



2025 Year in Review



LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS AND FELLOW PEACEBUILDERS,

GREETINGS OF PEACE.

The year 2025 has been one of profound challenges and transition for the global peacebuilding and foreign assistance community. Across the sector, organizations and communities have confronted unprecedented uncertainty as longstanding funding models have been disrupted and geopolitical tensions have intensified. At the same time, the broader global context has been marked by deepening polarization, within societies, across borders, and in multilateral spaces, making the work of dialogue, mediation, and inclusive peacebuilding both more difficult and more essential than ever.

In this critical moment for world affairs, the Peacemakers Network has continued to serve as a vital platform for solidarity, shared learning, and collective action. Despite the constraints facing our sector, the Network has remained committed to supporting locally-led, culturally grounded peace efforts and amplifying the leadership of religious and traditional actors who are often on the frontlines of conflict prevention and social cohesion.

In 2025, the Steering Group confirmed eight organizations as members and supporters of the Peacemakers Network. Each of these organizations brings distinct experience, insight, and leadership rooted in their respective religious and traditional communities. Their inclusion strengthens the diversity and reach of the Network and reinforces our collective ability to respond to complex and evolving peacebuilding challenges through inclusive and context-sensitive approaches.

None of this work would be possible without the continued trust, engagement, and collaboration of our members, partners, and supporters. Your commitment sustains the Network during a period of significant strain across the foreign aid ecosystem and affirms the enduring relevance of faith and community-based peacebuilding. Together, we have continued to demonstrate that even in times of constraint, cooperation and shared purpose remain powerful tools for change.

On behalf of the Peacemakers Network, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your continued support and collaboration. As we navigate the evolving impacts on our sector in 2025, let us continue to carry forward the hope, resilience, and determination that drive our shared mission to build more just, peaceful, and inclusive societies.

In solidarity and gratitude,



Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi
Executive Director,
The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers

CONTENTS

Network Membership	4
Exploring the Nexus of Climate and Peacebuilding	5
Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism	7
Joint Initiative for Strategic Religious Action	10
Advancing Inclusivity	18
Advancing Persons with Disabilities in Peacebuilding	24
Collaboration with the United Nations	26
Additional UN Moments and Partnerships	33
Regional Programming	36



NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

The Peacemakers Network Steering Group confirmed five new organizations as members: Community First Development (Australia); Global Initiative for Environment and Reconciliation (Rwanda); Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (Nigeria); Interfaith Mediation Centre (Nigeria); and Rosing Center for Education and Dialogue (Israel). The Peacemakers Network Steering Group also confirmed three new supporters: Ecumenical Commission for Human Development (Pakistan); Fund for Peace (USA); and Zaka Foundation for the Promotion of Peace and Dialogue (Nigeria). Each of these organizations bring unique perspectives and expertise to the Peacemakers Network as leaders in their religious and traditional communities.

The Network
for Religion
& Traditional
Peacemakers



Members by Region

6% Middle East
and North Africa

5% United Nations
Agencies

26% Europe

17% South and
Southeast Asia

11 % North
America

34% Sub-Saharan
Africa

1% Oceania



Persons with
disability-focused



Representative
of the LGBTQIA+
Community



Representative of
Indigenous or Ethnic
Minority



Religious and
traditional
actor-led



Women-led
and/or focused



Youth-led
and/or focused



Locally-led



Religious or
traditional Actor-
Focused

119 Network
members

Update as of April 2025

EXPLORING THE NEXUS OF CLIMATE AND PEACEBUILDING

Climate change is the ultimate threat multiplier and has increased the insecurity of vulnerable communities around the world. In the last 60 years, more than 40% of the world's civil wars have been linked to control over natural resources such as land, oil, and water. With the current track of projections, this situation is only poised to get worse, with new and unprecedented impacts on the climate ecosystems, which we depend on to survive. Vulnerable and marginalized populations in society are at the greatest risk of climate crises.



Faith actors, institutions and communities are critical partners in addressing climate emergencies. The contribution by faith leaders and actors are instrumental towards social transitioning to climate neutrality and developing innovative solutions to combat the climate crisis.

Building on the vital work of religious leaders, faith-based organizations, and communities committed to environmental protection, conflict resolution, and climate action, Sacred Earth, a multimedia campaign, invites viewers on a transformative journey to witness how faith communities are rising to meet the challenges of an evolving global landscape.

Through a rich selection of [videos](#), [podcasts](#), and [testimonies](#), we spotlight the invaluable work of our members, supporters and partners, showcasing their critical contributions in addressing the urgent climate crisis through the nexus of faith and climate.



“Faith and Indigenous traditions embody profound wisdom in environmental stewardship, highlighting the importance of living in harmony with nature and embracing sustainable practices.”

–Abdulhamid Tahir Hamid, CEO of Global Environment & Climate Conservation Initiative

“Faith and Indigenous communities play a critical role in promoting inclusivity in land management, ensuring that climate justice is rooted in wisdom, equity, and sustainability.”

–Dalitso Muronya, Country Director of One World – One Family Malawi



“World leaders and policymakers must support the engagement of young people in climate action and environmental peacemaking, especially traditional and religious youth whose faith and beliefs call them to be stewards and caretakers of Creation. There can be no lasting peace without harmony between the Creator, Humans and Nature.”

–Henri Kabore, Executive Director of Initiative Sougourounoma pour l’Education, la Paix et la Santé (ISEPS)



“In Pakistan, where climate disasters like floods and droughts displace families and deepen conflicts, faith and indigenous wisdom offer a powerful path to climate justice. Religious leaders and local communities, trusted voices for generations, can inspire action by linking Islamic principles with environmental care.

–Sameer Ali Khan, Founder of Collective Pakistan



INTERFAITH DIALOGUE ON VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Violent extremism (VE) is a challenge that affects societies around the globe in similar but context specific ways. Neither radicalisation nor VE is rooted in one cause alone – such as ideological, political or religious, and the spread of VE is first and foremost considered as a development challenge. Prevention of VE and radicalization requires a whole-of-society approach since the phenomenon is multi-faceted and affects all society in one way or the other. In promoting an intersectional approach within preventing violent extremism (PVE) efforts, it is critical to build the understanding and capacity of local multi-stakeholder groups, including youth and faith communities. With many countries' populations now surpassing 50 percent as young people, it is critical more than ever to engage youth within PVE efforts to ensure emerging and changing threats are recognized and that the barriers and challenges faced by youth are addressed.



Photo: USHIRIKA iDove Project Team. <https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/ushirka-gender-transformative-project/>. October 2024.

Religious leaders and organizations often play a vital role in local communities, particularly in remote areas, and are, therefore, potential key partners in the approach to preventing violent extremism (PVE). Youth activists are also often already involved in community work and deeply engaged in strengthening social cohesion and PVE.

'Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism' (iDove) is an initiative of the African Union Commission's Directorate of Citizens and Diaspora Organizations (AU-CIDO) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Grounded in innovative, youth-driven methods, iDove showcases the transformative potential of religion and dialogue as "soft power" tools for PVE. The Peacemakers Network works as the Secretariat for iDove.

In 2025, iDove welcomed close to 39 new young peacebuilders to its network. These youth work in P/CVE in their respective countries and communities in Africa, Middle East, Asia and Europe. To welcome the newly selected 2025 Cohort, the Peacemakers Network organised 8th Intercontinental Youth Forum. From 26 to 28 November 2025, young peacebuilders gathered for the 8th iDove Intercontinental Youth Forum. Over 70 participants came together to explore the most pressing issues shaping their communities: climate change, reintegration, digital narratives, interfaith dialogue, and the promise and risks of artificial intelligence.

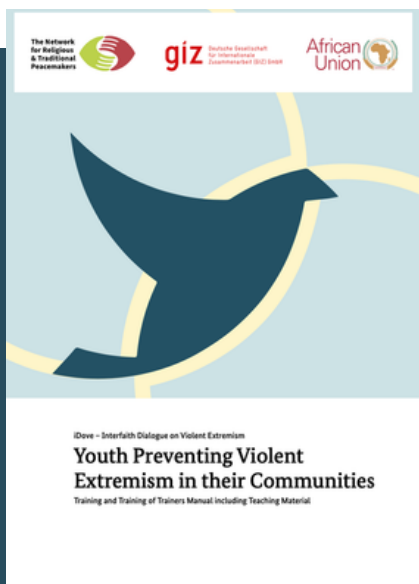
Across three days of storytelling, exchange, and experimentation, iDovers demonstrated once again that youth are not simply beneficiaries of PVE programming. They are designers, innovators, and leaders charting the path forward.



8th iDove Intercontinental Youth Forum. November 2025.

Additionally, in 2025, the newly updated Training of Trainers Manual was launched. Designed as a guide on facilitating the iDove Training as well as the iDove Training of Trainers for facilitators, this new toolkit aims to encourage and empower youth to play an active role in PVE and building cohesive communities. The training engages with different mechanisms to understand context and motivation, which should be used alongside resources focusing on interreligious and intercultural exchange, conflict transformation and intersectional conflicts.

On June 5th, Peacemakers Network organised an online session to launch the updated ToT Manual. The iDovers were engaged in the presentation of the manual during the session. The presentations were followed by practical experiences on how the iDovers have used the manual in their daily work. The session ended with Q&A.



New training manual on preventing violent extremism and fostering social cohesion for facilitators!

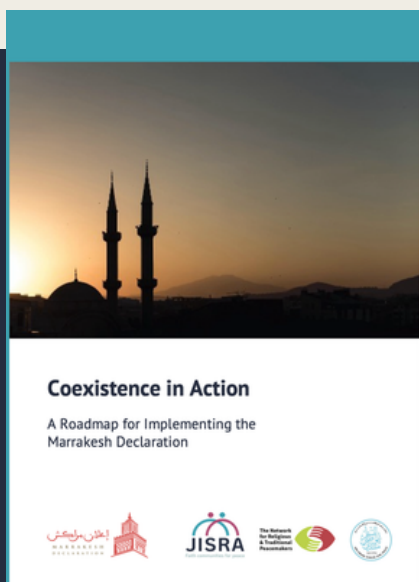


JOINT INITIATIVE FOR STRATEGIC RELIGIOUS ACTION

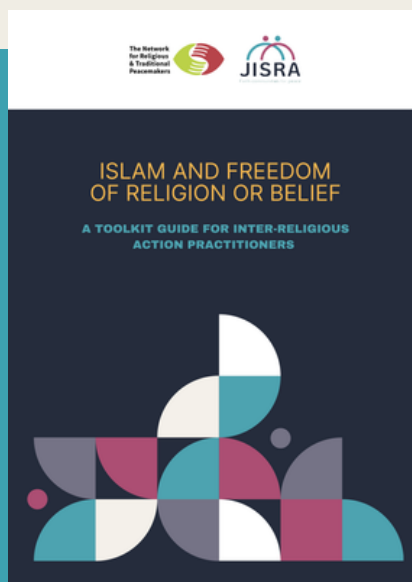
The past year marked a pivotal moment for the Dutch-funded “[Joint Initiative for Strategic Religious Action](#),” (JISRA) consortium, culminating in the final year of a five-year initiative across seven countries. Through interfaith collaboration, capacity strengthening, and evidence-based advocacy, the Peacemakers Network and partners continued to support communities striving for peaceful coexistence, protection of rights, and inclusive development.



Training on Islam and ForB in Kampala, Uganda. Group photo with participants, facilitators, and the Peacemakers Network. March 2025.



New roadmap on implementing the Marrakesh Declaration



New toolkit on Islam and Freedom of Religion or Belief

This year also marked the last funded year of the project; five years across seven countries, the project consortia collaborated in faith and courage. As part of the concluding results, a new policy document, '[Coexistence in Action: A Roadmap for Implementing the Marrakesh Declaration](#)', was developed. Rooted in local realities while aiming for global relevance, the Roadmap outlines actions, transformative strategies, and context-specific priorities to strengthen FoRB. It places particular emphasis on centering the voices of those most affected by religious persecution and exclusion, including faith actors, women, youth, and marginalized communities, recognizing them as critical agents of change.

Recognizing the importance of shifting power to local actors affected by inter- and intra-faith conflict, the JISRA project developed a [toolkit](#) for FoRB practitioners, peacebuilders, and policymakers.

Centered on gender equity, mutual respect, and interreligious dialogue, the toolkit helps users better understand the intersections of Islam and FoRB and supports more effective community engagement.

Photo: JISRA FoRB training in Muscat, Oman. November 2024.



JISRA Women and Young Women Advocating at the UN Commission on the Status of Women



Left photo: Speakers and attendees of the CSW69 Beijing+30 roundtable. March 2025.

Middle photo: Event Panel, From Left to Right: Jessica Roland, Senior Specialist for Inclusive Peace at the Peacemakers Network as Moderator, Djeneba Toure, Member of the Youth Union of Mali, Nur Rofiah, Teacher of the Perguruan Tinggi Il mu Alquran, Rev. Dominic Misolo, Founder and President of the Institute for Faith and Gender Empowerment, Louise Allen, Advocacy Officer for Tearfund and Stella Attah, Peacebuilding and Religious Freedom Policy Advocacy Coordinator for Tearfund. March 2025.

Right photo: From Faith to Action: Women Religious Leaders Transforming the Beijing Platform into Reality, an official panel side event as part of the 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. March 2025.

On the sidelines of the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and 13th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action Declaration, the JISRA consortium consisting of the Peacemakers Network, Mensen met een Missie, Tearfund, and the Faith for Action Network, partnered on several events to showcase the importance of local, gendered and faith perspectives in the implementation of the Platform for Action. The first event was a roundtable dialogue, co-hosted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations, the Ministry of Family and Human Rights Development of Somalia, to explore how women and young women in crisis-affected communities contribute to advancing the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the Beijing Declaration.

The second event consisting of JISRA partners showcased a dialogue on the importance of local, gendered and faith perspectives in the implementation of the Platform for Action, offering a coherent narrative on how inclusive approaches are vital for sustainable peace and development. In the final event, the Indonesia delegation to the UN partnered with the JISRA, to highlight the importance of grassroots faith leaders in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The 90-minute dialogue brought together women faith leaders from Indonesia, Mali and Nigeria to share their experiences and contributions to advancing gender equality and sustainable development to demonstrate the transformative potential of engaging women faith leaders in social change.

Promoting Religious Pluralism: JISRA Training on Islam and Freedom of Religion and Belief



Training on Islam and ForB in Kampala, Uganda. Group photo with participants, facilitators, and the Peacemakers Network. March 2025

As part of the Dutch-funded JISRA project, the Peacemakers Network convened 24 staff of JISRA partners from Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda for a training on Islam and Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in Kampala, Uganda. Building on their deep knowledge on diversity and pluralism from an Islamic perspective, participants were equipped with skills to understand different schools of thought in Islam as well as understanding Islam and religious pluralism from the perspective of the Marrakesh Declaration. Participants gained practical skills to build upon their experience to advance inter religious dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

Advancing Religious Freedom Training in Nairobi



Training on Islam and ForB in Nairobi, Kenya. Group photo of participants and facilitators at the JISRA FoRB training. May 2025.

Eighteen religious actors and peacebuilders from Kenya, Nigeria, and Mali gathered in Nairobi from May 26 to 29, 2025 for a regional training on Islam and Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB), organized by the Peacemakers Network. The week-long workshop deepened participants' understanding of Islamic theology and its role in advancing FoRB and peaceful coexistence across Africa and globally.

MENA Regional Consultation



Regional Consultation on Advancing the Implementation of the Marrakech Declaration in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco. October 2025.

A Regional Consultation on the Implementation of the Marrakesh Declaration in the MENA Region was organised between 11th to 13th October 2025 in Rabat, Morocco where 27 participants (9 women, 18 men) including JISRA partner staff, Network members, and representatives from the region and the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace gathered to debate on and discuss the implementation of the Marrakesh Declaration in their respective regions and countries. The Roadmap and Country Summary document was launched at the event.

National Consultation on FoRB in Kenya



Training on Islam and ForB in Nairobi, Kenya. Group photo of participants and facilitators at the JISRA FoRB training. December 2025.

On the 3rd and 4th of December 2025, the Peacemakers Network brought together 41 participants in Mombasa including JISRA partner staff, religious actors, academics, civil society representatives, and government representatives as part of a national consultation on the implementation of the Marakkesh Declaration towards the promotion of Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) in Kenya. The consultation resulted in the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) on FoRB in Kenya which will be widely disseminated in the coming months. Read the [consultation report](#) and the [NAP here](#).

Advancing Peace and Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB): A Look at JISRA's Islam and FoRB Community of Practice

In 2025, the JISRA project organised three Islam and FoRB Community of Practice (CoP) meetings on the topics of interfaith engagement, the implementation of the Marrakesh Declaration Roadmap, and the rights of women in Islam.

Strategies for Promoting Interfaith Engagement

1

Engaging in **intra- and interfaith dialogue sessions** is essential to share experiences on Islam and FoRB, while also enhancing collaboration amongst stakeholders. These platforms provide opportunities for religious actors to share their experiences and develop strategies to deepen their engagement around the topic.

2

Open and inclusive channels of discussions are necessary to raise awareness on diversity, mutual understanding, and to address misconceptions and misinformation. MCJL has been engaging religious leaders in intra- and inter faith dialogue workshops. In their most recent workshop, conducted in partnership with the JISRA project, the dialogue focused on the the 'Rights of Women in Islam.' Drawing on Islamic interpretation from the Quran and Hadith, the session aimed to raise awareness on the rights of women in Islam.

3

Dialogue sessions with religious and traditional leaders are valuable in sharing best practices, exchanging knowledge and strengthening work at the community and national levels. These also serve as important spaces to highlight the role of FoRB in countering radical ideologies and promoting peaceful coexistence.

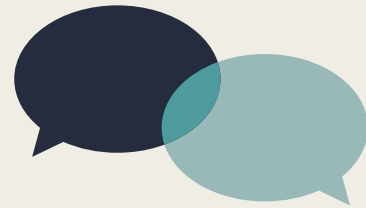


4

The **integration of the Marrakech Declaration** into training and dialogues has become a significant and effective tool in advancing these goals.

5

The **Common Ground Approach (CGA)**, developed by Search for Common Ground, has proven valuable in interfaith training, particularly when used as a foundation before analyzing conflict and violence from an interfaith perspective.



6

Establishing intra- and interfaith frameworks has further enabled religious leaders to exchange experiences and work together to address challenges related to Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). As a result of these efforts, Muslim religious leaders have shown a strong commitment to promoting peace and stability, culminating in the signing of an interfaith agreement.

ADVANCING INCLUSIVITY

Empowering Faith Actors at the G20 Interfaith Forum

Guided by the theme “Ubuntu in Action: Focus on Vulnerable Communities,” the [2025 G20 Interfaith Forum](#) convened religious leaders, non-governmental organizations, governments, and multilateral entities in Cape Town, South Africa, to exchange knowledge and provide actionable solutions to some of the world’s most complex challenges. Hosted by [A Common Word Among Youth](#) (ACWAY), the Peacemakers Network participated in training sessions and led an e-advocacy workshop to build the capacities of young professionals to implement impactful advocacy messages.

The Peacemakers Network’s Executive Director, Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, and Senior Specialist for Inclusive Peace Jessica Roland, spoke on separate panels, calling for inclusivity and collective action through interreligious partnerships and highlighting the critical role of women and young people in peacebuilding.



Oman Harmonious Connection Programme and Youth, Religion and Mediation Course



International Day of Tolerance in Muscat, Oman. November 2025.

In November, the Peacemakers Network held its annual Youth, Religion and Mediation course in Muscat, Oman, as part of the Oman Harmonious Connection programme, in partnership with the Sultanate of Oman's Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs. This year 19 youth from 19 countries participated from around the world to advance their peace mediation efforts.

INCLUSIVITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



Istiak Ahmed,
Coordinator,
MasterPeace Bangladesh



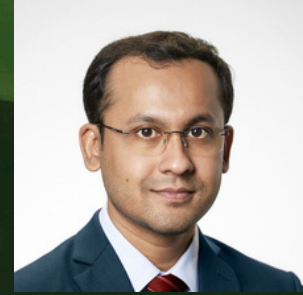
Yemesrach Assefa,
Youth Project Manager,
Youth Ministry Service of
the Ethiopian Catholic
Church



Sahlim Charles,
Founder and Executive
Director, Re-Imagining
New Communities



Anthonia Folashade,
Communications
Manager, Building Blocks
for Peace Foundation



Md Sariful Islam,
Development
Professional



Sarah-Derval E Lifanda,
Founder and CEO, Hope of
Africa (HOFA) / General
Coordinator Emeritus,
Southwest Northwest
Women Taskforce (SNWOT)



Rev. Beauty Makuzva,
Minister of Religion,
Methodist Church in
Zimbabwe



Binalakshmi Nepram,
Founder Director, Manipur
Women Gun Survivors
Network and Global
Alliance of Indigenous
Peoples, Gender Justice
and Peace



Sylvain Obedi,
Founder and Executive
Director, Enable the
Disable Action



Yehuda Silverman,
Cultural Exchange
Assistant, Acquaint /
Instructor,
Northwestern
University – Civic
Education Project and
at Brock University



Anojitha Sivaskaran,
Program Officer,
International Foundation
for Electoral Systems
(IFES)

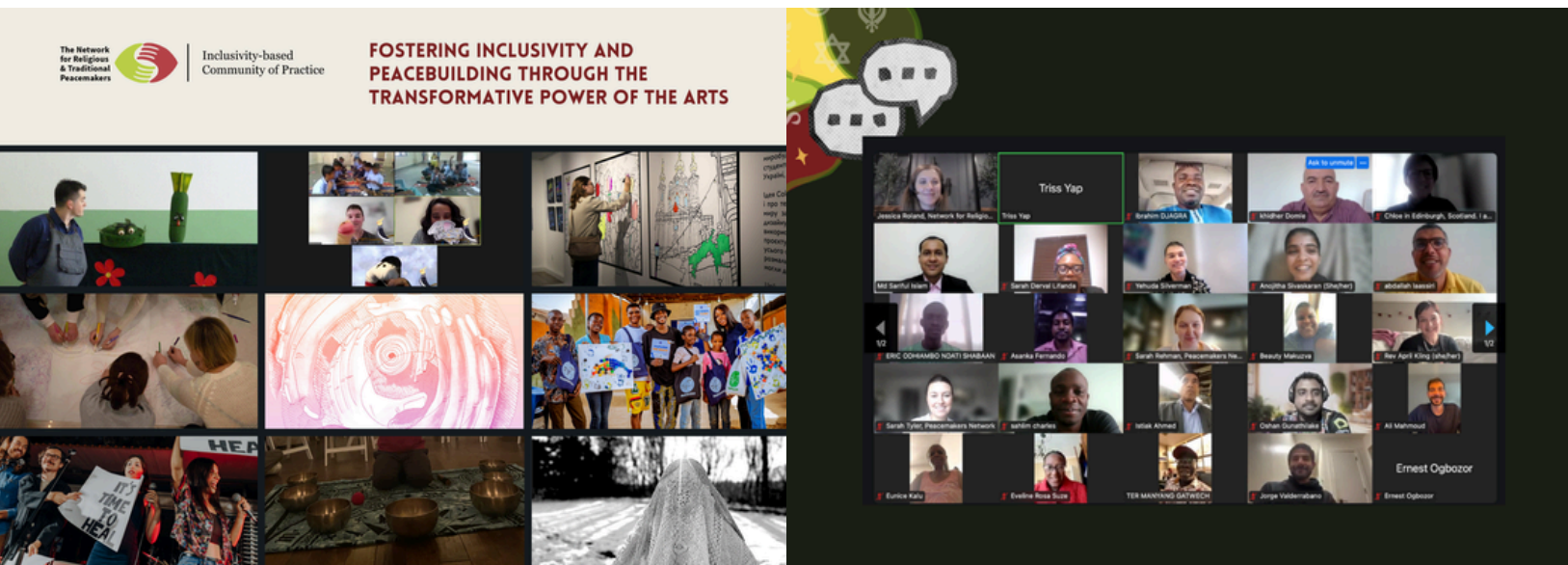


Jorge Valderrabano,
Advocacy Officer, Agora

INCLUSIVITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Fostering Inclusivity and Peacebuilding Through the Arts

Innovative Approaches to Inter-and Intra-Religious Dialogue



Collage of art pieces, installations, and interactive mediums of art for peace shared during the first Inclusivity Community of Practice meeting, 'Fostering Inclusivity and Peacebuilding Through the Arts.' April 2025.

Participants joined the webinar for the second Inclusivity Community of Practice meeting, 'Innovative Approaches to Inter-Religious and Intra-Religious Dialogue for Peace.' June 2025.

Aligned with World Art Day, the first meeting explored how the arts can serve as a transformative tool for sustainable and inclusive peacebuilding. Speakers highlighted the unique capacity of artistic expression to open new perspectives, encourage empathy, and help communities process difficult emotions, an essential foundation for holistic and long-term peace efforts.

Marking the International Day of Dialogue among Civilizations, the second meeting examined the benefits and challenges of fostering meaningful communication within and across faith communities. As global recognition of the role of faith actors in peacebuilding continues to grow, participants shared insights into strengthening partnerships with religious institutions to advance conflict resolution and social cohesion.

Advancing the Inclusion of Children in Peacebuilding Efforts

How to Strengthen Peacebuilding by Mindfully Centering Children's Experiences and Engagement

- 1**  **Create an Inclusive and Meaningful Space**

Support dialogue and peace negotiations where children's needs and involvement are systematically enshrined, emphasizing intergenerational collaboration and respect to foster understanding and build trust. Be mindful of local customs and social practices that may create power imbalances in communication, valuing the unique perspective children bring to peace processes, and ensuring a safe, respectful environment where children can effectively contribute.
- 2**  **Offer Opportunities for Children to Lead**

Create programs where children can develop and implement peacebuilding solutions, offering support to share and actualize their ideas. This process involves working with children and their representatives, listening to their needs, and communicating across each stage of development.
- 3**  **Engage Children Through Targeted Community Partnership**

Partner with children through different community-based initiatives, including engaging with schools, parents, religious leaders, and other key stakeholders to advance peacebuilding initiatives. This includes organizing and maintaining ongoing dialogues between children and peacebuilders to enhance trust and understanding, promoting learning exchange and long-term intergenerational collaboration.
- 4**  **Promote Sustainable Peace through Education and Creative Activities**

Raise awareness of peacebuilding practices and positive social values through accessible educational and media campaigns, tailored to children's ages and interests. Explore age-appropriate engagement tactics by incorporating peacebuilding principles in existing children's programs, such as art classes, prayer circles, and sports clubs, that can promote broader expression and social cohesion.
- 5**  **Raise Awareness of Children's Contributions to Peacebuilding**

Document and promote children's experiences and contributions to peacebuilding to preserve their valuable and unique perspectives.

Infographic developed for the fourth Inclusivity Community of Practice meeting on how to strengthen peacebuilding by mindfully centering children's experiences and engagement. September 2025.

The third meeting focused on the increasing need for more inclusive participation of communities and leadership opportunities, with a specific focus on the critical role of engaging children in peacebuilding efforts.. The discussion elevated concrete ways to strengthen peacebuilding through mindfully centering children's experiences and engagement through: creating meaningful and inclusive spaces, offering engagement through education and creative activities, and raising awareness of children's contributions to peacebuilding.

Integrating Mental Health into Peace and Conflict Resolution

How to Strengthen Peacebuilding by Integrating Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS)

1

Integrate Healing-Centered and Creative Approaches into Peacebuilding Practices

Embed MHPSS as a core component of peacebuilding rather than an add-on, using trauma-informed and healing-centered methods across all dialogue and reconciliation processes. Encourage the use of art, music, and other creative expressions as tools for well-being, solidarity, and collective healing.

2

Localize MHPSS Efforts through Inclusive and Empathetic Capacity Building and Partnerships

Localize MHPSS within peacebuilding by investing in the capacity of local actors in trauma-informed and psychosocial approaches and grounding interventions in community realities, including bridging partnerships with MHPSS practitioners.

3

Advance National Policy to Strengthen Systems of Support and Shared Learning

Bridge the gap between policy and practice by advancing national frameworks that embed MHPSS within peacebuilding and community development. Promote national platforms where peacebuilders, communities, and local leaders can exchange knowledge and experiences on healing and care, ensuring that insights from community practice inform national policy.

4

Invest in MHPSS Long-Term Funding and Support

Recognize that healing requires sustained engagement and adequate funding; governments and donors must move beyond short-term projects to support long-term transformation rooted in dignity, understanding, and care. Long-term investment in MHPSS not only supports lasting transformation but also builds the resilience and trust essential for enduring peace.

Infographic developed for the fourth Inclusivity Community of Practice meeting on how to strengthen peacebuilding by integrating mental health and psycho-social support. October 2025.

In recognition of World Mental Health Day, [the final meeting](#) of the year examined the vital intersection of mental health, psychosocial support (MHPSS), and peacebuilding. Speakers underscored the importance of combating burnout, supporting emotional well-being in fragile contexts, and investing in local MHPSS expertise. The session concluded with practical recommendations for integrating mental health into peace and conflict resolution programming.

ADVANCING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN PEACEBUILDING

Beyond the Margins: Centering Disability – Inclusion in the Architecture of Peace – A Global Toolkit for Advancing Persons with Disabilities in Peacebuilding

Too often, persons with disabilities are excluded from decision-making in times of conflict and recovery, despite being deeply affected by violence and already active in advancing peace within their communities. To address this issue, the Peacemakers Network, the Abilis Foundation and Finn Church Aid collaborated on a project called, ‘Strengthening Democratic and Inclusive Local Governance’ (STRONG), in 2024, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), in collaboration with Somalia’s Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) in Mogadishu, Somalia. The toolkit draws on insights from this project as a case study.

In June, the Peacemakers Network, the [Abilis Foundation](#), and [Finn Church Aid \(FCA\)](#) hosted a consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and peacebuilding organizations during the 18th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) to discuss the challenges and opportunities for advancing the inclusion of persons with disabilities in peace processes and highlighted best practices and case studies related to advancing the role of persons with disabilities in peacebuilding.



Global and framing the global disability toolkit in full and easy to read formats developed for advancing persons with disabilities in peacebuilding. December 2025.

Following the consultation, the Peacemakers Network, the Abilis Foundation, and FCA launched several new global resources, including, “Beyond the Margins: Centering Disability-Inclusion in the Architecture of Peace, A Global Toolkit for Advancing Persons with Disabilities in Peacebuilding,” and an accompanying framing guide. The toolkit outlines opportunities, recommended actions, and systemic shifts necessary to support the leadership, protection, and participation of persons with disabilities in building and sustaining peace. The framing guide supports the toolkit in providing further key historical and current information and sources on the progression of disability inclusion in peacebuilding, such as current examples of disability inclusion in peace-related National Action Plans and their significance, as well as answers to key frequently asked questions working in this cross-cutting space. In addition to these two resources, easy-to-read versions were created for persons with disabilities for both the toolkit and the framing guide.

Accompanying the launch of these new resources and in alignment with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Peacemakers Network hosted an online event to spotlight four small-grant initiatives aimed at promoting the inclusion of marginalized groups working across South and South-East Asia. In June 2025, Peacemakers Network’s Asia Working Group (AWG), with funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, awarded small grants to four grassroots initiatives to advance inclusive peacebuilding across Asia. The grants supported locally-led efforts that strengthened peacebuilders from groups of women and young women of faith, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQI+ individuals and communities. These small grants were designed to address persistent gaps in representation and participation within peace processes by investing in community-based leaders from underrepresented groups.



*'Strengthening Democratic and Inclusive Local Governance in Somalia', funded by the Government of Sweden (SIDA). 2024-2025.
Photo: Finn Church Aid.*

COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the UN Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development

The Multi-Faith Advisory Council (MFAC) to the United Nations Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development (UN IATF-Religion) is a network of 36 diverse faith-based partners that provides strategic guidance to UN agencies on issues related to religion and development, human rights, and peace. Established in 2018 by the UN IATF-Religion, the MFAC serves as a bridge between global faith communities and the UN system, helping to advance key priorities, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2025, Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Executive Director of the Peacemakers Network, served as an MFAC Co-Chair. In addition, Jessica Roland, Senior Specialist for Inclusive Peace, was named a Co-Chair of the MFAC Gender Working Group, contributing expertise to advance gender equity across multi-faith collaboration and peacebuilding efforts.



MFAC at UNGA. September 2025.

Strengthening Faith-UN Partnership at the Multi-Faith Advisory Council Retreat



Members present at the 2025 MFAC annual retreat. January 2025.

In January 2025, the UN Multi-Faith Advisory Council (MFAC) gathered at the Bahá'í International Community's UN offices for its annual retreat, reflecting on the progress of 2024 and setting priorities for the year. Members highlighted the increasing collaboration within MFAC, while discussions focused on strengthening partnerships, enhancing youth engagement, and addressing climate change. The retreat also laid the groundwork for upcoming initiatives, including the Kofi Annan Faith Briefing and proposed partnership with the Faith Solutions IMPACT Coalition.

Celebrating 30 Years of the Beijing Declaration: A High-Level Faith-Multi-Faith Reception on Gender Equality and Empowerment



Debra Boudreaux, CEO of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation and Co-Chair of the Multi-Faith Advisory Council (MFAC), welcoming attendees of the High-Level Multi-Faith Reception. March 2025.

In March, the Gender Working Group of the MFAC, alongside the Joint Initiative for Strategic Religious Action (JISRA) program with partners Mensen met een Missie, the Peacemakers Network, Tearfund, Faith to Action Network, ACT Alliance, and the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD), hosted a reception to celebrate 30 years of the Beijing Declaration. The reception provided perspectives from key United Nations, government, and faith actors on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, assessing the challenges to the achievement of gender equality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

“Women have taken powerful strides forward and, as far as I’m concerned, we’re not going back.”

–Dr. Nkeiruka Didigu, Senior Strategic Partnerships Specialist at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Call for ‘Unity, Urgency, and Courage’



Closing photo for the MFAC Kofi Annan Faith briefing. July 2025.

In alignment with the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development, convened the fifth Kofi Annan Faith Briefings in New York City focused on ‘Advancing the Realization of the 2030 Agenda through Meaningful Engagement of Faith Actors.’ The briefing served as a platform for MFAC members and relevant stakeholders to continue joint collaboration to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals and progress toward the 2030 Agenda.

Despite the backlash in global humanitarian funding, participants emphasized a few recommendations for action:

1. Include faith-based organizations as formal stakeholders in governance, peace processes, and international decision-making.
2. Invest in strategic storytelling and impact measurement through documenting faith-based contributions using both qualitative storytelling and quantitative metrics aligned with UN frameworks.
3. Anchor all efforts, environmental, peacebuilding, and developmental, in a vision that centers the people and communities most affected.

“They can take away our funding, but not our partnerships.”

–Simona Cruciani, UN-IATF Co-Chair and Head of Programmes at the UN Office on Genocide Prevention

Faith at UNGA: UN Multi-Faith Advisory Council and Reimagining Interreligious Cooperation

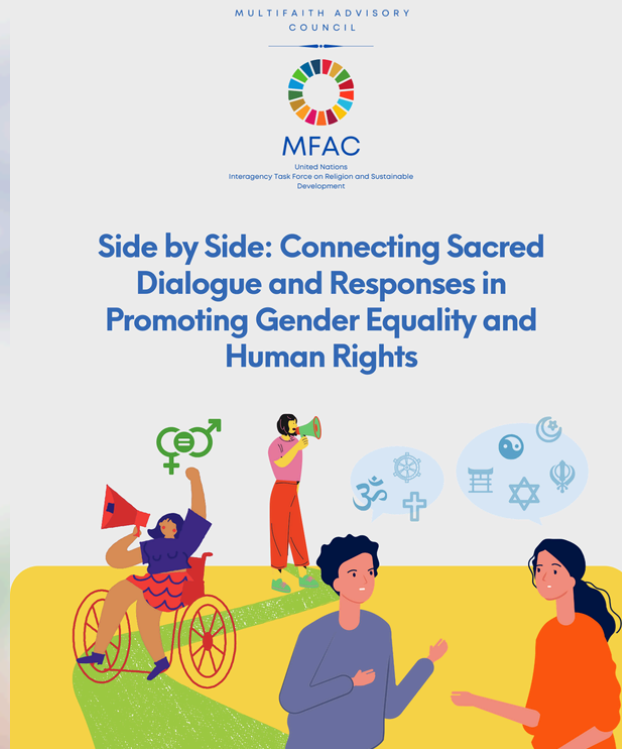


Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi speaks about inclusive peacebuilding on the panel with Dr. Nkeiruka Didigu. September 2025.

In September as part of the 80th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Peacemakers Network joined a [high-level panel](#), which served as an opportunity to highlight the organization's work to advance the meaningful participation of women and youth in peacebuilding and affirming the critical role of religious and interreligious communities in achieving just and lasting peace. The event brought together diverse stakeholders, faith leaders, government representatives, international organizations, civil society, and youth to examine how cross-sector collaboration can address the root causes of conflict, promote social cohesion, and contribute to long-term peace.

The event was followed by a high-level multi-faith reception to engage in dialogue on faith commitments in commemoration of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly under the theme 'Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights.'

Side by Side: Connecting Sacred Dialogue and Responses in Promoting Gender Equality and Human Rights



Regional Consultation on Advancing the Implementation of the Marrakech Declaration in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco. October 2025.

In September, the Gender Working Group of the Multi-Faith Advisory Council (MFAC) and members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development co-hosted a roundtable event on the margins of the 80th United Nations General Assembly with UN Agencies, faith-based organizations, and civil society members to strengthen cross-sectoral dialogue and highlight good practices, success stories, challenges, and on-the-ground experience that demonstrate positive faith-based responses to advancing the Beijing+30 commitments.

Following the backlash on gender equality at CSW69, the MFAC Gender Working Group conducted research analyzing Member State rhetoric, non-governmental organizations submissions, and civil society discourse during CSW69 to equip faith-based organizations with insights, language, and strategies to respond to the pushback on women's rights. Building on these findings, an advocacy brief was developed, aimed to initiate dialogue among faith-based and multilateral actors on how to collectively use positive faith-based examples to illustrate how to counter groups challenging rights-based approaches.

MFAC Common Pledge to Advance Women and Young Women of Faith Mediators

MULTIFAITH ADVISORY
COUNCIL



Multi-Faith Advisory Council
Peace and Security and
Gender Working Groups

Case Studies on Women and Young Women of Faith Mediators

Women and Young Women of Faith Mediators

The Peace and Security Working Group together with the Gender Working Group of the Multi-Faith Advisory Council (MFAC) strongly affirm the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution as envisioned in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSC 1325). On the 25th anniversary of the UNSC 1325, the two working groups held the event, "A Common Pledge: Advancing the Unique Role of Women and Young Women of Faith Mediators," showcasing examples and good practice from women and young women of faith who have been engaged in mediation in different contexts across the world.

The main objective of this initiative is to share good practices, challenges and to profile women and young women of faith directly involved in conflict mediation at different levels. The case studies have been compiled into a publication to inform advocacy within the two working groups, the wider MFAC and beyond.

Faith-based networks, organizations and individuals from all regions of the world are invited to submit case studies of women and young women of faith mediators.

Key Takeaways from Case Studies

Challenges:

Main challenges women and young women of faith mediators face in peace mediation processes:

- Prejudices, mistrust and preconceived ideas regarding other faith traditions;
- Bias against women as leaders for mediations, dialogue, and in the community. Entrenched patriarchal ideals further women's discrimination;
- Lack of resources (financial, time, recognition, transportation);
- Age and adult centrism for young women;
- Re-escalation of violence in certain areas; and
- Pushback to women's rights.

Needs:

In order to further women and young women of faith as mediators in the peace mediation processes, the following needs are addressed:

- Financial resources;
- Capacity-sharing and training;
- Better data collection; and
- Access to women and young women of faith peace mediator networks.

Case studies on Women and Young Women of Faith Mediators two-pager developed by the Multi-Faith Advisory Council Peace and Security and Gender Working Groups. October 2025.

In alignment with the UN Secretary-General's Common Pledge for Women's Participation, the Multi-Faith Advisory Council co-hosted a high-level event, "[A Common Pledge: Advancing the Unique Role of Women and Young Women of Faith Mediators](#)," bringing together faith leaders, UN representatives, and civil society to highlight and strengthen the role of women and young women of faith in advancing sustainable peace, in recognition of the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The event showcased stories and [case study examples](#) of women and young women of faith mediators and their work.

ADDITIONAL UN MOMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Centering Indigenous Peacebuilding at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

In April, the Peacemakers Network participated in the 24th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), including events hosted by the Global Network of Indigenous Peacebuilders, Mediators, and Negotiators. Peacemakers Network’s UN Representative Hannah Sattler spoke at the, “For Peace and Planetary Health” strategy meeting, emphasizing that Indigenous Peoples’ rights, particularly self-determination and land rights, are essential to global peace and security. 2025’s Forum centered on advancing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and highlighted Indigenous leadership in peacebuilding, climate justice, and human rights. Key takeaways included: 1) the importance of Indigenous frameworks rooted in land, spirituality, and governance; 2) recognizing Indigenous women and youth as active peace leaders; and 3) uplifting Indigenous knowledge as critical to addressing today’s global crisis.



Members of the Global Network of Indigenous Peacebuilders. April 2025.

Guiding the Future of Peacebuilding: Peacemakers Network's Steering Group Meets in New York



Members of the Peacemakers Network Steering Group. May 2025.

The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United States hosted the Peacemakers Network Steering Group for two in-person meetings at the expert and principal levels in New York City in May. Bringing together representatives from multilateral, governmental, and non-governmental organizations, the Steering Group continues to offer invaluable guidance on how the Peacemakers Network can support and elevate the role of religious and traditional actors in peacebuilding and peace mediation. The expert-level Steering Group members validated emerging themes for the Peacemakers Network 2026-2031 Strategy, before the principals offering guidance on how the themes can impact the Peacemakers Network's initiatives for the next five years. The Steering Group highlighted the importance of providing protection for peacebuilders, encouraged meaningful and increased engagement with Indigenous Peoples and traditional actors, and stressed the necessity that inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized populations remain a key element of the Peacemakers Network's continued peace work.

Peacemakers Network at the 25th Anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security



Second Event Panel, From Left to Right: Ms. Harriette Williams Bright, WPS-HA Compact Lead and WPS Focal Points Network Secretariat Coordinator for UN Women as Moderator; Ambassador Penda Naanda, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations in New York for Closing Remarks; Ms. Jasmin Nario-Galace, Senior Program Director, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP); Ms. Mpule Ngetsi, African Youth Ambassador for Peace; Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Executive Director of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers; and Ms. Helena Kuzee, Deputy Director, Ministry of International Relations and Trade for Namibia as Moderator. October 2025.

In light of the 25th Anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), the government of Namibia hosted, “The Power of WPS: Advancing Inclusive Decision-Making in Peace and Security,” brought together high-level leaders and advocates at the United Nations to reaffirm the importance of women’s leadership in peace and security. The gathering celebrated progress made under the WPS agenda and called for collective, intergenerational action to accelerate its implementation. During the event, Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Executive Director of the Peacemaker Network, spoke on the vital role of networks in advancing the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

Africa	37
Asia	42
Euopre	56



AFRICA

Supporting Religious and Traditional Leaders' Election Preparedness and Peace Efforts in Central African Republic

The Central African Republic (CAR) has faced repeated cycles of political instability, armed conflict, and humanitarian crises. Although recent years have seen some improvements in security and governance, tensions remain, and elections often heighten political polarization. In 2025, CAR had its local elections scheduled for August 2025 and general elections for December 2025. Political tensions escalated following the July 2023 constitutional referendum, which abolished presidential term limits and extended the presidential term from five to seven years. With general elections scheduled for December 2025, significant challenges remained in ensuring a free, fair, and democratic electoral process, leading some to call for a boycott.

In this volatile context, religious and traditional leaders have played a critical role, leveraging their moral authority and trust to shape the country's social and political landscape, often acting as intermediaries between the government, the people and international organizations. They have been vital in mediating between conflicting parties, promoting interfaith dialogue, and advocating for peaceful coexistence and social cohesion in CAR. Their established presence in communities enables them to act as trusted agents, facilitating communication and understanding among diverse groups.

Considering this background, FCA and the Peacemakers Network organised a 3-day consultative workshop to develop a Plan of Action in April 2025 hosting ~35 religious and traditional leaders from different regions and denominations to discuss and, outline the concrete actions that the participants will jointly take to support the peaceful election process, preparation, during and after elections across communities.



Peacemakers Network convened a Consultative Workshop with high-level religious and traditional leaders in Bangui in April 2025 to discuss election preparedness and concrete actions for peaceful transition. April 2025.

Peacemakers Network Convened a High-Level Panel on Geopolitical Competition and Conflict Dynamics in the Horn of Africa: Sudan as a Battleground of a Multipolar World



Representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Finn Church Aid, the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, and the Peacemakers Network hosted a seminar in Helsinki, Finland on Sudan's conflict within the wider context in the Horn of Africa. October 2025.

The Peacemakers Network, together with Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), Finn Church Aid and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland hosted a seminar in Helsinki on Sudan's drastic situation and conflict within the Horn of Africa with a solution-oriented mindset. Leading Sudanese experts and international stakeholders discussed how external actors, including the European Union, can better support local humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts. The panel highlighted the importance of linking grassroots initiatives with broader regional and global dynamics shaping the conflict and prospects for peace.

AFRICA WORKING GROUP



Joy Gitau, Executive Director of Amani Communities Africa



Hayatu Nura Ashafa, Co-Executive Director of Interfaith Mediation Centre



Meg-Ann Lenoble, General Manager of Cordoba Peace Institute



Nyasha Freeman Musikambesa, P/CVE Practitioner



Chukwudi Njoku, Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta



Daoda Kanneh, Development Initiative of West Africa



Sr. Veronica Onyeansi, Executive Director of Women Interfaith Council



Sesame Mogotsi, Founder of Act4Impact Botswana



Birtukan Mitiku, Peacebuilding Officer of Catholic Relief Services

Africa Working Group 2025 Steering Committee.

The Africa Working Group fosters collaboration among various international, regional, national, and local actors working across Africa with the shared goal of increasing the active collaboration between religious and traditional actors and other key stakeholders in peacebuilding, mediation, and conflict transformation. The Africa Working Group advances communication, networking, advocacy, planning, and knowledge exchange and can serve as the catalyst for joint activities and the financing of effective consortiums.

Seeds of Peace: The Power of Peace Education in Africa

Peace Education in Context: Lessons from Group Discussions



Infographic developed for the Africa Working Group meeting on peace education in context: lessons from group discussion. April 2025.

While many successful peace education models exist, they are not widely published or adapted for different contexts. Additionally, access to training materials remains a challenge for many organizations. Therefore, in April, the Africa Working Group brought together practitioners and experts through an online meeting to discuss strategies and recommendations to advance peace education.

Peace education is emerging as a vital tool for fostering stability and coexistence in regions affected by conflict. The session highlighted a collaborative effort by Teachers Without Borders, Finn Church Aid, and the Uganda Muslim Youth Development, the [Peace Education Manual](#). To ensure sustainability of peace education efforts, participants emphasized the need to strengthen teacher and student engagement, expand peace club networks, and foster collaboration between communities and policymakers.

Advancing Climate, Faith, and Peacebuilding Efforts in Africa

The Speakers



Imam Muhammad Ashafa
Co-founder of Kaduna
Interfaith Mediation Centre
and Peacemakers in Action



Rev. Dr. Simon Masiga
Church Priest and Associate
Lecturer in Religion and Peace
Studies at Makerere University



Rev. Zelda Cristina Cossa
Pastor at the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in
Mozambique



Pastor James Wuye
Co-founder of Kaduna
Interfaith Mediation Centre
and Peacemakers in Action



Nejat Mehdi Oumer
Women and Youth Focal
Person, Ethiopia
Interfaith Development,
Dialogue in Action



Dalitso Muronya
Country Director for
One World, One Family
Foundation

Building on the vital work of religious actors and faith-based organizations, the Africa Working Group convened a meeting in September 2025, expanding on the Peacemakers Network's Sacred Earth multimedia climate project, holding discussions with religious actors and community representatives from Africa who shared their experiences in mediating conflicts and promoting ecological peacebuilding through a faith-based lens.

The distinguished panel included Pastor James Wuye, Imam Muhammad Ashafa, Rev. Dr. Simon Masiga, Mrs. Nejat Mehdi Oumer and Mr. Dalitso Muronya, sharing various strategies for community resilience against climate-related challenges, including water access, economic growth, and interfaith collaboration. These strategies emphasize the crucial role of youth in climate action and peacebuilding efforts. Participants discussed integrating climate change education into religious institutions and highlighted the importance of using religious texts and traditional knowledge to promote environmental stewardship among young people and religious leaders.

ASIA

Empowering Migrant Youth in Southeast Asia

Migration continues to shape the lives of young people across Myanmar, Thailand, and the broader region, bringing both opportunities and challenges. Many youth migrants face job insecurity, discrimination, and social exclusion, highlighting the urgent need for programs that foster resilience and inclusion. In response, Finn Church Aid and the Peacemakers Network, with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, launched 'Youth on the Move: A Regional Approach to Resilience' – an initiative designed to equip Myanmar migrant youth with the tools they need to navigate migration safely and build a more secure future.



From Myanmar to Thailand, young people are learning, healing, and leading with compassion in Bangkok, Thailand. September 2025.

Building Resilient Futures of Myanmar Youth in Thailand



The fellowship built a leadership role of youth to express their voices towards challenges, aspirations and prospects in Mae Sot, Thailand. August 2025.

Ongoing conflict, political repression, and economic collapse since the 2021 coup have uprooted entire communities, with young people forced to flee both internally and across borders. In response to these challenges, FCA Thailand, the Peacemakers Network, and a network of local partners in Thailand hosted Youth Social Cohesion & Collective Action Fellowship workshops as part of the Youth on the Move project, convened 86 Myanmar youths across 3 localities in Thailand - Mae Sot, Chiang Mai and Bangkok - to exchange knowledge and foster networks of solidarity. By strengthening practical agency, Myanmar youth are rebuilding their lives while knitting together more compassionate, resilient communities.

Youth-led Volunteer Service to Building Solidarity in Thailand



A Myanmar youth volunteer distributes necessities to novices at a temple in Mae Sot district, Tak province. December 2025.

FCA Thailand, in collaboration with Spirit in Education Movement (SEM) and Thai Volunteer Service (TVS), brought together 35 Myanmar and Thai youth for a collaborative volunteer work in Mae Sot, Tak province, Thailand. They worked together on community services by sorting medical kits and medicine for displaced people and cleaning a temple library for novice monks. Volunteerism offers an empowering entry point for youth on the move to engage in social causes, strengthen leadership, and build networks with civil society. Through volunteer and cultural exchange activities, youth can foster empathy, mutual understanding, and cross-border solidarity. They can share their stories, bridge cultures, and plant seeds of compassion within their host communities. Each act of service becomes a step toward empathy and mutual understanding, turning the journey of displacement into one of growth, leadership, and collective healing—transforming their experiences of displacement into action for positive change.

Youth Migration Dialogue: Safer Pathways for Myanmar Youth in Thailand



Representatives from civil society, academics, business, government agencies, and youth join the Migration Youth Dialogue: Challenges and Prospects for Myanmar Youth – Collaborating for safer and more inclusive migration pathways. Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand. December 2025.

On International Migrants' Day, FCA Thailand and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, in collaboration with Spirit in Education Movement, the Center for Social Development Studies and the Asian Research Center for Migration of Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, hosted the "Youth Migration Dialogue: Challenges and Prospects for Myanmar Youth," bringing together Myanmar youth, government, academia, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector. The event highlighted how Myanmar youth are essential to Thailand's labor market but face legal, language, and skills barriers, as well as discrimination and limited access to services. The panel discussion, including young Myanmar migrants, emphasized the need for safer and more affordable regular migration channels, fair working conditions, better recognition of education and skills, and meaningful youth participation in decisions that affect their lives. Participants closed the day with a shared commitment to turn evidence and dialogue into concrete action for more inclusive migration pathways.

Labour Market Assessment: Improve Safe and Decent Work Pathways for Myanmar Youth in Thailand through Evidence-based Research



Myanmar Youth Migrants in Thailand: Strengthening Skills, Protection and Economic Inclusion. Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment report. December 2025.

FCA Thailand commissioned a Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment to assess migration dynamics, labour market participation, and livelihood strategies of Myanmar youth in Thailand. Drawing on insights from migrants, employers, officials, civil society organizations, and financial institutions, the study looks at labour conditions and structural barriers such as documentation, financial access, entrepreneurship, and skills development. Findings show that Myanmar youth are vital to Thailand's economy—especially in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, hospitality, and care work—yet many face a persistent skills mismatch and limited access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Because formal migration channels are costly and complex, most rely on unofficial pathways, increasing risks of arrest, exploitation, and exclusion from services, despite Thailand's generally robust labour laws. The assessment calls for stronger inter-ministerial coordination, youth-friendly skills pathways, improved legal protection and streamlined procedures, better financial inclusion, proactive employer engagement, and integrated data systems to support safe migration, decent work, and social inclusion for Myanmar youth. Learn more about the Labour Market Assessment.

Peacemakers Network Honored at the Congress at the VIII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Kazakhstan



President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Kemeluly Tokayev (right), presents the Honorary Medal of the Congress during the VIII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. The award was accepted on behalf of the Peacemakers Network by Executive Director Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi (left). October 2025.

The Peacemakers Network was awarded an Honorary Medal of the Congress at the VIII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan. The award was presented to Executive Director Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi by the President of Kazakhstan in recognition of the Peacemakers Network's global work fostering interreligious dialogue and collaboration.

“This honor is a powerful recognition of the transformative impact that interreligious collaboration can have on communities around the world. At the Peacemakers Network, we believe that sustained dialogue across faiths is essential to building resilience, peaceful societies.”

–Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Executive Director of the Peacemakers Network

ASIA WORKING GROUP

Small Grants to Advance Inclusive Peacebuilding Across Asia

From June–December 2025, the Peacemakers Network’s Asia Working Group (AWG), with support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, funded four grassroots initiatives to advance inclusive peacebuilding across Asia. The small grants back locally led efforts that strengthen mediators and peacebuilders from underrepresented groups: (1) women and young women of faith, (2) persons with disabilities, and (3) LGBTQI+ individuals and communities. These grants address persistent gaps in representation and participation by equipping community leaders with tools, visibility, and networks to influence dialogue, mediation, and local peace processes.

Digital 4 Peace: Empowering Persons with Disabilities from Exclusion to Influence in Thailand’s Deep South



Ms. Apichaya Thaichana (center) and Ms. Ameenoh Arong, (left) Project Team empowered PWDs transforming them from passive recipients of aid into active agents of peacebuilding in three deep south provinces of Thailand in collaboration with Digital 4 Peace by Maruf Chebueraheng (right). September 2025.

The PeaceAbility project organized a transformative September 2025 workshop at Prince of Songkla University's Pattani Campus, addressing the exclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) from peace and development decision-making in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces. 45 attendees, including 31 PWDs, developed the "Declaration of Persons with Disabilities for Inclusive Peace and Development," outlining six core demands. This policy document was presented to regional authorities, who made commitments to implementation, such as inviting PWD representatives to advisory councils and pledging to embed disability inclusion in plans and budgets. The project significantly boosted participants' advocacy confidence and rights awareness, elevated disability issues in local policy, and launched a digital platform for ongoing community-driven accountability. This replicable model for inclusive initiatives was made possible through a coalition of local and international partners.

Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS): Promotion of Peacebuilder Advocates with Disabilities in Grassroots (PADG), Bangladesh



Training on Peacebuilder Advocate with Disabilities. September 2025.

In September 2025, BPKS trained 42 Peacebuilder Advocates with Disabilities (47% women) through a seven-day residential program in Dhaka, building leadership, mediation, and advocacy skills. Trainees adopted a shared Declaration and, with OPD partners, formed eight divisional Peacebuilding Advocacy Teams (56 members total) to drive local dialogue, conflict resolution, and inclusion. A Facebook group and eight divisional WhatsApp groups sustain coordination and reporting, while extensive local media coverage (~30 TV/print outlets) elevated visibility. The PADG model—merit-based selection, intensive training, nationwide and systemic team formation, and digital follow-through—offers a scalable blueprint for disability-inclusive peacebuilding across Bangladesh.

Organization for the Women and Disable Care (OWDC): Strengthening Inclusive Peacebuilding through Local Leadership in Multan, Pakistan



Capacity building of CARP members at union council level as part of the Organization for the Women and Disable Care initiative. July 2025.

From July – December 2025, OWDC advanced inclusive, locally led peacebuilding across five Union Councils in Multan. The project trained 400 grassroots actors—women and young women of faith, youth, persons with disabilities, religious minorities, and community leaders—in inclusive dialogue, conflict sensitivity, basic mediation, and rights-based practice, engaging 542 participants across activities. OWDC established the Multan Alliance for Inclusive Peace & Rights (MAIPR, 25 members) and piloted Union Council-level Civic Alliances for Rights & Peace (CARP) as standing coordination platforms and launched community-led Social Action Projects to address local tensions through dialogue and civic engagement. A sample training showed a 60% average knowledge gain (pre/post), and structured forums strengthened cooperation with Union Council representatives, faith leaders, and the District Civil Society Network. The OWDC model—targeted skills-building, fixed local platforms (MAIPR/CARP), and immediate application through Social Action Projects—offers a practical, low-cost approach to embedding inclusion in community peace processes.

Religion, Culture, and Peace Laboratory (RCP Lab) / Payap University: From the Margins to Empowerment – Building Inclusive Justice & Peace through Storytelling, Dialogue, and Advocacy



Women of Faith was one of several themes led by Rey Ty, Ph.D. (left) and a project leader of IRCP Lab, Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand during August-October 2026.

From August–October 2025, IRCP ran an 11-event series that brought women of faith, Buddhist monastics and youth, LGBTQIA+ leaders, and persons with disabilities from storytelling to shared action. The program combined thematic storytelling, interfaith dialogue with a six-site walking pilgrimage, and skills workshops in mediation and peacebuilding, culminating in a co-refined, participant-owned Statement of Principles for teaching, programming, and advocacy. Hosted at Payap University, each session drew between 24–56 participants – reaching an estimated 300 participants. Sessions strengthened cross-community ties and increased speakers’ and participants’ confidence to apply dialogue and mediation tools. This low-cost, replicable IRCP model—safe inclusive storytelling, interfaith encounter, practical skills, and a shared framework—offers a clear pathway for inclusive peacebuilding.

2025 Asia Working Group Country Strategic Workshops: Advancing Member-Led National Strategies



iBHAP initiative as part of the 2025 Asia Small Grants.

From June–December 2025, the Peacemakers Network’s Asia Working Group (AWG), with support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, supported two member-led country strategic workshops to strengthen national peace ecosystems. These in-country processes convened members and key stakeholders to analyze conflict dynamics, map ongoing efforts, identify collaboration and funding opportunities, and set practical, shared priorities.

Each workshop produced concrete, member-owned outputs—action plans, coordination mechanisms, and next steps—to guide national engagement and inform regional learning. By centering local leadership and context, the workshops translate the Network’s inclusive peacebuilding goals into actionable country strategies and partnerships.

National Council of Churches in Bangladesh (NCCB): Faith in Action – Spiritual Leadership for Peacebuilding & Coexistence



NCCB Conference. September 2025.

Between September and November 2025 in Dhaka and surrounding areas, NCCB convened a focused country-level process to align faith leaders and grassroots actors around practical, member-led peace priorities. In line with advancing its national strategy in Bangladesh, NCCB brought together clergy, youth, women, and community workers for a three-day workshop (Oct 9–11, CCDB Hope Foundation, Savar) and a multi-faith consultation (Nov 15, The Daily Star). Thirty-seven participants completed training on conflict analysis and resolution using the Conflict-Tree model, explored interfaith perspectives on peace across Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, and Christian traditions, and mapped local tensions and resources. The consultation introduced a “service-based dialogue” approach, emphasizing concrete cooperation for community welfare, and gathered inputs from imams, priests, monks, pundits, youth, and CSO representatives on priorities, risks, and roles.

The process produced a draft Interfaith Action Plan, a nascent Cooperation Network of grassroots peacemakers, and practical modalities—most notably “courtyard meetings” at neighborhood level—to counter misinformation, surface local concerns, and expand participation beyond formal venues. Participants made personal pledges to model non-violence and justice, and identified immediate improvements, including ensuring women’s representation on future panels and tailoring youth engagement with appropriate media tools and soft-skills development. Together, these steps respond to the workshop mandate: convene national actors, conduct conflict and effort mapping, set collaboration and advocacy priorities, and define actionable next steps owned by members and partners, with a pathway to inform broader network learning and future programming.

Institute of Buddhist Management for Happiness and Peace Foundation (IBHAP): Youth-led Storytelling for Peace in the Midst of Climate Crisis - Thailand



Youth-led Storytelling for Peace in the Midst of Climate Crisis engagement convened by Network Member the Institute of Buddhist Management for Happiness and Peace Foundation. December 2025.

In December 2025, IBHAP convened a three-day country strategic workshop in Bangkok to position youth storytelling as a practical tool for peacebuilding amid escalating climate impacts, especially in areas heavily impacted by the climate crisis, such as in Thailand's Southernmost Districts. Seventeen youth and young adults from across the Asia-Pacific gathered for interactive workshops, dialogues, and site visits hosted at IBHAP, Wat Saket, and Benchakitti Forest Park. Sessions built core competencies in narrative design and multimedia storytelling; examined climate-peace-rights linkages and impacts on vulnerable groups; and explored fundraising for climate action. Case inputs covered ecocide, migration and refugees along the Thailand-Myanmar border, lessons from Bangkok Climate Action Week, and a social enterprise model "from waste to value." A site visit to Benchakitti showcased urban nature-based solutions and biodiversity restoration as sources for collective "Story of Us" narratives.

The workshop delivered member-led outcomes aligned with the country's strategic workshop objectives: it convened stakeholders, surfaced a shared analysis of climate risks and social inequalities, and generated concrete outputs and next steps. Participants produced and presented personal and collective stories (Story of Self/Us), formed a stronger youth network for ongoing collaboration, and reported higher confidence to use storytelling in advocacy, dialogue, and community initiatives. Despite a last-minute venue change due to flooding in the affected area in Thailand's Deep South, the team adapted the program and completed all core activities in Bangkok. Follow-up includes continued peer collaboration and a planned magazine compiling workshop stories. The initiative was delivered with the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers' support and in partnership with SEA Y4H, Religions for Peace Thailand, KAICIID Dialogue Centre, and Cerita Caravan.

Asia Working Group 2025 Impact



Top left and right photos: Peacemakers Network Asia Working Group representatives and Network members and partners at the Future Action Summit led by Network members Hussain Haider and Hiba Ikram. August 2025.

Bottom photo: International conference on Myanmar in Chiang Mai. August 2025.

The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers' Asia Working Group continued to play a strategic role in regional peacebuilding discussions throughout 2025. The Working Group supported the member-led Future Action Summit (FAS) in Thailand – led by Hussain Haider and Hiba Ikram – where Regional Programme Manager Divya Moorjani and key Network Member Venerable Napan Thawornbanjob participated as speakers, strengthening connections with youth leaders and SDG advocates from across Asia. The Network also maintained its presence in key interfaith forums, representing the Asia Network in the International Forum on Buddhist-Muslim Relations and the Faith for Rights CommUNITY of Practice meeting in Bangkok. Additionally, the Asia Working Group joined as an observer at the INEB Annual Advisory and Executive Meeting, allowing for valuable networking and coordination with country-level networks from Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, and Sri Lanka, among others. The Working Group also participated in the International Conference on Myanmar in Chiang Mai, contributing to discussions on systematic advocacy strategies for democratization and peace with justice in Myanmar and to recommendations for national, regional, and international response mechanisms. Through these engagements, the Asia Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers has remained a visible and influential voice in strategic regional peacebuilding efforts throughout 2025.

EUROPE

Supporting Resilience and Interfaith Cooperation in Ukraine

Over the past year, the Peacemakers Network has continued to deepen its engagement with religious leaders and faith-based peacebuilders in Ukraine, supporting efforts that strengthen resilience, interfaith cooperation, and community cohesion, and that foster a culture of dialogue amid the prolonged war. Building on collaborative initiatives, the Peacemakers Network has worked alongside its Ukrainian member, [Dialogue in Action](#), to convene an inclusive platform that brings together diverse religious actors for structured reflection on the evolving context, mutual learning, and strengthened interfaith collaboration in support of social cohesion. Through this engagement, religious actors have been supported to share experiences, strengthen relationships, and jointly reflect topical themes under cohesive societies. This effort aims to amplify the positive contributions of faith-based actors in reinforcing societal resilience and eventually, ensure their voices are recognized and resourced within broader peacebuilding and recovery processes.

This engagement was further reinforced in October 2025 through a [high-level visit to Kyiv](#) by the Peacemakers Network's Executive Director, Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi. The delegation met with government officials, including Deputy Head of the Presidential Office, Olena Kovalska, and religious leaders to discuss religious freedom, humanitarian needs, and education support efforts. Meetings with the State Service for Ethnopolitics and the Ukrainian Council of Churches highlighted the vital role of religious organizations in promoting peace and community resilience. [The visit underscored the Peacemakers Network's continued solidarity with Ukraine](#) and its vision of building a more inclusive and peaceful future. Through these engagements, the Peacemakers Network reaffirmed its solidarity with Ukraine and its sustained commitment to interreligious cooperation that contributes to peace, stability, and inclusive recovery.



Representatives of the Peacemakers Network, FCA, and FCA Ukraine, with the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations. October 2025.

EUROPE WORKING GROUP

Correlation Between Faith, Mental Health Support and Peace



Invest in MHPSS Long-Term Funding and Support

Recognize that healing requires sustained engagement and adequate funding; governments and donors must move beyond short-term projects to support long-term transformation rooted in dignity, understanding, and care. Invest in multi-year, well-coordinated partnerships that link MHPSS expertise with peacebuilding initiatives, ensuring approaches are locally grounded and sustainable beyond individual projects. Long-term investment in MHPSS not only supports lasting transformation but also builds the resilience and trust essential for enduring peace.



From the infographic created post working group event on how to strengthen peacebuilding by integrating mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). October 2025.

The Europe Working Group convened an online meeting titled “Correlation between Faith, Mental Health Support and Peace” to examine how trauma, faith, and peacebuilding intersect, with a particular focus on the ongoing war in Ukraine and its psychosocial impacts. The session brought together members of Peacemakers Network to explore how unaddressed conflict-related trauma can hinder reconciliation and sustainable peace. Expert inputs from Dialogue in Action and Mediators Beyond Borders International highlighted that trauma affects mental, social, and spiritual wellbeing and that faith communities play a crucial role in coping and resilience, as increased reliance on religious coping strategies—such as seeking support from clergy, prayer, and community belonging—was associated with lower stress and anxiety among war-affected populations.

Discussions on trauma-informed peacebuilding emphasized collaboration with local partners, culturally sensitive approaches, and the importance of community, safety, and empowerment in healing processes. Participants also noted key challenges, including limited religious literacy among institutions, the need for stronger cooperation between faith actors and mental health professionals, and the risk of addressing forgiveness or reconciliation prematurely in active conflict settings. Overall, the meeting underscored that integrating mental health considerations and faith-sensitive, trauma-informed approaches is essential for effective peacebuilding and long-term resilience.