



Strategic Framework 2026-2030

*Navigating Political and Civic Space  
– Peacebuilding in an Era  
of Heightened Instability*



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*The outlines of this Strategic Framework were drafted while tectonic shifts were reshaping the landscapes of peacebuilding. By the time the document was finished, the changes had become a new, volatile normal. This Strategic Framework serves as our compass, guiding our decisions and ensuring that those affected by conflict remain at the heart of everything we do.*

## FOUNDATIONS

### *Origins*

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From our origins 30 years ago as the *War-torn Societies Project* within the United Nations to our evolution into an independent international entity, our objectives remain clear: to serve those affected by conflict by amplifying the voices of communities, building trust in divided societies, and nurturing the conditions for sustainable peace.

### *Identity*

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**Vision.** We envision a world where conflicts are prevented, managed, resolved, and transformed without recourse to violence, in which peace is a credible and durable solution.

**Mission.** Our mission is to build sustainable peace in conflict-affected societies by overcoming divisions in non-violent and non-coercive ways. We do this by accompanying and reinforcing the capacities of communities – be they national or international, formal or informal – in their efforts to advance peaceful solutions before, during, and after conflict.

### *Principles*

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Our work is guided by five foundational principles creating a base for shared values, respect, and contextual sensitivity, thus enabling trust and trustworthiness.

- **Inclusion.** *Peace is grounded in the diverse perspectives, experiences, and participation of all groups.*
- **Equality.** *Peace is rooted in the upholding of fundamental human rights for all.*
- **Accountability.** *Peace is anchored in justice and ensures redress and restoration for harms committed.*
- **Integrity.** *Peace is built on trust earned through responsibility, transparency, and consistency.*
- **Impartiality.** *Peace is fostered through humility, awareness of biases, non-partisanship, and independence.*



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### *Trends*

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Indices measuring the levels of conflict illustrate an all-time high. The era of peacemaking has been replaced by transactionalism, brandishing peace as irrelevant and unviable. The landscapes peacebuilders are accustomed to and the systems we rely on are cracking.

As crises compound and resources dwindle, our ability to cut through the noise becomes mission-critical. To enhance our efficacy, we have identified seven global trends defining the realities of the communities we serve:

1. **Surge and evolution of violent conflicts.** The use of force is increasingly regarded as the preferred means to resolve disputes, resulting in the rise of longer, more destructive, and more complex conflicts devastating already vulnerable communities.
2. **Breakdown of multilateral systems.** Seismic geopolitical shifts and diplomatic deadlocks are impeding global peace and security. International systems are in an urgent need for collective leadership to redefine structures and reaffirm mechanisms.
3. **Fundamental rights in the line of fire.** Tolerance, resilience, and social contracts are eroding across the globe, signalling of heightened risks of escalation, violence, and conflict. As rights are compromised, injustices, repression, and impunity are normalised.
4. **Aggravation of socio-economic inequalities.** Global poverty reduction is at a standstill. As basic necessities become luxuries, social cohesion is replaced by opportunism, mistrust, frustration, and protest.
5. **Closure of civic and political space and rise of authoritarianism.** Authoritarian and isolationist sentiments are shrinking the space for dissent, diversity, and individual and collective rights. Communities and those on the frontlines of advocating for peace and justice sense the pressure.
6. **New technologies exacerbating conflict dynamics.** From the proliferation of surveillance tools and autonomous weapons to the spread of sophisticated disinformation, unregulated technological advancements are deepening divisions, escalating violence, fuelling distrust, and creating unforeseen threats. As basic facts are questioned, leaders and communities struggle to find common ground.
7. **Climate crisis accelerating shocks and instability.** Approximately 70% of the countries most exposed to climate change are experiencing violence. Yet, less than 1% of the world's climate adaptation finance is channelled to fragile, least developed nations. As it stands, those hit the hardest receive the smallest amounts of support.

**Together, these trends culminate in a crisis of trust**, breaking the bonds between institutions, communities, and individuals, thus shaking the cornerstones upholding societal resilience, coherence, and peace. The crisis is deeply intergenerational and embodied in the voices of the youth expressing their lack of confidence in established systems and traditional authorities to address the monumental threats facing humanity.

Amidst these landscapes, it is our role to bridge the divide between the global and local, the international and national, the formal and informal and ensure that the communities affected by conflict are seen, heard, and listened to.

## *Approach*

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Tectonic shifts are changing the fundamentals of peacebuilding. In parallel, only a select number of high-profile wars absorb global attention, failing to consider the interconnectedness of surging conflict theatres across continents. For communities, these shifts and the neglect manifest in the grave loss of life, weakening of resilience, and erosion of trust in the structures that have been created to protect them.

While acutely aware of the geopolitics defining ongoing trends and dynamics, we remain focused on our vision and the needs of the communities we serve.

For peace, the process matters. For us, the *how* is just as important as the *what*. Guided by our foundational principles, we seek to ensure that what we support and strengthen is owned, created, and embedded in the lived realities of the communities we serve.

Our programmatic approach builds on:

- **Ownership** - *Building peace from within*  
Anchoring national processes in societal consensus and community needs
- **Participation** - *Whole of society approach*  
Enabling conflict affected societies to influence policy and decision-making
- **Continuum** - *Accompaniment and commitment*  
Recognising peace as an evolving, long-term journey

Our programmatic focus areas are:

1. **Prevention and Transformation of Violent Conflict** - *The most efficient way to resolve conflicts is to prevent and transform them*
2. **Peace Responsiveness** - *Peace is not built by peacebuilders alone*
3. **Peace Diplomacy and Advocacy** - *Promoting peace, changing policies, and equipping the next generation of peacebuilders*

*Alongside our partners and peers, we will continue to place a spotlight on neglected conflicts and invest our programmatic efforts in making peace a credible, durable political solution.*

## **1. Prevention and Transformation of Violent Conflict**

*The most efficient way to resolve conflicts is to prevent and transform them*

Grounded in community-voices and efforts to address the underlying drivers of conflict, we work to identify root causes, create response mechanisms, shift power relations, build resilience, and transform conflicts before, during and after crises.

*Priorities*

- *Social Cohesion and Trust-Building*: Establish inclusive institutions, participatory processes, and mechanisms that enable the peaceful prevention and resolution of conflict.
- *Inclusive Governance and National Structures*: Enhance the legitimacy of institutions by strengthening inclusive, transparent, and accountable structures and security frameworks.
- *Reconciliation and Transitional Justice*: Enable justice and healing by rebuilding social fabrics and bridging divides.
- *Resilience and Adaptive Peacebuilding*: Support communities and institutions to anticipate, absorb, and adapt to shocks from violent conflict, political instability, and climate risks.

## **2. Peace Responsiveness**

*Peace is not built by peacebuilders alone*

Peace Responsiveness ensure that interventions across humanitarian, development, climate, and economic sectors are deliberately designed to foster peace and address the evolving nature of violence. Through cross-sectoral integration, conflict-sensitive programming, and strategic partnerships, we embed peacebuilding across institutional mandates and programmes, creating holistic and sustainable approaches strengthening the foundations of peace and resilience.

*Priorities*

- *Economic Peacebuilding, Innovative Finance and Trade for Peace*: Establish and strengthen innovative finance mechanisms and sustainable livelihood creation.
- *Climate Resilience*: Enhance the access, efficiency, and impact of climate finance for conflict-affected communities.
- *Peace Responsive Systems and Institutions*: Equip international, regional, and cross-sectoral actors in making peace a shared mandate integrated into policies and programmes.
- *Human-Centred Post-Conflict Reconstruction*: Ensure that affected communities are consulted in reconstruction efforts and that governance and development strategies align with social cohesion and conflict prevention goals.

### 3. Peace Diplomacy and Advocacy

*Promoting peace, changing policies, and equipping the next generation of peacebuilders*

As we witness the erosion of multilateralism and the architectures of peace and security, our work in creating and accelerating interconnected, coordinated, and mutually reinforcing peacebuilding efforts moves to the forefront. To counterbalance the rise of destructive violence and to advocate for peace, we forge strong linkages beyond horizontal and vertical models and act as a node between authorities, civil society, communities, and experts. We strive to ensure that evidence and the knowledge, voices, and needs of communities are at the centre of solutions.

#### *Priorities*

- *Influencing Policy and Practice:* Amplify the voices and realities of conflict-affected societies in decision-making through public fora and quiet diplomacy. Harness locally informed, evidence-based approaches to peace, reconciliation, and governance.
- *Public Engagement Through PeaceTalks:* Change dominant narratives and increase public understanding and support for peaceful solutions by sharing lessons and lived experiences from grassroots activists and global leaders.
- *Reinforcing Capacities and Peace Education:* Strengthen the skills, knowledge, and leadership of peacebuilders through training and mentorship programmes.
- *Thought Leadership and Narrative Change:* Reshape global and national discourses and promote peace as a public good rooted in inclusion, justice, and resilience.

#### *Cross Cutting Themes*

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### **Youth & Women, Peace and Security**

*Rising from the Margins, Leading with Purpose*

- **Youth Leadership for Peace.** Our approach rests on the meaningful inclusion of youth and amplifying young people's voices, agency, and roles in peace processes. Together, we challenge harmful stereotypes and reframe negative narratives, whilst recognising youth as a powerful driver of change, innovation, and social cohesion.
- **Gender-Inclusive Peacebuilding.** We embed gender equality and intersectionality across our work, spearheaded by women-led initiatives and strengthened by our evidence-based guidelines on gender-inclusive and -responsive approaches. Together with women leaders, we empower women as agents of change working at the front lines of peacebuilding.

## STRUCTURES

### *Centres*

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Since our founding, Interpeace has grown and developed with and within Geneva, a capital for peace promotion. Amidst geopolitical shifts, Geneva remains a trusted and neutral diplomatic centre of gravity, offering an enabling environment for dialogue and mediation, whilst acting as the custodian of the Geneva Conventions and a cornerstone for the upholding of human rights.

Alongside our relationship with Switzerland as our host and Geneva as the *Ville de Paix*, our global presence is integral to our ability to engage with international actors, shape peacebuilding policy, and make the voices of those we serve heard where it matters the most. Our offices in Nairobi and Abidjan are vital regional hubs, rooting us to the contexts we work in. Our experts in Brussels and New York enable us to shape high-level mediation and advocacy processes as decisions unfold.

### *Organisation*

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Today, we are an organisation of more than 100 peacebuilding professionals representing over 30 nationalities. Working alongside our partners, our expert teams root our strategic framework into action. To align our purpose and strategic aims across our organisation, we will:

- *People & Culture*: Foster an inclusive, healthy, and resilient workplace by prioritising diversity, wellbeing, and growth. Enhance and encourages innovation, collaboration, and agility, empowering staff to lead change, adapt to evolving needs, and thrive through shared learning and targeted development.
- *Business Continuity & Institutional Resilience*: Advance project and grant management, diversify funding, and strengthen operational agility, whilst sustaining impact and managing risks through agile systems, strategic partnerships, and adaptive practices.
- *Governance*: Support our boards, committees, and advisory bodies to leverage their leadership, diplomatic expertise, strategic foresight, and networks to enhance programmatic aims, impact, and the mobilization of financial resources.

### *Partnerships*

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Durable peace is built together. Our ability to deliver and excel rests on our long-term, trusted, and equal partnerships encompassing communities as well as national, international, governmental, and non-governmental organisations. Deeply local and genuinely global, our impact within the interconnected peace ecosystem is made possible through the trust we have among decision-makers. Building on our legacy, our partnerships enable us to build peace and navigate civic and political space in an era of heightened instability.



*Amid the dire statistics, the human face of violence must not be forgotten. Our work, relevance, and mandate begin and end with the communities impacted by conflict.*



**Interpeace**  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION  
FOR PEACEBUILDING



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