ABOUT CONCILIATION RESOURCES

Conflict is difficult, complex and political. The world urgently needs to find different ways to respond. Conciliation Resources is an international organisation committed to stopping violent conflict and creating more peaceful societies. We work with people impacted by war and violence, bringing diverse voices together to make change that lasts.

We connect the views of people on the ground with political processes, and share experience and expertise so others can find creative responses to conflict.

We make peace possible.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to transform the way the world resolves violent conflict so that people work together to build peaceful and inclusive societies.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to bring people together to find creative and sustainable paths to peace.

OUR VALUES

Collaboration
We work in partnership to tackle violence, exclusion, injustice and inequality.

Creativity
We are imaginative and resourceful in how we influence change.

Challenge
We are not afraid to face difficult conversations and defy convention.

Commitment
We are dedicated and resilient in the long journey to lasting peace.
WELCOME

“The past year has been a difficult one”, was how a long-time partner of Conciliation Resources recently greeted me.

It’s a phrase one hears often. With the converging crises of conflict, COVID-19 and climate change it can feel like an understatement. This past year the escalation of violence in countries such as Afghanistan and Ethiopia, and as I write, in Ukraine, are brutal reminders of how lives can so easily be shattered through war.

Yet when confronted by persistent hostilities, the task of peacebuilding and mediation is to find traction. To find the slivers of opportunity that enable people and societies immersed in violent conflict to explore the parameters for diplomatic outcomes. This is not comfortable, but it is needed. Only then can agreements be reached that enable the transition from the use of force and violence in response to conflicts, to negotiating difference by non-violent means.

We see all too clearly that different conflicts impose different demands and require different approaches, both to understand the dynamics that cause and sustain conflicts and to generate effective responses. Involving a diversity of voices, and the multiple ideas and energies of those affected by violence and oppression, is critical if we are to chart a way towards peace. We see the necessity of working collaboratively, recognising that we are stronger when we coordinate with our peers; and when we listen to the experiences of those who endure and survive conflict.

Conciliation Resources’ staff team and partners demonstrated throughout 2021 that it is possible to work across entrenched divides. Sustaining relationships and bringing varied perspectives and experiences into processes is part of the alchemy of peacebuilding.

My colleagues narrate their efforts of helping young women and men in the Central African Republic to lay down weapons and undertake the first, and often painful, steps towards dialogue with people they have considered their enemies. They share the experiences of communities in Papua New Guinea, Nigeria and Ethiopia that have dealt with the heartbreak and desperation of destruction to reintegrate and rehabilitate perpetrators of violence, enabling peace for the future. They reflect on the attempts of journalists, analysts, officials and activists from the South Caucasus to Kashmir who have sought to challenge divisive embedded beliefs with new ideas, often drawn from a rigorous interrogation of what has worked and what hasn’t in other conflicts.

Progress does not come quickly, sometimes it feels like it does not come at all. Anger and hope can be uncomfortable bedfellows in the hearts of those undertaking this work. Yet the courage of peacebuilders is to stay the course and accompany people working in their communities to find subtle ways to mediate between what can look like incompatible aspirations.

In 2021, Conciliation Resources continued to do this in person and online to achieve short and long-term change. The puzzle of peacebuilding is to piece together initiatives and efforts to promote change even when positive solutions feel distant. We do this with the support of many friends, donors and partners, to whom we are ever grateful. But we are also grateful to those who challenge us, who critique our ideas and efforts. We know that peacebuilding can touch raw nerves. But by engaging with the dissonance that comes from this, our collective endeavours continue to make peace possible.
DIALOGUE AND MEDIATION REMAINED CENTRAL TO OUR WORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. SUPPORTING COMMUNITY-LEVEL MEDIATION AND DIALOGUE PROCESSES, WE SUCCESSFULLY PREPARED COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO PLAY LEADERSHIP ROLES IN RESOLVING LOCAL CONFLICTS.
OUR GOALS

In 2021 we continued working towards our four strategic goals, to improve how peace is built.

1. ADAPTIVE AND ALTERNATIVE PATHS TO PEACE

Peacebuilding overcomes barriers to creating peaceful societies

2021 was another year that provided a host of challenges for peacebuilding in the various places in which we work. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted communities and travel globally, and new crises emerged in multiple locations. To respond, we worked with partners to adapt to changing circumstances and find incremental ways to build more peaceful societies.

Dialogue and mediation remained central to our work throughout the year. Supporting community-level mediation and dialogue processes, we successfully prepared community members to play leadership roles in resolving local conflicts. As a result, our work led to numerous examples of conflicting sides reaching compromise in places like Mindanao in the Philippines and Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), a district of Bossangoa where herders had once lived but had fled due to conflict, saw these pastoralists return following dialogue led by a local Mayor who we supported. Likewise, on the back of a number of different interventions in northeast Nigeria, communities acknowledged their role in accepting people formerly associated with Boko Haram.

To help shape future prospects for peace in the South Caucasus, we continued to focus on initiatives to document and learn from the past in relation to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. In several places, we also brought people together across conflict divides both online and in person, sharing ideas from dialogue with the wider public and enabling more formal dialogue processes to continue. This included across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, and in the South Caucasus. While in the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia (SRS), we continued to support dialogue processes as well as connecting political parties to work together on a common agenda to reduce violence.

2. CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PEACE EFFORTS

More coherent initiatives help prevent and reduce violent conflict

This year our work focused on supporting, strengthening and connecting various peace processes and structures, to help those experiencing violent conflict find creative ways to address it. Convening meetings and spaces both online and in person, we sought to ensure people working on peace at different levels and with multiple perspectives were sharing and learning from each other.

In all contexts, we worked within communities to build and strengthen peace networks and develop communities’ understanding of peacebuilding approaches. In Bougainville, Papua New Guinea and in northeast Nigeria we supported diverse groups of young people and women to develop mediation knowledge, and lead peacebuilding initiatives. In Jammu and Kashmir we expanded networks of peacebuilders and groups working for peace, both within the respective sides and across the dividing Line of Control.

Community Security Working Groups in Mindanao, the Philippines, provided spaces for communities to interact with local government – strengthening trust and transparency and enabling practical solutions to be found for the issues people are facing. In CAR, we supported civil society to propose alternative approaches to dialogue, and both here and in Bougainville, we successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of community-led peacebuilding activities to decision-makers.

We connected community peacebuilding initiatives with national and regional processes to enable activities to be coherent and joined-up. Supporting local efforts in Afghanistan, we developed the skills of community members to engage in dialogue and advocate de-escalation of local-level conflicts. In the SRS, linking a network of victims and survivors of the conflict, as well as other remote communities, to local and regional governments and political parties increased visibility for the network, and facilitated direct support from the President of the SRS.

Left: Peace Awareness Walk, Central African Republic © UN/MINUSCA Leonel Grothe
In South Asia, publishing a report advocating the resumption of cross-Line of Control trade, we contributed to shaping a positive narrative for bilateral economic engagement between India and Pakistan and for promoting measures which build confidence between the sides. We also helped improve trust and collaboration between traders and the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry, despite an ongoing suspension of trade across the Line of Control. Working with Women Mediators across the Commonwealth (WMC), we continued to promote the work of women mediators across the globe, and in particular provided direct support to members’ ongoing practical mediation endeavours through the provision of small grants.

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We continued to champion the integration of gender into peacebuilding, providing guidance to governments and other institutions, and promoting a gender-sensitive approach to conflict analysis. For example, in South Asia, we trained remotely UNDP Pakistan’s local partners using our gender conflict analysis tool and facilitator’s guide. We led research which explored how peacebuilders can better consider masculinities in their work, and addressed violence caused by toxic masculinity through, for example, organising a regional exchange meeting for those in the Pacific working specifically with men and boys. With the WMC we helped increase the visibility of women mediators, publishing a report which examined the factors supporting women in mediation, and launching an independent website and database for WMC members.

Involving armed groups and former combatants is a crucial part of peacebuilding – in 2022 we engaged with and supported previous members of armed groups in a number of countries. In northeast Nigeria, we helped the reintegration of those formerly associated with Boko Haram back into their communities, taking account of the differing needs of men and women. In the Philippines, we provided practical support to enable former combatants to transition back to civilian life, and through our work in Ethiopia, we supported women ex-combatants to advocate for their needs.

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In multiple places we supported young people to grow in confidence and participate in dialogue and peace processes. We engaged with young people in the Georgian-Abkhaz context in the South Caucasus in work responding to COVID-19 and in recording oral histories, and we continued to connect, support and inspire youth in northeast Nigeria. Research we published focused on the views of diverse youth and young combatants in CAR, and as a result of trauma and resiliency training in Fiji, young people took the lead in organising activities to support their communities to deal with trauma.
International peacebuilding support puts people first

Throughout 2021, we engaged with policy and decision-makers in the UK, EU and in the countries in which we work, to promote approaches to addressing conflict which focus on the views and needs of the people affected. Undertaking research, and drawing lessons from our practical experience, we shared learning which helped advance the knowledge of what works and what doesn’t in peacebuilding.

Exploring specific peacebuilding themes, we contributed to the national and international debate on climate change and the impacts of this on conflicts in Fiji and the wider Pacific region. We published research on reconciliation and how it can help deal with the legacies of past conflict and shape the future, sharing knowledge with governments and peacebuilding practitioners. Our two substantive pieces of research on gender and masculinities informed the Swiss National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security. Leading the Smart Peace consortium, we shared lessons about innovation in peacebuilding, and our latest Accord Spotlight provided expert guidance on developments in ceasefire support and monitoring as a key ingredient in transitions from war to peace.

We continued working collaboratively with the UK Government, NGOs and banks to counter the negative impact of counter-terrorism legislation and sanctions on peacebuilding and humanitarian work. Separately, we examined the issue of how best to finance and fund peacebuilding activities. We published media articles to promote conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and worked to influence the UK Government’s Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, which included a commitment to conflict prevention. In the EU, we engaged with policymakers and collaborated with civil society organisations and networks, to amplify support for peacebuilding and mediation efforts as a first-response to violent conflict. We also contributed to debates on conflict topics including gender, peace and security, and climate change and peacebuilding.

Working to influence policies in the countries in which we work, we undertook a number of initiatives to connect with opinion-formers and decision-makers, and propose new ideas and thinking on how to respond to conflicts. For example, we increased our influence and visibility among those working to move CAR towards peace. Advocating increased inclusion and greater consideration of local dynamics in CAR’s peace process, we published a number of reports, media articles and commentaries. In Nigeria, we helped bring the issue of the reintegration of those formerly associated with Boko Haram to the attention of key policymakers and international players.
**WHERE WE WORK**

**P15 WEST AFRICA**

In West Africa we work mainly in Nigeria. In the northeast, communities continue to be impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency and the emergence of Islamic State in West Africa. Nigeria’s Plateau State experiences violent conflict between farming and herder communities. In both regions our work supports communities to develop the skills, confidence and space to prevent and transform conflicts, looking particularly at how to include those who are most marginalised such as young people and women, persons with disabilities, and persons from minority groups. We also engaged with partners in Liberia, providing small grants to support women’s participation in peace and reconciliation.

**P11 EAST & CENTRAL AFRICA**

Our work in this region centres on the Central African Republic, but also includes Uganda and the bordering countries of the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. Weak governance and a lack of trust between populations and their governments is a driver of conflicts in many places, with cycles of violence exacerbated by the marginalisation of communities. We work to support communities and connect local to national peace initiatives.

**P14 HORN OF AFRICA**

We work in Kenya and the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia (SRS) to help address the legacies of historic ethnic violence and marginalisation, an important step in preventing the recurrence of such violence. In SRS, we support the implementation of the 2018 Asmara peace agreement between the Government of Ethiopia and the Ogaden National Liberation Front. We help improve coordination between peacebuilding interventions, and work with other political parties, local civil society organisations, victims’ and survivors’ networks and communities affected by violence. In northern Kenya, we support the development of a peace policy to provide frameworks for sustainable peacebuilding.

**P20 SOUTH CAUCASUS**

We focus on the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict context, and on the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorny Karabakh. Wars in Nagorny Karabakh and Abkhazia that were linked to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, left conflicts that remain unresolved decades later. In September 2020, a 44-day war took place between Azerbaijan and Armenia. We work with a wide range of partners to identify and address the causes of conflict, undertaking initiatives to open up new spaces for dialogue.
**SOUTH ASIA**

In South Asia, we work on the conflict between India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir, and more recently in Afghanistan. We work with people living on either side of the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, to enhance prospects for lasting peace through the inclusion of Kashmiri voices in the India-Pakistan peace process. The conflict in Afghanistan remains unresolved and the country is currently facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, alongside political and security uncertainty. We support local initiatives to promote dialogue and prevent violence within communities.

**PACIFIC**

In the Pacific we work in Fiji and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, as well as on conflict factors which impact the wider Pacific region. In Fiji we explore how climate change, the environment and conflict intersect. In Bougainville, we work with communities and with the governments of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea to prevent violence and assist in the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

**SOUTHEAST ASIA**

We work in the Philippines, focusing on the southern island of Mindanao, which saw a decades-long conflict between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Government of the Philippines. Despite a peace agreement being signed in 2014, people don’t yet feel secure. We support communities to continue the transition away from violent conflict – monitoring implementation of the peace agreement, resolving local conflicts and strengthening community relationships with authorities.

**GLOBAL INITIATIVES**

In addition to focusing on specific conflicts and geographies, we also have work which spans multiple locations and covers thematic areas relating to peacebuilding. Through partnering with the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund Rapid Response Window, we help increase women’s participation in peace processes by providing short-term grants to address funding gaps. Until later in 2021, we led the global consortium, Smart Peace, taking innovative approaches to peacebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected states. We also provided secretariat support for Women Mediators across the Commonwealth to increase the participation of, and support for, women in peace and mediation.

**RESEARCH, ADVISORY AND POLICY**

In an increasingly polarised world, the need to find better ways to prevent and resolve conflict non-violently and in ways that last, is more urgent than ever. Our Research, Advisory and Policy team works to ensure that multilateral and government policies are helpful in creating conditions for peace – primarily in the UK and at the EU level. We also generate research and evidence to improve how peacebuilders and decision-makers around the world are addressing conflict.

**CONCILIATION RESOURCES EU**

The strategic partnership between Conciliation Resources and the mediatEUr was further formalised in 2021 when we renamed the Brussels-based office Conciliation Resources EU. This name change reflects the growing relationship between the two organisations. Our Brussels-based team delivered peacebuilding assignments for the EU through management of two EU framework contracts and contributed to peer networks and policy debates on key peacebuilding topics.

**CONCILIATION RESOURCES AUSTRALIA**

Our Melbourne-based team oversees all our work in the Pacific and Southeast Asia regions, as well as engaging on cross-cutting peacebuilding issues and policy themes. In 2021, we expanded Conciliation Resources Australia, to provide us with greater flexibility and opportunities for income generation and influence in the future.
WE CONNECTED COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITIES TO NATIONAL PROCESSES AND ADVOCATED GREATER INCLUSION IN PEACEBUILDING AMONG DECISION-MAKERS, TO ADDRESS THE CAUSES, DRIVERS AND LEGACIES OF VIOLENT CONFLICT.

Above: Teenage girls who were recently released from an armed group gather at a rehabilitation session for other former child soldiers in Central African Republic © Jack Losh
2021 saw a turbulent start in the Central African Republic (CAR) with an ongoing crisis after disputed elections in December 2020. Following the elections, a new coalition of armed groups emerged – The Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) – which resulted in renewed waves of violence, even greater food insecurity, and further displacement.

In addition, COVID-19 restrictions continued to have an impact, including on travel to the region. We supported partners to work with communities, and in particular, young people. Centring efforts on driving forward peace initiatives at a local level, we also connected community-based activities to national processes and advocated greater inclusion in peacebuilding among decision-makers, to address the causes, drivers and legacies of violent conflict.

★ ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Civil society developed alternative responses to the conflict

The 2020 electoral crisis and emergence of CPC presented new challenges for CAR and the 2019 national peace agreement. We supported a group of civil society organisations in CAR to come together, develop and propose an alternative approach to dialogue which promotes the inclusion of conflict-affected communities. This ‘decentralised dialogue’ model was based on research findings coming from our Smart Peace consortium about the effectiveness of such locally-led peace initiatives. The concept is now being given consideration by the government, who can learn from this approach and how it can inform national processes.

2. Peacebuilding in Bossangoa resulted in the peaceful return of herders

Mbororo herders are a Muslim pastoralist group who originally operated in regions around Bossangoa, CAR. Following the outbreak of violent conflict in 2013, they were forced to leave the area due to being associated with the Séléka armed groups, who caused horrific violence to communities. We worked with the mayor of a rural commune near Bossangoa, mapping pastoralist routes, undertaking peacebuilding analysis, and supporting him to understand the needs of the herders. The mayor met with herders and allayed their concerns of being attacked. As a result, herders and their families have begun to return, with the mayor assisting their reintegration back into the area.

“We’ve trained young people in peacebuilding skills... In the Central African Republic, many of today’s young people have grown up knowing only conflict but they have not been invited to take part in building peace.”

Prosper Ndimbo, Association pour l’Action Humanitaire en Centrafrique
“I resisted because of all the community dialogues and peacebuilding work I carried out with my colleagues on non-violence.”
RESISTING THE LURE OF ARMED GROUPS: YOUTH IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

In late 2020, the emergence of a new rebel movement led to a fresh escalation of violence in CAR. Like many other young men (and some women), Patrice* felt pressure to join them.

Living near the town of Bossangoa, north-western CAR, Patrice had been a member of the anti-balaka during the height of the conflict in 2013. The native home of former President Bozizé, with the upsurge of insecurity, Bossangoa once again found itself at the epicentre of the violence. In December 2020, a wave of fighters from the newly formed Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) swept the town. This confronted young people with a difficult choice: should they join the armed coalition or stay behind?

Due to his past association with the anti-balaka, many of his peers expected Patrice to join the CPC. However, Patrice had become an active and respected peacebuilder in his community, after receiving peacebuilding training and support in 2019 from Conciliation Resources and its partners, War Child UK and Association pour l’Action Humanitaire en Centrafrique (AAHC).

Patrice could not bring himself to join the group, he did not want to stain his reputation as a peacebuilder and the positive perception local authorities had developed of him:

“I resisted because of all the community dialogues and peacebuilding work I carried out with my colleagues on non-violence. The Prefect and other authorities know me very well after the advocacy sessions. I cannot deceive them and I prefer to run away from the town than to join the CPC.”

So instead, Patrice joined his parents in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp, which had been established during the presence of the CPC in Bossangoa. During his time in the camp, Patrice kept regular contact with Conciliation Resources and local authorities:

“They encouraged me to resist. This is how instead of being idle, I proposed to my friends to start some discussions under the theme ‘Youth – the future of Bossangoa, let’s resist armed groups.’ My friends found the discussions very interesting and useful and that is how we continued the next day and so on.”

Since then, Patrice and his friends have created their own association, Association des Jeunes Emancipés en Centrafrique. They use different activities to educate other youth on leaving armed groups and resisting violence. The Prefect of Ouham prefecture recognised the young people’s commitment to peace and non-violence:

“Conciliation Resources has been here with our youth when everyone thinks that Bossangoa’s youth cannot deliver anything positive. Thanks to the organisation’s work, young people are my partners today. They have been there to galvanise me in my work in IDP camps during the difficult situation caused by the CPC.”

*Not his real name

Funding for Conciliation Resources’ work with young people in Bossangoa, northwest CAR, was provided by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and the United Kingdom’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. It was implemented in partnership with War Child UK and AAHC.
In prison I was in a desperate situation, as if between life and death. Now I have a new life, with new hopes and ambitions... The Association of Somali Region Victims and Survivors is one of those ambitions.

Mohamed Mohamud Mohamed ('Darusalem')

In Ethiopia, growing tensions between the government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front culminated in a violent conflict in Tigray in 2020. Despite these developments in the north, the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia (SRS) remained comparably calm throughout 2021. We worked with our partners to deepen our peace and dialogue support – promoting the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims and survivors; assisting reconciliation and dealing with the past; and helping progress the full transition of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) to a political party. This transition continued following the signing of the 2018 Asmara peace agreement. We also worked to strengthen the meaningful political participation of women and marginalised groups, and continued to support the inclusion of Somalis in the political, economic and social order of Ethiopia. In northern Kenya we helped strengthen local peacebuilding and improve stability in the border regions, through increased coordination and learning on cross-border and regional peacebuilding initiatives.

★ ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Increased recognition and support for Somali victims and survivors

We worked with partners to hold a commemoration event of ‘Black Day’ – a day in 2016 on which many jailed Somali men protested and demanded their rights, leading to systemic torture. SRS President Mustafa Muhumed Omar met with over 300 victims and survivors and made a public statement in support of the Association of Somali Region Victims and Survivors, a network we support. The event opened avenues for victims’ groups to access ongoing government help and services.

2. Prevented electoral violence due to collaboration between political parties

Deep political differences between political groups in the SRS pose a conflict risk, in particular around elections. However, the 2021 general elections took place with a notable lack of electoral violence in the region. Working with the registered political parties, traditional elders and civil society organisations, we held multiple dialogue sessions bringing different groups together. We also supported mechanisms to be put in place to address tensions between the parties before they escalate. Opposition groups’ and the ruling party’s continued commitment to engaging in dialogue even after the elections, shows a commitment from both sides to build bridges and create avenues for potential future collaboration.

3. Broke down barriers between women from across political and clan divides

With our partner, we helped establish a Women’s Dialogue Space in the Somali region, bringing women from diverse backgrounds together. Prior to this, women did not have a women’s only space to network, exchange ideas and jointly tackle barriers to their participation in processes to build peace. This initiative has challenged the negative perceptions some of the women held about each other, and has encouraged interaction across the political divide – particularly between women from the ONLF and the incumbent Prosperity Party. Women are now using this inclusive space to explore structural challenges and self-funding to support election campaigns for women candidates.
In northeast Nigeria, the security situation dramatically worsened over the course of 2021, with the intensity and geographic range of attacks from armed insurgents increasing significantly.

At the same time, conflict continued to be present between farmers and herders in Plateau State. Working with partners, we responded to these conflict challenges, supporting the inclusion of marginalised groups in community conflict resolution to make peace more sustainable and effective. We sought to challenge traditional structures of power, and enable a wider section of society to participate in dialogues. We specifically helped groups of young people, women and those with disabilities to have the confidence, skills and space to express their needs and actively participate in peace initiatives. Engaging with those formerly associated with armed groups as well as vigilante groups, we helped to encourage greater respect for human rights, build trust with communities, and assist in reintegrating former combatants. In Liberia, we provided small grants to two different civil society organisations to support their advocacy for the inclusion of women in the ongoing national reconciliation process.

In northeast Nigeria, youth have been ascribed negative masculinities which have led them into violence. In order to build peace, we had to identify strategies that would help us and them to understand the drivers of violence.

Janet Adama Mohamed, Conciliation Resources’ West Africa Programme Director

1. Vigilante groups showed greater respect for human rights

Over the past few years, vigilante groups have sprung up in northeast Nigeria in response to Boko Haram. This has resulted in violent attacks, the murder and torture of Boko Haram suspects and challenges around reconciliation. We provided training to the vigilante groups, creating spaces where people could talk about forgiveness, justice and stigmatisation. As a result, the vigilantes chose to use non-violent approaches, handing over suspects to authorities. This transformation of attitudes and behaviour has created safer communities and allowed for the reintegration of former combatants back into society.

2. Inclusive mediation processes led to more sustainable peacebuilding

A wider section of society, including young people and women, participated in community discussions aimed at resolving conflicts. This enabled them to have their views heard, shape the design of solutions and ensure there was greater ownership of the final decisions. More formal dialogue processes were also increasingly informed by and representative of the needs of traditionally marginalised groups, and membership of customary power structures have been diversified, for example in Yobe State, women have been nominated to five Local Government Area Council of Elders for the first time in history.

3. People defected from armed groups and re-joined communities

As a result of our work in communities, with former members of armed groups and with vigilante groups, those defecting from Boko Haram chose to surrender themselves in significant numbers. The amount of people surrendering was much higher in communities in which vigilante groups were known to be respecting human rights than in other areas. This has helped to increase the visibility and effectiveness of formal reintegration and rehabilitation processes. Demonstrating renewed trust, some reintegrated people were even invited to weddings and other community events.
SOUTH ASIA

In Jammu and Kashmir, COVID-19 continued to add to security concerns and instability with a number of lockdowns during the first half of the year, particularly in Indian-administered Kashmir. In addition, significant tensions remained between India and Pakistan.

We continued to support partners on either side of the Line of Control, as well as sustaining momentum around our platforms and initiatives which brought people together across the divide. This was bolstered following the February 2021 decision by India and Pakistan to reaffirm commitment to the 2003 ceasefire agreement, pledging to halt violence across the Line of Control. After two years of heightened tensions between the two countries, the Ceasefire Agreement opened a long-awaited window to further advance and consolidate efforts towards peace in the region.

Afghanistan has witnessed armed conflict for over 41 years. In the wake of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in late August 2021, a period of transition and Taliban rule emerged. Early in 2021, we began work to support local-level initiatives aimed at promoting community dialogue to reduce violence, enable the provision of basic services and consolidate peaceful societies.

★ ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Promoted bilateral economic engagement between India and Pakistan
Building on a decade of work supporting cross-Line of Control trade and despite its continuous suspension, we assisted partners to achieve significant national media coverage promoting the benefits of this initiative. The articles highlighted the successes of the trade in building confidence between the two sides and in helping to sustain Kashmiri livelihoods. They also contributed to shaping a positive narrative for promoting wider economic engagement between Pakistan and India, and can be used to conduct further advocacy in this regard.

2. Women and youth on either side of the Line of Control are equipped to lead peacebuilding initiatives
Despite significant challenges in 2021, partners increased and deepened their engagement with different groups on both the Indian and Pakistan-administered sides of Kashmir. As a result of years of interventions, civil society groups, in particular women’s networks and youth on either side, have consolidated their work and now feel well-equipped and willing to lead peacebuilding initiatives and dialogue work.

3. Supported peacebuilding around the Afghanistan crisis
Following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan after the US withdrawal, we continued supporting peacebuilding work at the community level, as well as responding directly to help partners during the crisis. Despite exceptionally challenging circumstances, we retained engagement and ensured the continuation of activities aimed at strengthening local capacities for peace.

In a highly complex environment such as Kashmir, change has to be incremental, and it has to be inclusive of the people who are most affected by violence. 

Tahir Aziz, Conciliation Resources’ South Asia Senior Advisor
AS A RESULT OF YEARS OF INTERVENTIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS, IN PARTICULAR WOMEN’S NETWORKS AND YOUTH ON EITHER SIDE, HAVE CONSOLIDATED THEIR WORK AND NOW FEEL WELL-EQUIPPED AND WILLING TO LEAD PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES AND DIALOGUE WORK.

Below: Conciliation Resources’ partner Ezabir Ali with a woman in Indian-administered Kashmir, 2020 © Shuaib Masoodi
“MY FAVOURITE PART OF MY JOB IS REACHING OUT TO NEW PEOPLE IN AJK AND SUPPORTING THEM TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PEACEBUILDING AND BUILDING THEIR SKILLS, SO THEY CAN BE MORE CONFIDENT AND VOCAL WHEN TAKING PART IN FUTURE DIALOGUE PROCESSES.”

Above: Waleed Khan, Director of Programmes and Finance at the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), at a workshop in Islamabad, Pakistan © KIIR.
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF WALEED KHAN

Waleed Khan is the Director of Programmes and Finance at the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), one of Conciliation Resources’ partner organisations in South Asia. KIIR is a not-for-profit organisation based in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, which promotes peacebuilding in the region.

Working together, Conciliation Resources and KIIR aims to enhance prospects for lasting peace in Kashmir, bringing together and training local government officials, journalists, policy influencers, youth leaders and women’s groups to help them input into processes and policies which affect their lives. KIIR also works to strengthen networks across the Line of Control, looking for ways to practically collaborate such as on preparing for and responding to natural disasters.

What does a typical day look like?

Our office is based in Islamabad, the capital city of Pakistan, but a lot of our activities are based in different parts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The implementation of our activities can be a challenge for us as it involves a lot of travelling. My favourite part of my job is reaching out to new people in AJK and supporting them to learn more about peacebuilding and building their skills, so they can be more confident and vocal when taking part in future dialogue processes and raising awareness about the necessity of cross-Line of Control dialogue in their local communities. I originally come from the Bagh district of AJK. Now when I go back and visit different areas of AJK and see that our people need our help, it motivates me a lot. In the past two years more than 2,400 people have been involved in our activities.

What do you wish you’d known when you started peacebuilding work?

The people reading this interview can never know about the personal challenges which I face. No one can understand how it feels to put all this effort into peacebuilding while facing resistance even from my parents. My advice to peacebuilders in AJK is that it is not easy to work as a social activist and peacebuilder but if your intention is good and you have the willpower to change the things around you, you will be successful. All the work that we do is very important to me, but I received one message that said, “You are our only hope Sir”. This love that I have received due to our work is my greatest achievement. I never thought that people would admire me so much.

What do you hope for in the future?

Currently we are witnessing a ceasefire on the Line of Control which is a positive sign both for peacebuilders, and the people living in the region. We are hopeful that the two nuclear states of India and Pakistan will continue dialogue and agree upon a solution to the long-lasting unresolved issue of Jammu and Kashmir.
SOUTH CAUCASUS

Our work on the conflict over Nagorny Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan was overshadowed by the 44-day war towards the end of 2020. This resulted in 7,000 deaths and the displacement of many more, and has led to increased challenges with, among other things, a profound public disillusionment with peacebuilding. We spent much of 2021 supporting existing partners to adapt to the post-war period, challenging dominant narratives, and building new partnerships for peace.

Ongoing travel restrictions due to the pandemic continued to impact our work, particularly in the Georgian-Abkhaz context. Despite this we strengthened cross-conflict relationships and dialogue through frequent virtual contact and re-starting in-person meetings. We also provided sustained support to Abkhaz partners to respond to COVID-19. On either side of the Georgian-Abkhaz divide, we continued working with partners to explore how their societies can ‘deal with the past’, engaging new and younger people in this initiative.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Responded to the immediate consequences of the 2020 Karabakh war

Together with other international partners we worked with networks of peacebuilders, providing a vital sense of community, to address the post-war isolation of peace advocates in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh. We facilitated contacts, passed messages, and convened online exchanges, as well as bringing 35 people from the South Caucasus to Brussels, to discuss with EU counterparts post-war concerns and needs. Through these initiatives, we created the space for new thinking on the roles that European policymakers, politicians and peacebuilders can play in the South Caucasus. We were also able to move conversations from a place of paralysis and uncertainty towards topics where possible dialogue and advocacy could take place, such as around the danger of landmines, the impacts of trauma and the need for individual and community perspectives to be heard.

Generated new ideas and public discussion in the Georgian-Abkhaz context

In the context of stalled negotiations and deep mistrust, public discussion of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict mostly focuses on fears and negative images of the other side. Despite heightened insecurity in the region, partners on either side of the Georgian-Abkhaz divide persisted in thinking creatively and disseminating new ideas in public. Expert articles and interviews in the local press; discussions filmed for YouTube and online current affairs platforms; and an online repository were all used to stimulate critical thinking and internal dialogue. In autumn 2021, the first joint Georgian-Abkhaz policy messages for over a decade were made public by a core group of partners involved in the Limehouse Discussion Platform convened by Conciliation Resources. These ‘Ideas for Action’ were made possible through years of principled, frank and constructive cross-conflict exchange and relationship building. They provoked discussion among decision makers and the wider public, and set out steps that could be taken to change the dynamic and address the needs of people affected by ongoing conflict.
The Pacific continued to face a number of conflict challenges throughout 2021, including marginalisation, land conflict and resource disputes. The region also saw the risk of violence exacerbated by climate change, with natural disasters increasing the vulnerability of communities already experiencing conflicts.

Progress on implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement continued with ongoing dialogue between the Autonomous Bougainville Government and Papua New Guinea Government in the post-referendum period. In Bougainville, we worked to assist implementation of the agreement; strengthen collaboration between government and civil society peacebuilding efforts; equip local leaders to resolve community disputes peacefully and ensure greater inclusion in peacebuilding activities. We also scoped the feasibility of working in a new area – the highlands region of Papua New Guinea which is experiencing an escalation of armed intergroup violence. In Fiji, and the wider Pacific region, we explored the growing social, political and environmental conflict risks associated with climate change, and supported communities facing relocation to mitigate and resolve conflicts that arose.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. **Developed a greater understanding of climate change-related conflict risks**

   Working in partnership, we enabled communities, policymakers and others to gain a deeper understanding of how climate change intersects with conflicts in the Pacific. We also promoted the importance of including marginalised groups when responding to these challenges. Publishing a report on climate change-related conflict risks, we added depth to debates on the issue among policy formers and international organisations. A COP26 side event we supported in Suva, Fiji organised by our local partners, helped give voice to rural communities impacted by climate change.

2. **Addressed conflict and reduced violence within communities by equipping community leaders**

   Our work with partners supported peacebuilding training across several communities to address social conflict issues including drug and alcohol abuse, family disputes and community violence. We worked with community leaders to pass on peacebuilding skills, explore non-violent solutions and practice mediation, instead of retaliation. Attitudes to conflict have now changed, with more people requesting conciliation training and choosing to resolve disputes through dialogue.

3. **Strengthened collaboration between the Autonomous Bougainville Government and civil society to address longer-term conflict issues**

   We brought together community-led peacebuilders and civil society groups with government representations, notably through a ‘Sharing and Collaboration’ workshop. As a result of this event, participants demonstrated a mindset shift with regards to working together to address complex conflict challenges. The event demonstrated a true spirit of collaboration, and strong connections were forged between different groups which, as well as the government, included the Bougainville Women Federation, Bougainville Veterans and Youth Associations.

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"We have provided extensive training to the communities, because we anticipate that there will be conflict driven by climate change issues... Communities are more vocal now. They are taking to social media and talking about the issues."

Florence Swamy, Executive Director of the Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding, Fiji
PROVIDING TRAINING AND MENTORING IN MEDIATION AND CONFLICT MAPPING TO COMMUNITY LEADERS, COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS MEANT THEY WERE ABLE TO TRANSFORM CONFLICTS OVER LAND, THEREFORE PREVENTING OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE.
ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Representatives from marginalised groups have become community leaders and are mitigating potential causes of violence

Training provided by Conciliation Resources and partners, alongside encouragement to participate in Community Security Working Groups, has led to a broad range of new leaders having the confidence and skills to represent their communities. Young people, women, indigenous people and people with disabilities have all taken on leadership roles and are responding to the needs of their respective groups. As a result, factors which could otherwise lead to violent conflict are being addressed. For example, young people are leading initiatives to steer their peers on paths away from violence.

2. Community leaders and officials are resolving land conflicts

Violent conflict often stems from disputes over land between different clans or groups. Providing training and mentoring in mediation and conflict mapping to community leaders, community working group members and local government officials meant they were able to transform conflicts over land, therefore preventing outbreaks of violence. In 2021, this included finding a resolution to a long-standing conflict between the Barangay Femogoyon (Moro community) and the Bahar (Indigenous Peoples community). Previously this conflict has led to communities needing to evacuate due to violence, but community dialogues resulted in a peaceful agreement.

3. Collaboration and transparency between communities and local government has improved

As the community working groups have become more established, local authorities in the various barangay (districts) where they operate have realised the value they have. As a result, people in communities have been able to raise their concerns with officials, and work collaboratively with them to find practical solutions to some of the challenges they face. Community members have also been able to hold local governments to account, and officials now appreciate the benefit of transparent communications with the people they serve. This increased engagement is leading to a reduction of tensions and a reduced risk of violence, within communities and between communities and the authorities.

The 2014 peace agreement, signed between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Government of the Philippines, brought an official end to conflict in Mindanao.

Despite progress being made on the implementation, peace remains fragile. Clan-related feuding, delays in peace agreement implementation due to COVID-19 and threats from armed groups, all pose challenges. In 2021 we worked with communities and local governments, creating joint spaces to resolve local conflicts, build trust and enable communities to hold authorities accountable for peace agreement implementation. We ensured the voices of those who are often marginalised – including diverse women, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and former combatants – were heard and their needs met. Through developing the skills of community members, they are now able to lead peacebuilding initiatives and mediate community conflicts, while former combatants are better able to transition to civilian life. We also continued to play a role in the ongoing implementation of the peace agreement as a member of the International Contact Group.

"A conflict was left unresolved even after 10 sessions handled by my uncle from the barangay (district). After (Conciliation Resources’ partner) UNYPAD taught us how to properly resolve conflict, the conflict was finally settled. When conflicts arise, they send me to handle them."

Bangsamoro Community Security Working Group member
STORY

INCLUDING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN PEACEBUILDING IN THE PHILIPPINES

Norhanie Mamasabulod Taha is a member of the Community Security Working Group for Barangay Long in the Philippines. She is also Chairperson for the Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office, Municipality of Pagalungan, and Women’s Affairs Committee head of the local UNYPAD chapter. She lives with restricted mobility following a childhood accident.

In the Philippines, as in many other countries, disability discrimination is entrenched and reinforced through superstition and misconceptions. Stigma can keep persons with disabilities at home and out of leadership positions. Fear of negative attitudes initially prevented Norhanie engaging with her community. As she comments:

“Persons with disabilities are viewed in Filipino society as lacking the capability to be involved in all community activities. Because of this perception, their families and the communities where they live consider being a person with disabilities as a curse.”

Norhanie became involved in community peacebuilding after attending a meeting with Conciliation Resources’ partner, UNYPAD. She then undertook subsequent training with Conciliation Resources, and started to take on leadership roles. Being invited to the UNYPAD gathering was a catalyst that helped Norhanie address her fears – she realised the importance of including persons with disabilities in conflict management processes, and she also recognised she had a lot to contribute.

“Because of the knowledge I got from the different capacity building workshops I participated in, I became more confident and vocal and had a greater understanding of persons with disabilities. This paved the way for me to be appointed as persons with disabilities focal point in our town.”

Norhanie has drawn on her own experiences to feed into her innovative work supporting women peacebuilders and linking excluded indigenous and religious communities to security sector reform across Mindanao. Many times she has had to overcome personal challenges, for example when faced with inaccessible venues with stairs, a lack of understanding of her needs, and fear of discrimination and other forms of violence.

Norhanie’s visible participation in peacebuilding and her leadership roles have shifted attitudes in her community – there is more acceptance of her needs and they have increased their efforts to make the physical environment more accessible. She believes that including persons with disabilities in peace processes is vital and a strategy to address harmful norms and discriminatory attitudes.

“Local conflicts result in the displacement of communities, and persons with disabilities are most affected because of their conditions... It is important for our sector to be involved in the peace process to be able to prevent conflicts, and prevent the increase in the number of persons with disabilities as a result of local conflicts in communities.”
“BECAUSE OF THE KNOWLEDGE I GOT FROM THE DIFFERENT CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS I PARTICIPATED IN, I BECAME MORE CONFIDENT AND VOCAL AND HAD A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.”
RESEARCH, ADVISORY AND POLICY

The impact of violent conflicts globally during 2021 continued to demonstrate the need for international responses that take a long-term preventative and peacebuilding approach to armed conflict. Throughout the year, we advocated policies that draw on the practical experiences of those living with conflict and are tailored to each situation. We engaged directly with policymakers and opinion formers, and undertook research into how peacebuilding interventions can be more effective.

In particular, we produced evidence and resources on the role of gender in peacebuilding, that demonstrate the importance of including the views of a wide range of people, including diverse groups of women, indigenous communities, people with disabilities and youth, in peace and mediation processes. We also continued to lead work with NGOs on solutions to the negative impact of counter-terrorism legislation on peacebuilding and humanitarian assistance.

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Enabled EU policymakers and others to integrate gender analysis into their work
   We helped EU delegations to integrate a gendered perspective into their work, through developing a specific training. This followed the inclusion of our ideas and approach to gender-sensitive conflict analysis in the EU’s 2020 internal conflict analysis guidance. In addition, research we published on integrating gender into peacebuilding organisations changed attitudes and provided peacebuilding practitioners with concrete tools for action.

2. Thinking and options on reconciliation were taken up by the UK Government
   The Mediation and Reconciliation Hub of the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) indicated that they were integrating the thinking, language and options for reconciliation, presented in Conciliation Resources’ research, into their own approach to this area. As well as publishing a briefing paper, we organised workshops on this topic, which were attended by FCDO representatives.

3. Guidance created to help NGOs navigate counter-terrorism laws
   As a result of our continued work with the UK Government, banks and NGOs, in October 2021 the UK Government produced an updated, comprehensive For Information Note for NGOs operating within counter-terrorism legislation and sanctions in high-risk jurisdictions. The document provides guidance and clarification on many areas of the law and was subject to a consultation process with NGOs coordinated by Conciliation Resources.

Work on reconciliation and dealing with the past has resonated directly with FCDO priorities this year and has been central to development of Mediation and Reconciliation Hub thinking in this area.

Tom Wheeler, FCDO Conflict Advisor
The EU remains committed to mediation and our objective is to work with EU institutions and its Member State representations in Brussels to ensure that policy and programming prioritises peacebuilding and mediation.

Olivia Caeymaex, Director of Conciliation Resources EU

As a major player in responding to, preventing and mediating violent conflict, the European Union (EU) and its member states, are a vital institution for our engagement. Throughout 2021, the close working partnership between Brussels-based mediatEUr and Conciliation Resources continued to develop.

At the end of 2021, mediatEUr was renamed Conciliation Resources EU*, and the team continued successful peace support work, implementing two EU framework contracts in consortia with peer organisations. In April 2021 we co-organised the online Community of Practice on Peace Mediation with the European External Action Service, bringing together a wide range of EU officials and representatives of mediation support organisations to explore digital mediation and environmental peacemaking. Bilaterally and through the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, which our Executive Director chairs, we fed into policy debates and contributed to civil society dialogue networks.

★ ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Strengthened capacities of the EU in conflict prevention and mediation

Leading a consortium, we supported the EU across a range of contexts as we delivered the European External Action Service Framework Service Contract for Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support. We provided expertise through in-person assignments, delivering training and conducting research to increase the knowledge, skills and capacity of EU staff and staff in member states. This included undertaking conflict analysis screenings in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Mali and Palestine; delivering women and youth, peace and security workshops; providing mediation support guidance and organising the annual Community of Practice on Peace Mediation.

2. Supported EU thinking and decision-making on how to respond to conflicts

We brought together experts and diverse stakeholders to improve the EU’s ability to address specific challenges in a number of conflict contexts. Through contributing to a consortium working on European Resources for Mediation Support, we assisted with the conceptualisation and implementation of a range of activities. This included working with experts from Conciliation Resources’ South Caucasus team to prepare a multi-stakeholder workshop on strategies and operational realisation of peacebuilding efforts; conflict analysis for transitional justice; and supporting the EU and United Nations Development Programme partnership. This helped the EU to engage conflicting parties, independent mediators and groups involved in inclusive peace processes in the context of local, national or international armed conflicts.

*Legally registered as Conciliation Resources EU/mediatEUr
GLOBAL INITIATIVES

Some of our work cuts across geographical boundaries and provides us with experience from a range of conflict areas, thematic knowledge from different regions and a more holistic global picture. Smart Peace was a Conciliation Resources-led global initiative which pooled the expertise of consortium members to address the challenges of building peace – focusing on the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Myanmar.

This work combined peacebuilding techniques, conflict analysis, rigorous evaluation and behavioural insights. Smart Peace’s activities concluded this year, with the wealth of data and innovative research captured in an interactive tool to facilitate shared learning. We also continued to support the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth network (WMC) by strengthening their independence and deployment capacities, and empowering women-led peacebuilding initiatives through easier access to direct funding. A new partnership with the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund on their Rapid Response Window, led to us providing small grants to women in Liberia to address the funding gap on women’s participation in peace processes.

★ ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Shared learning from innovation in peacebuilding to strengthen approaches

Adaptation was at the core of Smart Peace, with this innovative approach to peacebuilding recognising that conflicts are often complex, political and frequently changing. Smart Peace showed real impact within the conflict contexts of the three hub countries, demonstrating the value of its flexible approach. We created and shared learning from this work with donors and the wider peacebuilding community. As well as organising a roundtable of 50 different stakeholders from the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and an online event with Chatham House attracting over 80 individuals, we developed an interactive learning tool to galvanise interest in lessons from Smart Peace. Four guides documenting the monitoring, evaluation and learning methods utilised over the course of the project provided further resources to the peacebuilding community on how to navigate complexities to measure and improve the impact of peacebuilding work.

2. Empowered women-led peacebuilding initiatives through access to small grants

Working to address the funding gap on women’s participation in formal peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements, we provided an increased number of grants to WMC members. Using lessons from this support, through two funding mechanisms, including the UN Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund’s Rapid Response Window, we were able to accompany and provide direct, flexible funding to women and youth-led peacebuilding initiatives. These grants will ultimately help address diverse barriers to women’s influence and participation in peace processes.

3. Strengthened the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth network

In 2021, we worked closely with WMC members on further strengthening the foundations for a strong, successful, independent network. This included providing support to better utilise existing opportunities for members’ direct participation in ongoing peace processes, and the development and launch of a new database and website of WMC members. The database highlights members’ expertise and will be used to aid WMC advocacy. We also helped establish relationships and lay the groundwork for the network to apply for Commonwealth accreditation, which will create opportunities for deployment with Commonwealth member states and Commonwealth Secretariat.

Being able to make sure that we are building a reservoir of young women peacebuilders that are knowledgeable and skilled is very important in the overall scheme of sustaining peace globally.

Florence Mpaayei, experienced peacebuilder and mediator, Kenya
In 2021, we were represented by a diverse staff body of over 80 people, based out of three hub offices in London (Conciliation Resources UK), Melbourne (Conciliation Resources Australia), and Brussels (Conciliation Resources EU). Our staff team has combined expertise across multiple contexts and peacebuilding areas, as well as operational support.

We were also supported by a committed Board of Trustees who met every quarter to provide advice, oversee governance and exercise scrutiny of our work. The Board has three committees to provide focused oversight: the Safeguarding Committee, the Risk and Audit committee (RAC) and from 2021, a new Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The board is composed of professionals with considerable experience in financial management, governance, diversity and inclusion, campaigning, peacebuilding and conflict transformation, human rights, research and law.

In January, David Donoghue stepped down as Chair and Diana Good, who previously served as a trustee, became the new Chair of the Board. Then in April we appointed six new members to our Board of Trustees. The new Board members bring experience from around the globe, and reflect Conciliation Resources’ commitment to ensuring diversity and gender equality within the organisation, as well as increasing Board representation from the regions in which we work.

2020 BOARD MEMBERS

Tayyiba Bajwa [RAC member]
Christine Cheng (from April 2021)
Diana Good [Chair]
George Graham [RAC member]
Nesta Hatendi (from April 2021)
Dorothee Hutter (from April 2021)
Jamille Jinnah (from April 2021)
Jo Kemp [Safeguarding trustee]
Rosalind Marsden (until November 2021)
Lucy Moore (from April 2021)
Liz Muir (from April 2021)
Michelle Parlevliet (until April 2021)
Andrew Peck [RAC member, Treasurer]
Marc van Bellinghen (until April 2021)
To ensure we achieve our ambitious goals for building better peace, we also need to build better structures in our organisation. In our Strategic Plan 2020-2025, we set out how investment in our staff, systems and processes will enable us to deliver on our peace goals.

1. INVEST IN STAFF

Our vital work would not be possible without our dedicated, knowledgeable and passionate staff team of over 80 people. In order to support them, we prioritise staff learning and wellbeing to ensure we, as individuals and as an organisation, reach our peacebuilding potential. We continued to provide help to our staff in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling flexibility around work, as well as offering mental health and wellbeing support, including through specific trauma and resiliency training. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion progressed with an in-depth anti-racism review, and development of a subsequent Anti-racism Action Plan. In addition, we established a Diversity and Inclusion Committee consisting of both staff and board members, and expanded the Executive Management Team to include greater diversity and representation of our programmes.

2. INVEST IN PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are crucial to our peacebuilding work and at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to investing time and energy into building trusted relationships with our diverse partners. During 2021 we worked with over 80 partners globally, continuing to accompany them, share learning and work together to find solutions to violent conflicts. We are increasingly exploring how to enable partners to access direct funding by sharing opportunities with them. Through our involvement in the UN Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund Rapid Response Window, and through Women Mediators across the Commonwealth, we have also been able to provide a limited number of small grants to women peacebuilders. On an international level, we collaborated through participation in various networks such as the Mediation Support Network, Bond, Rethinking Security, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, Gender Action for Peace and Security and the Alliance for Peacebuilding.

3. LOCATE AND EQUIP STAFF TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT

We aim to locate and equip staff to enable effective peacebuilding practice and partnership, and achievement of our goals. We are headquartered in London, with regional hub offices in Brussels and Melbourne. Four satellite offices operate in Bangui, Manila, Cotabato and Jigjiga, which help us comply with local regulations, and coordinate effectively with our partners and others. This year we completed an organisational restructure, with the creation of programme departments designed to improve the agility and efficiency of Conciliation Resources and help us to respond better to the ever-changing needs of our programmes and contexts. We also focused on our presence in Brussels and Melbourne to provide us with greater opportunities in these regions – completing the transition from mediatEur to Conciliation Resources EU, and expanding Conciliation Resources Australia.

4. KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE

Conciliation Resources prioritises the safety of our staff, and the people we come into contact with. Our aim is to ensure that we operate in a safe and compliant way, and that those leading the organisation are aware of the risks involved in our work. In 2021, we continued to support staff and partners through the COVID-19 pandemic, monitoring the contexts in which we work and aiding with the mental health impacts of travel. We also worked towards creating greater accountability and a positive culture around reporting, including through training sessions, so that certain behaviours can be challenged in a safe way. We relaunched our safeguarding policy as ‘Keeping People Safe’, following a 12-month staff consultation to create a more contextualised approach. This means personnel, partners and participants know what activities are acceptable and how to raise concerns, and satellite offices are set up safely with appropriate planning and support to staff.
We work to ensure our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems are sensitive to the complexity inherent in peacebuilding. To collate evidence that reflects this complexity, showcases our impact, and enables learning and adaptation, we use participatory approaches as far as possible. This allows us to capture diverse and gendered perspectives and experience, and encourage staff and partners to think critically and creatively. In 2021 we finished the first cycle of our ‘outcome harvesting’ approach to MEL – collating evidence of over 120 outcomes of our work that demonstrate our impact at both micro- and macro-levels, and capturing these in a new online database, which forms part of a broader grant management and MEL platform. We shared learning from this approach with others – publishing a paper on outcome harvesting for adaptive programming in the Smart Peace Consortium, and presenting the methodology to external stakeholders including the UK’s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. Our Gender Action Plan has resulted in better programmatic gender integration and has strengthened organisational gender expertise and experience.

Despite the continued challenges of COVID-19, in 2021 we maintained our reach across digital platforms and the media. Our website had more than 550,000 unique visitors and over 39,000 people followed us across social media. We were mentioned more than 190 times in the media. We continued to highlight the voices of those we work with, as well as key peacebuilding messages including on how climate change intersects with conflict. Our work in the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia was nominated for a Charity Award, and our #SeeTheHuman campaign reminded us that behind every conflict there are people whose needs must be understood in order to achieve peace. The supporting video achieved over 100,000 video views online.

It is vital that we secure flexible funding to enable us to continue making progress towards peace. Throughout 2021, we increased efforts to diversify our funding sources. We submitted concepts or proposals to three new prospective government partners, conducted outreach to over 30 new trusts and foundations, and undertook activities to develop individual giving, running a successful end of year appeal. We also embedded a new grant management and MEL platform and donor database, which is helping us manage grants more efficiently, and supporting income generation activities by aiding the accessibility and coordination of information.

In 2021 we introduced our new financial model giving us a better understanding of the organisation’s financial resilience and helping us to improve efficiencies. We completed the successful rollout of our new accounting and expense systems which have allowed us to more easily respond to the different reporting needs of the organisation.
PARTNERS

PROGRAMME AND POLICY PARTNERS

Committed two-way partnerships are the cornerstone of everything we do. In 2021, we partnered with over 80 courageous individuals and organisations around the world. We partner with people impacted by conflict, who have the legitimacy and influence to make change happen. We also partner with peer organisations and networks internationally, combining expertise to enhance peacebuilding knowledge and conflict policy influence.

AFRICA DEPARTMENT

East and Central Africa
- Cercle de Réflexion et d’Etudes sur la République Centrafricaine
- Commission Diocésaine pour la Pastorale de l’Enfance et de la Jeunesse
- Conseil National de la Jeunesse Centrafricaine
- Groupe de Travail de la Société Civile sur la Crise Centrafricaine
- Jeunesse Évangélique Africaine
- Jeunesse Islamique Centrafricaine
- Observatoire Centrafricain des Droits de l’Homme
- Réseau de Soutien au Leadership Politique des Femmes Centrafricaines
- Taxi moto association

West Africa
- Borno Coalition for Democracy and Progress
- Centre for Peace Advancement in Nigeria
- Hope Interactive
- University of Maiduguri Muslim Women’s Association

EUROPE-ASIA DEPARTMENT

South Asia
- Bureau of Research on Industry and Economic Fundamentals
- Centre for Peace, Development and Reforms
- Human Welfare Voluntary Organisation
- InterMediate
- Kargil Development Project
- Kashmir Institute of International Relations
- PAIMAN Alumni Trust

South Caucasus
- Asarkia
- Avaz Hasanov
- Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development
- Center for Humanitarian Programmes
- Ecocoast

Pacific
- Autonomous Bougainville Government’s Department of Bougainville Independence Mission Implementation
- Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation
- Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding
- Papua New Guinea National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs
- Transcend Oceania

Southeast Asia
- Teduray Lambangian Women’s Organisation
- United Youth for Peace and Development
- United Youth of the Philippines – Women
We partner with people impacted by conflict, who have the legitimacy and influence to make change happen.
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Despite the pandemic, income recognised in 2021 rose to £10,786,525 (2020 – £9,336,001) as a result of deferred spending, alongside continued donor diversification and programme growth across multiple contexts.

Conciliation Resources continues to plan, adapt and adjust to changing and emerging trends and ensure the sustainability of the organisation through our Fundraising Strategy, which includes continuing to explore options to diversify funding.

We are fortunate to have valued, longstanding relationships with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland. Their funding provides essential core support and flexibility.

RESERVES

Conciliation Resources aims to keep a prudent working balance of unrestricted reserves to cover future contractual liabilities, mainly staff salaries and rent, to ensure that the organisation has sufficient funds for the orderly winding down of activities in the event that the organisation had to close. This amount is set at £756,000 in 2021 following a calculation contained in the Reserves Policy.

In addition to the reserves, to ensure cashflow and the ability to pre-fund work that is funded in arrears, or to respond to emergency situations, the organisation also retains an operational contingency fund that is built around a full month of programmatic activity costs. This amount is set at £356,000 in 2021.

The unrestricted funds balance at the end of the year under review was £1,836,763. Of the total reserves held at the end of the year, £259,179 was in fixed assets. Consequently, the charity has free reserves of £1,577,584.

The Board of Trustees keeps the reserves policy under regular review and particular attention will be given to the increasingly global spread of financial risks and liabilities as the Board and Executive Management Team continues to delegate increased direct financial management responsibility to offices other than London.

BASIS OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Summary Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are extracted from the Financial Statements of Conciliation Resources that have been audited by Haysmacintyre LLP. They have been 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 or they can be downloaded from the Charity Commission website: www.charitycommission.gov.uk

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (£)

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<td>Restricted Income</td>
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<td>Total Income</td>
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<td>Charitable Activities</td>
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<td>Total Expenditure</td>
<td>10,732,328</td>
<td>9,329,298</td>
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| Exchange Gains/Losses   | (210,380) | 137,801  |
| Surplus/Deficit         | (156,183) | 144,504  |

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<th>Balance Sheet</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Assets</td>
<td>259,179</td>
<td>84,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Assets</td>
<td>5,126,921</td>
<td>6,876,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td>(3,549,337)</td>
<td>(4,968,237)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,836,763</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,992,946</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW WE SPENT YOUR MONEY IN 2021

For every £1 you gave us, we spent:

- 79p on peacebuilding programmes and policy (£8,521,742)
- 19p on supporting programmes and running the organisation (£1,995,658)
- 2p on fundraising (£214,928)

PEACEBUILDING PROGRAMMES, POLICY AND SUPPORT
Total: £10,517,400

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Caucasus</td>
<td>£1,648,787</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>£633,217</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East and Central Africa</td>
<td>£701,040</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>£911,646</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Asia</td>
<td>£392,579</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>£1,464,385</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCILIATION RESOURCES EU 2021 (£)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover/Income</td>
<td>853,823</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenditure</td>
<td>862,793</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>8,970</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves as of 31 December 2021</td>
<td>194,111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The accounts of Conciliation Resources and Conciliation Resources EU/mediatEUr were not consolidated, and remained separate for 2021.
Conciliation Resources is an international organisation committed to stopping violent conflict and creating more peaceful societies. We work with people impacted by war and violence, bringing diverse voices together to make change that lasts.

C%20c-r.org
www.c-r.org
@CRbuildpeace
ConciliationResources
ConciliationResources

Conciliation Resources UK
Burghley Yard, 106 Burghley Road
London NW5 1AL, UK
Company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (03196482)
Charity registered in England and Wales (1055436)

Conciliation Resources EU
Avenue des Arts 24, letterbox 8
10th Floor, Brussels 1000, Belgium
A registered association in Germany (e.V VR 27 146 B)

Conciliation Resources Australia
552 Victoria St, North Melbourne VIC 3051
Australia
Charity registered with the ACNC ABN (94 642 321 640)