergence of Boko Haram has led the initiative to focus more of its efforts on young people at risk of radicalisation. To do this, API uses sport and IT as mediums to foster peace, tolerance and reconciliation amongst young people in conflict and post-conflict communities. API believes that for some of the most at-risk youth in the area, their programmes offer one of the few alternatives to joining Boko Haram.

Jaya's story

I would like to thank Peace Direct for recognising the work we have been doing locally and for creating this space to amplify our own work and our voices at the international level.

We have gathered 1,600 stories in the last year. We have trained survivors of conflict as Justice Reporters so they go into their communities and then gather the stories of other women. We bring them together in the story workshops, help them to share their stories, listen to each other, and make sure they feel like they are not alone.

This award means a lot to us. It is not just about the money, it is about the recognition. It is about the encouragement that will help us to continue this work. We will be spending this money to enhance the leadership of those women who have become Justice Reporters. I'd like to thank Peace Direct for recognising our local work in peacebuilding.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank my team. And last but not least I'd like to dedicate this award to all the Nepali women including my grandmother and mother whose stories and lived experience have always inspired me to work against discrimination and injustice. Thank you very much.

Jaya Luintel, The Story Kitchen receiving the Women-led peacebuilding award at a ceremony held in London, one of the three 2016 winners

STRENGTHENING OUR EXISTING PARTNERS AND EXPANDING OUR REACH



We are immensely proud of what we have achieved with our partners around the world this past year, and we have ambitions to support more organisations building peace in their communities in the years ahead. Our approach has always been to support smaller organisations and nurture them over time. We will continue to do this while looking for organisations that have already achieved scale in their work, but could benefit from additional support to grow further.

In 2016 we were delighted to partner with three new organisations:



In Nigeria, we established a partnership with the Peace Initiative Network (PIN) based in Kano, Northern Nigeria. PIN works on a range of peacebuilding activities focusing on youth. Following a successful in-country assessment visit in September, we began developing our first project with PIN which will focus on vulnerable young people in Kano State. We expect this to start in mid-2017.



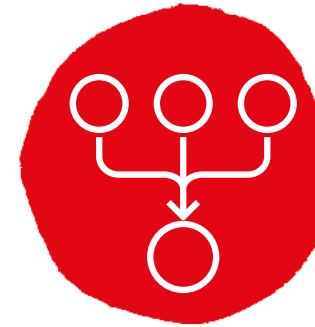
In Pakistan, we established a partnership with SPADO (Sustainable Peace and Development Organization) which works on a range of community development and peacebuilding programmes. They also have a strong research department and will greatly add value to our existing partnership with Aware Girls in Pakistan.



In Syria we will be partnering with Zoom In, a local peacebuilding organisation based in Idlib Governorate in Syria. In Idlib, Zoom In have established a partnership with the provincial council of Idlib Governorate to create a common platform for solving local conflicts, with a particular focus on bringing different groups in the area together to resolve grievances non-violently.

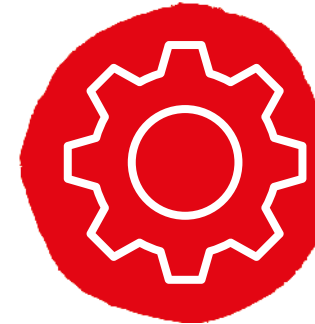
The establishment of three new partnerships is tremendously exciting for Peace Direct. It furthers our goal to expand the number of strategic partnerships worldwide and support local peacebuilders in some of the most difficult conflict contexts.

To help strengthen our existing partners we implemented a number of key activities:



Organisational development:

We commissioned a consultant to develop a capacity building framework and assessment tool to help us, and our partners, identify the areas of work that need most attention. We hope to roll this out to selected partners in 2017.



Technical assistance:

In Burundi, we supported our local partner to strengthen and refine its violence monitoring and reporting capabilities (see page 12). Working with the Carter Center in the US, we supported our local Burundian partner to start using an online system which helps record all incident data more efficiently, and provides for easier analysis.



Fundraising training and advice:

We provided fundraising training and programme development support to partners in DR Congo, Burundi, Sudan, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, including in-country support to partners in three countries. This led to a direct increase in high quality proposals from four partners that we were able to submit to major institutional donors. We hope such support will enable partners to secure their own funding in the future, so they become strong, sustainable and financially independent organisations.



Training and resources for peacebuilders:

In April we acquired the intellectual property of 'Responding to Conflict' (RTC), a UK-based organisation that provided training to local peacebuilding organisations worldwide. In March 2016 the RTC Board of Trustees took the decision to close down the organisation after 25 years serving the peacebuilding sector. We are committed to ensuring the continuation of some of RTC's core work, including running training courses for peacebuilders and practitioners working in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

rtc
responding to conflict

DEEPENING OUR LEARNING AND BUILDING AN EVIDENCE BASE

We believe that in order to truly advance the peacebuilding field, we need to aspire to the highest standards in learning and reflecting on our own practice, particularly when things don't go well. Being a learning organisation is more than just having good monitoring and evaluation systems. We believe that it is an entire way of thinking about our work, one which requires discipline and practice to analyse success and failure. If we can model this behaviour internally, we believe we will be a better partner and will make a better contribution to sector thinking.

Photo: Charlotte, civilian member of ex-combatant co-operative, Malangango

What we did in 2016

Scanning the sector

We established three thematic working groups in the year, composed of staff from across the organisation. The purpose of the thematic working groups was to help us explore particular issues in more depth and understand best practice and emerging trends from around the world in order to help improve our work and strengthen our partners' practice. The three working groups established were on tackling violent extremism, early warning and early response, and the role of women in peacebuilding. Reports on the first stakeholder mapping and scan of the field are expected in early 2017.



Evaluations and learning summaries

In 2016 we completed evaluations of our work in Sudan and Burundi. Both evaluations provided invaluable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the work. As part of our efforts to disseminate the key learning more widely we produced 'learning summaries' which are four-page, designed summaries which can be read quickly. These have proved very popular and we will be producing learning summaries for all of our work going forward.

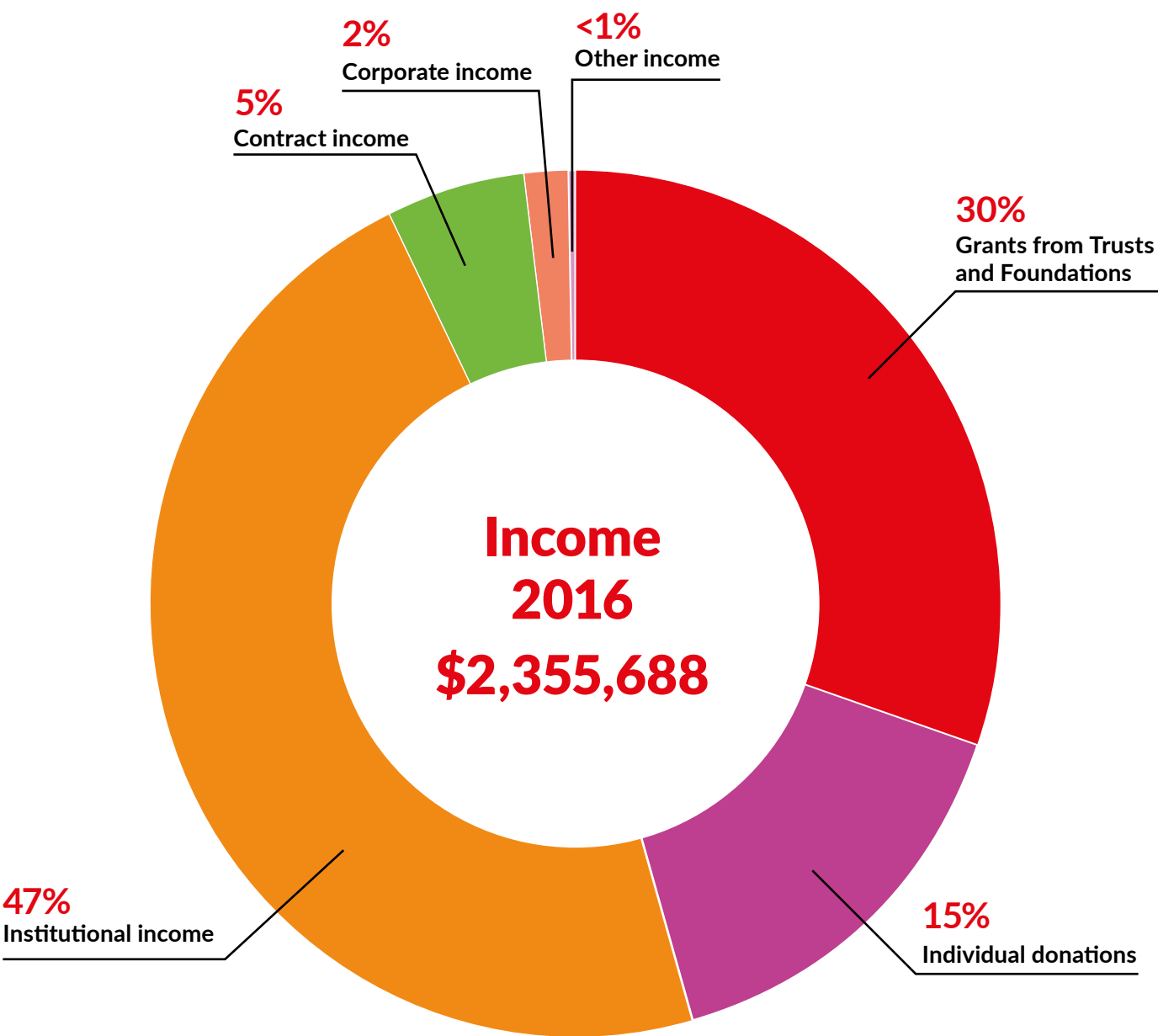


Research on Monitoring and Evaluation practice

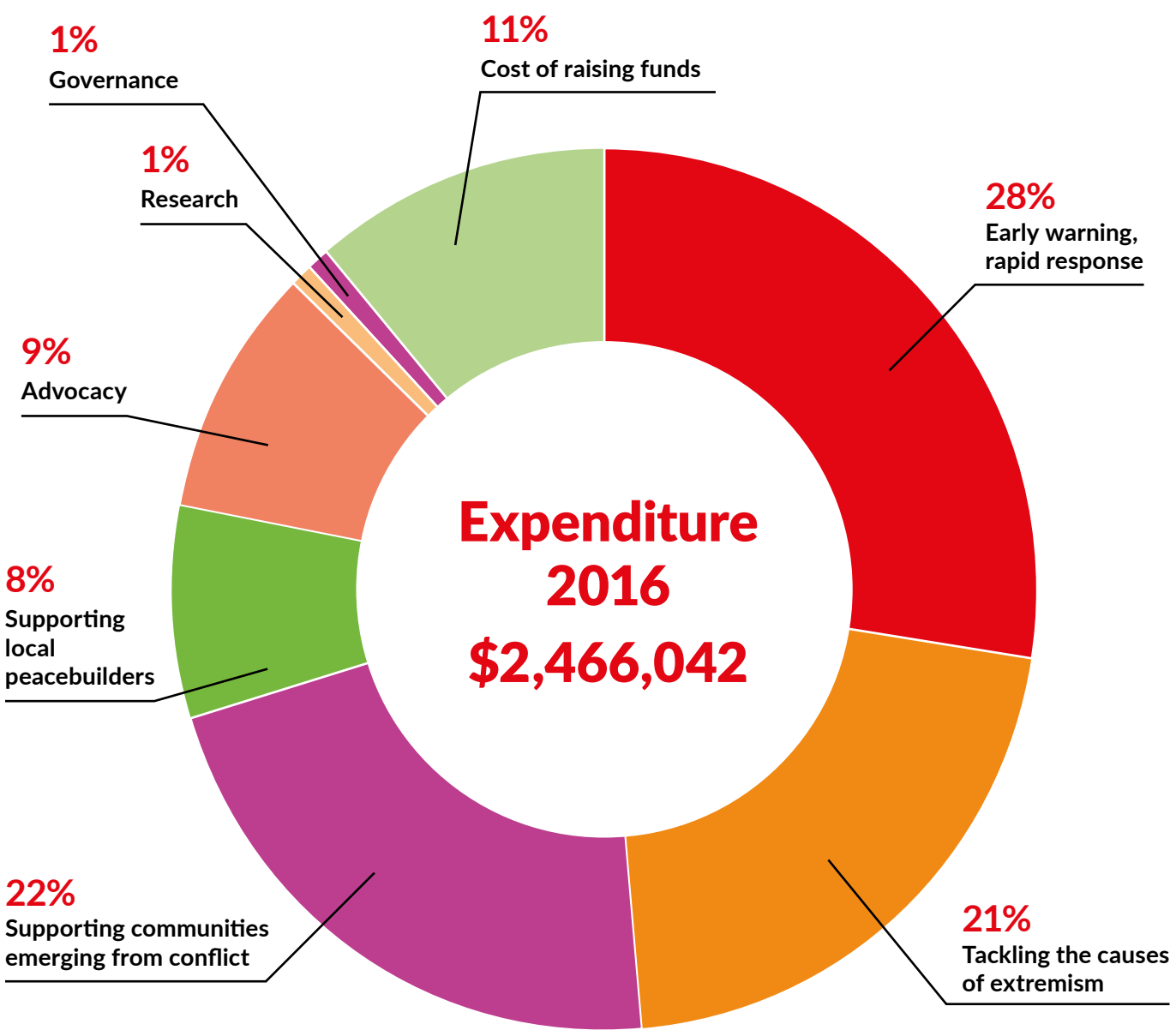
We disseminated our report 'Putting the Local First – Learning to Adapt When Measuring Change' which was funded by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The report highlights a number of recommendations that can help facilitate more responsive programming learning within Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks. Central to this is shifting focus away from developing sets of rigid indicators and instead concentrating on M&E frameworks as a process, looking at how local actors can be more involved in developing M&E and generating an environment that can make sense of contextual changes and approve adaptations of programmes. As part of the dissemination we held workshops in Washington, London and Goma to publicise the key findings.

OUR FINANCES

Our income for the year was £1,821,399 (\$2,355,688) – on par with our 2015 income. We are delighted that donors, individuals and institutions continued to support us in 2016. The charts below show the main sources of our income and how we spent the money.



	£	\$	%
Grants from trusts and foundations	£552,539	\$714,621	30%
Individual donations	£280,906	\$363,307	15%
Institutional income	£856,527	\$1,107,781	47%
Contract income	£99,654	\$128,886	5%
Corporate income	£31,242	\$40,406	2%
Other income	£531	\$687	<1%
TOTAL	£1,821,399	\$2,355,688	100%



	£	\$	%
Early warning, rapid response	£526,912	\$681,476	28%
Tackling the causes of extremism	£401,512	\$519,292	21%
Supporting communities emerging from conflict	£414,456	\$536,033	22%
Supporting local peacebuilders	£145,540	\$188,233	8%
Advocacy	£178,864	\$231,332	9%
Research	£12,913	\$16,701	1%
Governance	£18,095	\$23,403	1%
Cost of raising funds	£208,432	\$269,573	11%
TOTAL	£1,906,724	\$2,466,042	100%

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

Our work would not have been possible without the commitment and support of a wide range of donors, including individuals, corporate organisations, private trusts and foundations, and institutions. Organisations and institutions that supported us in 2016 include:

- AWAY
- Big Lottery Fund
- Blandford Lake Trust
- Brillig Trust
- Chino Cienega Foundation
- Cotton Trust
- Didymus
- European Union
- United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- J A Clark Trust
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Germany
- Network for Social Change
- Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity
- Pickwell Foundation
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- Scurrah Wainwright Charity
- Sir James Reckitt Charity
- Spears-Stutz Charitable Trust
- Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation
- Stiftung Umverteilen!
- Terra21 Foundation
- The Mrs Wingfield Charitable Trust
- W F Southall Trust

We are actively seeking new members of our family – supporters, donors and allies. Please get in touch if you would like to work with us and help build a just world, free from violent conflict.

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AT A TIME.