



**Annual Report 2021:
Safeguarding Peace,
Shifting Priorities**



**CIVIL SOCIETY
PLATFORM**
FOR PEACEBUILDING
AND STATEBUILDING



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CONTENTS

Foreword	5
Executive Summary	6
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	7
1. About CSPPS	9
Who We Are, What We Do and Our Strategy	9
Why We Stand out	10
How the Platform Works	11
2. CSPPS in the World in 2021	12
3. Introduction	14
4. Network	15
Networking in 2021	16
The Just Future Programme	17
Engagements in the Context of the IDPS	17
2021 FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum	18
International Day of Peace: “Sustainable Peace Treaties Initiative”	19
New Members – Welcome !	19
Close Up: CSPPS Networking 2021 – Some Main Takeaways	20
5. Amplify	21
Amplifying the voice of civil society in fragile and conflict-affected contexts to the global level	22
2021 Voices of SDG16+ Campaign	22
Report on Violent Extremism	23
Persistent Impact: An Urgent Call for a Conflict-Sensitive Approach to the COVID-19 Pandemic	23
2021 Paris Peace Forum: “Mind the Gaps”	23
Understanding the Conflict-Climate Nexus - Avans University Research Trajectory	24
The Peace Corner Podcast	24
Local Voices at a Crossroads	25
Member Case Story - Cameroon	26
6. Lobby	30
Lobbying in 2021	31
2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+	31
CSPPS Involvement in the High-Level Political Forum 2021	32
Letter to the President of the General Assembly on Civil Society Inclusion	34
Global SDG16+ Coalition Workshop	34
SDG16+ In Action: A Civil Society Workshop for National and Local Leadership	35

Civil Society Statement to the Peacebuilding Commission 2021 Annual Session on Financing for Peacebuilding	35
“Building Forward Better by Strengthening Local Resilience”	36
7. 2021 Main Outreach Activities	38
8. Strategic Outlook 2022	40

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2021 Annual Report of the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS).

The report is issued under the title we used for the 2022 Annual Conference. Now, more than ever, safeguarding peace amid shifting priorities is the key goal directing our work while being confronted with multiple crises and tectonic geopolitical developments.

This report for the year 2021 is issued while we as a Platform are discussing possible responses to the challenges posed by these developments. Looking back at the Platform's work in 2021 is useful in that context.

In 2021 the evolving COVID-19 pandemic continued to pose unprecedented challenges. Upon seeing that both the work of the Platform and that of local peacebuilders remained sharply impacted, CSPPS again reached out to its membership and released a new survey to document the pressing challenges they continue to be confronted with.

On basis of the information collected we published a new report and a renewed urgent call for a conflict-sensitive approach to the pandemic. This second CSPPS-report on the COVID-19 pandemic identifies a number of persistent trends needing urgent international attention and concerted action, including heightened economic vulnerabilities, continuous restrictions impacting civic space, and increased exposure to gender-based violence.

Our aim with the report is to amplify the voices of local peacebuilders that are still not sufficiently heard by national and international decision-makers, and to ensure that their lived experiences are taken into account.

The report documents how the work of CSPPS Country Teams on the ground continued to be

affected by the impact of the pandemic evolving in 2021. We thank our members and partners for their valuable contributions in documenting this persistent impact, and for their continued hard work and resilience in confronting the challenges identified.

In 2021 the Platform embarked on two new partnerships through which the work of CSPPS has been supported. CSPPS embarked on a partnership with GIZ with whom an operating grant agreement was signed. Next to this CSPPS also joined the Just Future Alliance. In this strategic partnership, supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CSPPS will act as networking partner for the next 5 years.

Activities as reported on in the Annual Report 2021 clearly point at the importance of collaborative efforts towards the realisation of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. It is with this in mind that the Platform remains committed to our core mission to strengthen the voice and agency of civil society in peacebuilding and statebuilding processes, and to work in polyilateral partnerships towards crisis prevention and truly sustainable peace and development across the globe.

We express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the support received, and for the continued collaboration with all CSPPS partners in the context of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) and beyond.

On behalf of the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding,



Peter van Sluijs

Coordinator CSPPS and
Member of the CSPPS Executive Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2021 was a pivotal and unprecedented year for CSPPS. Not only did it mark the end of the 3-year long operational grant kindly provided by EU DEVCO, but the emergence of the global COVID-19 pandemic forced the Platform's work almost entirely online, and saw the emergence of new and exacerbated inequalities, as well as increased threats to peace and security.

This Annual Report presents the activities of the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) as executed in 2021. A year in which the further evolving pandemic continued to pose challenges to our work as a Platform. After issuing a first report in 2020 on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic "Fighting COVID-19, Building Peace – What Local Peacebuilders say about COVID-19, Civic Space, Fragility and Drivers of Conflict", we witnessed that the work of local peacebuilders remained sharply impacted in 2021.

Based on this observation, the CSPPS Secretariat reached out to our membership to consult them on the witnessed and felt impact of the pandemic – and related government restrictions – on their work. The feedback received from our members was compiled into a final report, titled "**Persistent Impact: An Urgent Call for a Conflict-Sensitive Approach to the COVID-19 Pandemic**". This report showcases findings and draws recommendations around four main and recurrent themes arising from the survey, namely changes in civic space, good governance in crises, exacerbated impacts on vulnerable communities, and progress made towards resilience recovery.

In order to amplify the voice and agency of civil society, the Platform spearheaded, co-hosted, and participated in key sessions, roundtable meetings, and side-event debates in the context of the FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum, the

Rome SDG16 Conference, the Paris Peace Forum, the SIPRI Forum on Peace and Development, and many other crucial fora within the field of peacebuilding.

Concerns around the prioritisation to ensure the meaningful inclusion of all stakeholders – particularly civil society – in decision-making processes as being essential to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda were also shared in a letter sent to the President of the United Nations General Assembly. This process was spearheaded by CSPPS in tandem with partner organisations within the Global SDG16+ Coalition. Through various speaking engagements, we have underlined the importance for amplified commitments and true progress on the aspirations of SDG16 and related goals. Our recommendations were tailored around the observed context of 2021, with the evolving pandemic and its various direct and indirect impacts on the realisation of peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

In the latter half of 2021, we were cautiously optimistic about a gradual reduced impact of the pandemic and the opportunities this reduction could provide for the Platform to accelerate its work. However, the global events which occurred in early 2022 have tilted this strategic outlook. While writing this report, the CSPPS membership has already come together to take stock of and discuss on the potential impact of recent tectonic geopolitical developments. As a result, CSPPS has issued its reflections on these developments as our members see them impacting on the domains of peacebuilding and conflict prevention in the 2022 Berlin Statement.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASG	-	Assistant Secretary-General
CAR	-	Central African Republic
CDA	-	Collaborative Learning Projects
Cercle.Dev	-	Cercle de Réflexions et d'actions pour un Développement local innovant
CG	-	CSPPS Core Group
CSP	-	Conducive Space for Peace
CSW	-	Commission on the Status of Women
Cordaid	-	Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Assistance
CS	-	Civil Society
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
CSPPS	-	Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
CT	-	(CSPPS) Country Team
DAC	-	Development Assistance Committee
DDR	-	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DEVCO	-	The European Commission's DG International Cooperation & Development
DRC	-	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	-	(CSPPS) Executive Committee
EU	-	European Union
FCAS	-	Fragile and Conflict-Affected States
FOCUS	-	FOCUS Principles : Country led pathways out of fragility
FPO	-	(CSPPS) Focal Point Organisation
FES	-	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FriEnt	-	The Working Group on Peace and Development
(S)GBV	-	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
GIZ	-	German Agency for International Cooperation
GPPAC	-	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
g7+	-	Governments from fragile and conflict-affected countries
HLPF	-	High-Level Political Forum
ICAN	-	International Civil Society Action Network
ICP	-	Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding
IDPS	-	International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
INCAF	-	OECD International Network on Conflict and Fragility
INGO	-	International Non-Governmental Organisation
JF	-	Just Future
KPSRL	-	Knowledge Platform Security & Law
LPI	-	Life & Peace Institute
MFA	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ND	-	New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States
NGO	-	Non-Government Organisation

ODDI	-	Organisation pour le Développement Durable et Intégrée de la Guinée
OECD	-	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	-	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PBF	-	FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum
PSG	-	Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
PSRP	-	Political Settlements Research Programme
PVE	-	Prevention of Violent Extremism
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
SDG16+	-	Sustainable Development Goal 16+
SIPRI	-	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SFCG	-	Search for Common Ground
TAP	-	Transparency, Accountability and Participation Network
TWM	-	Tamazight Women's Movement
TRUST	-	TRUST Principles : Commitment for results
UN	-	United Nations
UNDESA-		United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDESA/DSDG-		UNDESA/Division for Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	-	United Nations General Assembly
UNITAR-		United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNOY	-	United Network of Young Peacebuilders
UNSC	-	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR1325	-	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
VIVA	-	Voices In the Vision for Africa
VNR	-	Voluntary National Review
WASH	-	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFUNA-		World Federation of United Nations Associations
YPS	-	Youth, Peace and Security
YWBOD-		Youth Without Borders Organisation for Development

About CSPPS

WHO WE ARE

- **OUR IDENTITY:** The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) is a member-led international network composed of civil society actors, practitioners, experts and academics from the Global South and Global North who work together on conflict and crisis prevention, peacebuilding and statebuilding in over 27 fragile and conflict-affected States (FCAS).
- **OUR VISION:** At CSPPS, we strive for international collaboration that brings sustainable peace and inclusive development for all.

WHAT WE DO

- **OUR MISSION:** Our mission is to strengthen the voice and capacity of society to effectively engage in, and influence, peacebuilding and statebuilding as a critical contribution to crisis prevention and sustainable peace and development for all.
- **OUR THEORY OF CHANGE:** If we shape and influence global and national structures and processes to address sources of destructive conflict and to build resilience, then countries and their citizens will be less likely to resort to violent conflict because they will have means to manage their grievances and build the quality of their lives.

▪ **OUR OBJECTIVES:**

- Strengthening and broadening civil society engagement and inclusion in peacebuilding, statebuilding and crisis prevention.
- Influencing conflict prevention, peacebuilding, statebuilding and development policies at all levels.
- Shaping and infusing the IDPS, the SDGs and humanitarian processes with peacebuilding values.

OUR STRATEGY

- **NETWORK:** Direct engagement, monitoring and advocacy towards New Deal implementation and policy in line with the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, FOCUS and TRUST principles. Enlargement of the CSPPS Network by engaging potential new civil society partners and provision of support to establish vibrant civil society focal points and country teams in g7+ countries.
- **AMPLIFY:** Consolidation and strengthening of civil society coalitions through on-going capacity strengthening and technical support to achieve this. Funding activities and projects that meet the critical needs of the Platform's diverse and vibrant constituency and ensuring civil society engagement at all levels of the IDPS process and the 2030 Agenda.
- **LOBBY:** Continued advocacy at the global IDPS level for the respect and acknowledgement of peacebuilding values and principles, notably inclusive processes at all levels. Focus on addressing the root drivers of conflict, fragility, and resilience in the development of fragility assessments and indicators, and in the inclusive and integrated design and implementation of New Deal Compacts.

WHY WE STAND OUT

- **A FOCUS ON CIVIL SOCIETY:** Over the last few years, peacebuilding and statebuilding initiatives and programmes have increasingly given support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), thus echoing the growing importance of these groups in development cooperation, as well as recognising their role in both the domestic and international arenas. This is a trend particularly present in societies transitioning from warring to peaceful, just and inclusive societies which we fully support and of which we are a part.
- **LINKING THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH:** CSPPS is a global network of civil society organisations, as well as individual practitioners, experts and academics from both the Global South and the Global North. We strive to foster ongoing dialogue, joint learning and cross-fertilisation between the two spheres on emerging trends and key policy issues.
- **PART OF THE UNIQUE IDPS STRUCTURE:** CSPPS is part of a larger architecture called [the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding \(IDPS\)](#). What is unique about the International Dialogue in today's peacebuilding environment is its tripartite structure which gathers around the table government representatives from fragile states, international donors and civil society. The International Dialogue provides a formalised space within which civil society can voice its concerns on crucial aspects and topical issues of the peacebuilding agenda.
- **TAKING ACTION ON SDG16+ WORKING WITH NEW DEAL PRINCIPLES:** CSPPS tackles the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the prism of SDG16+](#). Specifically, on grounding the SDG16+ into local context through meaningful consultations with civil society and authorities to determine priority areas for action, and localising SDG16+ with governments to catalyse more inclusive, national development processes and programming aligned with SDG16+ targets and enable continuous multi-stakeholder dialogues.

The [New Deal principles](#) (Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, FOCUS and TRUST) guide the actions of CSPPS members on SDG16+. It is worth noting that a number of European Ministries of Foreign Affairs have referred to the New Deal principles in their guiding national policy documents (e.g. France) or have incorporated the principles into their international development aid policy approaches (e.g. Germany and Switzerland).

HOW THE PLATFORM WORKS

WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS – or “the Platform”) coordinates and supports civil society participation in the **International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS)**. The IDPS is an inclusive partnership that facilitates joint learning, action and mutual accountability for inclusive and effective peacebuilding between donors, governments from fragile and conflict-affected countries (g7+), and civil society (CSPPS). The International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) is a network of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members and key multilateral agencies working in fragile and conflict-affected situations. The g7+ is a voluntary association of countries that are, or have been, affected by conflict and are now transitioning to the next stage of development.

This inclusive tripartite partnership brokered the **New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States**. The New Deal (ND) aims to end piecemeal solutions by promoting a comprehensive framework for coherent action to help countries transition out of fragility and conflict. At the heart of the New Deal lie the New Deal principles (PSG, FOCUS and TRUST), which guide the actions of the three IDPS constituencies to tackle the challenges and deliver on the goals related to SDG16+.

In 2019, the IDPS mandate was translated into a revised and recalibrated strategy: **the IDPS 2019-21 Peace Vision**. CSPPS has actively contributed to the finalisation of this IDPS Peace Vision, which articulates how the partnership and its constituencies will strengthen collective action on international, regional and local peacebuilding.

INTERNAL STRUCTURE

At its core, our network hosts coalitions of CSOs within g7+ countries and beyond that are impacted by manifested fragility, conflict and violence. At the country-level, these coalitions are coordinated by a Focal Point Organisation (FPO). As part of CSPPS, FPOs convene local civil society coalitions into CSPPS Country Teams (CTs), and thereby provide analysis, conduct advocacy work, coordinate activities (e.g. capacity building, awareness raising and media outreach) in their home countries, and help civil society actors participate in meetings with both governmental as well as donor stakeholders. The Core Group (CG) is the main membership forum within the CSPPS where engagement and leadership in peacebuilding processes are discussed and decided. The CG is made up of designated representatives from FPOs, CSPPS members and international experts. Functioning as a subset of the membership, the elected Executive Committee (EC), among other responsibilities, assists the Secretariat in day-to-day decision-making and provides guidance and advice on the Platform’s issues and priorities, as well as reviews the use of the CSPPS budget.

The **Secretariat** facilitates the functioning of the Core Group and the Executive Committee and the participation of civil society participation in IDPS events. It furthermore generates and disseminates information about our members’ activities.

Together, the Core Group, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat work to amplify the voice of civil society (CS), to strengthen the network of CS working on peacebuilding, and to ensure that CSOs are included and participate as principal agents of change – rather than merely as recipients or evaluators – within the IDPS and related peacebuilding policy-making arenas. Our goal is to ensure that civil society is broadly and meaningfully represented in nationally owned processes.

CSPPS IN THE WORLD IN 2021

By the end of 2021, CSPPS remained present in 19 out of 20 g7+ countries, either in the form of Country Teams, Focal Point Organisations, or contact persons. These countries are Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, and Yemen.

In addition, CSPPS extended its presence to 10 non-g7+ countries, as it welcomed its first member in Niger and Rwanda.

Finally, the Platform comprises INGO members based in nine Northern countries, namely Australia (Peacifica), Belgium (SFCG), Denmark (RIKO, Conductive Space for Peace), Germany (FriEnt and World Vision Intl), the United Kingdom (Integrity Action, Conciliation Resources, Saferworld, International Alert), the United States (Alliance for Peacebuilding, CDA, International Budget Partnership, SFCG, Interpeace), Switzerland (Swisspeace), the Netherlands (Cordaid, GPPAC, Oxfam Novib, UNOY, SEMA, and Mercy Corps Netherlands), and its new member in Ireland (Christian Aid). The entire CSPPS membership to date has over 800 civil society organisations within its wider network.

19

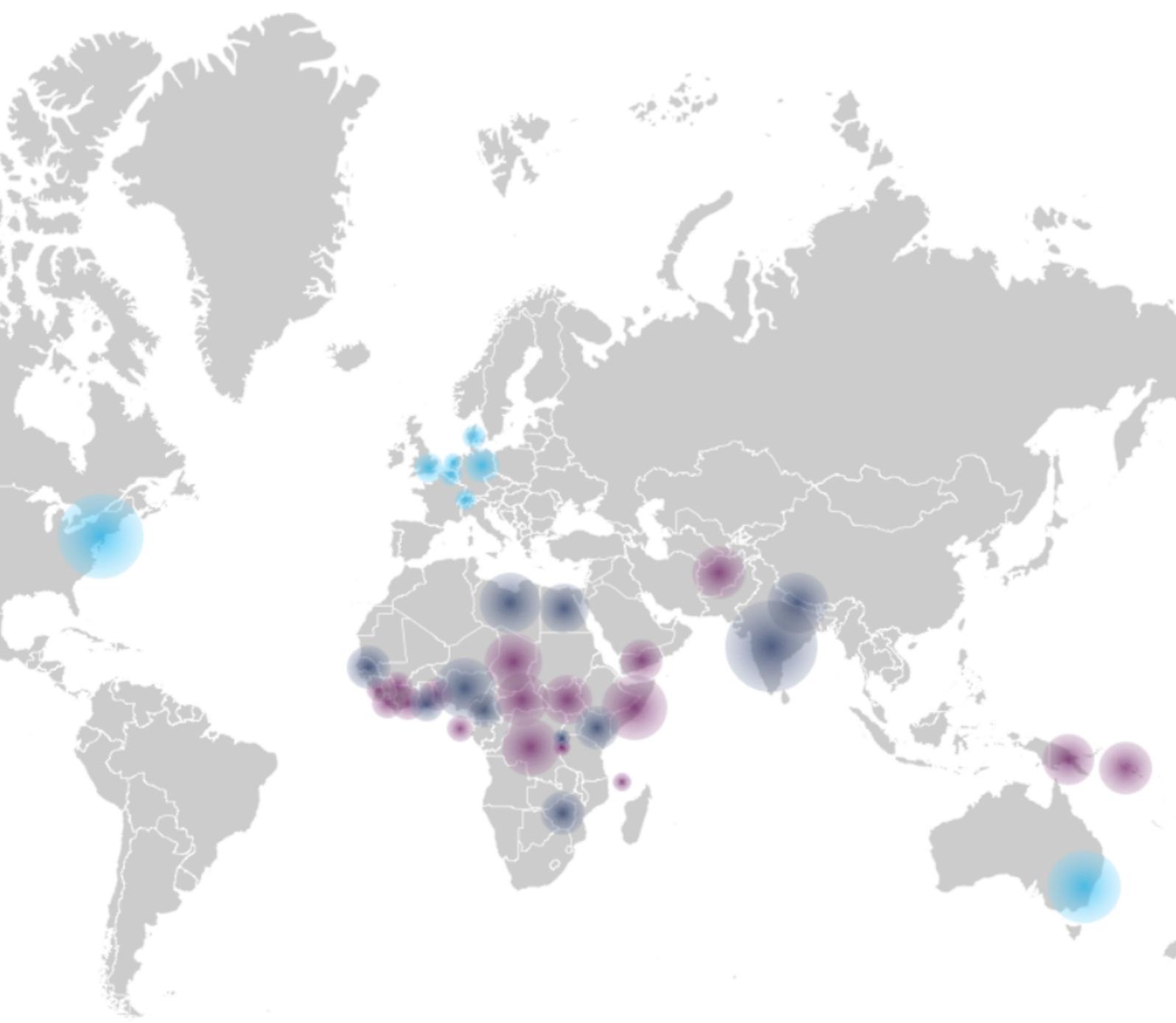
g7+ CSO
Country
Teams

10

Non-g7+ CSO
Country Teams
and Individual
Contacts

9

22 INGO
members
based in 9
countries



INTRODUCTION

In 2021, CSPPS has benefitted from the kind support of GIZ. Next to this the Platform also continued its role as a networking partner in context of the Just Future Consortium. These grants have enabled the Platform to continue to both broaden and deepen its global presence, pursuing greater inclusiveness and scale to achieve the Platform's goals. This report encompasses some of the key activities and highlights across CSPPS in 2021, as well as a look forward to its work in 2022.

The past year has seen a shift in global attention away from COVID-19, yet – as will be showcased in this report – the persistent impacts of the pandemic have continued to affect the work of its membership and wider civil society. CSPPS spoke to this during many of its lobby and advocacy activities throughout 2021, as it continued to push for a better integrated, and more conflict-sensitive response to the pandemic that addresses the worrying trends of shrinking civic space, rises in gender-based violence, lack of access to water, sanitation, and health (WASH) facilities, and combatting the spread of misinformation, to name a few.

The donor support provided has enabled CSPPS to sustain and expand upon its work, ensuring that civil society contributes meaningfully to relevant national and international peacebuilding and statebuilding policy processes, to partner with the fellow constituency partners of the IDPS and wider stakeholders to ensure the perspectives of civil society infuse global policy processes around SDG16 and the 2030 Agenda more broadly. CSPPS extends its gratitude to both GIZ and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for supporting the Platform in doing so.

We hope you enjoy reading!

NETWORK

Coordination of Concerted Civil Society Action in the Context of the IDPS and related Policy Domains

Over the course of 2021, CSPPS has continued its work to fulfil the Platform's Network Objective. At the heart of CSPPS' mandate is the aim to foster a broad and deep network of civil society representatives from around the world, and to connect these with relevant stakeholders (governments, policymakers, academia, among others) on the global level - all with a distinct focus of supporting local civil society and local peacebuilders in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

These activities are linked by our commitment to strengthen civil society at the national and international levels in two ways. Firstly, by enhancing in-country capacity and coordination through our Focal Points and Country Teams. Secondly, by jointly advocating for an inclusive, whole-of-society approach to peacebuilding in global processes, such as the IDPS and the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

Among our main activities under this branch of our work, we have organised and coordinated a number of meetings designed to create and foster linkages between all actors in the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. We have supported several of our members to participate in international trainings and debates, and we have served as a mechanism for the exchange of expertise and best practices among civil society activists from different countries who would otherwise operate in parallel rather than in concert.

In addition, we have extended the presence of our Platform to several new countries in 2021, namely Ireland, Niger, and Rwanda.

Networking in 2021

We are a proud member-led South-North non-governmental coalition of peacebuilding organisations. Our Platform comprises representatives from around the globe, and engages with grassroots civil society organisations affected by manifestations of fragility, conflict, and violence, and 8 international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) based in the global North. As a first step towards developing and strengthening the voice and capacity of our local partners, the Platform's key focus is to invest in further consolidating and expanding its membership.

While 2021 represented a global shift in attention away from the COVID-19 pandemic, with many countries lifting their border restrictions and ending lockdowns, many of the exacerbated challenges that arose during the pandemic continued to be experienced and observed by our civil society partners across the globe. A key pillar of our work in 2021 focused on fostering linkages between our vast civil society, governmental, and multilateral network, in order to share and support each other's experiences and efforts to address some of these challenges, and on peace and conflict prevention efforts more broadly.

The Just Future Programme

In January 2021, Cordaid, in partnership with other Just Future Consortium partners, began the implementation of their five-year strategic partnership, selected and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the “**Power of Voices**” framework. This programme focuses on security, justice and inclusive politics in decision-making processes, through coordinated lobbying, advocacy and support networks for civil society organisations in **Afghanistan, Burundi, DRC, South Sudan, Niger and Mali**. Next to this the strategic partners of Just Future Alliance and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs aim to use and improve collaboration and development policies between civil society and (Dutch) government representatives at both MFA and embassy level. You can read more about the Just Future Alliance [here](#).

In the context of the Just Future Alliance CSPPS, as its networking partner, has taken the initiative to host **monthly Just Future Networking Meetings** to bring together representatives from across the JF Consortium to discuss innovative information-sharing approaches, exchange on key topics, and engage in motivational storytelling. In 2021, CSPPS hosted nine Just Future Networking Meetings, featuring presentations from various consortium partners, Ministry staff, and research partners.

Meetings featured presentations from SIPRI, the EVE Organization for Women Development – South Sudan, the African Security Sector Network, Search for Common Ground, and Cordaid, where topics such as the Sahel crisis, the Youth, Peace, and Security agenda, and developments in Afghanistan were brought to the fore and discussed in rich networking opportunities.

Engagements in the IDPS Context

Constituency Meetings

While Covid restrictions were still weakening IDPS constituencies’ (CSPPS, g7+ and INCAF representatives) potential to meet, momentum around the International Dialogue was revived. The foreseen **relocation of the IDPS Secretariat** from the OECD to UNDP in New York contributed to this revival. The Platform has reached out several times to the Co-Chairs requesting a greater visibility and response to international developments, and also requested a restart of constituency meetings to renew traction and engagement of the IDPS in joint activities. A first meeting subsequently was held in early 2022. Virtual meetings are now followed-up by an in-person meeting that will take place in September 2022 in order to discuss and decide on the **workplan for the IDPS** moving forward.

In parallel, CSPPS engaged in discussions with Canada as the Co-Chair of the IDPS, and – to a lesser extent – with g7+ on issues related to the IDPS partnership. This included, for instance, the identification of opportunities for strategic positioning of the IDPS partnership in the SDG16+ domain and on issues related to the impacts of COVID-19.

Re-establishment of CSPPS Working Groups (May 2021)

Amidst the 2019 CSPPS Conference in Addis Ababa, CSPPS members called for renewed action on the previously active Working Groups. These working groups were tasked in prior years with collecting, discussing, and analysing evidence on progress made on various processes in the domain of peacebuilding and statebuilding, linked to the **New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States** and the thereafter agreed **IDPS Peace Vision**.

In May 2021, two Working Groups were re-established. They focused on “**National Cohesion**”, and “**Gender Equality and Women, Peace & Security**”. Both aimed at developing a common understanding on how the Platform members see the implementation of the IDPS Peace Vision, and on which aspects the Platform’s contribution has been particularly relevant. These groups were also designed for CSPPS to identify and capture common understandings, diverging opinions, and preliminary recommendations on these thematic priorities among its members coming from different settings for the Platform’s positioning on these topics for future civil society action.

The overarching objective was to contribute to a strengthened, diversified, and solidified “**common voice**” of the CSPPS membership on issues related to conflict and fragility, to ensure trusted and continuous engagement in dialogue processes with all relevant stakeholders to prevent conflict and sustain peace. Eventually, the harvested learnings are to infuse the next iteration of an IDPS strategic vision document with inputs from the civil society constituency.

Both working groups, over the course of their meetings in 2021, have documented their consultations and recommendations for future use.

2021 FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum (April-May 2021)

The FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum (PBF) 2021, titled “**Translate - Relate - Act: Forging Partnerships for Sustainable Peace**” was held on 27–29 April 2021, with high-level panels on the future of partnership and peacebuilding on 5–6 May 2021. The event was hosted by the FriEnt members involving national and international partner organisations. **CSPPS hosted two sessions** on April 28 and 29.

In early May, CSPPS members attended the second part of the FriEnt PBF conference, including a session on “Co-Creative

Transformation – Mobilizing Ambitious Actions to Build Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies” in which Olla Al Sakkaf (YWBOD, CSPPS member in Yemen) participated as speaker.

This Forum provided a space to reflect on the future of peacebuilding based on current global trends, while highlighting new ways of bringing partnerships into action.

Session “Influencing Local Peacebuilding Politics through Polyilateral Political Dialogues – The Case of Sierra Leone”

The first FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum session organised by CSPPS was facilitated by Charlotte de Harder and had both Karina Gould and Francis Mustapha Kai-Kai, IDPS co-chairs in attendance next to Habib Mayar from g7+ and Valnora Edwin and Anne Kristine Raunkiær-Jensen from CSPPS. [This session](#) focused on how CSPPS has intensified their efforts in improving state-citizen relations in response to COVID-19 within the framework of the IDPS, and explored how **polyilateral partnerships** can best be structured to ensure an **inclusive and resilient local peacebuilding response to COVID-19**.

Speakers

		
<p>Anne-Kristine Raunkiær-Jensen Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS)</p>	<p>Francis Mustapha Kai-Kai Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Sierra Leone, co-Chair of the International Dialogue, and Chair of the g7+ group of fragile states</p>	<p>Habib Ur Rehman Mayar g7+ Secretariat</p>
<p>read more ></p>	<p>read more ></p>	<p>read more ></p>
		
<p>Karina Gould Minister of International Development, Canada co-Chair of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding</p>	<p>Valnora Edwin CSPPS Country Team Sierra Leone and Sierra Leone War Trust for Children</p>	
<p>read more ></p>	<p>read more ></p>	

Session “Channeling Local Realities – Civil Society and Power Structures in Syria, Yemen and Libya”

The second session organised by CSPPS was facilitated by Peter van Sluijs and co-organised with the Political Settlements Research Programme (PSRP) and the COVID Collective. Key take-aways from this session included positive and negative impacts of COVID-19 on the complex realities of civil society organisations operating during the pandemic, the **importance of trust** in CSO and governmental authorities, and potential **gaps in funding priorities**. [The session](#) featured researchers from the PSRP-team as well as Zorgh Madi from TWM/Libya and Maged Sultan from YWBOD/Yemen.

International Day of Peace: “Sustainable Peace Treaties Initiative” (Sept 2021)

Each year on the **21st of September**, the International Day of Peace is observed around the world, declared by the UN General Assembly as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace and commitments to observe 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire. To commemorate the occasion, CSPPS organised a special meeting of its membership, which typically meets on a bi-monthly basis to receive updates on the workings of the Platform and to provide members with an opportunity to share their upcoming plans and priorities.

This **special session of the CSPPS Core Group** was co-organised with and hosted by the [Institute for Integrated Transitions](#) (IFIT), a non-profit organisation supporting fragile and conflict-affected states to achieve more sustainable transitions out of war, crisis or

authoritarianism. In the meeting, IFIT presented their **Peace Treaty Initiative**, a new global initiative which has the aim of developing an international law framework for conducting peace negotiations, filling an existing gap IFIT identified in the current law governing war. During the meeting, CSPPS Core Group members were asked to reflect on the content of the draft Treaty, providing their feedback on the draft as it stands and their own insights from their experiences working on conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This feedback will be used by IFIT in the re-drafting process of the Treaty, after which CSPPS will be further consulted and informed as the final draft of the text is developed.

This session enabled the wider CSPPS membership to **voice their concerns and reflections** in order to give shape to the design of this international legislative framework.

New Members – Welcome !

In 2021, we expanded our network with new members joining the Platform! We would like to share a warm welcome to:

Christian Aid – Ireland

Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peace building (ICP) – Rwanda

Cercle de Réflexions et d’actions pour un Développement local innovant (Cercle.Dev) – Niger

Voices In the Vision for Africa (VIVA) – Zimbabwe

Justice Call - Egypt



Close Up: CSPPS Networking in 2021 – Some Main Takeaways

- CSPPS ensured regular meetings and interactions between our Core Group members through meetings, cross-border collaboration, and workshops regarding our involvement in international partnerships such as the TAP Network and Global SDG16+ Coalition.
- Throughout 2021, the CSPPS Coordinator continued to function as the Co-chair of the TAP Steering Committee. TAP is a broad international coalition of civil society organisations working together to advance SDG16 and to enhance accountability for the 2030 Agenda. In joining the TAP Network Steering Committee, CSPPS aims to support efforts to bring about greater interaction between individual TAP Network members and proactively seek new strategic coalitions to be built at the regional and international levels, in order to enhance policy influencing impact and to catalyse new innovative programming ideas.
- In 2021 CSPPS continued its close collaboration with other Steering Committee members of the Global SDG16+ Coalition. The Coalition brings together major networks, initiatives and organisations active in the SDG16+ domain.
- Meetings of the Coalition and its Steering Committee are organised to identify and plan for joint advocacy and action at both the national and the international levels.



AMPLIFY

Amplifying the voice of civil society in fragile and conflict-affected contexts to the global level

In 2021, CSPPS's efforts to "amplify" the voice of civil society have centred around a series of advocacy efforts, including the participation of our members in a series of high-level international conferences and events, such as the 2021 edition of the Paris Peace Forum and the FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum. This, in combination with the publication of the second CSPPS COVID-19 report, served to raise civil society voices to the global community, putting their experiences and concerns front and centre.

2021 Voices of SDG16+ Campaign (May-July 2021)

In May 2021, the 3rd edition of the "[Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action](#)" video campaign was launched by CSPPS, together with our partners GPPAC, TAP Network, Peace Direct, World Vision, Namati, and the Life & Peace Institute. Individuals and civil society organisations from around the world were invited to submit short videos telling their "stories" of best practices and extraordinary efforts undertaken towards SDG16+ at the national and local levels, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis.

After reviewing all the video submissions, CSPPS and co-organising partners selected four finalists to present their work in a **side-event during the 2021 High-level Political Forum (HLPF)** in New York on 13 July 2021.

The side-event, titled "**Resilient Recovery through Local Action on SDG16+**" showcased the finalists' stellar contributions as civil society, and provided an opportunity to engage with the community of local voices of SDG16+ for its third edition. The compilation video for this event is available [here](#).

On basis of the first 3 completed editions of the Voices of SDG16+ campaign, a "[Voices of SDG16+ Alumni Booklet](#)" was produced and launched at the beginning of 2022. This booklet features the work of all the finalists showcased, illustrating their work in manifesting local action on SDG16+ and explaining how COVID-19 has impacted the efforts of their organisations around the world, and how they have worked to respond to the challenges and obstacles presented by the ongoing crisis.



Save The Date

HLPF side event for the 2021 Voices of SDG16+:
Stories for Global Action video campaign

TUESDAY JULY 13 1:30PM - 3:00PM
CEST / 7:30AM - 9:00AM EDT

In the context of the 2021 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, this third edition of the Voices of SDG16+ : Stories for Global Action video campaign will feature local civil society voices from around the world to showcase how their work on SDG16+ is contributing to resilient recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to showcasing stellar contributions from civil society, this virtual side-event during HLPF 2021 will also provide an opportunity to engage with the community of local voices of SDG16+. The Voices of SDG16+, started in 2019, provides a unique and dynamic opportunity to call for accelerated action and increased awareness on the work of local civil society partners in this domain. Featured videos will exemplify how the global goal towards more peaceful, just and inclusive societies is being implemented and is invaluable in positively impacting people's lives – despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More information can be found [here](#)

#VOICESOFSDG16+
#STORIES4GLOBALACTION
#ACTONSDG16



Report on Violent Extremism (July 2021)

Through consultations with key CSPPS members and partners, the report [“Safeguarding cohesion and dialogue : Beyond A Standard Prevention Narrative”](#), written by Adeline du Crest, aims to establish best practices for state and non-state actors alike on how to effectively **respond to violent extremism and radicalisation**.

The report catalogues and highlights civil society’s valuable contributions to the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) to solidify its place within the international community on this topic. In addition to recognising the value of PVE as opposed to overly securitised response measures, the report proposes to move beyond this narrative and **evaluate needs** before societal actors are further radicalised, become violent, and engage in acts of extremism. This approach is also centred on the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working to **foster dialogue and community building**, who therefore play a key part in prevention. CSPPS thus sees a clear link between PVE and the Platform’s mission to amplify the voices of local civil society, demonstrating the importance of developing knowledge on the topic.

Persistent Impact: An Urgent Call for a Conflict-Sensitive Approach to the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sept 2021)

Throughout the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, CSPPS continued to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 on peace, fragility, and conflict. While doing so, it became apparent that while the initial shock of the pandemic had begun to subside, with many countries ending their lockdown restrictive measures and opening their borders once more to international travel, civil society continued to report new and exacerbated challenges brought to the fore.

CSPPS thus shared a second survey among its global membership of civil society organisations working on peace and conflict prevention, to document and collate the ways in which their work continues to be impacted by the multifaceted impacts of the pandemic.

The feedback received from our members was compiled into a final report, titled [“Persistent Impact: An Urgent Call for a Conflict-Sensitive Approach to the COVID-19 Pandemic”](#). This report showcases findings and draws recommendations around four main and recurrent themes arising from the survey, namely changes in **civic space, good governance in crises, exacerbated impacts on vulnerable communities**, and **progress made towards resilience recovery**.

Overall, the report highlights the ways in which the work of civil society continues to be sharply impacted by COVID-19. It ends with a commitment from CSPPS to support our members and their efforts as one of our key objectives in 2021 and beyond, as well as to **monitor the impact of the pandemic on the ground** while simultaneously calling for a more **inclusive, conflict-sensitive response** that focuses on the provision of egalitarian support to local action across the globe in the upcoming years. The recommendations as formulated in this second report grounded our engagement with governments and other international actors, recognising the importance of partnering locally and globally to institute fairer and more amplified efforts, also towards the SDG targets for peace, justice and inclusion.

2021 Paris Peace Forum: “Mind the Gaps” (Nov 2021)

In November 2021, CSPPS was invited to attend the 2021 edition of the Paris Peace Forum. Our 2020 project **“Coordinated Response to Support Local Action during COVID-19”** was selected to be showcased alongside 80 other innovative and ambitious projects working on some of today’s most pressing societal challenges. In our participation, we presented the work implemented by the Platform and its

Country Teams in support of local peacebuilding activities in fragile and conflicted-affected settings to face the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the Forum, in an event held in a hybrid manner both in Paris and online, CSPPS was represented by Ms Fidèle Djebba, President of the Association Rayons de Soleil and then Country Focal Point of CSPPS in Cameroon, in a session entitled “**Projects of hope: What expanding civic space looks like in practice**”. During this roundtable debate, civil society representatives shared the practical efforts that have been implemented in their contexts to deal with the shrinkage of civic space caused by the COVID-19. In the context of Cameroon, Ms Djebba emphasised the **disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on women and young girls**, and claimed that the restrictive measures have had a more significant negative impact on civil society than the pandemic itself. Ms Djebba called for **more inclusive collaboration** and instated on the need to build the capacity of civil society organisation members - particularly of women and girls - and to provide them with the necessary tools and instruments for their effective participation.



Understanding the Conflict-Climate Nexus - Avans University Research Trajectory (Aug-Nov 2021)

The **conflict-climate nexus** is quickly emerging as one of the most urgent and still to be understood themes in the field of peace and conflict prevention. **Avans University**, based in Tilburg, The Netherlands, chose to explore this

theme in their university module “**Systems Thinking in Disaster Resilience**”, for which they partnered with CSPPS to conduct their research.

Several groups of students consulted selected CSPPS Country Teams (Cameroon, Afghanistan, and Somalia, with one group studying Nicaragua) to research the nexus between climate change and conflict in their contexts. This research ultimately aimed to highlight and document the ways in which climate change is already impacting the contexts in which our Country Teams operate, and to identify ways our members can best address the challenges. Click [here](#) to watch a sample video of one of the projects, which researched women’s capacities in the climate-conflict nexus in Cameroon.

The Peace Corner Podcast (ongoing)

After the season 5 of the Peace Corner Podcast, under the theme of “**Locals at Forefront of Peace**” ended, CSPPS co-launched the sixth season in December 2021, focusing on “**Gender Dynamics in Peacebuilding**”. The Peace Corner Podcast is an initiative launched in 2018 by CSPPS, GPPAC and UNOY. The podcast’s outreach has grown over the years, with 2,664 listeners in 2019 and 4,059 in 2020. In 2021, the podcast received a total of 2,315 listeners – a figure achieved with new episodes released only in the last two weeks of the year.

This podcast series provides a platform for **peacebuilders** around the world – within and outside CSPPS membership – to **voice their concerns and to highlight the challenges they face in their work**. It also serves to create a space for them to share their **best practices and lessons learned** with any wider civil society members or relevant stakeholders tuning in to the podcast.

The latest season features the stories of peacebuilders around the world, and each of the 13 episodes focuses on a different individual, showcasing their work and stories and putting the spotlight on their efforts to advance peace and security.

The first episode of the sixth season was published in December 2021, where CSPPS trainee Vera Amorim de Araujo spoke with Inas Miloud, indigenous feminist activist and co-founder of the **Tamazight Women's Movement** - an intersectional organisation that works to address gender, youth, and indigenous people's inequalities in Libya. You can listen to this episode, and all episodes later published in this series, [here](#), including 3 other showcased interviews conducted by CSPPS trainees Laura Marcucci, Gabrielle Tristan and Charlotte Kerting.

Local Voices at a Crossroads – article series (ongoing)

In 2021 CSPPS hosted a series of articles in partnership with the **Political Settlements Research Program (PSRP)**, based in Edinburgh. The "[Local Voices at a Crossroads](#)" article series showcases local actors of everyday peace who share their insights into the fragilities and resilience of their societies in the face of conflict. Grassroots societies lie at the crossroads between local realities and national peacebuilding policies and practices. The series thus aims to **accelerate action at the local level by strengthening the voices of civil society at the policy level**. The ten articles issued from this collaboration are available on the CSPPS website:

- [Local Reconciliation Committees in Northern Syria](#), Managing daily conflicts in a country at war (March 2021)
- [Delocalisation and Uprooting](#), The adverse impact of peace in Syria (March 2021)
- [The Politics of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Syria](#), How local civil society inherited the COVID-19 file (March 2021)
- [Political Trust at a Time of Pandemic](#), A long-term repercussion of COVID-19 on durable peace (March 2021)
- [Art as a Tool for Local Peace](#), Reflection of young artists in Syrian opposition-held areas (April 2021)
- [Syrian Youth and the Violence of Exclusion](#), Challenges and opportunities of higher education in opposition-held areas (April 2021)
- [Pens Against Guns](#), The uncertain future of Syrian journalism (May 2021)
- [The Courage to Dare](#): Supporting the empowerment of women and girls on Cameroon (November 2021)
- [Peace is not an add-on; Peace is the way](#): An inclusive and participatory multi-stakeholder approach to building peaceful and resilient communities (December 2021)
- [Restoring a climate of trust between citizens and state officials](#), A Togolese perspective (December 2021)

MEMBER CASE STORY



Safeguarding Civic Space and Addressing Gender-Based (Sexual) Violence in Cameroon at the First ever National Women's Convention for Peace in Cameroon

By Fidèle Djebba (Rayons de Soleil and Coordinator of the Psychosocial Task Force at the Convention) and Esterh Omam (Reach out Cameroon)



Context

The multiple crises in Cameroon such as the Boko Haram insurgency in the North Region, the Influx of refugees from Central African Republic and most recently the Anglophone crisis in the North West and South West Regions have plunged Cameroon into a state of increased violence, injustice and misery. Since then, high levels of social, economic and political insecurity have gained popularity in the nation. Some attempts were made by the government and other stakeholders to ensure the return of peace in the two restive regions to no avail. A case in point is the Major National Dialogue which held in September 2019 and has till not yielded any palpable results. In all these instances, women were not actively represented. Hence the reason why women took on themselves to organise the first ever National Women's Convention for Peace, which was held from 29 to 31 July 2021.

The Convention is an initiative led by some 38 partner associations and NGOs under the facilitation and support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the involvement of the Swiss Embassy, the Goethe Institute, the High Commission of Canada, UN Women and Cameroon's Ministry for Women's Empowerment and the Family. A national planning committee consisting of 38 CSOs working for peace and women's rights in Cameroon was responsible for the organisation of the Convention. In attendance were women peace activists and civil society leaders, survivors of war-related violence and displaced women and girls, female traditional and religious leaders, female politicians, soldiers, businesswomen, grassroots women, and many more. Not only from all parts of society, but importantly the attendees represented all 10 regions in the country.

Testimony

The aim of this Convention was to unite women's voices for peace and seek pathways that could lead to a peaceful resolution of the crises. The main activities to achieve this goal consisted in experience sharing and workshops.

After the opening ceremony on 29 July 2021, several women from the North West, South West and Far North, shared their experiences of the Anglophone Crisis and Boko Haram Insurgency in Cameroon.

Most of their experiences explained instances of violence, injustice, torture, arrest and pain. It is worth noting that although more men have died during the crisis, women remain the highest victims of rape, violence, injustice and pain; and subsequently trauma and depression.

The second day of the Convention was characterised by capacity-building sessions and psychosocial support for participants to visit for reflection, meditation or for counselling and trauma healing. The capacity-building session was split in workshops with different themes.

- 1) **Understanding the role of women in the peace process**, with a cross-analysis of the contribution of women in the Far-North, North-West and South-West regions.
- 2) **The normative framework for the participation of women in the peace processes in Cameroon**, assessing the existing legal frameworks that guarantee women's participation in Cameroon's peace processes and their implementation.
- 3) **Strategic dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution**, evaluating the results of dialogue actions undertaken by Cameroon to put an end to security crises.
- 4) **Conflict-related sexual violence, psychosocial support and trauma healing**, also looking at who, how and when DDR programmes should be directed towards.

In addition to the workshops, the second day saw artistic presentations of poetry, songs and spoken word from youths, promotional videos for the convention, and Ms. Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche's video message to Cameroonian women.

"The victims of conflicts, and particularly women and children, are deeply and lastingly affected.

The issue of mental health must be listed as a priority for government action."

Fidèle Djebba

Women's Peace Declaration

Women at the National Peace Convention urged the government and other stakeholders to take concrete and immediate actions in the following ways :

- End hostilities, immediately and permanently, and thus give meaning to African Union's campaign to "Silence the Guns" in Africa;
- Pursue a continued and inclusive dialogue that addresses core issues around Peace, Solidarity and shared Humanity in Cameroon;
- Ensure the equal and permanent involvement of Women peace mediators and negotiators in peace processes at all levels, while enforcing their protection at all times (according to UN Resolution 1325);
- Create additional and reinforce existing centres for psychosocial support and trauma healing;
- Render the existing DDR centres functional and responsive to the existing conflicts.

"It will only be possible for women peacebuilding networks to continue to take up the peacebuilding space and ensure the peace we seek is attained if increasingly we build synergy amongst these networks and work for the common good."

Esther Omam

Other recommendations were included on:

- Training on peacebuilding and mediation for women in urban and rural areas;
- Women's access to legal services;
- Community sessions and trainings on trauma and mental health, inter-generational dialogues and social cohesion;
- Localisation of normative frameworks;
- Reinforcement of women peacebuilders' and mediators' capacities on adequate data collection and reporting;
- Women and children's medical care.

A year after the first convention was held, the women are meeting again in Maroua in the Far North region to assess the progress made since then. This will be an opportunity for women not only to meet their sisters affected by the Boko Haram conflict, but also to launch the policy document on the role of women in peace and security in Cameroon.

Women pledged their total commitment to work for the return and consolidation of peace within their respective families and communities and encouraged other women, husbands, brothers and sons to join them in this patriotic commitment. The Women National convention, the first of its kind served as an opportunity for women to cry in unison for peace. At the end of the Convention, women left a mandate for peace and the Declaration was handed to the Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family and the Representative of the Head of Government.



Please also read ICAN's report on the First Women's National Peace Convention in Cameroon [here](#).

LOBBY

Lobbying in 2021

Over the course of 2021, we have leveraged every opportunity at our disposal to advocate for more inclusive peacebuilding in line with SDG16+ and the 2030 Agenda. We have engaged in a wide range of international fora and discussions, representing the views of our membership, and enabling the participation of CSO representatives from our network.

Many of the events the Platform engaged in focused on the persistent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ways the international community can and should plan for sustainable recovery considering the ongoing pandemic. Key messaging centred around the urgent call for strengthening commitments, partnerships and accelerated action on SDG16+ as a critical enabler for progress on the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration (May 2021)

In 2019, CSPPS joined hands with the TAP Network, GPPAC, and Namati to produce the **Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+**. This document outlined key messages, recommendations, and a broad call to action around SDG16+, with the aim of **mobilising accelerated action on SDG16 at the 2019 HLPF and SDG Summit**.

Two years later in 2021, the **COVID-19** pandemic showed that many of the issues brought to the fore in the 2019 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+ were still just as relevant as ever, and in some cases, these issues had been exacerbated even further. Globally, not only health was impacted, but also peace, justice and accountability. As a result, CSPPS came together with these same partners to release a [2021 Addendum to the original Rome Civil Society Declaration](#). This served as a firm and urgent reminder for the global community that peaceful, just and

inclusive societies are at the core of not only sustainable development, but also **sustainable recovery**, especially in light of the ongoing pandemic.

This revised Rome Civil Society Declaration was officially launched and shared across CSPPS' extensive member network and beyond. It received **over 200 endorsements** from fellow CS organisations and representatives. In line with our objective to influence policy on fragility, peace, security and sustainable development at all levels to consolidate civil society inclusion in policy dialogues, this Declaration called for inclusive respect and acknowledgement of peacebuilding values and principles as articulated under SDG16+, particularly in the context of the pandemic.

Along the process of drafting the Revised Declaration, we worked closely alongside our wider CSPPS membership network, soliciting their **feedback and opinion** on which points were most crucial to highlight and stress to governments worldwide. This followed our objective **to facilitate participatory processes** which ensure ongoing and meaningful

participation of civil society in assessment, planning, and policy processes.

In the context of **2021 HLPF**, CSPPS hosted a side-event to launch and present the [2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+](#) on 7 July 2021. Spearheaded by Namati, CSPPS, the TAP Network, and GPPAC, the 2021 Addendum to the original Rome Civil Society Declaration was brought to the fore and launched during the side-event: **“A Renewed Call for Strengthening Commitments, Partnerships, and Accelerated Action for SDG16+ - 2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+”**. The side-event featured **presentations from Uganda, India and Libya**, illustrating the relevance and importance of progress on SDG16+ at national, regional and international levels. Initial reflections were provided by a representative from the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, host of the 2019 and 2021 SDG16 Conferences.

CSPPS Involvement in the High-Level Political Forum 2021 (HLPF 2021)

From the start of 2021, CSPPS was actively working in preparation of the [HLPF2021](#) (6-15 July 2021) on "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development".

CSPPS was involved in several **Official-Side Events and activities at 2021 UN HLPF**:

Side-Event “Coming to peace with COVID-19? Implications for peaceful, just and inclusive societies and recommendations for building better forward”

CSPPS, in partnership with FriEnt, FES, Accountability Forum Nepal and CIVICUS, staged on 6 July 2021, an Official Side event in context of the 2021 UN HLPF on the impact of

COVID-19 on civic space: **[“Coming to peace with COVID-19? Implications for peaceful, just and inclusive societies and recommendations for building better forward”](#)**.

During the event, Ms Fidèle Djebba from Association Rayons de Soleil and then CSPPS Country Focal Point in Cameroon spoke on the engendered impact of COVID-19 and the way that government measures against COVID-19 have exacerbated existing vulnerabilities including poverty and food insecurity especially in conflict-affected areas. She pointed out the need for inclusive governance to increase levels of trust and social cohesion. Similarly, Mr. Martin Schuldes from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation highlighted that the key to change is political will as well as the need for more concerted action between actors to reach a more coherent and aligned approach.

The **FriEnt Working Group on Peace and Development** shared a summary report of this joint side-event, summarising the discussion on the necessity for peace and conflict to be addressed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please find the report [here](#).



High-Level Political Forum 2021 Side-Event

Coming to peace with COVID-19?

Tuesday July 6th

Implications for peaceful, just and inclusive societies and recommendations for "building better forward"

13:30-15:00CEST / 7:30-9:00EST via MS Teams
RSVP: info@frient.de

Side-Event “A Renewed Call for Strengthening Commitments, Partnerships, and Accelerated Action for SDG16+ - 2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16”

Already mentioned above, this side-event presented the [2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+](#) on 7 July 2021.

Side-Event “SDG16+ Civil Society Toolkit: a practical resource guide for planning, implementation and accountability to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies”

On 8 July 2021, CSPPS participated in the TAP Network organised official side-event to launch the **“SDG16+ Civil Society Toolkit: a practical resource guide for planning, implementation and accountability to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies”**.

The newly revised Toolkit aimed at helping civil society understand how to reach SDG16+, providing all stakeholders with practical guidance on how to work towards the goal while serving as a platform to learn from each other. During this event, Ms. Liv Torres from Pathfinders pointed out that **civil society plays a crucial role in holding governments accountable, in exchanging information and in building collaboration**. CSPPS Coordinator Peter van Sluijs stressed the urgent need to improve dialogue and strengthen the collaboration between governments and civil society.

The toolkit, featuring a CSPPS case study, is available [here](#) and recordings of the event can be found [here](#).



Side-Event “Mainstreaming SDG16+ in VNR and National Development Planning”

On 8 July 2021, CSPPS was involved in a **Learning Lab Side event-2021 SDGs Learning, Training & Practice**. Co-organised by UNDESA, Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DESA/DSDG) and UNITAR, the side-event

focused on **“Mainstreaming SDG16+ in VNR and National Development Planning”**.

Mr. Musa Ansumana Soko, CSPPS Focal Point of Sierra Leone Country Team and member of CSPPS Executive Committee participated on behalf of CSPPS and spoke about civil society’s involvement in VNR follow-up and review processes in Sierra Leone. Among the recommendations given, Mr. Soko pointed out the need to **unite decision-makers, to share data** on what works and what is still lacking when delivering results in line with SDGs ambition, and to **build a roadmap** to be followed by key partners establishing clear priorities and to agree on a **collaborative pathway to realise progress towards accelerated action**.



Side-Event “Resilient Recovery through Local Action on SDG16+”

Already mentioned above, this side-event showcased the work of the finalists of the 2021 Voices of SDG16+ Video Campaign, on 13 July 2021.

Side-Event “SDG16+: A United Framework to Build Forward Better”

On 14 July 2022, CSPPS co-organised the **“SDG16+: A United Framework to Build Forward Better”** High-level side-event, which welcomed the participation of various eminent speakers including H.E. Mr. Vandi Chidi Minah, Sierra Leone Ambassador to the UN, Ms. Ilze Brand Kehris, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights at OHCHR, H.E. Mr. Bob Rae, Canadian Ambassador to the UN, Gulden Turkoz-Cosslett, ASG, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy at UNDP, and Lysa John, Secretary General at CIVICUS.

This event called for **bolder and accelerated action on SDG16+, galvanised political will, and multi-stakeholder commitments to achieving the targets of SDG16+**. One main takeaway is the need to confront our past in order to build and move forward towards a better future. National narratives should be reconstructed and include everyone’s story, leaving no one behind.



CSPPS Article in DEVEX

DEVEX published an article authored by the members of the CSPPS Secretariat titled: [“An online UN HLPF will not stop SDG16+ from backsliding”](#). It emphasises the need to see inclusivity manifested in reality and not only in our discussions. The article also called for amplified commitments and true progress on the aspirations of SDG16 and related goals.

Letter to the President of the General Assembly on Civil Society Inclusion (Sept 2021)

In September 2021, CSPPS spearheaded in tandem with the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies (UNDP) the drafting of a letter to be sent to the Office of the President of the General Assembly (and copied to the Secretary General's Office) on behalf of a wide subset of national and international CSOs. In the context of the organisation of the **76th session of the UN General Assembly**, this letter called for a **prioritisation of meaningful multi-stakeholder inclusion with open, participative, and transparent modalities of participation** alongside any adherence to

safety restrictions imposed by the pandemic. This was shared widely amongst civil society and was **signed by over 80 organisations**.

In response to this letter, CSPPS received a reply from the President of the General Assembly welcoming our call and expressing his commitment to ensure effective and fruitful engagement with civil society throughout his presidency. Next to this he assures that civil society representatives will be invited to participate in in-person meetings and grounds passes will be reissued from January 2022 onwards.

This activity followed our objective of **influencing policy at all levels to consolidate civil society inclusion in policy dialogues** on fragility, peace, security and sustainable development, as well as ensuring proper follow-up and continuation of dialogue processes in consultation with key CSPPS members and partners.

Global SDG16+ Coalition Workshop (Sept 2021)

CSPPS, as part of its efforts to promote peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, has engaged in the SDG16+ Coalition to promote action towards achieving Agenda 2030 and SDG16+ in particular. On 24 September 2021, during the 2021 UN General Assembly High-Level Week, the SDG16+ Coalition hosted a virtual event titled **“Accelerating Action for SDG16+: Supporting bold and concrete commitments towards Peaceful, Just & Inclusive Societies.”** The event explored ways that the international community can enhance the efforts made by local CSOs to mobilise and support bold and ambitious commitments to SDG16+, by showcasing existing SDG16+ “Action Platforms” and existing partnerships and initiatives to advance SDG16+. You can find a summary of the event [here](#) as well as a link to the recording of the webinar [here](#).

SDG16+ In Action: A Civil Society Workshop for National and Local Leadership (Nov 2021)

On 23 November 2021, CSPPS together with Namati, CIVICUS, GPPAC, and TAP Network co-organised an SDG16+ Civil Society Workshop under the thematic headline "**SDG16+ In Action**". The aim of this workshop was to showcase via a series of lightning pitches, followed by an interactive moderated discussion, how peacebuilders around the world have acted to advance SDG16+ in their respective communities.



Over 100 participants in this workshop were placed into breakout groups, based on their regional expertise, to discuss ways that civil society can enhance their efforts to support bold and ambitious commitments on SDG16+. The interactive style of the event allowed for direct engagement and learning among the participants, and was particularly relevant for representatives from the countries that would go for Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in 2022.

This workshop brought together civil society representatives and other key stakeholders to provide advice and support to selected country-level efforts to effectively participate in and influence peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts.

Civil Society Statement to the Peacebuilding Commission 2021 Annual Session on Financing for Peacebuilding (Nov 2021)

CSPPS, GPPAC, LPI, Conducive Space for Peace, Peace Direct, and other CSOs, actively engaged in discussions ahead of the High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding, and shared a statement to the **Peacebuilding Commission 2021 Annual Session on Financing for Peacebuilding**.

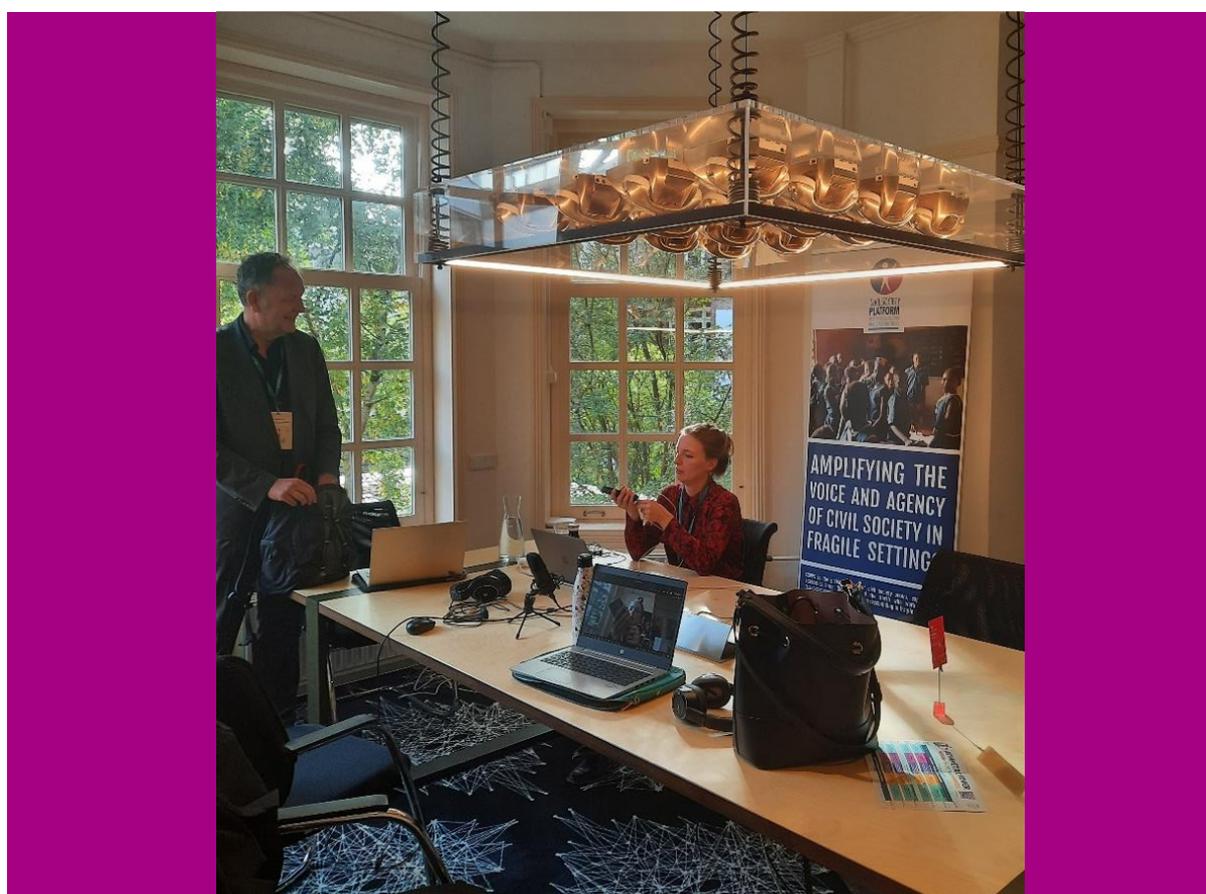
In the statement, the involved CSOs affirmed that they believe there is a strong need to **increase both the quantity of financial contributions to peacebuilding and the quality of the financing provided**. To achieve this, it is deemed essential to enhance local ownership and engage local peacebuilders, including women and young people, as recognised partners and stakeholders during the High-Level Meeting and beyond.



“Building Forward Better by Strengthening Local Resilience”

By Charlotte de Harder (CSPPS Secretariat)

In October 2021, CSPPS hosted a session in partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) at the Annual Conference of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL), under the theme of Asymmetric Power. Titled “Building Forward Better by Strengthening Local Resilience”, CSPPS session showcased local efforts for increased resilience across the Sahel (Niagalé Bagayoko, Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies), India (Rhea Mahanta, Founder and President of The Peacebuilding Project), Libya (Zorgh Madi, Founder of Tamazight Women’s Movement Organization), and Cameroon (Fidèle Djebba, President of Association Rayons de Soleil). These interventions were then followed by reflections from a panel of international representatives, namely Pascal Richard (Localisation Expert at Cordaid), Mariët Schuurman, and Sorcha O’Callaghan (Director of the Humanitarian Policy Group at the Overseas Development Institute). The event kickstarted the Unboxing Localisation learning trajectory, a series of inclusive dialogues with practitioners and experts on the hurdles and challenges of localisation.



Each of these experts and practitioners provided a critical reflection on what their role in the localisation agenda is, and what commitments can and should be made within their sector and their own work to support its realisation. In follow-up to this session, CSPPS has been in discussions with KPSRL and the Dutch MFA to give shape to a continuous follow-up learning trajectory on localisation, designed to ensure the discussions and formulation of concrete commitments and objectives are not left within the walls of the KPSRL Annual Conference. This trajectory will facilitate a platform for civil society representatives to provide direct input and guidance into the realisation of the localisation agenda. You can watch a playback of the session [here](#).

This activity contributed to our objective of influencing policy at all levels to consolidate civil society inclusion in policy dialogues on fragility, peace, security and sustainable development. It did so by providing a platform for peacebuilders in conflict-affected settings to both vocalise their experiences and needs regarding the localisation agenda, as well as to directly engage with policymakers and practitioners operating on the international level. This is in line with our aim of grounding SDG16+ into the local context by organising meaningful consultations with local civil society and authorities to determine priority areas for action and localising SDG16+ with governments, catalysing more inclusive national development processes and programming aligned with SDG16+ targets by enabling continuous multi-stakeholder dialogues.

2021 MAIN OUTREACH EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Launch of the **Just Future programme**, under which CSPPS is organising **monthly Networking Meetings** across the consortium

Start of the **article series** "[Local Voices at a Crossroads](#)", a joint trajectory between Edinburgh University and CSPPS

APRIL

Launch of the **2021 Voices of SD16+ Campaign**

MAY

Organisation of two sessions at the **2021 FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum**

Re-establishment of **CSPPS Working Groups**

JULY

Organisation of **several side-events at the 2021 UN High Level Political Forum**

Launch of the [2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration](#)

Publication of **the TAP Network** [SDG16+ Civil Society Toolkit](#) featuring CSPPS case study on the VNR process

Report on Violent Extremism

AUGUST

Launch of Partnership with Avans University Research Trajectory: **The Conflict Climate-Nexus**

SEPTEMBER

Publication of the **second CSPPS COVID-19 report**, "[Persistent Impact: An Urgent Call for a Conflict-Sensitive Approach to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)"

Letter to the President of the UNGA on Civil Society Inclusion

CSPPS **Core Group consultation session** for the Institute for Integrated Transitions [Peace Treaty Initiative](#)

Global SDG16+ Coalition Workshop

OCTOBER

KPSRL 2021 Annual Conference and launch of the follow-up **Localisation Trajectory**

CSPPS presents their project at the 2021 edition of **the Paris Peace Forum** in-person in Paris

Event "SDG16+ In Action: A Civil Society Workshop for National and Local Leadership"

Civil Society **Statement** to the Peacebuilding Commission 2021 Annual Session on Financing for Peacebuilding

NOVEMBER



2022 AND BEYOND

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK 2022

During the latter half of 2021, we were cautiously optimistic that with the gradual reducing impact of the pandemic the Platform could accelerate its work around in-person meeting. The deceleration of the pandemic gave an impetus to see new ways of pursuing CSPPS efforts to amplify the voice and agency of civil society to effectively influence peacebuilding and statebuilding as a critical contribution to crisis prevention, lasting peace, and sustainable development for all.

While presenting this strategic outlook, the world has seen dramatic geopolitical developments which, coupled with the persistent impact of the pandemic on the functioning and operating capacity of civil society, have presented clear challenges to the work we do as a Platform.

During the first months of 2022, the CSPPS membership has come together to tackle these issues. In the context of the 2022 CSPPS Annual Conference, and after consultation with the entire membership, we issued the CSPPS Berlin Statement.

The Statement shares our reflections on the recent tectonic geopolitical developments in the world, and how they have impacted the work CSPPS members achieve on conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The Berlin Statement builds on another advocacy document issued earlier this year, the 2022 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+. The Declaration includes a set of critical recommendations that we plan to follow-up on in dialogue with our local and international partners for the implementation of SDG16+.

As a global Platform, we are committed to continue our work supporting peacebuilding efforts in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

On behalf of the entire membership, we would like to thank our key partners for supporting the work of CSPPS and for joining forces with us on the global journey towards a more peaceful and resilient future.



Cordaid, as part of its commitment to addressing fragility, hosts the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS). The Secretariat is managed and coordinated by Peter van Sluijs, Senior Strategist at Cordaid. Please find attached relevant contact information for the Secretariat and please do not hesitate to contact us with any question you might have.

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