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OUR PROCESS

1. CALL FOR SUPPORT.

The work of Interpeace is largely demand-driven. We receive requests from a range of sources: the government or civil society of the countries or regions concerned; donor countries; UN agencies; other international organizations; or our Governing Council members.

2. ASSESSMENT.

Exploration visits combined with in-depth consultations with local, national, regional and international sources provides the basis from which we assess whether our approach would have a positive impact.

After we have monitored the situation closely, the Interpeace Governing Council makes the final decision whether Interpeace should explore a possible engagement further.

We only initiate projects when the key national players are willing to participate in the peacebuilding process. Further criteria are the political and security situations and the availability of the necessary financial resources.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF THE LOCAL TEAM.

The identification of the team is one of the most crucial steps in our peacebuilding methodology. Made up exclusively of people from the society concerned, the team's credibility and reputation are key to the success of any initiative.

A painstaking vetting process is undertaken to ensure that the national team is well respected, is made up of individuals from a broad range of local professionals, and includes researchers and facilitators under the leadership of a consensus figure. We aim to ensure representation of a credible balance of the conflicting forces within our teams to ensure that the team is seen as trustworthy from all sides.

In order to form a peacebuilding team we develop a strategic partnership with an existing local NGO or research centre, or we create one.

4. STRATEGY DESIGN.

As each context is unique, we work together with our local team to develop a joint peacebuilding strategy.

The local team is best placed to mould the Interpeace approach according to their particular context and formulate the peacebuilding strategy. Considerations include: How will the priorities be determined? Who must be involved for the process to be truly inclusive? How will ownership of any findings and solutions be ensured? How will the solutions be seen as legitimate? Which specific techniques should be used: group discussions or participatory polling? Radio, events or a social media strategy: What should the media strategy look like to disseminate results?

Frequently, the context and working environment rapidly changes. The strategy is regularly reviewed to ensure continuing relevance and maximum effectiveness.

Peacebuilding is not a linear process. We adapt the development of any peacebuilding initiative to a society's specific circumstances. With this in mind, there are eight typical phases of an Interpeace peacebuilding process.

5. CONSULTATION AND RESEARCH.

The local peacebuilding teams engage the society in the development of the peacebuilding plans, asking them for their views on the obstacles to lasting peace in their countries.

This interactive dialogue, supported by objective, verifiable research and the evaluation of the data are the foundation for a national self-portrait. It documents the history of the conflict, details the current state of relations between different groups and levels in the society, and defines priority issues. All this is done through the eyes of the society themselves so ensuring their unique input remains the hallmark of the process.

6. SETTING PRIORITIES.

This inclusive process drives understanding, supports the prioritization of the main obstacles that stand in the way of lasting peace, and enables the smooth implementation of solutions that have been developed collectively.

The local team then convenes a national level meeting where all relevant stakeholders from government, civil society, academia, media, religious authorities, members of political groups, and representatives of the diaspora come together to talk about obstacles to peace.

Facilitated by the team, they debate and validate the findings so far and select the most important obstacles to peace from the many presented. Typically the local team of peacebuilders is then mandated to analyze and understand between three and five main challenges to peace in more depth and to possible solutions.

7. DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS.

For each priority area selected through this consensus-orientated process, a working group is formed.

These working groups are facilitated by the team of local peacebuilders and are composed of the most relevant individuals and institutions for the problem. The working groups develop recommendations for change and present them to the national group for validation. Inclusion is key every step of the way.

8. FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION.

The peacebuilding team then facilitates the process of implementing the recommendations by advising national stakeholders and especially the state.

The local teams of peacebuilders are often called upon by national stakeholders to engage in new rounds of problem solving in addition to implementing initiatives. This can involve research and dialogue on other obstacles to peace as they emerge, providing an early warning network, or other interventions to prevent the use of violence and coercion.

Local insights and expertise fuse with the Interpeace experience to create a combination that is the foundation for creative solutions to peacebuilding challenges and that are owned by the society concerned.