



**Interpeace**

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION  
FOR PEACEBUILDING

# Shaping Future Peacebuilding

## Annual Report 2020







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# Message from the Chair

Over the last eight years, in my role as a Board member and then as Chairperson, I have learned many lessons on peacebuilding at Interpeace. We have faced many challenges during those years and have responded to these in remarkable ways because of the hard work and commitment of the Interpeace team. I have also been able to reflect on the outcomes, and I would like to share a few of them here.

## Ensuring the meaningful participation of people from all levels of society.

Interpeace's three track model, 3+2+1 = Track 6, is a proven path to building trust and social cohesion between citizens and the State and also the key to transforming relationships and building capacities for peace and conflict prevention within institutions and society. Where legitimacy and trust between societies, governments, and the international community is a matter

of life and death, this approach is needed more than ever. 'Track 6' thinking and action are needed at national level to re-legitimise policies of the State, just as they are needed in large institutions such as the United Nations. Connecting senior decision-makers with those potentially affected by their actions, facilitated by the natural 'connective tissue' of civil society, is



a much better approach to effective peacebuilding than any with which I had worked on previously. This approach would have been beneficial to us as negotiators of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and it is good to see the extent to which Track 6 has been adopted in work on conflict resolution.

## Creating incentives and frameworks that make peace processes more 'fit for purpose'.

In conflict societies, an important question to ask is, 'who is not at the table?' We now know that the inclusion of women and youth as peacebuilders helps broaden the agenda. It also helps us to think more about gender-specific issues and young people's needs. This more inclusive approach helps to build sustainable peace. We have also learned that the issues of community development and commitments to tackling social and economic disadvantage are as crucial to resolving conflicts as issues of political identity.

Our belief in integrating the relationship between human rights and justice and the durability of peace has been built into the way we frame our peace-responsive approach at Interpeace. The prevailing battles around race and racism and the issues arising from the Covid pandemic, in terms of its consequences as well as the governmental responses, mean that human rights and justice issues are central to our work. In its development, humanitarian and peacebuilding approach, Inter-

peace has been able to show that peacebuilding is not just about food security or health delivery but also rights regimes and commitments to justice. Focusing on protection and prevention in terms of the role of human rights in peacebuilding means ensuring that conflict resolution mechanisms, including legal mechanisms and access to justice, and systems of accountability are in place. These are what make not only individuals, but communities, societies, and States resilient in the face of violent conflict, as I learned



from our fieldwork and programmes during my time at Interpeace. Another key lesson was that peacebuilding and human rights have to be reflected in the partnerships we seek to build and the rich platform we have already established. We cannot detach peacebuilding and human rights work from each other.

As I step down from my role this year, I am heartened to see that work on 'The Principles for Peace' is now progressing. This is a global participatory initiative to reframe the current narrow, exclusionary, and flawed way peace processes are understood and implemented. Principles for peace is a collective

effort to develop a new set of principles to enable local, national, and international actors to craft more inclusive approaches that result in long-term sustainable peace.

## Bringing sectors together to foster resilience and peace

The humanitarian, development, and peace nexus had also become critical in recent years. Interpeace has contributed to bringing the three sectors together to develop a common agenda. With conflict now the main driver of humanitarian needs, the international aid system has been pushed to breaking point, and funding is unable to keep up with increased needs. The humanitarian-development-peace nexus requires international actors now more than ever to support local and national actors to build more self-reliant, resilient, and peaceful societies. It

is the key to addressing the needs that lead to so much conflict.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow members of the Governing Board for their wisdom and dedication in guiding the organization to fulfill its mandate. I would also like to offer a word of appreciation to the staff of Interpeace, from those who contribute to peacebuilding in the financial, administrative, and human resources areas, to those who work directly in conflict-affected communities or at the international policy level. Your commitment, conviction,

and creativity have been truly inspiring to me over the last years, but especially in these times when your work is more needed than ever. It has been my honour and privilege to serve as Chair of Interpeace and to be part of this family of remarkable peacebuilders who help to make the world a better place.

*Monica McWilliams*

**Monica McWilliams**  
Chairperson

# Message from the President

If the Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly disrupted our way of life and caused immense hardship for countless families and communities, it has also revealed the frailties of the social contract in developing and developed countries alike, and the limits of international solidarity.

Sadly, what started as a health emergency last year has morphed into a multi-faceted crisis of trust in our systems and institutions that will linger, and possibly fester, for years to come. And the onslaught of the virus is unrelenting, with wave after wave of new variants delaying efforts to “build back” or rather “build forward better.” The world is struggling to regain its footing on urgent priorities such as the mitigation of Climate Change and the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals for the poorest and most disadvantaged citizens of the planet, the vast majority of whom - nearly 85% - live in fragile states.

These events tested Interpeace and our team rose to the challenge. Observing all necessary protocols, our dedicated peacebuilders and local partners found innovative ways to sustain the momentum of peacebuilding on the ground in places like Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Libya to name a few. In the midst of the pandemic, Interpeace deepened its work in Burkina Faso and continued to explore how to contribute to peace and security challenges in Ethiopia and Yemen. And Interpeace contributed to more widespread

understanding of the mutually reinforcing linkages that can be fostered between health and peace, which was achieved through developing and promoting fresh policy perspectives as well as through practical programmatic work.

Our work on shaping new and better international policies has never been as active and impactful, including the launch of a collective effort involving over hundred peace, development and humanitarian organizations from across the world to reassess the fundamental principles of how sustainable peace can and must be built. Interpeace also used these months of lockdown and remote working to make important strides in strengthening our governance and accountability systems as well as pursuing our commitment to diversity and inclusion. And finally, this annual report also provides a sampling of personal stories of resilience of some of our colleagues in their commitment to Interpeace.

While there is more to be said of how we grew in scope, impact and budget despite the headwinds we faced in 2020, I am equally eager to share a few thoughts about the journey ahead.

Interpeace has now launched an exciting five-year Strategy entitled, “A Resilient Peace”. As that title suggests, we are reaffirming our mission to strengthen the *resilience* of societies to manage conflict - whenever and however it may arise - in non-violent and



legitimate ways that are designed, led and ultimately owned by those societies themselves. Otherwise put, rather than administering medicine in response to symptoms of a society’s ills, we focus on boosting its immune system to handle current, and future, ‘pathogens’. After all, trust, self-reliance and a strong social contract are key to a society’s stability and peace.

To do so, we will address the root causes of inequality and strengthen the ability of national governments to engage their citizens as partners in governance, development, and especially in security. And while most conflicts are local in nature, they are more than ever before capable of engulfing an entire nation or region in violence. We will therefore endeavor to expand grassroots networks of community peacebuilders and link them in common cause to national and international peace efforts. We will also pioneer and roll

out Trust, Resilience and Inclusion Barometers where we work in order to learn what does and does not work, to inform better quality policies, and to better anticipate where preventative actions are needed.

Interpeace will also set its sights on seeking *systemic change* to alter the norms and standards on which peace is built, sustained and funded. The flagship *Principles for Peace* initiative is already one of the most collaborative efforts among peacemakers in a generation. We are pioneering *Peace Responsiveness* which is enhancing the quality, impact and relevance to enduring peace of technical interventions by UN agencies. We

are exploring new approaches to Stabilization and to public-private cooperation in financing for peace. All of these are manifestations of our commitment to probing the deeper questions and to continuous, forward-looking innovation.

As devastating as the global pandemic has been, it is also an opportunity to question the status quo and to build creative solutions that anticipate future needs in an ever-changing, uncertain world. Interpeace is committed to pushing necessary boundaries while remaining true to its founding values that put people, not just governments or institutions, at the heart of peace.

We are fortunate to count on the steadfast support of our Strategic Partners and other donors, and the wise guidance of our Governing Board and Advisory Council members on this journey. Most of all, Interpeace's immensely dedicated staff and local partners deserve our deepest gratitude. They continue to inspire us all.



**Scott M. Weber**  
*President of Interpeace*



# About Interpeace

## About us

Interpeace is an international organization for peacebuilding. With over 25 years of experience, it has implemented a broad range of peacebuilding programmes in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

Interpeace tailors its approach to each society and ensures that its work is locally designed and driven. Through local partners and its own local teams, it jointly develops peacebuilding programmes based on extensive consultation and research. Interpeace helps establish processes of change that promote sustainable peace, social cohesion, and resilience. The organization's work is designed to connect and promote understanding between local communities, civil society, governments, and the international community.

Interpeace also assists the international community – especially the United Nations – to play a more effective role in peacebuilding, based on Interpeace's expertise in field-based work at grassroots level. Interpeace achieves this primarily by contributing innovative thought leadership and fresh insights to contemporary peacebuilding policy. It also assists the international community through 'peace responsiveness' work, in which Interpeace provides advice and practical support to other international organizations (especially those in the security, development, and humanitarian aid sectors), enabling them to adapt their work systemically to simultaneously address conflict dynamics and strengthen peace dynamics.

Interpeace is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, and has offices around the world.



# Our peacebuilding pillars

While every situation is different, the following pillars guide our approach.

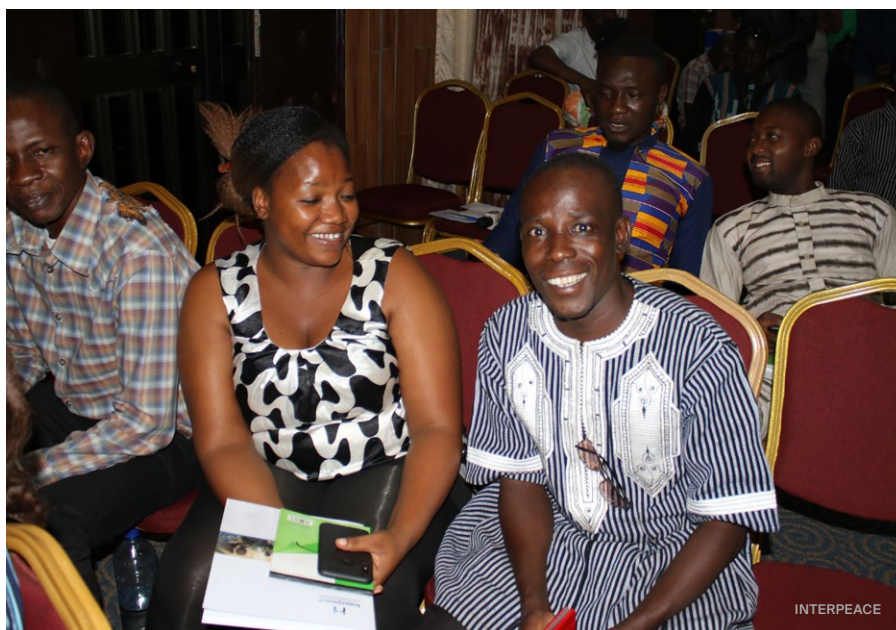
## Local ownership

### Putting local people at the heart of building peace

Peace cannot be imported from the outside. We believe that peace must be built from within societies. Together with our local partners, we create spaces for dialogue that allow for the active participation of local people to identify peacebuilding challenges and to develop their own solutions. By ensuring local ownership, we pave the way for the sustainability of peacebuilding efforts.

We ensure that priorities are determined locally and are not imposed from the outside. Local ownership ensures that local concerns are at the center of peacebuilding. If people participate in defining the problem, they have a sense of responsibility and ownership of the solutions.

Local ownership ensures that peacebuilding efforts are sustainable.





## Building trust

### Trust is the keystone of peace

Trust holds relationships, societies, and economies together. Violent conflict dissolves it and that is why rebuilding trust is a core element of our approach. By working with all sectors and levels of society to develop a common vision for the future, we help to increase mutual understanding and restore trust.

Conflict tears apart the fabric of societies. Mistrust colours all relationships, including between people and their leaders. In such contexts, even small problems can escalate into wide-scale violence.

By providing safe spaces for dialogue, Interpeace helps societies to restore trust by identifying obstacles to lasting peace collaboratively and developing solutions to common problems.

Current policies often prioritise the 'hardware' of rebuilding countries after conflict: infrastructure, government buildings, demobilised soldiers, the timing of elections, police stations. Very often, these efforts fail to also focus on crucial 'software': reconciliation between former antagonists, trust in public institutions, and traditional practices of dispute resolution.

Trust gives institutions lasting legitimacy and helps individuals and groups to remain engaged in the long and arduous process of building lasting peace.

## Reaching out to all groups

### Building peace involves everyone

When key groups of society are excluded or marginalised, it sows the seeds of renewed violence. It deepens resentment and gives groups a reason to undermine peace. Our programmes are designed to include participants from across society – even those who are typically overlooked or seen as difficult to engage with. This inclusive approach ensures that a broad base of social groups shares ownership and responsibility for reconciliation and rebuilding their society.

Inclusion engages all parties in a process of change and begins to build bridges of understanding. In time, this enables the society to move collectively towards moderation and compromise.



## Long-term commitment

### Building peace requires a sustained effort

Building lasting peace is a long-term commitment. Transforming the way a society deals with conflict is a complicated process that cannot be achieved instantly. Our peacebuilding efforts take this into account and are designed as long-term initiatives.

Building lasting peace takes time. The road to peace is bumpy, long, unpredictable and anything but straight. Support of local efforts must be patient and consistent.

External engagement must be predictable and must include long-term financial commitments. Otherwise sustaining peacebuilding processes becomes impossible.

The Interpeace approach puts a focus on building trust. This approach to rebuilding society and institutions takes time and long-term commitment.

## Process matters

### The process determines the result

We put a lot of effort into deciding *what* needs to be done to enable a society to build peace and just as much effort into *how* that work is done. It is vital to focus not only on the end goal of building peace, but on making sure that the process leading to peace is inclusive, is a process that builds consensus and encourages constructive dialogue rather than confrontation and power games. This is the only way to build sustainable peace.

Strengthening the foundations of a society that is divided is not business as usual. Mistrust tends to be deeply engrained. Major issues tend to be politically sensitive and urgent. Because of this urgency, the tendency is to propose technical solutions rather than to seek holistic solutions to complex problems. How the process is managed and how all sides carry out their engagements will largely determine the success of an initiative.

# Together as one

## Stories of resilience and solidarity in times of social distancing

By March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic had come to dominate the world agenda. Personal space, lives and rights were put to one side and severe restrictions were imposed on movement, travel, social spaces, and work. People were isolated, obliged to live apart. Interpeace devised innovative ways to recombine social spaces, individuals and teamwork to sustain health and well-being.

The story that emerges describes an organization that strengthened individuals while it worked collectively towards a shared vision, attentive to the particular situation of each person amid the clamour of changes, challenges, anxieties, and fears. The team displayed an abundance of a central Interpeace value: resilience – through individual commitment, personal sacrifice, committed work and a selfless willingness to put others first. The results achieved were made possible by a ‘dream team’ that chose to make the world a better place by staying together, listening to each other, and working as one towards a common goal.

### Elina Mariutsa

Programme Support Officer

*This is your home ... because every single person matters at Interpeace*

*“Interpeace had every right to set me aside during the pandemic as I was only an exchange student ... but instead they chose to empower me, because every single person matters at Interpeace”.* These were Elina’s words but a common experience for many colleagues. Navigating through the global pandemic was unprecedented in many ways, yet Interpeace stood tall not only in empathy but in building resilience, accepting vulnerabilities and giving each other space to steer through these trying times.

Elina, then a 22-year-old Russian student in the U.S., joined Interpeace in January 2020 as an intern in Geneva with big dreams, having worked hard to get where she was. However, the pandemic changed many of her hopes and aspirations,

leaving only unknowns. Elina’s parents were severely affected by COVID-19, she was short on funding for her last year at the university, and she had just moved across the world for an opportunity that did not feel certain anymore. She uses the word ‘scared’ when describing how she felt.

*“A senior staff member from Interpeace walked up to me and said, ‘Well, this is your home now, no matter what awaits us in the months to come’ and left. It was exactly what I needed to hear – the assurance, acceptance and humanity. That was when I knew I wanted to stay and grow with the organization.*

*I am thinking about it all the time and, in fact, keep telling people that I would not have wanted to be*



*anywhere else when the pandemic hit. I cannot imagine any other place treating me better in a time of crisis.*

*Interpeace saw my vulnerability, yet still gave me an opportunity to continue growing and showcase resilience.”* Elina says.

During this time, she managed to get funding to complete her studies as well.

Interpeace knows how to make people resilient in the darkest of times. This is what they believe, work for and promote: resilience as a lifestyle.

Elina was exposed to many professional opportunities during the pandemic, enabling her to sys-

tematically build her capacity as a young peacebuilder. Her Ukrainian roots, language skills and contextual knowledge were the perfect blend for a new programme that emerged in the region, and she continues her journey in the role of Programme Support Officer for Peace Responsiveness in Ukraine.

It has been 18 months since the start of the pandemic and her first day at Interpeace, and Elina,

having completed her degree, is emerging with valuable professional skills, resilience and a new confidence in what the future holds.

*“Despite the challenges of the past year, I always felt secure at Interpeace. From what I have seen during the pandemic, and many stories are similar to mine, the best word to describe Interpeace is dignified.”*

## Monica Aldana

### Digital Communications Officer

*This last year has given me a bigger sense of purpose, more than ever before*

*“I am grateful that I work for an organization whose mission is to prevent conflict and make the world a better place. Coming back to work (after giving birth) during the pandemic reinforced the value of working for a place like Interpeace that has a purpose and is working towards the wellbeing of others and to improve people’s lives and circumstances,”* Monica says.

Monica Aldana was seven months into her pregnancy when the pandemic started to make headlines. She was feeling utterly helpless and insecure.

She gave birth to a beautiful baby boy during the pandemic amidst all the challenges she had to face and worked through the obstacles of working from home, often feeling like an “octopus” as she juggled work, relocation, responsibilities, shared space, and a death in the family due to Covid 19.

Monica said that her first months as a new mum were extremely challenging, having to figure everything out by herself without help from her immediate family. She is very thank-

ful for the support she got from her husband and parents and in-laws, who became the only people the baby knew for the first months of his life. She remembers the moments where she longed to show her new-born to her siblings, but Covid restrictions did not allow any kind of gathering. She was often frustrated.

*“I’m so used to having my baby around me 24/7, but at the same time not being able to separate is incredibly difficult. I feel like I have two babies, I have him and then I have work, and even though there is some help from the family now, I hear him, I see him. If he is crying, I’ll be distracted. If I was in the office, I wouldn’t know. So it would be really different.”*

It’s the same for everybody who has children and has to do home office. But being introduced to motherhood in all these different circumstances was a lot to handle for Monica, who could not control much of anything and knew so much was happening all over the world. She told herself: this shall also pass, and did her best to keep her baby safe and give her level best at work.



*“This last year has given me a bigger sense of purpose, more than ever before - contributing to helping and knowing that in some way or another we are making some type of difference in this chaotic world.”*

*It was definitely a chaotic year, but one of the best years in my life as well, if not maybe the best year of my life, becoming a mum and seeing my baby grow and continuing to work and contributing to make the world a place of peace,”* she says.

# Cheick Faycal Traore

## Country Representative, Burkina Faso

*During these difficult times, everyone made a contribution*

The pandemic started to make headlines in Burkina Faso on 8 March 2020 when Cheick had just returned from a trip to Belgium. He came back home with a cold and was suspected of having Covid. Just four days after his return, his wife gave birth to their first child. These were challenging months in his life. "I had a baby in the midst of the pandemic and at work I was responsible for political issues and had to interact with a number of actors. Knowing that people could be sick and we would never know, I wondered what to do. On the other hand, no-one from our families could visit our baby and we could not even meet our parents to show our new-born. It was very frustrating at the beginning," he says.

*"In Burkina Faso we usually work outside the home. It was a sudden change to our way of working when we moved to work from home. We were in the process of developing a number of initiatives at field level with our partners, and working from home was extremely difficult."*

The sudden changes to the way of working in the country and at Interpeace were difficult both professionally and personally for Cheick. He was very comfortable working in the office and felt that he was efficient and effective, whereas adapting to do fieldwork from home was a new challenge.

*"I didn't have an office space at home and had to work in the living room which was also the space where the baby spent her time. We were sharing our space actually, I was invading her space with my office work,"* said Cheick.

On the other hand, the pandemic situation also became an opportunity for Cheick to learn how to innovate to deliver results. He and his team were able to continue to do their work. Innovative solutions for focus group discussions and individual interviews were found using modern technology.

This situation was also a source of motivation and strength for Cheick personally, because Interpeace gave him the opportunity to take on the role of country representative in Burkina Faso. *"I have worked at Interpeace for 3 years, first as a consultant then as a focal point, before becoming a political advisor. This was my first time as a country representative, and I am so thankful for this professional trajectory which was made possible by Interpeace."*

*"The results my team was able to achieve were really team efforts. During these difficult times, everyone made a contribution, and everyone was willing to go beyond themselves to be flexible and contribute to the work of Interpeace. We are very proud of that as a team,"* Cheick concludes.



# Almudena Bartayres

Senior Director for Global Operations and CFO

*We are a group that works together and cares for each other.*

The greatest challenges for Almudena during the pandemic were to maintain team cohesion and ensure that communication was inclusive and everybody in the organization was cared for during this difficult period.

*“We (the Global Management Team) called all staff members one by one and individually tried to engage, whether they were part of our team or not. Because we are a group that works together and cares for each other. This communication was useful for us, not necessarily for mentoring, but as a way to maintain mental health, to develop friendship and a support system that takes care of each other during a very difficult time.”*

It was also very important for staff members that had many responsibilities during the lockdown to have space and flexibility in their work and working hours. This period has been even tougher for them. *“We adjusted deadlines, created spaces for people to work at different times at different schedules, we defined which colleagues will support each other .... I cannot say that it worked perfectly, it was the first time we were doing it and we did not know how, but we have been able to move ahead and keep growing.”*

Personally, Almudena had to face many challenges *“... being stopped by military police, traffic police, and women's special forces on the way to my mother's house, to provide groceries ... and then at the end being asked to turn back because I did not have a paper that is required. I mean, all this bureaucracy internally, it was like being in the middle of a war zone again*

*but in your own country. It felt even worse than crossing Erez checkpoint going to Gaza back in 2005. Accepting this reality back at home was quite a challenge for me.”*

Having being posted away from home for over 20 years in different countries, the Covid period was also a time of personal bonding for Almudena, with her mother, cousins, friends and extended family. *“My brother lives abroad with his wife and kids and couldn't go back to Spain to take care of my mum, so I relocated to Spain during the confinement, to work from there and to take care of my mum. It has been beautiful to go out together when restrictions were lifted and spend time with my mum after ages.”*

It has been 18 months and the challenges remain, but the back-end work done by Almudena and her team has ensured that Interpeace developed effective online tools for building relationships and adapting to the situation.





## Jesse Kariuki

Somali Programme Officer

### *It was a very difficult time that also brought us together*

Jesse has been with Interpeace since 2011 and currently works in the Somali programme. He also found it difficult to deal with the changes prompted by the pandemic. Working from home for him was a new challenge but it brought the opportunity to spend more time with his three young children. Jesse and his wife were home schooling their three children before the pandemic and they therefore continued what they had been doing, though outdoor learning opportunities were limited.

Jesse talks about his home gardening with passion. This was an activity he started with his children at this time. *“...You plant a seed and you see it grow which is very fulfilling and at the end you harvest and you get what you planted. It was a very good learning opportunity for the kids, just to learn how to take care of plants, how you prepare to plant certain vegetables by removing impurities (such as stones) in the seedbed and then water them. Sometimes they don't grow. Sometimes the seeds are eaten by animals, mainly birds, but then in the end, some plants survive and you harvest and eat what is good.”*

Misinformation at the beginning of the pandemic caused uncertainty, fears, stigmatisation and frustration in Kenya. *“Initially there was a lot of confusion and government measures were not people-centric at all, people were taken into quarantine in a very combative way.”* Jesse had to bid farewell to several friends, robbed by the pandemic.

*“I felt bad when some people close to me died and I could not even attend their funerals.*

*It was a very difficult time that also brought us together as a family. I sort of found a routine of working during the day, mainly remaining active online, available for meetings, but then, most of the serious work that I needed to do, like writing a report, I tended to do that at night. When the kids are asleep, I can concentrate. But the challenge is that my body is also tired during that time. So I think that has been one of my challenges over the last one and a half years, working from home, getting to be productive at work, but also to take care of myself, because you end up working at odd hours, and you end up not having enough time to rest physically.”*

Interpeace has a rich heritage and this is known by people we work with, civil society and government officials. When you introduce yourself, and say you working with Interpeace, you are received quite well because we've been in that space for quite some time, but it also raises a lot of expectation and managing expectations is a great need. Interpeace is extremely people-focused and working without attending community meetings, meeting people and interacting was a challenge for all the field teams during the pandemic.

*“It also challenged me to ask myself, what more can I do? And one thing I've seen is that my contribution has been to work with colleagues, kicking ideas around, transforming them into opportunities that can create projects that have lasting impacts. Despite working from home, we developed new proposals with quick turnaround time, secured funding and worked very intensely.*



*I feel very privileged to work with the Interpeace team, with a rich heritage of people-centric processes, a credible reputation, and active engagement in ensuring peace for communities and nations,”* Jesse says.

# Health and peace: an inseparable bond



The COVID-19 pandemic has changed and is still changing the world. We cannot return to the world as it was, but at the same time this crisis creates new opportunities. Health has moved to centre stage and the intrinsic link between health, peace, and economic recovery has become more evident than ever before.

COVID-19 exacerbated tensions that were already present in many countries. In 2020, political instability deteriorated in 46 states; more than 5,000 violent incidents associated with COVID-19 occurred, and the number of violent demonstrations increased by 10%.<sup>1</sup> The pandemic has done most harm to people who are poor and vulnerable. It has pushed an additional 88 million people into extreme poverty and caused financial hardship to more than 900 million people. Gender and other structural inequalities have widened. More than half of those who are poor live in fragile, conflict-affected and violent (FCV) settings; food insecurity and COVID-19 have worsened their vulnerability.<sup>2</sup>

The crisis is evidently multi-dimensional in nature. In particular, it has made clear the link between health and peace. This is not a new revelation. The Ebola epidemics in both West Africa (2014–2016) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2018–2021) had already highlighted the connection. However, the global scale and gravity of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced into being a new clarity of understanding.

*«We need to stop thinking about health as a primarily technical intervention. Peacebuilding actors need to see how health can be part of building peace. I'm glad that the UN has understood that strong health care provisions can play a part in preventing violence»*

**Karin Landgren, Executive Director,  
Security Council Report.**

- 1 See Institute of Economics and Peace (2021), *Global Peace Index 2021: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*, IEP: Sydney. At: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports>.
- 2 See Blake, P., and Wadhwa, D. (2020), *2020 Year in Review: The impact of COVID-19 in 12 charts*, World Bank Blogs. Online at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/2020-year-review-impact-covid-19-12-charts>.

***Trust is the foundation for public health and building peace. We must overcome silos but should never use health as leverage in peace processes. Community engagement is key in building more peaceful and resilient societies.”***

**Scott M. Weber, President of Interpeace.**

To sustain peace, it is necessary to build “a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account”<sup>3</sup> but also to consider and integrate societal interrelationships and health challenges in our programming, and to put the humanitarian-development-peace nexus into practice. All actors must ask how they can reduce forces that drive conflict and promote forces that enhance transformative change in communities. Put another way, humanitarian and development programmes must promote peace-responsive behaviour patterns.<sup>4</sup> Interpeace’s approach to health and peace recognises this complexity. It asserts that peacebuilding involves multidimensional and intersectoral forms of action that build trust, local leadership, and resilience.

For Interpeace, actions to link health and peace have four elements that are necessarily interrelated.

## Health as a social contract

At the heart of peacebuilding is a social contract between communities in a society or between the state and its citizens. Social contracts regulate how people live together, how power is exercised, how resources are distributed. In health too, there is a social contract between the state, as health service provider, and the individual. This relationship is influenced by a number of factors, including the strength of the health system, the political context, and the degree to which users enjoy equitable access to affordable and quality health services, medication, water, and vaccines. As COVID-19 has demonstrated, exclusion from health services or vaccines may result in civil unrest, conflict, or violence, which in turn may reduce trust and confidence in local or national authorities and social cohesion. At the same time, it is precisely this trust, in the health system and the services it provides, that allows societies to mobilise and act together to deal with crises and remain stable.

<sup>3</sup> See UN General Assembly [Resolution A/70/L.43 \(2016\)](#), and UN Security Council [Resolution S/RES/2282 \(2016\)](#).

<sup>4</sup> Peace responsiveness programming requires actors who operate in conflict-affected or fragile contexts to be conflict-sensitive and contribute to peace outcomes through their technical programming. They should proceed in ways that enhance collective impact, support inclusive and locally-led change, and strengthen societal resilience to conflict and violence. Interpeace works with a range of actors to strengthen the peace responsiveness of humanitarian and development action, including in the field of health.

The first is to harness the convening power of health to persuade people from different sectors of society to work together, recognizing that health is a shared good that can foster trust and enhance resilience.

The second is to show that peacebuilding, trust-building, and dialogue can create conditions for health interventions that would otherwise be impossible to implement.

The third is to promote mental health, which is an indispensable condition for sustainable peace. In countries that have experienced conflict, psychosocial recovery is vital for people who suffer from trauma. Action in this area is necessary for individual growth and for community development.

The fourth is to recognise that public health systems are a fundamental ingredient of social contracts. If citizens are to trust their governments and societies are to prevent social unrest, they must make significant efforts to strengthen their health care systems and make sure these are of good quality and trustworthy. This can only be achieved through a robust partnership strategy of the sort that Interpeace has been implementing in the last few years. Interpeace is proud to have established strong collaborative links through partnerships with global health actors such as WHO, GAVI, and UNFPA.

***“Successful health responses can improve trust and contribute to improved relations between populations and their governments.”***

**Tarja Halonen, Former President of Finland and Lancet-SIGHT Commission Chair.**

In Ukraine, Interpeace’s work on health and peace is helping to enhance public trust and restore the social contract between the state and its citizens. Recently, Interpeace and the World Health Organization’s Country Office worked together to improve trust between the state and citizens by developing more inclusive forms of health governance and service delivery which simultaneously increased the effectiveness of Ukraine’s COVID-19 response. The crisis triggered by the pandemic requires a fundamental transformation of the health sector and the construction of stronger

foundations for sustainable peace. While the pandemic has revealed and accentuated a wide range of systemic socio-economic grievances, it has also created an opportunity to redesign healthcare services in ways that strengthen trust and enhance state-society relations. The health sector is particularly suitable for this, because during the pandemic health has become an evident priority. The crisis has magnified rifts in the health care system throughout Ukraine, yet has also shown how important it is to integrate health with work to restore social cohesion. It provides a point of entry

for consulting and promoting the participation of a wide range of health stakeholders across the nation. By focusing on health, a strategic sector in an acute crisis, this programme can have wider ripple effects and positively influence other governance sectors in the country.

This programme is not just about solving health issues, but about increasing public confidence in the Ukrainian authorities by connecting health issues to the broader social contract and fostering homegrown solutions.

## Peacebuilding creates favourable conditions for health interventions

Peace responsiveness enables all actors that operate in a conflict-affected setting to promote more peaceful and resilient societies. It also increases programme effectiveness. Years of hard-earned experience indicate that, when aid programmes do not sufficiently consider local contexts and conflict dynamics, they are less effective, less sustainable, and likely to cause harm. Aid systems that are more peace responsive can therefore have more impact: because they are contextually more aware, they are able to adapt their interventions to take account of local contexts, relationships, and capacities.

A key lesson learned from the international response to the Ebola outbreaks in 2014 and 2018 was that it is impossible to apply technical approaches in the absence of a politically-informed understanding of local conflict dynamics. Technical interventions that lack this contextual understanding are likely to fail.

***“Trust is the foundation for public health. We cannot control any outbreak if the community is not engaged and if there is trust deficit from the communities.”***

**Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,  
WHO Director-General**

In 2018, the Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced the second largest Ebola outbreak ever recorded. The response team, jointly coordinated by the national authorities and WHO, struggled to persuade affected communities to support, let alone trust, the official health response. This mistrust posed a huge risk, that Ebola might spread to other areas of the country, in the wider region, and potentially to other parts of the

world. Interpeace worked to deepen understanding of this challenge. It conducted research and brought key local actors together to help build trust between members of the communities in the outbreak epicentres of Beni and Butembo and the health response teams.

In Kenya's Mandera County, situated on the country's restive borders with Ethiopia and Somalia, Interpeace and the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) facilitated six peace negotiations to reduce cross-border and cross-clan tensions, prevent radicalization, and address communities' security concerns. Although the initiative had some success in promoting locally-owned peace solutions, it became clear the serious health challenges compounded the effects of conflict and insecurity: migrant and mobile cross-border populations have unequal access to health services; the region has very high rates of malnutrition and food insecurity; the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure is inadequate, etc. Interpeace and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) identified the health services and access needs of mobile communities, introduced so-called 'health zones' and reviewed IGAD policies to improve the cross-border coordination of health actors. All these steps are designed to boost household and community health security and resilience while contributing to peacebuilding efforts in the cross-border area.

***“Health is a bridge to overcome political differences, people will seek health services wherever they can find, independently of borders and demarcation lines.”***

**Hassan Ismail,  
Interpeace Country Representative, Kenya**



## Health creates an opportunity to collaborate and reconcile

Conflict prevention, mediation strategies, and reconciliation processes are integral components of peacebuilding. If they are to be successful, peacebuilders must adopt specific approaches to each context. All these approaches must be also conflict-sensitive and historically-conscious. Integrating health considerations into peacebuilding efforts often creates room for new governance models and new forms of collaboration that otherwise would not be possible. New forms of action and interaction become feasible that can build trust between individuals and communities and increase resilience by enhancing their own capacities, skills and competencies. The paradigm of 'building back better' becomes 'building back sustainably'.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to understand that we need to 'build back sustainably' and that prolonged crisis, violence and social fragmentation harm mental health. It has become evident that mental health and psychosocial support (MH-

PSS) programmes are an important health intervention that contributes to sustaining peace.

In Rwanda, Interpeace runs a mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programme designed to heal trauma and promote participatory local governance. Recognising that the wounds of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi are still present, the programme offers psychosocial support group therapy and safe spaces for dialogue and healing, builds the capacity of local leaders to facilitate consultation processes, increases citizen's participation, and helps youth to develop critical thinking. A survey of the programme's participants suggested that the group therapy approach has mitigated the effects of trauma by about one quarter, made it less likely that people will seek violent revenge, and, most significantly, reduced by about two thirds the number of survey participants who regularly had suicidal thoughts.<sup>5</sup> Respondents also exhibited a more proactive atti-

5 272 out of 335 persons participated in a base- and end-line survey developed by Interpeace and Never Again Rwanda (NAR) together with a Societal Healing Advisory Committee composed of MHPSS experts.



EU CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID / OLYMPIA DE MAISMONT

tude to mediation and reconciliation efforts, were more involved in family and community affairs, and were able to express themselves in a group setting, causing them to feel more empathy and tolerance.

This example underlines how important it is to take an intersectoral and integrated approach to peacebuilding. Psychological recovery is a precondition of financial security; societal healing and psychological recovery together create conditions for civic and economic inclusion in societies that have experienced social rupture and psychosocial trauma; and societal healing and psychological recovery need to be coupled with livelihood generation to create sustainable change. Mental health interventions can be described as health initiatives, but they also

foster individual growth and community development, thereby creating space for shifts in mindset.

*“This innovative and holistic approach that simultaneously promotes mental health, social cohesion and supports sustainable livelihoods is a new contribution to our reconciliation journey (...) There’s a very close relation between mental health, reconciliation and economic well-being.”*

**Fidèle Ndayisaba,**  
Executive Secretary of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission of Rwanda.

## Looking Ahead

The work does not stop here. Interpeace’s ambition is that all local, regional, and global actors integrate health with peace, not just in times of crisis but in their everyday work. If we desire to create change and a more just, equitable, and resilient society, it is crucial to understand that health interventions are opportunities to build peace. Peacebuilding is not a linear process, nor are health interventions always straightforwardly replicable. To discover context-specific solutions and carry them into the future, we must continue to learn. Agility, adaptability, and innovation – exemplified in the

Rwandan MHPSS programme – will continue to determine the outcomes of our work on health and peace.

*“Health and peace are both a public good. We need a holistic approach that addresses this interface. Community engagement is key to building more peaceful and resilient societies.”*

**Scott M. Weber, President of Interpeace.**

# Spotlight on Strategy 2021 – 2025: A Resilient Peace

In 2020, Interpeace carried out a broad consultative process to define its new 5-years strategy. This process was an opportunity to collect the views and advice from a wide array of stakeholders ranging from Interpeace's staff, its Governing Board, the Advisory Council and strategic partners. The process culminated in December 2020 with the adoption by the Governing Board of the strategy entitled: "A Resilient Peace".

*"Interpeace's Strategy for the next five years comes at a time of profound change and stress at the global level, but equally of opportunity for peacebuilding and for Interpeace as an organization. The COVID-19 pandemic has precipitated a multi-faceted global crisis, causing a sharp global economic decline, straining multilateral cooperation, and triggering new conflicts while exacerbating existing ones. Even as reliable vaccines start to emerge in 2021, we can state with some certainty that the next five years - and thus the period of the present Strategy - will be profoundly influenced by the secondary effects of the pandemic and by tensions related to the response effort.*

*In the midst of such volatility, our intention is to enhance resilience for peace - at the grassroots, at the level of States, or within the international system at large - in order to underpin more peaceful and prosperous societies worldwide. The dividend of this emphasis on resilience is a peace that delivers on the aspirations of citizens, that is tailored to the context, and that outlives our own involvement."*

**Scott Weber, President of Interpeace**

Eighty percent of all humanitarian crises are now conflict-related, the majority lasting over a decade. Political polarisation is on the rise, while trust in institutions and confidence in economic systems is weak. In light of these trends and volatility, it is imperative to strengthen the positive, built-in capacities and resilience of individuals and communities in order to create lasting peace, growth and development.

## Vision

A world in which enduring peace is evident in the cohesion and resilience of citizens, the diversity and inclusion of communities, and the responsiveness and trustworthiness of State institutions.

# Strategic Aim 1: Rethinking Peace

The ways we build, assess, and fund peace.

## Objective 1 - Re-frame peace processes

Peace processes repeatedly struggle to succeed and yet the same approaches are stubbornly replicated from one conflict to the next. How they are designed, implemented, and monitored needs to be reassessed and adjusted. Interpeace will sup-

port the global Principles for Peace initiative and its independent International Commission on Inclusive Peace. The Commission will consult extensively, learn from lessons of the past, and craft standards to shape future peace processes.

## Objective 2 - Assess trust, resilience and inclusion

In conflict-affected societies, many efforts in governance, security, and development are unable to assess whether they cumulatively contribute to greater peace and stability. Interpeace's work is anchored in field-based research and measuring

resilience. The next step is to establish Trust, Resilience and Inclusion barometers where Interpeace is present. Each barometer's findings will be used to support better and more lasting peacebuilding.

## Objective 3 - Changing the way peace is funded

Funding for peacebuilding faces continued strain, yet the world requires more peacebuilding. Interpeace will contribute to global efforts to increase the value of existing public financing for peacebuilding so that it is more efficient and effective. Interpeace will also aim to attract the private sector into peacebuilding, including through innovative blended finance instruments.





## Strategic Aim 2: Enhancing Resilience for Peace

We will broaden our reach; seek to strengthen the resilience of communities and the trustworthiness of State institutions; and champion inclusion, justice, and the economic dimensions of peacebuilding.

### Objective 1 - Expanding the global scope of our engagement and the breadth of our local networks

Interpeace will nurture and expand its network of change agents in local communities in complex peacebuilding situations. It will also broaden its geographic reach and will explore the integration of peacebuilding

in the digital space. It will diversify its local, national and international partners. It will contribute in particular to overcoming barriers that keep young people and women from participating fully in society and peacebuilding.

### Objective 2 - Safer communities and more trustworthy security institutions

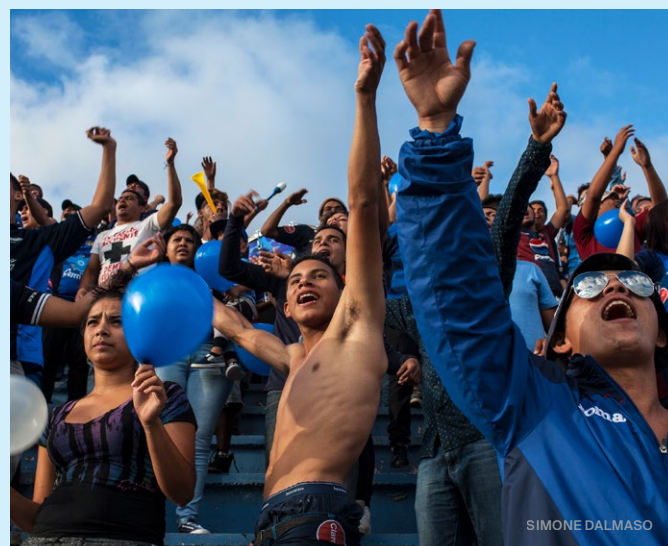
Lack of trust along with injustice and exclusion are at the origin of most conflict dynamics. The structural origins must be understood and acknowledged if effective peace solutions are to be found. Enhancing the relationship between State security institutions and local communities is vital to the wider social contract and can be successfully pursued using Interpeace's Track 6 methodology (see last page).

### Objective 3 - Enhancing inclusion and justice

Interpeace will foster pluralism, diversity, equality and justice, including field and policy work focused on the relationship between human rights and peacebuilding.

### Objective 4 - Integrating economic peacebuilding

For peacebuilding to be relevant and enduring, more attention must be given to social, development and growth dividends as outcomes of peacebuilding. Interpeace will integrate inclusive economic



## Strategic Aim 3: Embedding Peace

We will seek to institutionalise peace in State behaviour and in the international system, and put self-sustainability at the core of every peacebuilding strategy.

### Objective 1 - Anchoring change in States

For peace to be built, maintained, and nurtured, it must be embedded in the behaviour of State institutions and become a natural part of the way societies are governed. Wherever possible and appropriate, Interpeace will seek direct partnerships with State institutions to secure national ownership and create a legacy of sustainable national capacity for peace.

### Objective 2 - A peace-responsive international system

Peacebuilding must be more than a sector on its own. It should be understood as the way security, development, governance, justice and other actions build legitimacy, trust and resilience. A cornerstone of this Strategy will be Interpeace's work on Peace Responsiveness. This is the deliberate and systematic redesign of the activities of international organizations in development, humanitarian and other fields so that



they can move beyond 'conflict sensitivity' and make pro-active, practical and lasting contributions to the wider goals of peace and the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 16. Interpeace will continue to increase the number of international partners with whom it works to achieve this fundamental reorientation of their institutional approaches, and will enhance its capacity to accompany partners' work practically in the field.

### Objective 3 - Modelling peacebuilding's success and sustainability

Critical to building a culture of peace is a sustainable national peace infrastructure that allows societies and States to resolve conflicts internally using their own skills, institutions, and resources. Therefore, Interpeace will place particular emphasis on modelling responsi-

ble business plans, including transition and end-line strategies, by defining benchmarks of success with its partners and the local communities it serves. Interpeace will build this self-sustainability into its country strategies and resource mobilisation requests.

# Organizational Objectives 2021 - 2025

We will strengthen One Interpeace; raise our profile, impact and resources through partnerships and outreach; and strengthen systems, standards, accountability and governance.

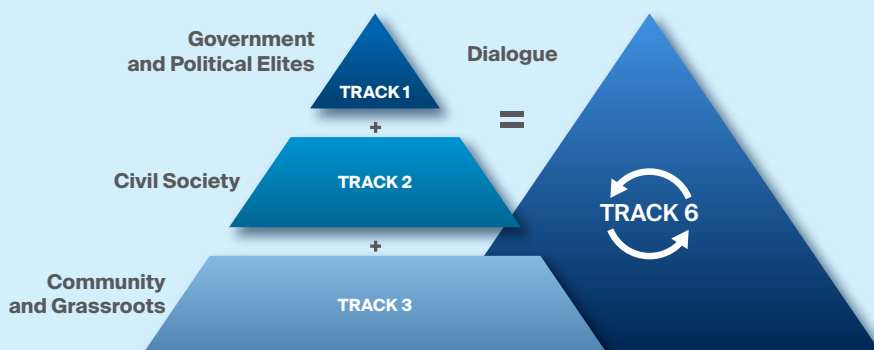
In pursuing Interpeace's strategic aims, all staff in all locations worldwide will seek to be stronger as a "One Interpeace" team: to be inclusive, to embrace and celebrate diversity, to be united, and to be supportive of each other.

Interpeace's national teams and partners are indispensable to ensuring that peacebuilding is locally designed, locally relevant, and effective. Interpeace also has crucial international and institutional partnerships, which it will continue to foster and adapt to the new Strategy. Through its local and wider partnerships, Interpeace will continue to aspire to be among the best governed and administered international organizations.



## Our 'Track-6' approach

Interpeace's integrated 'Track 6' approach connects local communities, civil society, governments and the international community. High-level policies become rooted in local peacebuilding contexts, and local communities help to shape their circumstances at political level. Interpeace works across all levels of society, connecting the three tracks: 1+2+3=6.





# 2020 Highlights

1

In the Horn of Africa, **Kenya**, Somalia, and Ethiopia meet in the Mandera Triangle, which has been a locus of cyclical violence. The violence has deeply affected communities that have strong cross-border ties. In July 2020, with support from Germany and Interpeace, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission began to construct and establish **the first ever Regional Peace Centre located in Mandera County**. This facility for cross-border communities will coordinate peace efforts, conduct research and consultation, and strengthen early response mechanisms, planning, and violence mitigation.

2

In a society in which civil society and citizens enjoy little political space to express their views and concerns, **Interpeace's Burundi programme** aims to strengthen resilience and promote inclusive decision-making. In 2020, the programme contributed to improving relations between communities and the authorities by establishing a collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman. The Office is a State institution whose responsibilities include the promotion of mediation as a conflict resolution mechanism. **The programme and the Ombudsman identified synergies** and it is expected that they will increase their coordination in provinces where both have operational teams.

3

A conflict between a local militia and national government forces in 2016 plunged the relatively calm Kasai region in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** into violent intercommunal conflict. Published in October 2020, Interpeace's report **Challenges and Priorities for Peace in Kasai and Kasai-Central** calls for inclusive and coordinated action to address simmering tensions and foster peace, reconciliation, and development in the region.

4

Can reconciliation be sustainable between communities that have experienced extreme violence? This is one of the questions explored by Interpeace's report [Resilience Capacities for Reconciliation in the Great Lakes Sub-Region](#), which consulted more than nine thousand people in Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC. Published in October 2020, the report highlights several existing capacities in the sub-region that enable people to live together peacefully and overcome the distrust created by years of conflict.

5

Dissatisfaction with the justice sector is a key obstacle to peace in **Guinea-Bissau**. In 2020, Interpeace and Voz di Paz, its local partner, launched [The Sense of Justice – Participatory barometer on the perceptions and experiences of the population: How to improve the governance of justice in Guinea-Bissau](#). This report is based on the results of a participatory research process that involved more than 4,250 people. The report sets out proposals for structurally improving the judicial sector in Guinea-Bissau.

6

Conflict in **Libya** has hampered the ability of Libyan institutions to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. As the pandemic began testing the resilience of local communities, Interpeace's network of change agents found themselves applying their skills to a pandemic response. Interpeace's programme in Libya **assessed the impact of Covid-19 on livelihoods, health, and social cohesion, identified sources of resilience**, and determined the role that change agents could play in community adaptation.

7

The first participatory quantitative analysis (justice barometer) was launched in **Mali** in 2020 in a new partnership with three UN agencies, including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Started in 2020, this work aims to **strengthen trust and shape support the UN provides to the justice system** and enhance the fight against impunity in Mali, applying a peacebuilding lens. It is expected to generate significant learning about the links between human rights and peacebuilding.

8

In an era of alarming conflict, contemporary peace processes are least effective where they are most needed. In 2020, Interpeace launched the **Principles for Peace (P4P)** initiative, a highly **inclusive, participatory and collective effort to bridge the gap between policy and action** by enabling local, national, and international actors to frame future peace processes. The initiative has established a high-profile independent International Commission on Inclusive Peace. The Commission is leading a global participatory process that will develop fresh thinking on the global peace agenda.

9

The COVID-19 pandemic is a multidimensional crisis that threatens peace and social cohesion. It is therefore important to look ahead to see what effects the pandemic is likely to have. In December 2020, Interpeace launched [From crisis to opportunity for sustainable peace: A joint perspective on responding to the health, employment and peacebuilding challenges in times of COVID-19](#). This report was prepared in collaboration with the ILO, WHO, the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). The report makes proposals for mitigating the pandemic's multidimensional effects in contexts affected by conflict.



CENAP

## 10

The impact of the Genocide against the Tutsis still weighs heavily on Rwandan society. Interpeace has launched an innovative and holistic trauma-healing programme in **Rwanda** that invests additional resources in mental health, addresses trauma and enhances social cohesion. Launched in Kigali on 15 October 2020, the programme is called **'Reinforcing community capacity for social cohesion through societal trauma healing'**.

As the country prepares to release some perpetrators of the genocide who have completed their prison terms, the programme will support individuals grappling with anxiety and trauma, and the host communi-

ties to ensure effective reintegration. Through a partnership with the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) and Prison Fellowship Rwanda, this programme will complement the remarkable investment and progress already made by the government of Rwanda and local civil society organisations towards social cohesion and improved livelihoods.

## 11

In January 2020, communities in **Ceel Afweyn, Somaliland**, began to mobilise funds to compensate the families of victims of four major violent conflicts that erupted in 2016. The failure of four successive peace agreements in the last two years was linked to communities' inability to meet their conditions promptly, including agreed compensation requirements. The active efforts of these communities to raise compensation funds, a significant burden on them in a period of drought, demonstrates **their continued commitment to apply and uphold the December 2019 peace agreement**, supported by Interpeace and the Academy for Peace and Development.



## 12

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic go beyond medical and public health. The crisis is unique because direct solutions and public health approaches have the potential to induce conflicts. Interpeace recognises that **integrating peacebuilding approaches into international responses to COVID-19 is a matter of urgency**. The briefing paper [Peace and Conflict in a COVID-19 World – Implications for International Responses](#) summarises ten key aspects of the crisis and notes three implications for international actors responding to it.

## 13

As the world started to realise the pandemic's devastating effects, Interpeace launched its **Resilience Webcast**, a series of conversations featuring experts and leaders from different professional backgrounds. Although the series started by focusing on the Covid-19 crisis, its overall purpose was to understand **the role that individuals, communities, and institutions can play in building trust and a more peaceful world**. Webcast guests included Dr Seth Berkley, CEO of GAVI, the multi-award-winning journalist Nelufar Hedayat, and Dr Jemilah Mahmood, Special Advisor on Public Health to the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

## 14

In 2020, the **8th edition of the Geneva Peace Talks** went digital and was livestreamed from Geneva on 21 September, the International Day of Peace. The theme for 2020 was Shaping Peace. Responding to the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Geneva Peace Talks **highlighted our interconnectedness, that events in one part of the planet affect people worldwide**. During the event, ten guest speakers shared their personal stories, reflected on how we can shape our world, and imagined what we might want our new 'normal' to look like.

# 2020 Main Achievements and Impacts

In 2020, Interpeace's Change Framework continued to guide the organization's work. The Change Framework is based on the two mutually reinforcing facets of Interpeace's mandate: (1) to strengthen societies' capacity to manage conflict in non-violent ways; and (2) to assist the international community -especially the UN- to build peace more effectively. The Change Framework provides the architecture around which the organization is framing its work and measuring its results through three Impact Goals, aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16:

- **Impact goal 1** Reduced violence and enhanced safety and security.
- **Impact goal 2** More resilient and inclusive societies.
- **Impact goal 3** Greater incentives for sustainable peace.



VOZ DI PAZ



## Impact Goal 1

# Reduced violence and enhanced safety and security

Through this impact goal, Interpeace works to help individuals and groups who are disposed to commit violence to instead join peaceful processes and solutions. Simultaneously, it focuses on enhancing the capacity of communities to manage security inclusively and non-violently in the long term. Interpeace also encourages national security and justice institutions to prevent violence and foster trust more effectively.

## Libya

### Libyan change agents mediate successfully for a peaceful transition in Alasaba city

In the first quarter of 2020, the city of Alasaba, 120km west of Tripoli, became a battlefield between the Government of National Accord (GNA) allied forces and the Eastern-based Libyan National Army (LNA). When they were ousted from the Al Watiya airbase by GNA forces in May 2020, LNA troops retreated and barricaded themselves in Alasaba, making the city the centre of drone airstrikes and fighting. The Alasaba social council and GNA forces negotiated a first agreement to hand over the city; but this was violently rejected by LNA supporters and clashes in the city and its outskirts subsequently intensified. Extensive mediation efforts took place to defuse the situation.

One session, organised and facilitated by Interpeace local change agents, turned out to be decisive in appeasing the protagonists and ending violent clashes in the region.

Interpeace's programme in Libya has formed a network of change agents trained in conflict management, mediation, and dialogue facilitation. During the Alasaba negotiation process, these change agents brought their technical skills and sustained community-based engagement to bear, demonstrating the value of Interpeace's programmatic approach. According to Mr. Asswaie, himself a change agent, "the community's

acceptance of our role as peacebuilders, mediators and facilitators of community dialogue has created an incentive for all of us to keep forging ahead with efforts to stabilise the city and prevent further escalation of hostilities that would inflict on us huge losses in lives and properties". Mediation by the change agents led to a ceasefire agreement between the warring sides. General Haftar's Libyan National Army withdrew peacefully; the GNA lifted its siege of the city; main roads reopened and people who had been displaced returned to their homes; the city's municipal council and security directorate started to meet again; and the city exchanged prisoners with five neighboring towns. Today, the security situation is relatively stable and calm, and life is back to normal, free of violence.

In a region deeply affected by divisive narratives and violent clashes, this successful initiative demonstrates once more that locally-led mediation efforts and local actors can defuse tensions between warring parties through inclusive dialogue. In Libya's complex environment, local peacebuilding initiatives will continue to play a vital role in efforts to achieve a sustainable and peaceful society. Peace starts locally, where people can resolve their differences and conflicts without violence.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Libya is generously supported by Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

## Kenya

### Ending decade-long violence between clans and strengthening local capacities to resolve conflict

The Gare and Degodia communities have been fighting for almost a decade in the Banisa-Malka Mari corridor. Progress towards reconciliation suffered a setback in 2020 when killings and retaliation spilled into the communities from across the Kenya-Ethiopia border. After continuous community engagement and accompaniment by the programme, the two communities have adopted a progressive, positive attitude to end this cycle of violence.

In late 2019, after two weeks of violence, clan leaders in Banisa, Mandera County, signed a peace pact titled 'The Banisa Peace Declaration'. The Declaration established a Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (CMC), which is composed of two elders from each of the conflicting clans and a local senior chief. The CMC's job is to ensure that the corridor is peaceful, a purpose it achieves by initiating grassroots dialogues in agreed dialogue spaces. These enhance the cohesion and integration of the various clans, and encourage them to disarm militias and start work to resettle people who have been displaced.

By January 2020, with support from Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) and Interpeace, the CMC had created nine dialogue spaces, which subsequently facilitated the return of camels and helped disarm clan militias. The CMC's collaboration with the communities in these dialogue spaces is redressing current and past grievances and creating conditions in which the clans in conflict can rebuild trust.

The NCIC/Interpeace peacebuilding team helped to facilitate the 2019 Banisa Peace Declaration, giving support to the national and county governments. During 2020, the team trained the CMC in conflict analysis and transformation, dialogue facilitation and conflict resolution, and went on to assist the Committee to establish local peacebuilding structures.

Since the formation of dialogue spaces, acts of retaliation have stopped. These are known to have a domino effect and often spiral into deadly clan conflicts. The spaces act as an early response mechanism and have dealt with six major incidents, including three killings and a cross-border abduction. All six cases were resolved amicably without escalating retaliation, unlike incidents recorded in the past. Through the spaces and by embedding a culture of dialogue, the clans have been able to resolve conflict locally, settle clan feuds, dispense justice, and sustain inter-village relations. By constantly communicating and sharing information rapidly, clans have grown to trust each other more. This in turn has stimulated a deeper discussion about peace and reconciliation. The discussion aims to address structural issues that tend to give rise to conflict without the need of external actors.

Interpeace and the NCIC are now replicating the CMC model in North Kenya, as a locally-owned form of community peace infrastructure that can transform societal conflict.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Kenya is generously supported by Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.





## The Democratic Republic of the Congo

### Improving security and social cohesion in South Kivu

Minembwe has been the epicenter of recurring violent conflict in South Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In the high and medium plateaux of Uvira, Fizi and Mwenga (Itombwe), conflict has pitted communities such as the Babembe, Bafuliru, and Bayindu, who consider themselves indigenous to the area, against the Banyamulenge, most of whom migrated to the area during the 19th century. In the post-colonial period, imprecise citizenship rights meant that Banyamulenge citizenship was uncertain. In the 1990s, their quest for territorial rights and full recognition played a critical role in the first and second Congo wars. Although the Addis Ababa agreement of 2013 ended the Second Congo War, relations between the Banyamulenge and other groups have remained hostile. There have been clashes since 2013 and large-scale violence erupted in late 2019, when dozens of villages were torched and more than 200,000 people were displaced.

The alleged involvement of armed groups from neighboring countries intensified the conflict. Despite the presence of peacebuilding actors, international non-governmental organizations, civil society groups and the government, it has proved difficult to establish a sustainable local path to peace.

A ceasefire agreement in March 2020 marks a potential turning point. Signed by 22 armed groups implicated in the conflict in and around Minembwe, the agreement paves the way for a long-term and sustainable peace agreement in the high and medium plateaux and is the product of extensive preparatory discussions with stakeholders and a two-day meeting organized by Interpeace and the national

Mechanism for the Monitoring of the Addis Ababa Accords (MNS), representing the DRC government.

Interpeace and the MNS facilitated the process that brought the armed groups to the negotiation table. They mapped the actors engaged in the conflict, brought together civil society and government actors, launched intra-community dialogues, and eventually co-hosted the meeting that led to signature of the ceasefire agreement and the establishment of a ceasefire monitoring committee.

As a result of the ceasefire monitoring committee's work, several roads and four local markets have been reopened in Bijombo, increasing access to food and enabling people and goods to move between Bijombo and Uvira and between Kirungu and Munanira. Although some violent clashes have occurred, most of the armed groups that signed the agreement have not re-engaged in violence. Interpeace, the government and civil society partners have been working to bring non-signatory groups into the process and to consolidate the gains made at national political level using Interpeace's Track 6 methodology for achieving sustainable peace. Simultaneously, separate efforts are being made to bring key government, community, and civil society stakeholders together to agree a plan to resolve conflicts, build peace, and strengthen social cohesion as elements of a continuous and progressive process of conflict transformation.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in the DRC is generously supported by the European Union, the United Kingdom, the Fonds de Cohérence pour la Stabilisation (STAREC-UAS), the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.



## Burundi

### Building peaceful relationships between youth affiliated with political parties

Longstanding tensions between youth affiliated with the Conseil National Pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD–FDD, the Imbonerakure party) and youth affiliated to the Congrès National pour la Liberté (CNL, the Inzirumugayo party) deteriorated on the eve of electoral campaigning in April 2020. A few weeks earlier, a violent incident occurred in the Rugazi commune of Bubanza province: youth aligned with the CNL beat, tied, and locked up a group of youth aligned with the CNDD–FDD. They then called the administrator of Rugazi commune, who is a member of the CNDD–FDD, and told him: “...we caught and tied up your Imbonerakure, we will only release them when you come to our location”. The administrator immediately sent the police, who arrested and imprisoned the CNL youths responsible. Subsequently, acts of revenge on CNL youth by the Imbonerakure multiplied to such an extent that part of the commune became ungovernable.

In February 2020, the Conflict Alert and Prevention Centre (Centre d’Alerte et de Prévention des Conflits, CENAP), a partner of Interpeace, convened a meeting in Rugazi commune to help restore calm.

This initial dialogue made possible a series of significant changes in the behaviour of youth affiliated with both the CNDD–FDD and CNL. Both sides decided

to settle their differences because their actions had stressed their communities and weakened social cohesion. Today, they are living together peacefully, as individuals and as groups. This change is significant since in the past the youth wings of both parties have repeatedly attacked, fought and injured each other. At the end of the meeting, the youth on both sides committed to behave responsibly for the benefit of their community, and, along with other youth affiliates in Bubanza province, they have since involved themselves in community outreach initiatives that promote tolerance and political coexistence.

In May 2020, a few days before the presidential elections, Interpeace’s Burundi programme organized another exchange session in Rugazi to assess the success of the first meeting and levels of peaceful coexistence between the youth. Acknowledging the positive changes that had occurred, the administrator said: “I do not know how to thank you, but if it was not for your intervention, I do not know what would have become of the Butavuka hill”. A hill leader added: “Today, the peaceful coexistence between the youth of the CNDD–FDD and those of the CNL is great... When they return from campaign events, they tease each other gently and go on their way.”

Interpeace’s peacebuilding work in Burundi is generously supported by Norway, the European Union, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

## Côte d'Ivoire

### Preventing political and electoral violence

The town of Bangolo in western Côte d'Ivoire is known to be a hotspot of political violence during elections. Party leaders often mobilise the youth and in the past their confrontations have sometimes escalated into larger-scale intercommunal conflicts, since political support in Côte d'Ivoire is closely linked to ethno-social affiliation.

In October 2020, on the day of the presidential election, the Deputy-Prefect of Bangolo, together with civil society representatives and members of an early warning committee, facilitated a dialogue to prevent violent disagreement between young supporters of rival parties in the city. After the main opposition parties called for a boycott of the elections and civil disobedience, a group of young opposition party supporters infiltrated local election offices and confiscated voting materials, preventing people from voting. In response, young people from a neighbourhood that supported the presidential party gathered and decided to reclaim the material.

The Interpeace team and Indigo Côte d'Ivoire, a local partner, had been touring different areas of the city in the days before the election to monitor the social climate. They quickly opened a dialogue in the neighbourhood and convinced the young people in question to shelve their plans because these might set off a larger inter-communal conflict in the city. Asked to leave the

matter in the hands of judicial and security actors, the group responded positively and agreed to let security forces handle the situation. Since the country is still healing the wounds of a decade-long political and security crisis in which communities fought violently to defend their political leaders, this example of local mediation in Bangolo demonstrates the value of community-based dialogue, which makes it possible to detect and quickly respond to incidents and tension before they escalate into intense violent conflicts.

Interpeace and Indigo Côte d'Ivoire contributed to this change by convening, supporting and involving key actors in a collaborative process before the election. They engaged representatives of the city authorities, civil society, peace committees, and individuals commonly described as 'violent'. As people of influence in their communities, these representatives collectively monitored levels of political tension and facilitated early dialogue and mediation to prevent conflicts from occurring. The programme also set up collaborative frameworks in the cities of Abidjan and Bouaké to increase trust, promote civic engagement, and develop participatory methods for preventing conflict before, during, and after the presidential elections.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Côte d'Ivoire is generously supported by the European Union, UNICEF, the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.



## Impact Goal 2

### More resilient and inclusive societies

Trust matters; it is the bedrock of peaceful societies. Interpeace's second impact goal focuses on enhancing trust between individuals and groups and between societies and their authorities. At the same time, 27 years of experience have shown us that violence is rooted in exclusion. Removing causes of marginalisation and exclusion is therefore a necessary step in peacebuilding.

## Mali

### Fostering trust between women and defence and security forces in northern and central Mali

Mali experienced an unprecedented political and security crisis at the start of 2012. Since then, some steps have been taken to stabilise the country and restore peace, most notably by the signature of the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement. However, the security and stability of Mali remain of concern, and violence has since spread to other regions of the country. National and international armed forces struggle to protect civilians, and their efforts do not seem sufficient to restore peace, because conflict, mistrust and violence continue to rise.

The work of Interpeace in Mali has shown that trust between the population and the defence and security forces (DSF) is essential for peace and social cohesion. More specifically, it has become clear that strengthening the participation of women in the DSF is a catalyst for enhancing trust.

"I had taken the initiative to participate in the recruitment, but I was discouraged by some people who said that a woman should not be part of the army. This view has proved wrong. A woman, if she has the ability and willingness and if she meets the recruitment criteria, she is accepted."

Mariam (not her real name) is a young woman from Mopti, in central Mali – today the epicentre of the Malian conflict. Despite being attracted to work in the Gendarmerie, Mariam was sceptical about applying but changed her mind after participating in an Interpeace initiative. Interpeace ran activities to reduce levels of mistrust and foster communication and collaboration between young women and the DSF. The programme offered support to young women

who wished to enrol in either the defence or security forces. Activities to prepare for recruitment included dialogue spaces, communication, and DSF open days. These demystified the DSF and encouraged DSF enrolment. Mariam was able to better understand the DSF's different mandates and recruitment processes, and learn more about the experiences of female personnel. "I now understand the application process, the steps to follow, and the relevant documents for the different forces. The knowledge I have gained will be lasting, and I will share it with other friends. The knowledge will stay with me, and I will use it everywhere".

At the end of these different activities, Mariam expressed her interest in applying for the Gendarmerie. Interpeace assisted her and 150 other young women to prepare for the 2020 recruitment procedure by offering practice written tests and fitness training. The women also benefited from a mentorship program with female personnel from the different forces. Mariam's mentor from the Gendarmerie improved her self-confidence and helped her prepare for the tests. Mariam was successful and is currently doing preparatory training before being deployed.

An internal study showed that 75% of the young women who participated in Interpeace's dialogue process reported that they trusted the DSF more; 50% of DSF interviewees reported the same. As a result of the dialogue process and communication campaign, more young women in Gao and Mopti also showed interest in joining the DSF. Interpeace accompanied 151 young women as they prepared for the recruitment procedures of the different branches of the DSF.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Mali is generously supported by Canada, the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland as well as by Humanity United as an institutional partner.



## Great Lakes Region

### Collaboration and solidarity in the face of COVID-19: beyond stereotypes and identity

Recurrent conflicts in Africa's Great Lakes region have claimed millions of lives. Many of the region's conflicts are also deeply interconnected due to the interdependence and historical connections between Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda. Persistent conflict has progressively eroded trust. Identity manipulation and stereotypes, as well as competition for power and resources, are widely considered to be among the main drivers of conflict.

Acknowledging that the populations of the region are the authors of their own peace, Interpeace's Great Lakes programme established Permanent Dialogue Groups (GDPs) to facilitate cross border exchanges. In these dialogue spaces, communities can openly discuss the root causes of conflicts and propose solutions to address them. GDPs have helped to develop consensus-based and locally-owned solutions and have assisted decision-makers to connect with and consult local populations.

During the COVID-19 crisis in 2020, Congolese communities helped to protect, harvest, and store the crops of Rwandan farmers who had cultivated land in the DRC but were unable to cross the border. Local authorities on both sides of the border worked with GDPs and community members to harvest the crops and send the produce to their owners using cross-border transporters. Some Congolese even helped sell the crops and send the profits to the Rwandan landowners.

As noted by a member of the Bugarama GDP, this "...shows the rising level of willingness among community members and decision-makers to promote peace and peaceful coexistence".

Interpeace's programme in the Great Lakes Region contributed to this change through dialogue, trust-building, and advocacy activities. After learning that Rwandan farmers were likely to lose their harvest due to border closure, members of the Bugarama-Kamanyola GDP approached local authorities to obtain a special authorisation to cross the border. Their request was approved, but the plan was paralysed one day before the crossing was due to occur. Refusing to be discouraged, members of the Bugarama-Kamanyola GDP continued to work with local authorities in Kamanyola. As a member of the GDP Bugarama explained, they "...placed a mobile sound system that passes in the neighbourhoods of Kamanyola to ask the Congolese to protect the Rwandan property".

Despite isolated cases of theft, the Congolese have been willing to aid the Rwandan farmers, highlighting the trust that has been built between communities on the border.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in the Great Lakes region is generously supported by the European Union, Norway, the Fonds de Cohérence pour la Stabilisation (STAREC-UAS), the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

## Guinea-Bissau

### Inclusive dialogue resolves entrenched land disputes and improves local governance and citizen participation

Guinea-Bissau has experienced major political turmoil in the last two decades. There have been several coups and recurrent confrontations between political authorities and the military. Dysfunctional State mechanisms have a strong negative impact on society at large, inhibiting sustainable peacebuilding as well as development and international support to civil society.

Interpeace's programme in the country focuses on justice and governance. It has worked to create new mechanisms and build the capacity of an active citizenry. Citizens have been empowered to monitor, evaluate and advocate for adequate public policies in the justice sector, and to integrate the values of traditional justice mechanisms in the justice sector, applying a peacebuilding lens. Through a project titled 'Turning the Black Box Transparent', Citizen Intervention Spaces (EICs) have been created in every region of the country to debate and challenge the conduct of justice and local governance.

In 2020, EICs helped establish channels for dialogue between members of civil society organizations and local authorities in order to find shared solutions to local problems. The project is the first step towards implementing a participatory and inclusive monitoring system for local governance. The creation of EICs helped to establish an open and honest dialogue between the community and local authorities and identified specific action points in each region.

In the Bolama and Bijagos region, for instance, the local EIC focused mainly on the issue of land tenure and governance. EIC members pointed out that ineffective governance of land matters by local authorities in the region had led to conflict between communities and individuals. "A land without justice is an animal's land," said Major Conu, a traditional leader from Bubaque Island.

Bubaque and the Bijagos islands experienced numerous conflicts caused by unregulated land purchases. Demand for land in the islands has risen because of the potential of tourism, but has created numerous disputes among communities and between communities and foreigners because land regulations are not applied. The EIC was able to show that the appli-



cation of property regulations was an issue the local administration (State Committee) needed to prioritise. As a result, the State Committee took steps to implement land measurement and registration, involved neighbours as well as purchasers and sellers in land sale procedures, and determined that land concessions must be witnessed by at least four people.

Thanks to the trust that communities had in them, EIC members were chosen as the preferred group to witness land concession and purchase procedures. They accompany the work of the State Committee and monitor their actions, ensuring that they comply with national policies and that local communities and civil society organizations (CSOs) participate in land governance in each region.

Through dialogue, the EICs have enabled citizens, traditional leaders and CSO members to participate in decisions that affect them, challenge the authorities, promote changes in local governance and the local justice system, and play more inclusive roles. The EICs are an example of community-led structures that successfully improve relations between citizens and local authorities.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Guinea Bissau is generously supported by the European Union, the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.



## Rwanda

### Healing the wounds of the past through dialogue

In 2020, the first convicted genocide perpetrators were released after completing their sentences. Most had been convicted by Gacaca courts. Some 27,875 genocide prisoners are expected to be released between 2020 and 2023. The release of former perpetrators troubles many genocide survivors, who are fearful of cohabitating and interacting with people who victimised them. Many ex-prisoners are also afraid that after their release they will be confronted by their victims or the families of their victims.

Trauma healing remains a pressing public health issue in Rwanda, and is a direct consequence of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Over four years, Interpeace and Never Again Rwanda (NAR), a local partner, have helped to address this challenge by developing 'healing spaces', a psycho-social support group therapy programme that fosters individual healing and social cohesion.

'Gihango' (the pact) is one of the most complex mixed healing spaces. It brings together a diverse mix of Rwandans, including genocide perpetrators, survivors, returnees, former members of militia groups, and people in mixed marriages. Most of the participants had lived in indifference and suspicion, had never met beforehand, and had not wanted to meet. In the first sessions, their high level of distrust was visible. For instance, ex-perpetrators sat on one side and survivors

on the other. It was even hard for them to look each other in the eye. They didn't want to share their stories until the third session, at which one of the survivors spoke with much grief. "During the 1994 genocide, I was a mother with a small baby. I remember how worried I was because I had nowhere to hide and when I tried to ask for water to drink, I would be chased away with a machete. And when I met people on the way, they would scream and draw attention to me. No one felt sorry for my child or me. Today you are asking me to sit with the same people that ran after me, the same people who tried to kill me and participated in the killing of my family, and talk about our painful past?"

These words divided those in the healing space even more and led to intense arguments between them. However, they also opened a discussion that had been avoided. As the dialogue sessions proceeded, those who took part in the genocide expressed regret and requested forgiveness; progressively, survivors accepted their requests. The group discussions also empowered those who had participated in the genocide to finally tell their families, particularly their children, the real reasons for their imprisonment. Like the members of other groups supported by Interpeace's programme, the participants in this healing space have started to help and materially support neighbours who experienced severe trauma and its effect on their livelihoods.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Rwanda is generously supported by the European Union, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.



## Somalia and Somaliland

### Enhancing citizen participation and government accountability in Puntland

Democratisation continues to be an important pillar in the efforts of Somalia and Somaliland to achieve sustainable peace. Since the collapse of Somalia's government in the early 1990s, both Somalia and Somaliland have struggled to establishing governance systems that foster citizen participation and ownership in State-building processes. In view of the contribution that responsive, participatory and inclusive governance makes to building and sustaining peace, it is vital to facilitate citizen participation in decision-making in order to consolidate peacebuilding gains in Somalia and Somaliland.

In February 2020, a Citizen Forum took place, chaired by the Puntland Development Research Center (PDRC), a long-term partner of Interpeace. It was attended by the Minister of Planning and almost two hundred citizens. During the meeting, the Minister shared the government's budget, workplan and achievements with the participants, who posed questions and suggested how the Ministry could better align its work with their priorities. The discussion was animated and demonstrated citizens' desire and ability to inform decision-making processes. The Citizen Forum enabled a direct exchange between citizens and the authorities, shared information, and prefigured a cul-

ture of accountability that will be foundational to the establishment of responsive democratic governance.

Organized by Interpeace and PDRC, the Forum built on previous efforts to connect citizens and their local councils. Under the Talo Wadaag programme, the two organizations have also run civic and voter education activities to raise awareness of citizens' rights and responsibilities, and worked with the government to promote more inclusive and participatory governance.

Shortly after the Citizen Forum, the President of Puntland, Said Abdullahi Deni, issued a statement in which he instructed all Ministers to make themselves available at future fora and to engage directly with the public. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, for the moment it has not been possible to convene meetings with other ministries. However, the forums have been devolved to local level so that citizens and local mayors have met in Eyl, Bander Bayla and Jariban. Such meetings are just as important as meetings with national officials, because people living outside urban centres have even fewer opportunities to participate in and influence decision-making.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Somalia and Somaliland is generously supported by the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.





## Burkina Faso

### Towards effective participation of youth in the development of public policies

Rising violence and hostilities have disrupted social cohesion in parts of Burkina Faso. Many national and international actors are working to address this problem and restore meaningful peace in the country. However, when tackling violent conflict in communities, especially in areas vulnerable to extremist groups, young people are rarely given a chance to make meaningful contributions, although they have an understanding of what drives the behaviour of their peers, including their involvements in violence and with radical actions. As violence has spread across the country and evolved, youth exclusion has made it even more challenging to tackle the root causes.

Interpeace and Fondation Hironnelle worked together during 2020 to create spaces for dialogue in which young Burkinabè could talk to each other productively about the issues facing their communities. In March, a national youth forum for dialogue was launched in Ouagadougou. This gave young people a voice and empowered them to discuss challenges to peace in their societies and propose practical solutions that would promote peace and improve social cohesion.

"We need committed and responsible young people working for peace and social cohesion. This campaign must continue, but we should not get ourselves into populism," said Ali Bokoum, a young Burkinabè who participated in the forum.

Initiated by Interpeace and Fondation Hironnelle, the forum was part of a nationwide project known as 'Bibiss Laafi Batû', which broadly translates as 'fostering dialogue among young people in Burkina Faso'. Young people in Burkina Faso are often portrayed as perpetrators of violence, though only a few of them contribute to violent activities. Many young Burkinabè actively work for peace and security in their societies and are responsible for significant positive change; but they rarely engage with each other constructively.

Through Bibiss Laafi Batû, radio programmes were organized. Like the forum, these allowed young Burkinabè to communicate directly, and even discuss their ideas with the authorities. In a testimony, the Emir of Liptako said: "It's a novel setting, where young people are also talking openly with the authorities, who are willing to participate. This is encouraging and deserves to be pursued."

This programme has enabled young people to explain the many challenges they face. Several mentioned the absence of space for intergenerational dialogue in Burkina Faso. The initiative has helped to fill this gap and create a way to consider adequately the contributions that youth can make to developing and implementing public policies. Their involvement in peace efforts is essential to build relationships, restore trust and enhance social cohesion in the country.

Interpeace's peacebuilding work in Burkina Faso is generously supported by Canada, Ireland, UNDP, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

## Impact Goal 3

### Greater incentives for sustainable peace

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We recognise that everyone has a role to play in building peace. Our third impact goal therefore focuses on improving international strategies for peace and promoting the adoption of peacebuilding principles.

### Principles for Peace Initiative

#### Peace is possible: creating a collective momentum to reshape peace processes

Practitioners, researchers and policymakers have long been aware of the limitations of the international community's approach to contemporary peace and conflict challenges. They are outdated and ineffective. There is an opportunity to reframe them, and support for change is reflected in recent policy frameworks, including the Sustaining Peace Agenda, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda.

Principles for Peace (P4P) is a global and inclusive participatory initiative that seeks to develop a new body of principles and guiding norms that will fundamentally reshape how peace processes are structured, sequenced and implemented. P4P aims to bridge the gaps between policy, research and action by enabling local, national and international actors to build peace processes that will more often be informed by robust and effective guiding principles. In particular, these principles will be grounded in evidence and experience and will make all actors engaged in peace processes accountable to the societies they serve. Through a collective effort, the initiative has adopted a multilayered approach that takes into account

different facets of societies, recognises the stages that peacebuilding processes must negotiate, and involves the necessary mix of local, national and international actors. The initiative seeks to engage governments and will anchor the new Principles for Peace in relevant formal bodies and processes in order to secure their global adoption and acceptance of the long-term vision required to achieve lasting peace.

In 2020, P4P launched the Independent International Commission on Inclusive Peace. It is composed of twelve eminent and diverse global experts and leaders, who combine expertise in policy, practice, on-the-ground experience, and high-level political leadership. P4P also launched a global participatory consultation process, to gather evidence and advice, which the Commission is leading. Initial consultations, undertaken with Search for Common Ground, have already been completed in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Myanmar, Sierra Leone, Syria and Yemen. These will root the initiative's work in experiences and local realities, while it lays the foundations for potential longer-term peace action.

Interpeace's work on the Principles for Peace is generously supported by Denmark, the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

## Towards a peace responsive international system

### Our shared responsibility: assisting the international community to be more effective in contributing to peace.

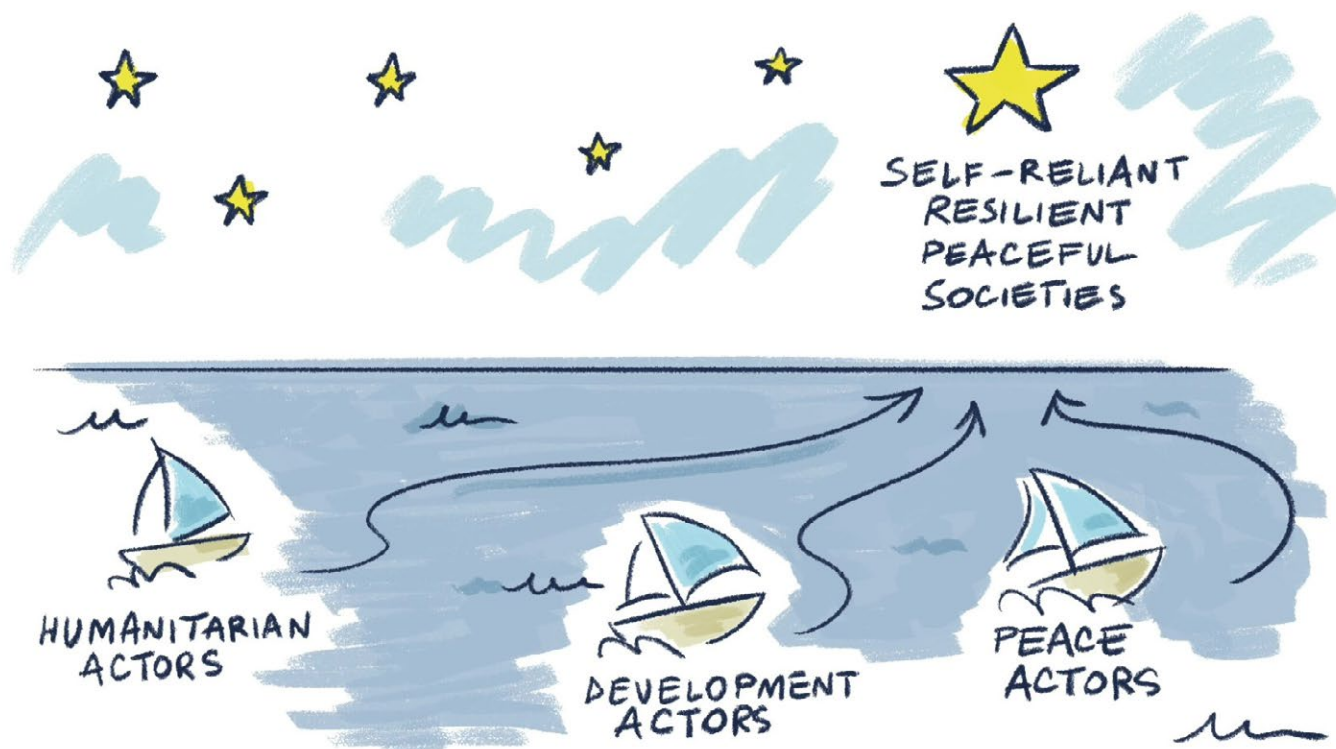
About 80% of all humanitarian and development interventions now occur in countries affected by conflict. The interlinked nature of our world means that conflict and violence are now the business of everyone and require tailored international approaches. Conflict and violence have become the greatest obstacle to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Multilateralism is under threat and trust in public institutions is low, increasing pressure on the international system to deliver. In 2020, the third UN Peacebuilding Architecture Review stated that "Inclusive and sustainable development, anchored in the protection and promotion of human rights, gender equality, and the goal of leaving no one behind, is the best defence against conflict".

As a peacebuilding organization, Interpeace's Peace Responsiveness programme aims to build practical collaboration and change institutionally with development and humanitarian actors, in order to enhance the peace benefits that can be generated through their in-country technical work and services. In addition to this practical objective at local level, the programme also aims to work with development and humanitarian actors to strengthen the ability of their

policies and procedures to contribute to peace.

During 2020, Interpeace strengthened its institutional partnerships with four UN agencies: FAO, WHO, ILO and UNFPA. Interpeace collaborated with these agencies to anchor peace responsiveness in institutional strategies and policies, as well as programming practice. This work led to programming opportunities at country level. In Ukraine, for example, Interpeace and WHO have adopted a multi-dimensional approach to health, governance and peace in light of the country's COVID-19 response. Interpeace also seconded a staff member to WHO for 12 months to advance its work on health and peace. In Somalia, Interpeace and FAO Somalia trained elders and community leaders in conflict resolution skills to prevent conflict over scarce resources. Interpeace and FAO also defined ways in which the FAO can strengthen its contributions to peace, with guidance on operationalising them. UNFPA and Interpeace jointly developed institutional, programmatic and thematic forms of collaboration that more strongly incorporate peacebuilding in UNFPA's strategic documents. With ILO, finally, Interpeace developed a peace and conflict analysis guide.

Interpeace's work on peace responsiveness is generously supported by Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.



## Mali-Burkina Faso Cross-Border Programme

### Managing natural resources to prevent conflict and strengthen social cohesion.

The cross-border lands of the Hauts-Bassins-Sikasso region in Burkina Faso and Mali have been experiencing tensions, compromising the stability of an area that is considered the breadbasket of both countries. Community and cross-border conflicts mainly relate to natural resources and land. They are also linked to the growing presence and influence of armed groups.

In view of this situation, Interpeace launched an initiative titled 'Cross-Border Dialogue for Peace Responsive Actions to Prevent Conflict and Improve Natural Resource Management along the Mali-Burkina Faso Border'. Funded by the PATRIP Foundation, the initiative aims to prevent violent conflict and strengthen social cohesion by managing natural resources in ways that promote peace. It has three main pillars: first, by means of cross-border participatory dialogue, it enables the populations to form between themselves a shared understanding of the issues; second, it supports and strengthens conflict management mechanisms at cross-border level, enabling communities and local government to collaborate closely and prioritise endogenous forms of economic development that support peace and social cohesion; and third, it develops shared and practical ways to manage resources and promote economic development. The initiative combines peacebuilding with development in order to enhance social cohesion, generate

peace benefits, and show the practical advantages of an approach that promotes humanitarian action, development, and peacebuilding simultaneously.

"The initiative is most welcome because of the many problems in border areas. Natural resources, due to their scarcity, and the borders, are often sources of conflict," the Secretary-General of the Hauts-Bassins region has said.

Discussion groups in Burkina Faso and Mali enabled participants to better understand the dynamics of community and cross-border conflicts. Cross-border dialogue spaces gave communities in both countries an opportunity to meet, discuss problems, and propose solutions. The closure of Burkina Faso's borders during the COVID pandemic required the programme to convene the dialogue spaces virtually. This meant, however, that distance was no longer an obstacle to discussion. As a community member from Bezansso (Mali) said: "Having a meeting between the different border villages of the two communes in an online format is evidence of your commitment to the success of this project... This space has allowed us to express ourselves without being interrupted and above all without having to cross the border."

Interpeace's peacebuilding work at the Mali-Burkina Faso border is generously supported by PATRIP, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.



INTERPEACE

## Rethinking Stability

### Bridging the gap between the cessation of violence and longer-term stability

International stabilisation missions have become a major part of the international toolbox in conflict affected areas, mandated to improve the stability and peace of communities experiencing active armed conflict. And yet despite their stated purpose of reducing violence and laying the structural foundations for longer-term security, these efforts have too often not only failed, but made conflict worse. Questions remain about which interests are really being 'stabilised', and whether current operations are ultimately enabling local and national actors to manage their own security challenges.

In response, Interpeace is leading a two-year initiative called Rethinking Stability in partnership with the German Federal Foreign Office, the Bunde-

sakademie für Sicherheitspolitik (BAKS), and the Atlantic Council. It seeks to revisit and question the conceptual and operational norms behind stabilisation efforts in the interests of improving the prospect of future work contributing to lasting peace.

Activities are centred around a series of frank dialogue sessions at local, national and international levels, bilateral meetings, and original research papers. These are designed both to improve coordination between different stabilisation actors, whose disparate policies and actions can otherwise prove out of sync or even contradictory, and to build a stronger community of practice better able to respond to sources of instability.

## Influencing International Policy

### Operationalising the Youth, Peace and Security agenda (YPS)

In July 2020, the UN Security Council passed UNSCR 2535, its third youth, peace and security resolution. It affirms high-level political commitment to operationalising the YPS agenda and driving it forward in the UN system. Ideally, the Resolution will lead to a 'whole of system' approach, as Interpeace has recommended. UNSCR 2535 is important for two other reasons. First, it contains new language on States' obligation to protect civic and political spaces, thereby reaffirming a strong relationship between peace, justice, and human rights. Second, it cements the place of YPS on the agenda of the Security Council by requiring the UN Secretary-General to submit

a biennial report to the Council on implementation of the YPS agenda and associated resolutions.

Interpeace participated actively in shaping the process leading to UNSC 2535. During the year, it offered advice to the Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY) and to the African Union (AU) Youth Envoy; provided input to and commented on the UN Secretary-General's first report to the Security Council on YPS; and gave advice as requested to a number of UN member States, including Canada, Dominican Republic, France, Ireland and South Africa.

Interpeace's work on YPS is generously supported by Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

### Influencing the new mediation concept of the European Union

In 2020, Interpeace's Brussels Office, located in the heart of the EU quarter, continued to support and position Interpeace's policy and programmatic work with EU and Member States' representations.

Because of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, in 2020 Interpeace did most of its EU advocacy and political engagement on-line. Staff were generally unable to travel to capitals to provide briefings, insights and recommendations.

Despite these challenges Interpeace supported the revision of the European Union guidelines mediation. It encouraged the EU to promote forms of mediation that are designed for each situation and context and are adapted to local realities and peacebuilding needs. To make this case, Interpeace met with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and other networks in which Interpeace is active, including the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), the EU-funded ERMES, and Inside Mediators. The EEAS included Interpeace's Rwanda project on trauma healing in the new EU Mediation guidelines as a specific example of policy aligned with practice. It will be used as a basis for future mediation engagements by the EU and Member States.

# Our partners

Achieving lasting peace requires partnerships. Interpeace is very pleased to have built strong partnerships with a wide array of local, national and international actors worldwide. Each of these has been established depending on the peacebuilding context in which the relationship is founded and each reflects the way in which Interpeace and its partners can create more effective, relevant and sustainable impact together.

## Strategic Partners

Interpeace is particularly grateful to the governments which are its Strategic Partners –the **Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland** – for their continued political and financial support. Their commitment remains critical in achieving our results by supporting Interpeace’s overall institutional strengthening and contributions to peacebuilding at the international level as well as specific work on peacebuilding policy, programming, and innovation.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Sweden



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

## Global Partners

Interpeace is delighted to have longstanding partnerships with the following governments which generously provide targeted financial support allowing the organisation to pursue sustainable peace practically at the in-country level and to advance innovative policy influence for more effective peacebuilding strategies.

Canada



MINISTRY OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF DENMARK



Federal Republic of Germany  
Foreign Office

**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



An Roinn Gnóthaí  
Eachtracha agus Trádála  
Department of  
Foreign Affairs and Trade

  
NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office



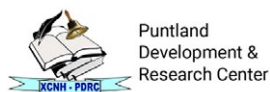
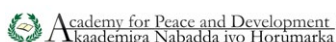
# Institutional Partners

In light of its mandate to assist the international community – especially the United Nations – to be more effective in its peacebuilding, Interpeace is honoured to have a special, constitutional relationship with the UN Secretary-General and also to be a partner with a growing number of humanitarian, development and technical organisations. Interpeace has also built longstanding institutional partnerships with other global peacebuilding organisations to create synergies and to maximise impact at the field level.



# National, Regional and Local Partners

Peace cannot be imported from the outside. It is therefore critical that all in-country peace processes continue to be designed, owned and led locally. Interpeace contributes to long term, embedded national and local leadership through crucial and long-term relationships with regional, national and community-level partners.



## Global Policy Partners

In line with its Strategy 2021-2025, Interpeace has an ambitious policy agenda including supporting an independent global initiative to create principles for peace and systemic improvement to the way peace processes are framed, designed and financed. The following partners are contributing to this shared endeavour and goal.



Alliance for  
Peacebuilding



Atlantic Council



Bundesakademie  
für Sicherheitspolitik



BAKS



EPLO  
European Peacebuilding Liaison Office



GCSP

Geneva Centre for Security Policy  
Where knowledge meets experience

GENEVA  
peacebuilding  
PLATFORM



THE  
GRADUATE  
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Interpeace remains grateful to all other partners who have provided significant and generous contributions to our activities worldwide.

MIRABAUD



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# 2020 Financial statements

## Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income Balance Sheet

	2020	2019	Assets	2020	2019
	US\$	US\$		US\$	US\$
<b>Income</b>					
United Nations	2 060 332	1 737 677	Non Current Assets		
Governments	20 202 755	15 331 384	Property, Plant and Equipment	115 115	89 574
Trusts & Foundations, NGO and Other	1 651 522	962 803	Right-of-Use Assets	1 482 438	1 427 024
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>23 914 609</u>	<u>18 031 864</u>	Deposits	156 521	134 630
			Donor Income Receivable	8 272 165	10 208 022
<b>Expenses</b>			Current Assets		
Personnel (incl. consultants)	13 662 774	10 710 928	Deposits	2 716	2 824
Travel and Related Expenses	2 566 400	2 944 156	Advances to UN	149 162	209 744
Equipment Purchases	803 681	496 419	Advances to Partners	1 014 579	625 839
Depreciation (including on right-of-use assets)	644 577	619 419	Donor Income Receivable	21 020 766	15 596 072
Office, Communications, Vehicle and Finance	1 769 557	1 283 833	Other Receivables and Prepayments	405 749	314 813
Workshops, Reporting, Professional Services and Grants	3 130 358	1 940 803	Cash and Cash Equivalents	12 480 548	10 207 543
UN Management Fees	49 736	46 787	<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>45 099 759</u>	<u>38 816 085</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>22 627 083</u>	<u>18 042 345</u>	<b>Liabilities and Reserves</b>		
			Non Current Liabilities		
<b>Finance (costs) / gains</b>	93 699	(69 972)	Provisions	59 263	43 638
<b>Other Comprehensive (loss) / income</b>	(267 954)	(353 193)	Employee Benefits	1 273 451	971 710
<b>Net (loss) / income</b>	1 113 271	(433 646)	Deferred Income	8 272 165	10 208 022
<b>Carryforward from Previous Year</b>	1 627 486	2 061 132	Lease Liability	1 029 526	832 043
<b>Closing Balance 31<sup>st</sup> December</b>	<u>2 740 757</u>	<u>1 627 486</u>	Current Liabilities		
			Deferred Income	29 495 940	23 750 614
			Lease Liability	594 456	646 343
			Amounts due to Partners	213 420	25 365
			Income to be Repaid to Donors	176 256	74 799
			Payables and Accruals	1 244 525	636 065
			<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>42 359 002</u>	<u>37 188 599</u>
			Unrestricted Reserves	2 740 757	1 627 486
			<b>Total Liabilities and Reserves</b>	<u>45 099 759</u>	<u>38 816 085</u>

The consolidated financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The consolidated summary financial statements are prepared using the same structured presentation and measurement basis but do not contain all disclosures required by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

# Cash Flow

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	US\$	US\$
<b>Unrestricted net (loss) / income for the year</b>	<b>1 381 225</b>	<b>(80 453)</b>
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>		
Adjustments for		
Depreciation, including on right-of-use assets	644 577	619 419
Net finance costs / (income)	(93 699)	(14 125)
	<b>1 932 103</b>	<b>524 841</b>
Change in deposits	(21 783)	(10 852)
Change in advances to UN	60 582	(184 834)
Change in advances to partners	(388 740)	(125 447)
Change in donor income receivable	(258 838)	(820 174)
Change in accounts receivable and prepayments	(90 936)	(100 229)
Change in provisions and employee benefits	155 537	56 388
Change in deferred income	579 470	1 584 666
Change in amount due to partners	188 056	19 051
Change in Income to be repaid to donors	101 457	(541 506)
Change in accounts payable and accrued expenses	391 459	(130 133)
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<b>2 648 367</b>	<b>271 771</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest received	39 155	21 100
Acquisition of property plant and equipment	(77 649)	(13 567)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(38 494)</b>	<b>7 533</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Payment on principal portion of lease liability	(502 288)	(523 337)
Interest paid	(47 766)	(237)
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>	<b>(550 054)</b>	<b>(523 574)</b>
<b>Net Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>2 059 819</b>	<b>(244 270)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	10 207 543	10 470 577
Effect of exchange rate fluctuations on cash held	213 185	(18 764)
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December</b>	<b>12 480 548</b>	<b>10 207 543</b>

## Changes in Reserves

	2020			2019	
	Interpeace Headquarters Unrestricted Reserves	Interpeace Inc. Unrestricted Fund	Interpeace Sweden Unrestricted Fund	Total Unrestricted Reserves	
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>1 602 966</b>	<b>23 400</b>	<b>1 120</b>	<b>1 627 486</b>	<b>2 061 132</b>
<b>Unrestricted net (loss) / income for the year</b>	<b>1 382 345</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1 120)</b>	<b>1 381 225</b>	<b>(80 453)</b>
Items that will never be reclassified to profit or loss					
Remeasurements of defined benefit liability	(161 829)	0	0	(161 829)	(333 755)
Items that are or may be reclassified to profit or loss					
Foreign currency translation differences	(106 125)	0	0	(106 125)	(19 438)
<b>Total other comprehensive (loss) / income</b>	<b>(267 954)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(267 954)</b>	<b>(353 193)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive (loss) / income for the year</b>	<b>1 114 391</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1 120)</b>	<b>1 113 271</b>	<b>(433 646)</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>2 717 357</b>	<b>23 400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2 740 757</b>	<b>1 627 486</b>

# Letter from the Auditors

**mazars**

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## Independent Auditor's Report on the summary consolidated financial statements of Interpeace, Geneva

### Opinion

The summary consolidated financial statements of Interpeace, which comprise the summary consolidated statement of comprehensive income, summary balance sheet, summary statement of cash flows, summary statement of changes in equity and explanatory notes, are derived from the audited consolidated financial statements of Interpeace for the year ended December 31, 2020.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary consolidated financial statements derived from the audited consolidated financial statements of Interpeace for the year ended December 31, 2020 are consistent, in all material respects, with those consolidated financial statements, in accordance with the basis of preparation described in note 2.

### Summary Consolidated Financial Statements

The summary consolidated financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Reading the summary consolidated financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited consolidated financial statements and the auditor's report thereon.

### The Audited Consolidated Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unqualified audit opinion on the audited consolidated financial statements in our report dated August 13, 2021.

### Management's Responsibility for the Summary Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary consolidated financial statements in accordance with IFRS.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary consolidated financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with (or are a fair summary of) the audited consolidated financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 810 (Revised), *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

MAZARS SA

A blue ink signature of Franck Paucod on a white background, with a small red Swiss cross logo to the right.

Franck Paucod  
Swiss Certified Public Accountant  
(Auditor in Charge)

A blue ink signature of Vincent Pichard on a white background, with a small red Swiss cross logo to the right.

Vincent Pichard  
US Certified Public Accountant

Geneva, August 13, 2021



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