



**CONCILIATION  
RESOURCES**  
working together for peace



# People building peace

## Annual Report 2017

# About us

Conciliation Resources is an independent international organisation working with people in conflict to prevent violence, resolve conflicts and promote peaceful societies.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is of a world where people work together to resolve conflicts and promote peaceful and inclusive societies.

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## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide practical support to help people affected by violent conflict achieve lasting peace. We draw on our shared experiences to improve peacebuilding policies and practice worldwide.

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## OUR VALUES

### Collaboration

We believe that everybody affected by conflict has a stake in peace. We work to create peaceful and inclusive change within societies in partnership with local people, to respond to violence, inequality, injustice and exclusion.

### Creativity

We believe that peacebuilding needs to be flexible and adaptive to the specific and evolving realities of each conflict context. We support innovative ways to influence change, and we share insights from people's lived experience globally to build collective knowledge and expertise.

### Challenge

We believe that peace can only come about if people have a chance to better understand their conflict and if difficult conversations are held between allies and adversaries. We stand alongside those who, with courage and integrity, reach out across conflict divides.

### Commitment

We believe that building sustainable peace takes time. That's why we make long-term commitments to support just and resilient transitions from protracted conflict to lasting peace.

# Welcome

Visiting 'Home Place', a centre dedicated to the life and work of the Irish Nobel laureate poet Seamus Heaney, I was drawn to the following words of his:

*History says, don't hope on this side of the grave. But then, once in a lifetime the longed for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme. So hope for a great sea change on the far side of revenge. Believe that a further shore is reachable from here. Believe in miracles, and cures and healing wells.*

This report offers powerful testimony to the triumph of hope over history. It bears witness to places where hope and history have rhymed. Poetic though it may sound, the work of building peace is often demanding, un-remitting, hidden and frustrating. The work is never easy, nor its objectives naïve. Resources for peacebuilding remain a fraction of those devoted to military spending. Yet the reality is that resources devoted to conflict resolution, are both practical and cost effective.

In a recent Conciliation Resources survey, 60% of the UK public indicated they would support more investment in peacebuilding. In our crisis ridden world, we do need faith that the *tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme*. But if a *further shore is reachable from here*, it can only be so through the continued resourcing of governments and institutions, and insisted on by each of us committed to a world free from conflict.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Price'.

**Rt Rev Peter Price**  
Chair of Trustees

I reflect back on the past year with pride and concern. Pride at the determined work of Conciliation Resources' partners and staff in their efforts to build a more peaceful world. Concern because we cannot hide from the complexity of conflict and the violence it begets around the globe. Yet calling conflict complex can hide the brutal simplicity of people being killed and communities destroyed by persistent violence. This is simply wrong. It can also hide the fact that there are myriad ways to prevent and resolve conflict – and this annual report presents some of those.

Conciliation Resources works with individuals, communities and local, national and international organisations, to bring about change in over a dozen conflicts around the world. Our staff and partners demonstrate patience in the face of persistent obstacles to peace, and impatience in the knowledge that efforts to confront violent conflict in creative and new ways must not cease.

At the heart of this work is a combination of relationships, ideas and action. Relationships that are tested by the toughest of circumstances and ideas that motivate and inspire people to seek change. We see people taking action to cross physical and psychological boundaries; to analyse and advocate for new approaches. We hold dear the need to constantly learn from what we and others do, in order to do it better.

Our work is not done in isolation. I would like to thank all those donors and policymakers, people and communities living with conflict, for the support they provide us. Ours is without doubt a collaborative endeavour.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Cohen'.

**Jonathan Cohen**  
Executive Director

# 2017 in numbers

In 2017 Conciliation Resources and partners...

Held **13** dialogue events on the conflict over Jammu and Kashmir



Worked with **31** women's groups



Trained **1,627** people through **58** training workshops in northeast Nigeria



Reached **3,559** young people across **8** contexts



Resolved **84** local conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo over issues like land and between refugees and host communities



Supported **80** local peace structures across **6** different countries



Engaged with **14** armed groups



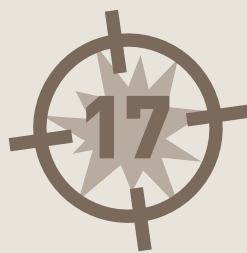
Provided advice and insight to conflict parties and mediators in **8** peace processes



Worked with **71** partners



Focused on **17** conflict contexts



Produced **20** publications and films, which were downloaded or watched **72,826** times



# Our goals

## GOAL 1

## Causes and drivers of conflict are peacefully transformed

**As a result of our support, relationships, governance practices and structures, and legacies of violence, which are obstacles to sustainable peace, are addressed.**

In order to build sustainable peace, the underlying causes of conflict need to be addressed. Throughout 2017, we worked in multiple regions to tackle the legacies of violence, bring people together in dialogue and transform relationships damaged by conflict. We provided opportunities for people from all sides of a divide to meet and work together to find solutions to the issues they face.

Building connections between people with different viewpoints, from different sides of a conflict and from different sectors of society – such as communities that have experienced violence with the military – we contributed to the development of trust and increased cooperation between them. By establishing and supporting structures for facilitating community-led discussions, we enabled the mediation of local conflicts in diverse contexts including: West Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and Kenya. We connected politicians, civil society, business

people, academics and experts through facilitating informal dialogue processes in South Asia and the Caucasus. These platforms brought people together to discuss complex conflict challenges and take practical steps on specific issues, as well as sometimes linking to the formal peace processes.

We used our experience to provide mediation support to peace negotiations in the Philippines and Colombia, and on the conflict over the Ogaden region in the Horn of Africa. We also sought to ensure such processes were informed by the realities of those who experience violence, by feeding the perspectives of people directly affected by the conflicts into the official processes.

Through organising study visits of people from one conflict area to another, such as a group from Kenya which travelled to Liberia, we ensured that valuable lessons on successful peacebuilding approaches were shared. Contributing to efforts to understand individual and collective memory in connection to conflicts in both the South Caucasus and with Colombian women of the diaspora, we helped address legacies of the past, as well as challenging destructive ongoing narratives.

*Below: A community meeting, Dungu, the Democratic Republic of Congo © Conciliation Resources*





## GOAL 2

## Approaches to building peace support inclusion

**As a result of our engagement, expertise and resources, peacebuilding and conflict prevention practice is more inclusive.**

When laying the foundations for peace, it is important to respond to the priorities of local populations in areas of conflict. Having a diverse range of people addressing violent conflict, and aiding conflict-affected populations to find and implement their own solutions, ensures approaches to building peace are more sustainable.

In 2017, we supported partners and others affected by conflict to initiate and direct initiatives to build peace. Across all the regions in which we work, our reciprocal approach to partnership ensured that we worked collaboratively to develop networks, establish platforms and create programmes that were informed by, and responded to, the realities of the conflicts people at the grassroots experience.

We also focused on enabling marginalised groups to contribute to and lead peacebuilding

activities. In particular, in Jammu and Kashmir, the Caucasus, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria, our work with young people enabled us to gain rich insight into their views on conflict and support them to create more peaceful communities. In all the contexts where we work, but especially in Colombia and East and Central Africa, we supported women to come together and play a leading role in preventing and responding to violence. Through our work on gender and peacebuilding, we improved how responsive we are to issues of gender in our own work and the work of others – including looking at how to improve the gender-sensitivity of programming within the UN, EU and UK Government.

Working directly with ex-combatants and armed groups from the Central African Republic, Bougainville and the Ogaden region, we supported them to develop their peacebuilding skills and knowledge. This means they are better equipped to move away from violence and engage with political and social processes of change.

*Above: Comparative learning visit of Kenyan peacebuilders to Liberia © Conciliation Resources*



## GOAL 3

# Policy is prioritising conflict prevention and peacebuilding

As a result of our efforts, relevant policymakers at international, national and regional levels make investments in long-term, non-violent approaches to preventing armed conflict and building peace, and in those working for peace in conflict contexts.

Decisions taken remotely by representatives of international organisations or governments on how to respond to conflicts, often don't involve the people directly affected by conflict. To ensure conflicts are ended peacefully, it is vital that those deciding on how to address the violence are informed by the views and experiences of people living in the areas of conflict. It is also important that lessons about how to build peace are fed into the design of future peace initiatives.

In 2017, through our *Accord* publications, communications, policy and programme work, we produced significant evidence highlighting the value and effectiveness of non-violent responses to conflict. Sixteen publications, four films, three infographics and numerous case studies and opinion pieces provided lessons, guidance and recommendations to policymakers and others working on conflicts. This helped to increase the

body of knowledge and understanding of successful approaches to building peace. Nationwide opinion surveys conducted in the UK, US and Germany demonstrated that there is strong public support for peacebuilding and investing more in it, a finding which has strengthened the case for peacebuilding.

In various regions, including in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, West Africa, the Caucasus and South Asia, we made progress in increasing awareness among national and local officials of the perspectives of communities affected by conflict. We brought politicians and civil society together in all our programmes, to ensure that national, regional and international policymakers were aware of and were responding to the needs of conflict-affected communities.

In many of these regions, we also forged relationships with and between decision-makers and influential individuals to enable them to have the knowledge they need to work towards the peaceful resolution of conflict. Engaging with policymakers in the UK, UN and EU, we also sparked debate and impacted international decision-making, including on issues such as counter-terrorism legislation and its effect on the work of international NGOs.

# Accord, policy and practice

## Background

To find lasting solutions to violent conflict there needs to be a focus on the causes and drivers of instability. Yet political effort and resources deployed by governmental and inter-governmental donors is increasingly spent on immediate threats, short-term crises and on the symptoms of conflict. Stronger evidence about the positive results of long-term conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and how it is done, can encourage a better balance of effort and resources. There is also a need to improve the connection between policy and practice. For example, international policy frameworks emphasise the importance of locally-led peacebuilding, as well as commitments to increase the quality of women's participation in peace and security. Yet, too often this does not translate into practice. And while at an operational level the need to engage with armed groups to explore ways to end violence through political solutions is an acknowledged reality, this is not the case at policy level where political appetite is shaped by counter-terrorism policies and strategies, as well as media headlines. International and local NGOs working in conflict areas feel the effects of this in their work.

## Our work

Our work in this area links our research and peacebuilding practice with government policy. We gather and analyse comparative evidence, results and learning, and turn these into relevant messages and lessons for decision-makers and peacebuilders across the world. In 2017, we undertook a significant amount of comparative research under our *Accord* programme, which explored a range of topics including: violent conflict between farmers and pastoralists in Nigeria and inclusion in Nepal's peace process, to priorities for building peace in Afghanistan and indigenous women and peaceful transition in Colombia. We worked to better reflect conflict prevention and peacebuilding in UK and EU policies and strategies. In addition, we demonstrated how to apply gender-sensitive approaches to conflict analysis and shared evidence from our practice to make the case for tailored support to women's meaningful participation in peace. We also completed an internal baseline assessment of our approach to gender, to guide and monitor our work going forward.



Left: Recent issues of Conciliation Resources' *Accord* publications  
© Conciliation Resources

Opposite: Women from Colombian indigenous communities participate in a workshop exploring indigenous women's participation in Colombia's peace process © CIASE





## Achievements

### Demonstrated public support for peacebuilding

A public opinion survey we conducted with the Alliance for Peacebuilding, in the UK, US and Germany in June and July, revealed strong public support for peacebuilding and contact with armed groups as part of peace processes. The results of the survey were shared widely online and gained media attention with several outlets publishing the findings. We presented the results to policymakers and those working on conflict issues and peacebuilding in the UK and US. The findings were also used by other peer organisations to press for greater investment in peacebuilding. The conclusions were positively received by officials in British Government departments, including the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and stimulated discussions on the implications of the results.

### Strengthened the evidence base for how and why peacebuilding works

Through our work as part of the DFID-funded Political Settlements Research Programme, we conducted seven pieces of comparative research, sharing the findings with key policymakers and others working on conflict issues in Afghanistan, Colombia, Ethiopia, Nepal and Nigeria. Collectively, around 8,000 copies of this research were viewed online or in hardcopy. The findings strengthened the evidence base for how and why peacebuilding works. The ideas and recommendations presented resonated with UK Government departments and at the UN in New York, the State Department in Washington and with people working for peace in Bogota, amongst others. They were well received by DFID, helping people to strategise and better understand the potential for changing their responses to conflict. The main findings were presented at a British Academy event in London, attended by over 100 policymakers, peacebuilders and analysts working on conflict issues, which included senior government staff, UN advisors, international NGOs and prominent academics.

### Improved the gender-sensitivity of conflict analysis

Practical application of our Gender and conflict analysis toolkit led to greater attention of EU officials and others on gender-sensitivity. We conducted training using the toolkit in Pakistan and South Sudan for EU and other member states' officials. Following this, the toolkit was shared with EU officials and other donor partners in Pakistan, with practical steps to integrate the analysis into their programme work. We also provided recommendations to the UK Government on the fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and as a result, commitments on the meaningful participation of women and the need for conflict-sensitive analysis have been included in the plan. Four papers we produced on the inclusion of women and other excluded groups in peace processes in the Philippines, Nepal, Colombia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, contributed to the global evidence base on this topic. Lessons from these are being used to improve our programming, particularly in the Philippines and Colombia.

## CASE STUDY

# Addressing the impact of counter-terrorism legislation on international NGOs

**The rise of global terrorism has led to a proliferation of counter-terrorism laws, regulations and policies in recent years. These have had a direct and indirect impact on NGOs and individuals working in areas where ‘proscribed’ armed groups operate – groups that have been listed by governments or multilateral organisations as designated terrorist organisations.**

The impact is felt by humanitarian NGOs delivering aid to populations in areas controlled by a proscribed group, but also by those who are seeking contact with an armed group in order to further peace. One of the indirect consequences of counter-terrorism regulations is ‘de-risking’ by banks which seek to reduce their exposure to the risk of terrorism financing. International NGOs (INGOs) face challenges when transferring funds or goods to conflict areas. Payment transfers can be delayed or blocked, and some organisations experience the closure or denial of bank accounts.

Conciliation Resources has been working for a number of years on the broader issue of proscription and its impact on third parties engaged in peacebuilding. Since 2012, we have played a leading role in coordinating efforts of UK based INGOs experiencing difficulties as a result of sanctions and counter-terrorism legislation. Together with other INGOs we have pressed for a structured dialogue with UK Government and financial institutions in order to find ways to address the challenges NGOs face. At the end of 2017, this culminated in the convening of the first meeting of a multi-stakeholder *Working Group on INGO Operations in High-Risk Jurisdictions*. As Dr Teresa Dumasy, Director of Policy and Learning at Conciliation Resources who has been leading this work says:

*The establishment of the Working Group is a milestone in our efforts in the UK to tackle the pressing and complex problems facing international NGOs operating in high-risk areas. Given the stakes – the number of conflicts and the level of humanitarian need around the globe – we hope the dialogue will lead to effective solutions.*

This Working Group brings together representatives from the UK Government, the INGO sector, regulators and banking institutions. The aim of the group is to enhance dialogue between these different sectors on the challenges and operating risks facing INGOs in high-risk contexts, such as Syria and Somalia, and to find solutions. As Chair of the *Bond Working Group on Proscription and Counter-terrorism*, we played a leading role in advising and helping bring this group to fruition.

Dialogue between these sectors was a recommendation made by David Anderson QC, former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, in his 2014 review of the Terrorism Act 2000. However, until now, no significant progress had been made. This is the first time that the three sectors have come together for structured and outcome-oriented dialogue – such joint collaboration is essential to find workable solutions to the complex and interconnected problems in this area.

The establishment of this tripartite Working Group follows three years of coordination and collaboration with leading INGOs and umbrella bodies, including Bond and the Charity Finance Group. It has involved numerous meetings, events and the preparation of briefings, evidence and proposals. Conciliation Resources has sought to build strong, trusted relationships with both INGOs and government officials. A member of the *Bond Working Group on Proscription and Counter-terrorism* comments:

*The engagement with the Home Office in setting up the Home Office working group has required persistence and patience and the ability to influence key officials which Conciliation Resources has provided. The ability to build relationships of trust has been essential to the progress made and this is very largely down to Conciliation Resources’ ability to bring together key players while maintaining an open profile with the wider sector.*

In addition to creating a practical platform to find solutions to the problems INGOs face, this work has also developed wider understanding of the challenges related to working in conflict environments. It has also prompted greater discussion on the issues among government departments and beyond.

*Opposite: Mural in Nagorny Karabakh © Conciliation Resources*

## OUR IMPACT

# Caucasus



## Background

In both the Nagorny Karabakh and Georgian-Abkhaz contexts, prospects for political settlement are distant and there are many obstacles to reaching a more conducive context for negotiations. The region is volatile, facing rising nationalism, challenges to governance and threats to democratic space. Geopolitical tensions are increasing in the region. Space for peacebuilding is diminishing and civil society groups working to address conflict are facing increasing pressures. In the Nagorny Karabakh context, in April 2016 there was the worst escalation of violence for two decades. Since then, fears of another serious outbreak of fighting have been high. In the Georgian-Abkhaz context, concerns

**“ It is important above all that young people see this film, as they are the ones who will ultimately have to solve this conflict.**

Participant in a film screening,  
South Caucasus

for physical security are fewer but unresolved conflict continues to have crippling consequences for those living in the midst of it. Distorted and politicised narratives about both conflicts shape domestic politics, and feed societal misconceptions and prejudice.

## Our work

With our partners, we aim to address the challenges in this region by working to create an environment where progress towards peace is possible. We provide analysis, creative ideas, continuity and lessons learned to key people – in particular local and international policymakers. We also facilitate cross-conflict contact and dialogue, including among politicians and influential people and we link ideas generated in these discussions with the formal peace processes. This year we created opportunities for progress on specific areas of common interest such as education and sustainable development. In both contexts, we work to improve understanding of the recent violent past and encourage debate on options for building a peaceful future.



## Achievements

- **Reduced isolation among young Abkhaz by improving access to education**

In collaboration with our partner, DAAD (the German Academic Exchange Service), we worked to improve German language teaching standards in Abkhazia and opened up possibilities for students from Abkhazia to study in Germany. Enabling young Abkhaz to participate in overseas exchanges is an important step towards the de-isolation of Abkhazia, which many feel is crucial for building peaceful societies in the region. Together with Erasmus+ experts, key staff at the Abkhaz State University have identified concrete areas to improve the quality of education and are seeking relevant advice and input, not only in the Russian Federation, but also among European and Western universities. We also established a strong network of English language teachers across Abkhazia, with increased skills and relationships via English Language Resource Centres.

- **Introduced new perspectives into debates on the Nagorny Karabakh conflict**

Through the use of innovative film material, produced in collaboration with Armenians and Azerbaijanis, we provided a range of views on the conflict to audiences in the region. This provoked some strong reactions and open discussion, and inspired reflection and examination of existing narratives and preconceptions. It was challenging for participants at the screenings to be presented with balanced information about the conflict, and to listen to the perspectives of the other side. Together with project partners, they reflected on how current one-sided narratives are an obstacle to peace.

- **Engaged youth in important discussions on conflict and peacebuilding**

Research we undertook to feed into the Global Progress Report on UN Security Council Resolution 2250 – Youth, Peace and Security – provided access to youth perspectives on both sides of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict divide. In total we consulted 99 young people through 14 focus group discussions. It was striking both from the focus group findings, and from subsequent discussions in Tbilisi, the extent to which the unresolved conflict is not a high security concern in many young people's minds. However, discussion of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict through the lens of youth perceptions of security, has proved a good hook to reach potential new allies in peacebuilding.



## CASE STUDY

### Dialogue improving prospects for peace

Conciliation Resources has been facilitating dialogue among Georgians and Abkhaz for twenty years – bringing together officials, experts and civil society from either side of the conflict divide.

Despite a lack of progress in official talks, this dialogue is successfully building trust, identifying areas of common interest and creating an environment more conducive to progress. Discussions as part of the Limehouse Discussion Platform, as the informal dialogue is known, have achieved concrete results, most recently on the topic of education – helping to improve the lives of those living with the conflict.

Georgian dialogue participant, Margarita Akhvediani, has been involved in the dialogue for a number of years:

*The dialogue is important because it provides a lot of information about each other, there are a lot of problems because people don't know each other – they don't know the facts and perspectives that are known to the other side. The dialogue creates a platform for honest exchange and only on such a platform can we build stable peace in the future.*

This dialogue process and the formal peace negotiations are separate, yet having an overview of the discourse from both sets of discussions provides a better overall sense of the different aspects of the conflict. As Björn Kühne, Head of the Office of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia, and participant in both the official peace talks and the Limehouse Discussion Platform states:

*These informal dialogue processes are essential but are in short supply – this is the one long-standing process which exists...I personally very much appreciate the opportunity of taking part in these informal dialogue sessions. This allows for deeper understanding of the positions, obstacles and overall dynamics.*

The discussions as part of this forum generate new ideas for peacebuilding, create opportunities for



“ *The dialogue creates a platform for honest exchange and only on such a platform can we build stable peace in the future.* ”

progress on concrete areas of mutual interest and enable more constructive narratives to be built. By focusing on pragmatic and where possible less contentious topics, this platform is enabling practical steps to be taken on specific issues. As Astamur Tania, a dialogue participant from Sukhum/i elaborates:

*These meetings are an opportunity to explore the positions of the Georgians, Abkhaz and international actors and then identify some areas for collaboration...We understand how narrow the political context is, we shouldn't expect any political breakthroughs, but there are areas of engagement which we can explore. Each step improves confidence between the sides.*

As a result of these discussions, we have enabled greater access to education for young university students from Abkhazia – supporting Abkhaz State University to raise standards and enabling students to participate in study and exchanges overseas in different European countries. Currently, youth in Abkhazia suffer from increased isolation and find it difficult to study abroad. Many people believe addressing the de-isolation of Abkhazia is essential to fostering long-term peace.

With small steps such as these, we continue to work towards creating an environment where peace can ultimately prevail.

Above: Bridge © Ibragim Chkadua

Opposite: University students in Abkhazia © Ibragim Chkadua

## OUR IMPACT

# South Asia



## Background

In South Asia we primarily focus on Jammu and Kashmir<sup>1</sup> which has been a hub of violent conflict since partition in 1947. India and Pakistan, both nuclear states, have fought three wars over this region. Tensions and unresolved grievances around these historic disputes continue to feed wider regional instability. China's increasing role in the region through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project is complicating relations still further. 2017 marked 70 years since the start of the conflict between India and Pakistan. Turmoil and violence in the Kashmir Valley continued from 2016, and tensions persisted throughout 2017. This year also saw an increase in the ongoing ceasefire violations across the Line of Control (LoC). Despite this, domestic concerns meant Kashmir was not a priority for either government.

1. This refers to all the regions of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir including the India-administered state of 'Jammu and Kashmir' i.e. Jammu, the Kashmir Valley, and Ladakh, and the Pakistan-administered territories of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan

## Our work

We work at different levels in partnership with local civil society, helping them play a more dynamic and proactive role in peacebuilding. At the community level, we focus particularly on involving those who are often excluded, such as women and youth. We believe that Kashmiri participation, along with sustained Pakistani and Indian engagement, is essential in order to reduce violence and build sustainable peace in the region. We support collaborative and cross-LoC initiatives around filmmaking, trade, tourism, disaster management, education, journalism and economic development. These contribute to building confidence and relationships across the divides. We facilitate constructive engagement, so that official and unofficial dialogue processes over Jammu and Kashmir can be better informed by local perspectives. In 2017, we organised a number of high-level policy events, and also collated the perspectives of a wide range of people across Jammu and Kashmir in relation to the conflict. As well as releasing [another film](#) looking at disaster management and conflict across the LoC, partners had the opportunity to screen their films at events including the [Beyond Borders Festival](#) in the UK.



Above: Kashmiri filmmakers discuss their films at the Beyond Borders festival in Scotland © Conciliation Resources

Opposite: Young Ladakhis in Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, share their perspectives on peace and conflict © Conciliation Resources

**“ I found the Kashmir films incredibly moving. What gave them special impact was the fact we saw and heard from ordinary people who are still suffering the pain of being separated from their families. I feel strongly that these films need to be shown to a range of groups.**

Rita Payne, President Emeritus, Commonwealth Journalists Association and film screening participant



## Achievements

### • Increased interaction between policymakers from India and Pakistan

We successfully engaged key influencers in New Delhi and Islamabad, as well as from across Jammu and Kashmir, increasing collaboration between them. A number of dialogue events and meetings brought together senior policymakers, and participants emphasised the need for promoting regional cooperation and renewing dialogue. Notably, we enabled two former national security personnel from India and Pakistan respectively, to jointly participate in a public meeting in London – the first time this has ever happened. The two speakers recognised the lack of cooperation between the two intelligence agencies as a major obstacle and emphasised the importance of their working together more closely and collaboratively for peace and security in the South Asian region.

### • Strengthened initiatives to build confidence between the different sides

Through increasing collaboration among the policy, academic, civil society and business sectors, we ensured cross-LoC trade, education and tourism were reinforced. In particular, despite external challenges, a combination of advocacy and high-level political engagement played an important role in increasing the visibility and viability of the most successful measure to build confidence so far – cross-LoC trade. This included two meetings which brought together the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, politicians from across India, civil society organisations, academics, journalists, and diplomats based in New Delhi. Partners were involved in the issuing of a notice by the Jammu and Kashmir Government, which brings clarity and consistency to the registration of traders and will increase positive perceptions and support for the trade. Our activity also contributed to the resumption of trade on the Poonch-Rawalakot road which had been halted for four months.

### • Increased the participation of Kashmiris in peacebuilding

Through reaching greater numbers of Kashmiris – particularly often excluded groups – we continued to expand public support for building peace within Jammu and Kashmir. In 2017, a total of 1,283 new people (656 male, 627 female) participated in dialogue and awareness-raising initiatives. These included youth, women, NGO representatives, journalists, business people, academics, Kashmiri diaspora and politicians. In particular, we created more space for youth participation. We identified ways to translate the values of the youth *Vision 2020* into practical projects. For example in secondary schools, teachers focused on how to incorporate the values into their curriculums. In Pakistan-administered Kashmir, the Youth Core Group presented *Vision 2020* to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister, Raja Farooq Haider Khan, demonstrating the increased ability of young leaders to advocate and lobby policymakers.



## PARTNER PROFILE

Shafat Ahmed works to develop the peacebuilding skills and awareness of communities across the Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh on the Indian-administered side of Kashmir.

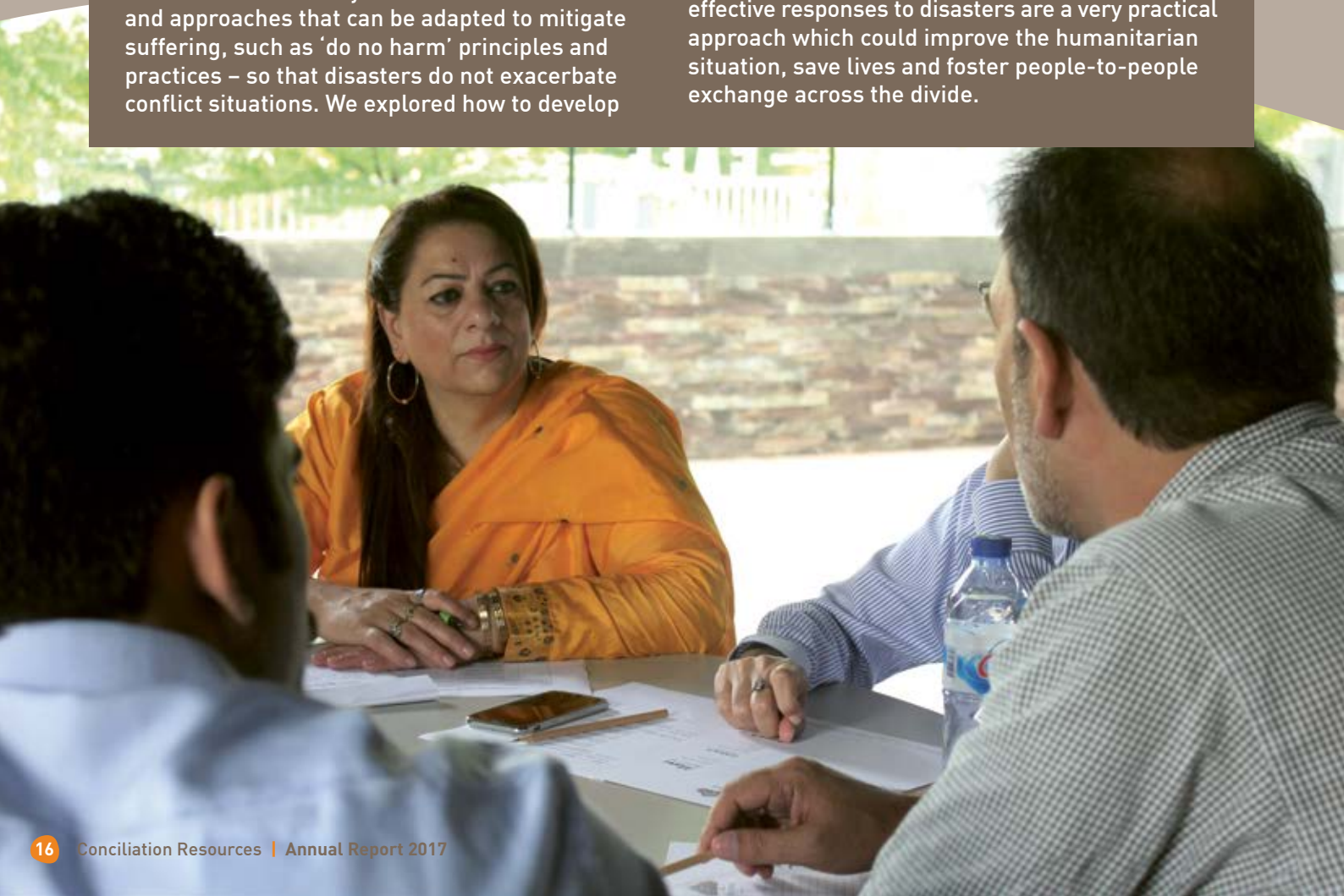
Shafat has run workshops to involve women in peacebuilding and most recently led work on conflict sensitive disaster management. He participated in a disaster preparedness and conflict Commonwealth fellowship hosted by Conciliation Resources in London in summer 2015 and has since then been putting what he learnt into practice. The theme of disaster management and conflict is one we have recently begun working on in this region, with partners releasing a new film in 2017 on this topic – *Disaster: the common enemy*.

“ The fellowship focused on understanding disasters in conflict situations, including understanding ways that disasters affect men and women differently. We looked at the issues and approaches that can be adapted to mitigate suffering, such as ‘do no harm’ principles and practices – so that disasters do not exacerbate conflict situations. We explored how to develop

relationships including across the LoC, resilient communities, technological improvements and the possibilities of developing early warning systems.

Militarised areas such as along the LoC, face similar threats, and disasters on the Pakistan-administered side of Kashmir definitely impact the Indian-administered side, and vice versa.

Since the fellowship, we have undertaken advocacy around the issues of conflict and disaster management, which has been well-received by various groups including officials and the public. Practical solutions, and work at a community level is something that governments, the general public and civil society can all get behind. More effective responses to disasters are a very practical approach which could improve the humanitarian situation, save lives and foster people-to-people exchange across the divide.





## OUR IMPACT

# Southeast Asia



## Background

In this region, we work exclusively in the Philippines. The Philippines has suffered two major armed conflicts during the past four decades: a self-determination struggle by Muslim communities in the southern island of Mindanao, involving the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and a countrywide communist insurgency represented by the National Democratic Front (NDF). A breakthrough comprehensive agreement in March 2014 brought an end to the four-decade conflict between the MILF and the Government of the Philippines. However, implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement remains elusive because Congress has been unable to enact the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). Further complicating the situation, in May 2017, an Islamist armed group, the Maute, laid siege to Marawi City in Mindanao, prompting the President to declare martial law across the whole island. The peace talks with the Communists that saw unprecedented developments in 2016 did not resume after May 2017, and eventually were formally terminated by the President in November.

## Our work

In the Philippines, our work currently centres around supporting community security, as well as providing informal advice and mediation support to both peace processes. Across all aspects, we work to ensure that the peace processes in the Philippines are more inclusive and participatory. We also collate and provide analysis on the NDF conflict, which we share with a network of peacebuilders and policymakers interested in this region. In 2017, we maintained a low-level presence in the Philippines while gearing up to expand our community security work into new areas in 2018.

“ *I consider your bulletin as the most reliable and accurate timeline in circulation of events surrounding the peace process. This is very helpful when reflecting on past events while trying not to be misled by inaccurate reporting or opinions, which abound in the media.* ”

Marco Mezzera, NOREF

## Achievements

### • Provided mediation support to peace negotiations

As part of the International Contact Group, we have previously given and continue to provide support to the peace process between the Government of the Philippines and MILF. In addition, this year the government and NDF negotiation panel requested Conciliation Resources to facilitate some of their meetings – particularly in the areas of human rights and ceasefires. This role, which helps enable the negotiations to move forward, is testament to the trusted relationships we have built in the country and the quality of advice we have provided.

### • Invited to attend the Bangsamoro Assembly

In November the Bangsamoro Transition Commission convened a Bangsamoro Assembly to inform about the status of the BBL and to advocate for its urgent enactment by Congress. This enactment is essential for the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement. The Bangsamoro Assembly was attended by tens of thousands of people, and also by the President himself. Conciliation Resources was invited to participate in this meeting, demonstrating the strength of relationships and trust we have built up over time and the respect we have gained in this peace process.

## OUR IMPACT

# Pacific

Indonesia

Papua New Guinea

Australia

Fiji

## Background

We have been working in the Pacific region for over 20 years. We work with partners in both the Republic of Fiji, and in Bougainville – an autonomous region in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement saw the end of almost a decade of violent conflict on the island. As Bougainville advances towards a referendum on its political status, to be held in 2019, it faces numerous challenges which threaten peace and stability in the region. In Fiji, 2014 saw the country hold its first elections since the military coup of 2006, heralding a new era for a country with a troubled history of political instability. However, the path to democracy is not smooth, and at the heart of this turbulent past lie long-standing ethnic and political divisions and a lack of inclusive dialogue as a means of resolving conflicts.

## Our work

As Bougainville moves towards the referendum, we are working with our Bougainville partner to develop the peacebuilding skills of community leaders to transform conflict in their communities. We also support collaboration and sharing between peacebuilders and promote learning from contexts with relevant experiences such as South Sudan and New Caledonia. This support enables ex-combatants, district and community leaders, parliamentarians and others to better coordinate their activities and learn from other contexts in order to address Bougainville's numerous conflict challenges. In Fiji, we continue to support our civil society partners to promote public participation in policymaking and dialogue on Fiji's long-standing conflict issues. 2017 also saw the commencement of a pan-Pacific comparative learning element to our programme, bringing civil society leaders from across the Pacific together to share methodologies and experiences of influencing public policy change to prevent conflicts.



## PARTNER PROFILE

**Sister Lorraine Garasu is founder of the Nazareth Rehabilitation Centre and one of the island of Bougainville's foremost peace advocates.**

The Nazareth Centre provides care and trauma counselling for women, children and former combatants affected by the conflict on the island between 1988 and 1998. The centre has developed into a hub that connects local organisations and delivers a range of training and support services for community groups.

Sister Lorraine's work has earned her the Papua New Guinea Government's Silver Jubilee Award and the Order of Australia medal and she was named among the US State Department's International Women of Courage in 2009.

“ It has been a challenge trying to help people who suffer the same thing as me. I am the wounded healer – I suffer the same thing as the people I help to recover.

Whether it is a survivor or victim of sexual violence or former combatants, the most rewarding is to witness them recover and live a normal life.

What has helped me, to bring back life and courage in me, has been the recognition, even if I don't get millions, people are grateful and thankful, and that's what counts. I tell them, the biggest thanks you can give me is to make a difference in your life.

## Achievements

### • Increased knowledge relating to referenda and change processes

We facilitated learning exchange visits to Bougainville by experts from Northern Ireland and South Sudan. This meant ex-combatant leaders, PNG Government representatives, Autonomous Bougainville Government representatives and civil society groups increased their knowledge of peacebuilding approaches, post-conflict issues and political change processes. Participants were able to relate this comparative learning to their own work and insert relevant peacebuilding lessons into practices. This work contributed to a number of peacebuilding initiatives across Bougainville this year, including reconciliation and disarmament processes – important steps towards attaining peace and stability around the referendum.

### • Strengthened peacebuilding capacities of ex-combatant leaders

Through an intensive peacebuilding training programme, our partner in Bougainville increased the analysis and peacebuilding skills of a group of 41 mid- and senior-level ex-combatant leaders from across Bougainville. This training improved the ability of this core group of Bougainville leaders to respond to conflict issues and threats to stability. At the training, this group signed an agreement to support and work towards a peaceful referendum. Many of the participants also used their new skills to initiate peacebuilding, dialogue and reconciliation work in their own communities.

### • Improved advocacy capacities among civil society leaders across the Pacific region

A multi-country workshop we organised, enabled civil society leaders and activists from across the Pacific (including from PNG, the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and Fiji) to analyse and share methodologies for influencing public policy in their countries. The participants analysed and shared their experiences of using advocacy approaches such as social media, civil society-government dialogue and non-violent direct action. The event was successful in building advocacy capacities in the Pacific, along with enhancing relationships between civil society leaders in the region.

**“ We have been using what we have learned in this training to map out conflicts in our communities and find strategies for how we can address that when we go back.**

Female community leader from Haku, North Bougainville and participant on Conciliation Resources' community leaders' peacebuilding training



Peacebuilding workshop in Bougainville © Conciliation Resources

## OUR IMPACT

# Horn of Africa



## Background

In the Horn of Africa, Somali clan linkages across the state borders of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia mean that conflicts cannot be resolved in isolation. Somali regional state (Ogaden) in Ethiopia has been at the centre of instability in the Horn of Africa for over two decades. Since 1994, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) has fought an armed insurgency against the Government of Ethiopia. This conflict threatens the stability, security and development prospects of Ethiopia. Formal negotiations under the auspices of the Government of Kenya are being conducted in an on-off fashion. While a different part of the region, northern Kenya, has a long history of ethnic conflict,

violence and marginalisation. Now different dynamics related to devolution, terrorism and resource extraction are exacerbating these local tensions and raising new challenges for traditional peacebuilding structures.

“ *Everywhere we went in Liberia, most of the leaders were women. I will urge my community to encourage women to take part in leadership, so that we can progress like the people of Liberia.* ”

Adan Dagane, Secretary of the Balambala local peace committee in Garissa and exchange visit participant

## Achievements

### • Strengthened capacities of Kenyan local peacebuilders through exchange visit

A Kenyan group consisting of representatives from local peace committees, county and national government and regional peacebuilding organisations, met with people working on peacebuilding initiatives in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. The visit enabled the Kenyans to gain valuable insight and inspiration from the success of the West African local dialogue platforms. Following the visit, participants committed to tangible actions which they can implement at home. These included the involvement of more women in their peace committees and better collaboration between officials and the committees.

### • Contributed to reduced election-related violence in northern Kenya

Through support to local peace committees and religious leaders, we contributed to the de-escalation of post-election violence in Garissa township. We convened a forum which brought together religious leaders, elders, the media, government officials, youth and women to discuss how to prevent and respond to election violence and agree common peace messages. The messages were preached during and immediately after the elections through mosques and churches in hotspot areas. Alongside this, a social media campaign and a public statement instructed voters, electoral officials and political leaders on how to ensure free, fair and violence-free elections. This contributed to a reduction in violence, before, during and after the elections.

### • Collated and fed diverse views into the Ogaden peace process

A peace and development conference we convened in Nairobi brought together diverse sectors of society from the Ogaden region – including elders, intellectuals, business people, diaspora, refugees, religious leaders, women and youth. The aim of the conference was to solicit different opinions and discuss solutions to the conflict. As a result of the conference and prior consultations, a committee was formed which has been engaging with the conflict parties and the Kenyan Government facilitating the Ogaden peace talks, to feed perspectives of the participants into the formal peace process.



Peacebuilders discuss local peace structures as part of the comparative learning visit from Kenya to Liberia  
© Conciliation Resources

## Our work

We work to support local, national and cross-border peacebuilding in the region, as well as supporting the official peace process in the Somali (Ogaden) region of Ethiopia. In 2017, Conciliation Resources continued to provide technical support and advice to the talks at the request of the Kenyan facilitation team. We also encouraged public engagement and participation in wider peace and dialogue in the region. This year we began new work in northern Kenya, to strengthen community-level, national and cross-border peacebuilding in Garissa County – an area which experiences multiple conflict challenges, including potential election violence. There we support local peace committees and provide connections between officials and the community-led peace structures.

## PARTNER PROFILE

**Hassan Osman Shuri lives in Garissa, northern Kenya and is the secretary of the Garissa Township Peace Committee.**



“ I first became involved in peace work in my community because of a protracted conflict between two major clans in Garissa county. They fought over land and boundaries. Three of us from the two respective clans came together, we called elders from both sides, we talked to them, and we were able to strike a deal. The two clans came together and ended their decade-old conflict.

After that I decided to become a peacemaker. Now, I have been working for 20 years in the area of conflict management.

Livestock is the main source of livelihood for the pastoralist communities living in Garissa county. This livestock depends on pasture and water. So when resources become scarce, and there is prolonged drought then there is always conflict at the water points, until the drought is over.

Conflicts are disastrous. There is displacement of people, destruction of properties, children don't go to school and hospitals close. When conflicts arise, poverty becomes lord of the day.

We come from an oral society, we have no written culture. It is a poetic society, very rich in oratory and literature. We talk to people about ethnic conflict using poetry and other forms of traditional idioms. We hold seminars and workshops and promote exchange visits between communities.

We can see the impact of this in many parts of the county. Because we are constantly talking with communities, ethnic clashes have reduced. We have brought together clans who have never been brought together before, because of age-old differences. Now they live like brothers and sisters.

Peace is a single parameter, without it nothing can happen. Peacebuilders should own the process. It is not about making money, it is about humanity. It is about saving human lives. It is about our future. So let them endeavour to enhance their peacebuilding efforts, and ultimately the world will be a peaceful world where everybody lives in harmony.

## OUR IMPACT

# East and Central Africa



## Background

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan face multiple conflicts. The causes include weak state authorities, marginalisation of remote communities, and mistrust between the population and those who govern. The lack of strong governance – particularly in border zones – has allowed armed groups, such as the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), to operate. Nearly 200,000 people remain displaced by the LRA. Displacement and return have led to an increase in land disputes and social tensions between host-communities and returnees, with former LRA captives often being ostracised. In CAR, responses to the conflict continue to focus on the

“ **No-one can force us to build peace. Although the international community is here to help us, it’s up to us to prove we’re able to bring the country back to a sustainable peace.** ”

Young male ex-Séléka member, Bambari, CAR

immediate conflict symptoms rather than addressing its root causes. While in South Sudan, the political crisis continues to bring hardship and instability. The conflicts are exacerbated by the social exclusion of large groups of the population such as women and youth.

## Our work

In East and Central Africa we focus on peacebuilding in the border areas affected by the LRA, the inter-communal conflict in CAR and the political crisis in the Republic of South Sudan. We work to strengthen the capacities of civil society – especially often excluded groups such as women, LRA returnees and young people – to resolve conflict and prevent violence in their communities. We also work to inform government policies and positively transform relationships between civilians and officials. In 2017, our work centred on engaging young people in DRC in peacebuilding activities and supporting LRA-returnees to integrate back into their communities. We also continued to empower women across LRA-affected areas of DRC, South Sudan and CAR. Our work with local peace committees in CAR and DRC helped resolve and prevent community-level conflict through dialogue.



## CASE STUDY

# Enabling young people in the DRC to build peace in their communities

Across areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which have been affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict, we are working directly with communities to help them prevent violence.

We support those who are often marginalised – in particular young men and women – to develop skills which enable them to deal with the trauma of their past and contribute to building more peaceful societies in the future.

Working with partners and through existing structures such as youth groups, local protection committees and youth associations, we empower young people to prevent and peacefully resolve conflicts in their community. A female LRA-returnee explains how the training helped her:

*I returned [from the LRA] pregnant and nobody in my family or the community welcomed me back. Through the project, I started to work with young people and women leaders to build peace. The training provided us with enough knowledge to begin resolving conflicts between us. We have mediated conflicts between other members in our youth platform. They now reject violence and privilege non-violent modes of conflict resolution such as dialogue, cooperation and communication.*

The trainings we provide cover everything from conflict resolution and mediation techniques to financial management, and even practical skills such as tailoring or carpentry, which support young survivors to start a new livelihood. These skills enable youth group members to find new ways to manage conflicts and gain respect within their communities. As Clémentine, an LRA-returnee and local peace committee president explains:

*Today I have become a peacemaker because I can be invited to somewhere to advise people. Before I was marginalised, I was stigmatised. I was insulted by the community. But today I can now talk even with high-rank people in the community and they will listen to me; they know that I am a peacemaker.*



This support also enables them to develop the skills of others and develop stronger relationships with local authorities. A young male LRA-returnee states:

*Thanks to the training in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, I began to build the capacity of other youth to help them become peacebuilders themselves. Today, together with Conciliation Resources and its partner CDJPR, we are setting up a coalition of young people to strengthen collaboration and dialogue mechanisms between community members, local authorities and security forces.*

“ *I have learned to forgive and to solve my problems without resorting to violence.* ”

The young people we work with include many who were abducted by the LRA and who now struggle to reintegrate back into society. Of over 840 people trained in 2017, 47% have some previous or current association with an armed group. The work enables young LRA-returnees to change their behaviour and return to their communities. Another male LRA-returnee elaborates:

*The trainings helped me to realise that I can overcome my trauma and transform my aggressive behaviour to peaceful behaviour. I can help other returnees to reintegrate into their community. The trainings also helped me to reconcile with my community. Today, I work with other young people because I have learned to forgive and to solve my problems without resorting to violence.*

It will take many years to address the legacies of conflict and transform the unequal power relations in northeast DRC. However, now previously excluded young men and women are starting to show leadership in peacefully resolving conflicts, challenging negative perceptions and strengthening ties with local authorities.

Above: Working with young people in the Democratic Republic of Congo © Conciliation Resources Opposite: Workshop for peacebuilders from across the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan © Conciliation Resources



## Achievements

### • Built strong relationships between DRC civil society and the military

By bringing together civil society representatives, including youth, with security forces we enabled a breakthrough in strained civil-military relationships. A workshop we organised created an open environment for debate and dialogue between civil society and government. The heated and surprisingly frank discussions fostered a good understanding between the two sides. Previously young people were sometimes falsely perceived by security forces as colluding with the LRA. Since the workshop a joint committee, charged with following up the recommendations of the workshop, has met 22 times. The military and civil society are currently working more collaboratively, such as jointly appearing on live phone-in radio programmes to respond to questions from affected communities – something that was inconceivable before.

### • Supported excluded women to engage in peacebuilding

We strengthened the skills, capacities and knowledge of women, including those in remote rural areas, enabling them to better advocate for peace. Through delivering training of trainers sessions and utilising a strong network of women across LRA-affected areas, we enabled 14 women peacebuilders to pass on their expertise to 662 others in twelve months, 400 of whom were women at the grassroots. This resulted in the women gaining the confidence to speak to senior ministers and military officials. Through these conversations, they increased the participation of women in the resolution of local disputes and found solutions to some of the issues causing tensions such as military road barriers. In addition, we created strong relationships between civil society partners, community leaders, and local government. This ensured that female partners were invited to participate in regular security and land-dispute meetings with government and UN officials – a significant step-forward and something that is unusual in this strongly patriarchal society.

### • Ensured the sustainability of local peace committees in CAR

In CAR, peace committees which we supported the establishment of in 2014, are still operating and delivering considerable results, demonstrating their sustainability. The peace committees prevent and resolve conflicts at a community level and have been instrumental in improving relationships between community members, between different warring groups and between the local populations and officials. In Bria for example, in 2017 the committee succeeded in negotiating a non-aggression pact between two local armed groups.

*Above:* Communications workshop, Uganda © Conciliation Resources

*Opposite:* Youth Peace Platform members in northeast Nigeria © conciliation Resources



## OUR IMPACT

# West Africa



## Background

Our work in West Africa is focused on Nigeria – in particular the northeast, but also the Plateau State. We also continue to liaise with partners in the Mano River region (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) where we have worked for nearly 20 years. Much of the recent attention in Nigeria has focused on Boko Haram-related violence, which has led to over 25,000 civilian deaths, the displacement of 2.1 million people and significant hardship for around 5.1 million people. In northeast Nigeria, young people are largely excluded from decision-making and as a result have become increasingly disengaged from society. This disillusionment has made them vulnerable and ideal targets for mobilisation by Boko Haram and other armed groups, in turn leading to the stigmatisation of youth. Recently Boko Haram has returned to using bomb attacks and raids, in particular the use of pregnant women and children as suicide bombers.

## Our work

Over the past few years, our work in West Africa has centred on establishing and supporting community-led dialogue platforms, as well as improving the abilities of community members to effectively work with decision-makers, to prevent and resolve violent conflict. We have also taken peacebuilding lessons to policymakers to advocate for a change in response to conflict. The dialogue platforms help to address conflicts, prevent violence and encourage those who are often marginalised to speak out. Across the Mano River region, this has involved ensuring the strong participation and leadership of women in the District Platforms for Dialogue. In Nigeria, we focus on working with youth. In 2017, we continued to support the Plateau State Youth Peace Platforms. This enabled them to mediate local tensions and build relations between divided groups – including between communities and local authorities. We also scaled up our work in Nigeria, using the lessons learnt from Plateau State to successfully establish Youth Peace Platforms in the northeast.

**“ Whether we like it or not, youth have been at the centre of the violence, it is our brothers and sisters who were part of this group, have been killed, abducted, arrested or whatever. That is undeniable. But what I see now is that we youth also have the potential to end the violence and bring peace to communities.**

**Idris Abdullahi Youth Peace Platform chairperson from Damaturu, Yobe State**





## Achievements

- **Established a strong network of peace platforms in northeast Nigeria to engage youth**

During 2017, we supported over 550 youth from eleven communities to form a network of youth coalitions committed to promoting messages of peace and tolerance. Through these Youth Peace Platforms, young people rebuilt their confidence, processed the traumas they have experienced, analysed conflicts and voiced their needs and concerns. The participation of the young people in these groups, 250 of whom are deemed 'at-risk' – substance abusers, sex workers, orphans and victims or perpetrators of extreme violence – has led to tangible results. These include armed gangs giving up their weapons and stopping their criminal activity; young people ending the extra-judicial killing of suspected Boko Haram members; and girls pursuing alternative livelihoods to sex work. Since engaging with the project, over 90 youth drug addicts have committed to giving up illicit substances or stopped completely. In addition, negative perceptions against youth in their communities as perpetrators of violence are beginning to change, and there is a better understanding between young people and security sectors.

- **Inspired and supported peace platform members through youth exchange**

In November, 24 young people from Borno and Yobe States in northeast Nigeria spent three days with the Youth Peace Platforms in Plateau State, which we have supported for over five years. The exchange enabled a deeper understanding of and enthusiasm for the Youth Peace Platforms and created connections between Youth Peace Platforms in the northeast. It also allowed the young people to open up about their own traumas and experiences over the course of the insurgency, which is extremely difficult for them to do in their own communities given the stigma this arouses and fear of who is listening.

- **Reduced tensions and prevented violence between communities and companies**

Post-Ebola, the 18 District Platforms for Dialogue we support across the Mano River region are working to limit tensions caused by badly-run development projects in remote border areas. Numerous development projects have been awarded to contractors by the central government, and planned to take place in areas a long way from the capital. The work often has negative impacts on the surrounding communities due to a lack of oversight – for example water sources being polluted with chemicals by mining companies, or construction companies using land without permission. The District Platforms for Dialogue have been playing a role in monitoring the work, raising concerns with officials and mediating conflicts which arise. This has led to a reduction in tensions between communities and the companies and prevented community members resorting to violence to address the complaints.

*Above: Youth Peace Platform meeting, Anglo Jos, Plateau State Nigeria © Conciliation Resources*

*Opposite: Market, Kaga Local Government Area, Borno State, northeast Nigeria © Conciliation Resources*

## PERSONAL STORY

# Badawiya\* and youth peace platforms



Badawiya lives in Yobe State northeast Nigeria. Since 2009, the Boko Haram insurgency has ravaged this region, leading to what the UN has called ‘the worst humanitarian crisis on the African continent.’ Conciliation Resources has supported young people in 11 communities to establish peace platforms – helping youth rebuild their confidence, promote messages of peace and challenge negative stereotypes of them as perpetrators of violence.

“ When I was 14, my father was killed. We never knew exactly what happened but he was caught up in an attack. Soon after, my mother died of shock. I was completely alone and had nothing and nobody. I didn’t know what to do and I resorted to selling my body to earn some money so I could eat. At the same time, I increasingly started taking drugs. I just wanted to forget about everything that had happened and it was the only thing that gave me the courage to go through with selling myself. The prostitution and drug taking isolated me even more – people looked at me differently and my friends fell away. I was depressed, I didn’t know what I was living for.

One day, a man I met on the street showed me kindness. I didn’t know it but he was a Boko Haram member. He brought me some food and gave me a little money. I was very grateful. A few days later, he introduced me to some of his friends. Over the next few weeks we talked a lot. He would tell me that my father had been killed by the military. He kept saying it and I began to believe him. He said I should punish them for what they have done and that he could help me do it. He gave me a vest full of explosives and told me to wrap it around my body, find some soldiers and detonate it. He then gave me a phone and told me to wait for more instructions.

I was completely hopeless, I was depressed, I was angry and I had given up on life. I put the vest on three times and walked around the town with it on. When I put it on, I just wanted everything to be over, but I couldn’t ever find the courage to go through with it. Deep down I knew it was wrong. The third time I was wearing it, an old school classmate, stopped

“ *This group called me their friend and sister and showed me love...I feel like I have the chance at a new life now.*

me and greeted me. He was talking about a new programme in the community working with youth and saying that I should join. I wasn’t really listening and told him ‘I’m not interested, there’s no point.’ He kept protesting saying that I should join. He said lots of things had happened to me but he remembers me from school and knows I can do something in the future. I told him again I really wasn’t interested and that I didn’t know whether I would see out the day. He wouldn’t let me leave, so eventually I showed him the vest. I was shocked – he didn’t run away or scream, he carried on talking to me. Eventually he found my brother and the two of them removed the vest from me and destroyed the phone I had been given.

After all of that he still asked me to come and join the Youth Peace Platform, so I came to an event. Everyone knew what had happened, people were calling me names, but this group called me their friend and sister and showed me love. I felt at home. At first, I just sat and listened but then I began to talk. Deep down I knew everything that got me into that situation was wrong but the group have given me the support to actually give it up. I am no longer doing prostitution or drugs, they moved me to a different part of the city and I no longer want revenge for my father’s death – I still don’t know what happened, so how can I blame one person? The group tracked down my uncle, who I hadn’t seen since my father’s death and after their intervention, he accepted for me to live with him. Every day the other youth in the group check on me to make sure I haven’t fallen back. I don’t know how my life ever came to this, but I feel like I have the chance at a new life now.

\* Not her real name

## OUR IMPACT

# Latin America



## Background

In Latin America we work in Colombia, supporting its transition to peace. Despite persistent political polarisation, Colombia saw significant developments in 2017, especially with implementation of the peace agreement – signed between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 2016, to end over 50 years of conflict. Congress enacted several laws, and former combatants successfully decommissioned their weapons and created a new political party. Formal talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN) began in 2017, offering hope of a new peace deal, but were then suspended at the start of 2018. The main concern is the increase in killings of social leaders and the uncertainty that accompanies upcoming presidential elections in May 2018. Despite the progress made, Colombia still needs a more inclusive and cohesive peace process.

## Our work

Our work in Colombia challenges convention by enabling those who are often excluded from the official peace process to participate in the ongoing transition to peace. We specifically focus on women's empowerment and in 2017 supported a new grassroots network of indigenous women as well as Colombian women living in the diaspora. We also provided informal advice and analysis on the peace talks between the Government of Colombia and ELN. Through documenting and sharing the innovations from the Colombian peace process, we help inform similar processes in other contexts.

## PARTNER PROFILE

**Sofia Vinasco-Molina is part of the Truth, Memory and Reconciliation Commission of Colombian Women in the Diaspora.**



**The initiative brings together women in London and Barcelona to share their stories and memories of conflict and migration, and to claim a voice in Colombia's peace process.**

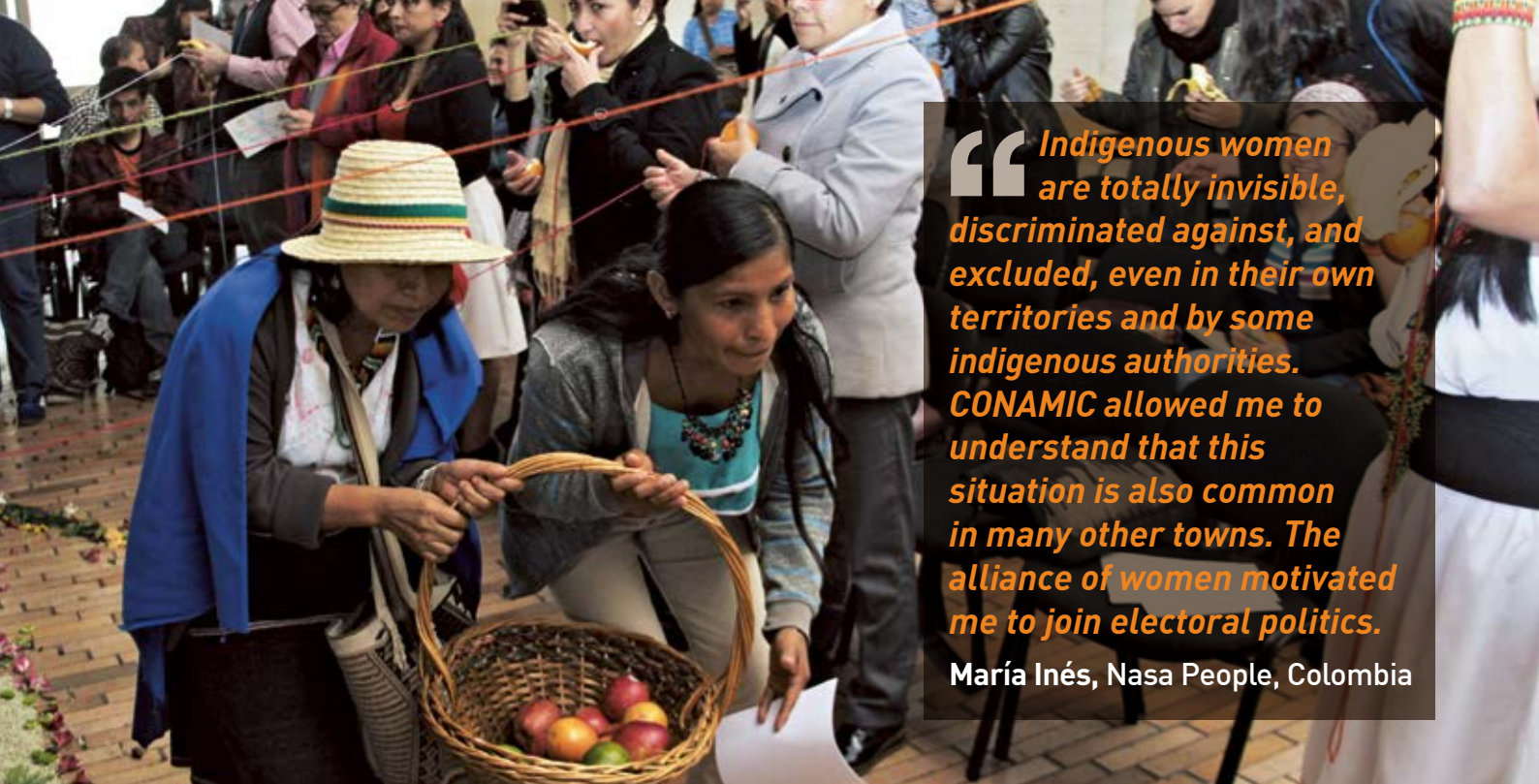
“ I am a psychologist from Bogota and have been working on human rights and women's rights since 2011. I have given advocacy and psychosocial support to women victims of sexual and gender violence in the Colombian Caribbean coast. I was forced to leave my country due to my professional activity and activism in 2013 when I moved to London as an international student.

The commission has empowered me along my migration process and has allowed me to heal the trauma caused by the war back in Colombia.

I have developed a new family and built a new network in London. The commission has been supporting me at difficult times and I am deeply thankful to all the ladies for that.

Peace for Colombia for me is a new path that all Colombians have started; it was our grandparents' dream and now is our responsibility to build it. For me, we can build peace through the revolution of small things, every day, at every time, respecting each other, empowering women, and recognising the value of every human being, especially if he/she is different from me.

Peace is possible if we dream it, if we work on it together from every part of the world where women are willing to do it.



“ Indigenous women are totally invisible, discriminated against, and excluded, even in their own territories and by some indigenous authorities. CONAMIC allowed me to understand that this situation is also common in many other towns. The alliance of women motivated me to join electoral politics.

María Inés, Nasa People, Colombia

## Achievements

- **Enabled the psychosocial healing and empowerment of Colombian diaspora women**

The completion of a pilot phase of the Truth, Memory and Reconciliation Commission of Colombian Women in the diaspora, resulted in collating a total of 84 testimonies, and involving over 400 women across London and Barcelona. Developing an innovative methodology, the process of ‘active memory’ used to gather the various testimonies has had a powerful transformative impact on the women involved – contributing to healing, social reparation and reconciliation. As part of this work, we are connecting to the official Truth Commission in Colombia, as well as looking to roll out the methodology to women from other diaspora communities.

- **Strengthened the abilities of indigenous women to monitor implementation of the peace agreement**

Alongside our partner CIASE, we are supporting a network of indigenous women to play an active role in the country’s peace process. The National Coordination of Indigenous Women in Colombia (CONAMIC) consists of women from ten different indigenous communities across Colombia. In 2017 we provided training to over 90 women, as well as an innovative internship opportunity with CIASE in Bogota, which allows the indigenous women to engage with and directly lobby national and international decision-makers. Two of the CONAMIC members are standing in legislative elections in 2018, empowered in part by their involvement in the network.

- **Provided a significant platform to debate gender aspects of the Colombia peace agreement**

We brought people together to explore gender and the Colombian agreement, as part of a process which resulted in us co-convening a successful, high-profile peace conference in London with ABColombia. Through this, we enabled 120 people to discuss the gender aspects relating to the peace agreement between FARC and the Government of Colombia. The conference involved Colombian government representatives, civil society organisations, FARC members and government officials from the EU, UK and other European countries. As well as celebrating the achievements already made by Colombian women, the conference importantly allowed participants to present recommendations to improve the effectiveness of implementation of the peace agreement. By sharing the Colombian innovations, including gender perspectives in the peace process, we are contributing to the global quest for turning gender-related policies into practice.

Above: A traditional ceremony as part of one of the meetings of CONAMIC members © Conciliation Resources



# Strengthening the organisation

Conciliation Resources invests in continuous learning, and allocates time and resources to develop the individuals who work with us and the systems and processes that support our programmatic work.

## Monitoring, evaluation and organisational learning

Our efforts to make learning more systematic across our organisational practice were taken forward this year by staff working to integrate learning in four interlinked areas: monitoring, evaluation and learning; performance, roles and incentives; knowledge management; and cross-team learning questions. This work is underpinned by a learning strategy to guide our objectives. In addition, we fostered learning exchanges on peacebuilding themes with a number of external academic and other organisations, hosting learning workshops and events at our offices throughout the year.

Our monitoring and evaluation systems strive to achieve a balance between accountability and learning. We have invested in tools and processes to capture, evidence and communicate the outcomes and impact of our work. In 2017, we continued to develop monitoring, evaluation and learning processes that create space for our teams and partners to critically reflect and learn. Teams and partners use this evidence and learning to continually adapt their programmes to rapidly changing conflict dynamics.

## Fundraising and communications

In 2017, we further diversified our funding base, developing new relationships with bilateral donors and trusts and foundations. In addition to funding existing work to provide long-term support where

it is most needed, funds secured have allowed us to start new projects and deepen engagement in existing areas of work.

Our communications continued to support both our programme and policy work as well as providing examples and approaches to highlight the effectiveness of peacebuilding. We reached around 300,000 people online and in addition had 221 media articles published – sharing conflict analysis, peacebuilding lessons and examples from our experience. We contributed to external global networks of other peacebuilding organisations to collectively strengthen the case for peacebuilding. Our communications team also played a leading role in ensuring that as an organisation we are prepared for the introduction of the new General Data Protection Regulations in May 2018.

## Partnerships

We believe in two-way partner relationships characterised by mutual support and learning. As part of a broader practice-based research programme, in 2017, we initiated a series of internal reflections and consultations with our partners to draw practical lessons, for ourselves and for the wider policy and practitioner community. These reflections looked at how, and under what conditions, partnering between international NGOs and civil society organisations or individuals, supports inclusive and transformative peace processes and peacebuilding. The research draws on Conciliation Resources' practice as the case study.

*Above:* Conciliation Resources staff and trustees © Conciliation Resources

*Opposite:* Conciliation Resources staff take part in an organisational away day © Conciliation Resources

## Core and operations

We undertook an Employee Engagement Survey (previous surveys having taken place in 2013 and 2015) to better understand what works and what needs improving in the organisation. We continued work into supporting staff performance and development through refining the appraisal processes further; undertaking an independent salary benchmarking exercise; and developing new policies and procedures to help guide staff on best practice and employment law.

In 2017, our experienced finance team continued to strengthen our financial management through improved accounting systems and processes, and through increased procedural linkages between programmatic operations and financial systems. Our IT systems were also reviewed and improved, to stay ahead on information security and data protection.

# Our people

The work of Conciliation Resources would not be possible without our team of dedicated staff, volunteers, partners and board members. In 2017, we had an average of 43 staff (full-time equivalent) made up of full- and part-time staff, and were supported by a number of volunteers.

## Board

Our Board meets four times a year and in addition, trustees directly support our programmes and policy work. The Board consists of professionals from a variety of backgrounds including peacebuilding, human rights, academia, diplomacy, law and communications.

In 2017, the Board of Trustees undertook an open recruitment process – the third time that Conciliation Resources has undertaken a full external process – in order to recruit a new treasurer. Andrew Peck replaced Jeremy Lester as Treasurer. Jeremy stepped down from the Board after serving for four years.

## Board members:

**Carey Cavanaugh**  
**Michelle Davis**  
**Kate Fearon**  
**Diana Good**  
**Katy Hayward**  
**Avila Kilmurray**  
**Rosalind Marsden**  
**Michelle Parlevliet**  
**Andrew Peck (Treasurer)**  
**Rt Rev Peter Price (Chair)**  
**Marc Van Bellinghen**





# Our partners

Conciliation Resources' partnerships with a wide variety of individuals, networks and civil society organisations are fundamental to our work. In 2017, we partnered with 71 local and international individuals and organisations, which included women's groups, youth networks, human rights organisations and peacebuilders.

## Accord, Policy and Practice

Alliance for Peacebuilding  
 Bond  
 Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies  
 Centre for Peacebuilding and Socio-Economic Resources Development  
 Charity Finance Group  
 Conflict Analysis Research Centre, University of Kent  
 European Peacebuilding Liaison Office  
 Gender Action for Peace and Security  
 International Alert  
 International Crisis Group  
 Mediation Support Network  
 Political Settlements Research Programme  
 Quaker United Nations Office  
 Rethinking Security  
 Saferworld  
 School of Oriental and African Studies  
 Social Science Baha

## Caucasus

Asarkia  
 Avangard  
 Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development  
 Center for Humanitarian Programmes  
 Crisis Management Initiative  
 Go Group Media  
 Heinrich Böll Stiftung  
 Institute for the Study of Nationalism and Conflict  
 International Alert  
 Kvinna till Kvinna  
 LINKS  
 Media Initiatives Center  
 Memory Project Core Group  
 Peaceful Change Initiative  
 Public Union for Humanitarian Research  
 Respublika Idei  
 Stepanakert Press Club  
 Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Politik  
 Sukhum Youth House  
 swisspeace  
 Young Socialists

## East and Central Africa

Commission diocésaine de justice, paix et réconciliation  
 Femme Homme Action Plus  
 Réseau des Organisations de Femmes des Uélés  
 Self-Help Women Development Association  
 Solidarité et Assistance Intégrale aux Personnes Démunies  
 South Sudan Democratic Engagement, Monitoring and Observation Programme  
 Totto Chan for Child Trauma

## Horn of Africa

County Government of Garissa  
 Government of Kenya Facilitation Team to the Ogaden peace process  
 Inter Government Authority on Development  
 National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management

*Above: Conciliation Resources' partners from across East and Central Africa*  
 © Conciliation Resources



## Latin America

ABC Colombia  
Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social  
Coordinación Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas de Colombia  
Comisión de Verdad, Memoria y Reconciliación de Mujeres en la Diáspora  
Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular  
Instituto Pensar,  
Universidad Javeriana

## Pacific

Citizens' Constitutional Forum  
Dialogue Fiji  
Fiji Women's Rights Movement  
Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation  
Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding

## South Asia

Bureau of Research on Industry and Economic Fundamentals  
Centre for Peace, Development and Reforms  
Human Welfare Voluntary Organisation  
Kargil Development Project  
Kashmir Development Foundation  
Kashmir Institute for International Relations  
School of Hospitality and Tourism Management,  
University of Jammu

## Southeast Asia

Teduray Lambangian Women's Organisation  
United Youth for Peace and Development

## West Africa

Borno Coalition for Democracy and Progress  
Hope Interactive  
Kukah Centre

“ *It is a very collaborative partnership... both friendly and professional. The biggest difference from other partnerships we have is that this is not a client-implementor relationship. With Conciliation Resources we are a partner. The word makes a big difference.* ”

Afaq Hussain Bureau of Research on Industry and Economic Fundamentals

# Donors

All of Conciliation Resources' work is based on a spirit of cooperation and partnership. We would like to thank all of our donors for their continued support. Together, we are striving for a world where people work together to resolve conflicts and promote peaceful and inclusive societies.

## Government and multilateral organisations

Australian Embassy in Ethiopia  
Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Commonwealth Scholarship Commission  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland  
European Union  
Federal Republic of Germany Foreign Office  
French Embassy in the Central African Republic  
Global Affairs Canada

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency  
Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs  
UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund  
UK Department for International Development  
UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
United Nations Office for Project Services  
United Nations Population Fund

## Trusts and foundations

Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust  
Economic Social and Research Council  
Folke Bernadotte Academy  
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (zivilic Funding Programme)  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Peace Nexus Foundation  
Ploughshares Fund  
MISEREOR  
National Endowment for Democracy  
Robert Bosch Stiftung  
Sigrid Rausing Trust

# Financial summary

In 2017, Conciliation Resources' income was £5.12 million, with various programmes of work at different points in their lifecycles, as some came to an end and others began. This translated into increased expenditure of £5.55 million. The summary statement of financial activities shows a decrease of £431,102 for the year and total funds available stand at £1,793,134.

Increasingly, donor funds are projectised over short time frames instead of providing strategic flexibility over a longer period. Conciliation Resources continues to plan, adapt and adjust to these changing and emerging trends. The ability to recover organisational support costs at an appropriate level remains a challenge at a time when external requirements are becoming increasingly complex, costly and time consuming to manage.

The unrestricted funding Conciliation Resources receives from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, is increasingly important and provides much needed core support. We value our long-standing relationships with them.

The increase in spending on charitable activities reflects the beginning of funding contracts for some areas of work in South Asia, East and Central Africa, the Horn of Africa and Colombia. As we entered 2018, we began new funding contracts for work in the Horn of Africa and the Philippines.

## Summary statement of financial activities

Income	2017	2016
Unrestricted grants	1,217,489	1,637,799
Restricted grants	3,864,536	2,966,014
Other income	39,160	51,570
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>5,121,186</b>	<b>4,655,383</b>

Expenditure	2017	2016
Fundraising	202,144	177,692
Charitable activities	5,350,144	4,789,909
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>5,552,288</b>	<b>4,967,601</b>
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>	<b>(431,102)</b>	<b>(312,218)</b>

## Support costs

Costs incurred for the general management of Conciliation Resources, including the provision of direct and indirect executive oversight, financial management, office costs, communication costs, governance costs and cross-organisational support to programmes are allocated as 'charitable activity' expenditure. The costs of fundraising are met from unrestricted income.

## Reserves

Conciliation Resources has a policy to maintain a balance of unrestricted reserves equalling six months core operating costs in line with general guidelines for UK charities. General reserves are unrestricted and include a designation of £53,368 for staff contingency. During 2017, Conciliation Resources met its target for unrestricted reserves.

## Basis of financial information

The accounts are audited by PKF Littlejohn LLP and are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2005) issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Financial Reporting Standard 102. We publish our audited accounts on our website: [www.c-r.org](http://www.c-r.org) or they can be downloaded from the Charity Commission website: [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)

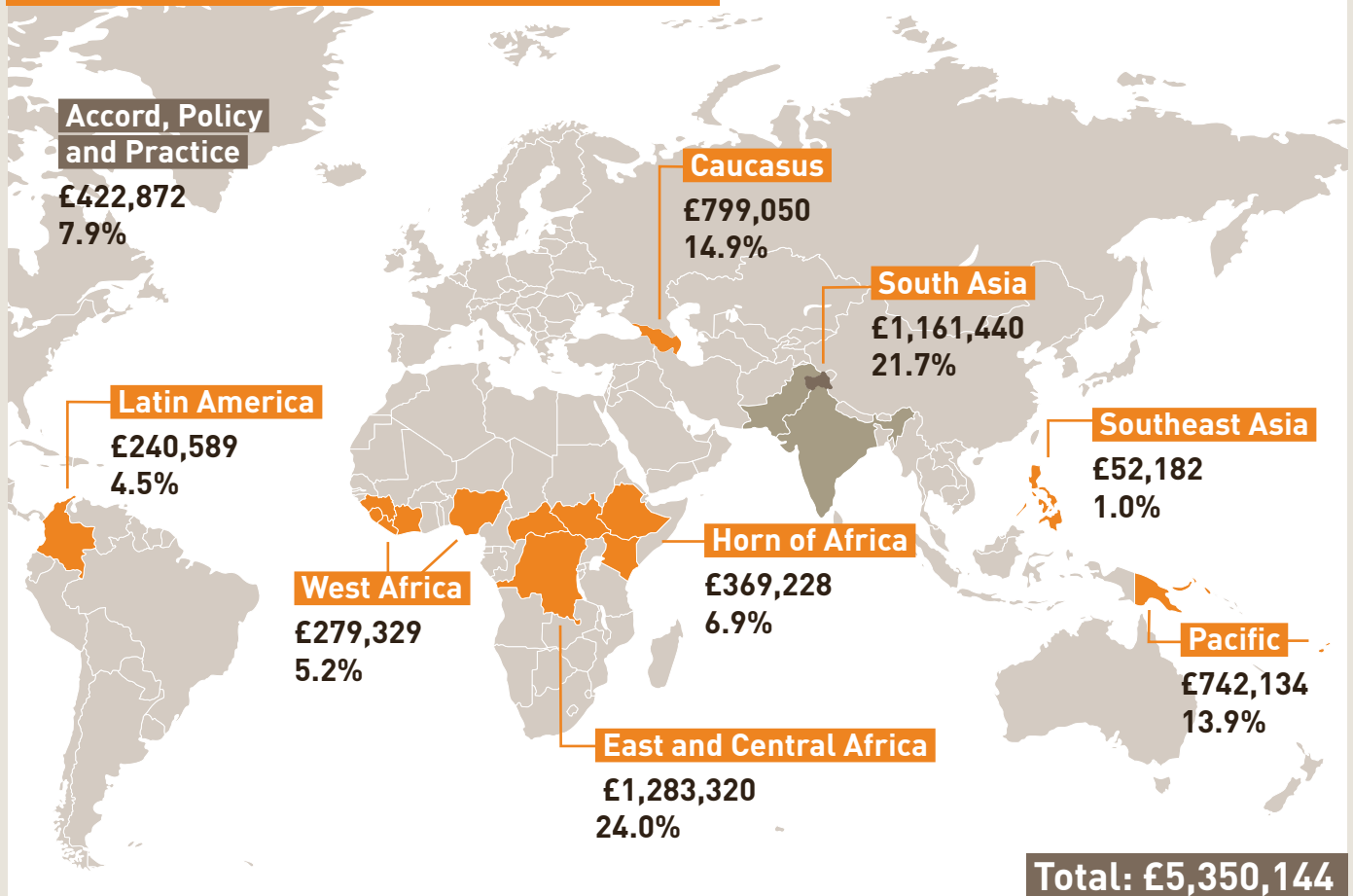
Balance sheet	2017	2016
Fixed Assets	103,318	147,390
Current Assets	3,032,243	4,087,161
Liabilities	(1,239,109)	(2,010,315)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,793,134</b>	<b>2,224,236</b>

Funds	2017	2016
Unrestricted funds	1,793,134	2,023,519
Restricted funds		200,717
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>1,793,134</b>	<b>2,224,236</b>

# How we spent your money in 2017




## Programme and policy activities



**Conciliation Resources** is an independent international organisation working with people in conflict to prevent violence, resolve conflicts and promote peaceful societies. We believe that building sustainable peace takes time. We provide practical support to help people affected by violent conflict achieve lasting peace. We draw on our shared experiences to improve peacebuilding policies and practice worldwide.


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 [ConciliationResources](https://www.facebook.com/ConciliationResources)

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Cover images: Conciliation Resources' partners from: Liberia, Colombia, Kenya, Jammu and Kashmir, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and the Philippines © Conciliation Resources

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