



Voices of SDG16+  
Stories for Global Action

# Raising Voices for Impactful Change

Alumni Profiles 2019 - 2021



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## **Introduction**

This booklet showcases the work of the finalists showcased during the previous three editions of the [Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action](#) campaign. It includes information on the context in which the campaign was developed and its relevance regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Alumni profiles, the work of the organisation they represent, challenges and achievements in the context of SDG16+.

*On behalf of all supporting organisations, CSPPS wishes to congratulate all finalists for their inspiring interventions during UN HLPF Side events and for their efforts to initiate and support local action on SDG16+ and for their efforts to promote the inclusion of civil society in relevant SDG processes.*

## **What is “Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action”?**

In 2019, a group of organisations<sup>1</sup> joined forces to showcase work done by local civil society actors on SDG16+ through a storytelling initiative. Out of this consortium, the ‘Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action’ campaign was initiated by [International Peace Institute](#), [Saferworld](#), [TAP Network](#), [Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict \(GPPAC\)](#), [Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding \(CSPPS\)](#), [Peace Direct](#), [Article19](#), [World Vision](#), [Namati](#), [Pax Christi International](#) and the [Life & Peace Institute](#). Voices of SDG16+ is a collaborative campaign to bring the work of civil society on SDG16+ to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in New York.

Aside from organizing an event at the HLPF featuring local voices working to advance SDG16+ in their communities, the campaign invites each year individuals and partner organisations to showcase local civil society actors and their work on SDG16+. It gives them the opportunity to submit short videos telling their “stories” of extraordinary efforts being undertaken towards SDG16+ at the national and local levels. It gives voice to the local experiences of local peacebuilders, showcasing their work and engaging in discussions around the documented practices.

## **Context of HLPF and SDG16 Review**

Around the world, the 2030 Agenda has helped catalyze and support a wide range of innovative, grassroots-led work around SDG16+ with a variety of civil society actors. As part of the 2030 Agenda, SDG 16 aims to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for

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<sup>1</sup> CSPPS, NAMATI, IPI, GPPAC, TAP Network, World Vision, PAX Christi International, Saferworld, Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, Article 19.

sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” The term ‘SDG16+’ is increasingly used to describe the inter-connected commitments to peace across the 2030 Agenda, and it offers a comprehensive framework to strengthen preventative action on a range of issues. As a framework, the SDG16+ targets provide a more comprehensive picture of the actions that are needed to realize peace, inclusion and justice for all, especially for those furthest behind. While the actions and commitments of civil society at the national level are often overlooked in global-level discussions, the HLPF provides a unique opportunity to bring civil society from a wide range of contexts together to showcase best practices and innovative initiatives supporting SDG16+ implementation, and a chance to explore opportunities for further civil society collaboration at all levels around SDG16+ going forward.

The course of 2020 and 2021 brought the importance of these efforts into an even sharper focus. The trickle-down effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have not only had devastating impacts on global health, but also on issues related to peace, justice, and accountability, cornerstones of SDG16+. Civil society organisations have played a key role throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in localising SDG16+, through efforts to combat the spread of misinformation, improving public services, and standing up for people’s fundamental rights and freedoms, to name a few - many of which are reflected in the stories collated in this booklet. In recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore, it is crucial that the international community (particularly member states and international agencies) adopts a “people-centred” approach that works in close collaboration with civil society - a call re-emphasised in the [2021 Rome Civil Society Declaration](#). These are all issues tabled on the agenda at last year’s 2021 UN High-Level Political Forum, where a wide array of key stakeholders discussed and analysed progress made towards the realisation of the 2030 Agenda with SDG16’s progress under scrutiny and review.

An agenda that promises to ‘leave no-one behind thus’ needs to be inclusive of all voices, particularly those working at the local and national levels. With growing momentum to mobilize actions and commitments to achieve peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, particularly amongst civil society actors, the HLPF presents to showcase national and local-level work to implement SDG16+ that must be seized.

#### ★ HLPF2019

At the HLPF 2019, themed “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”, SDG16 was reviewed for the first time. In this context, the [Voices of SDG16+ Campaign](#) was launched and representatives from around the world submitted their videos showcasing their efforts on SDG16+. This provided an

opportunity to showcase best practices and insert localised experiences into policy discussions at the HLPF.

#### ★ HLPF2020

In 2020, the world entered the Decade of Action to deliver the Global Goals. This was accompanied by an urgent call for accelerated action in the ten years we have left to transform the world towards sustainable development. Despite the progress made in many places overall, action to meet the Goals is not yet advancing at the required speed or scale. The unfolding COVID-19 pandemic impacts work planned towards more peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, in novel ways as well as exacerbating pre-existing issues. At a global scale, this crisis is testing humanity's resilience to the extreme, exposing and reinforcing long-standing grievances, injustices, inequalities and fragility.

The 2020 campaign was impacted by the pandemic and all campaign events thus took place online. It was held on Wednesday 15 July 2020 and was based on the theme "SDG16+ and Covid-19 - Local Actions for Global Solutions".

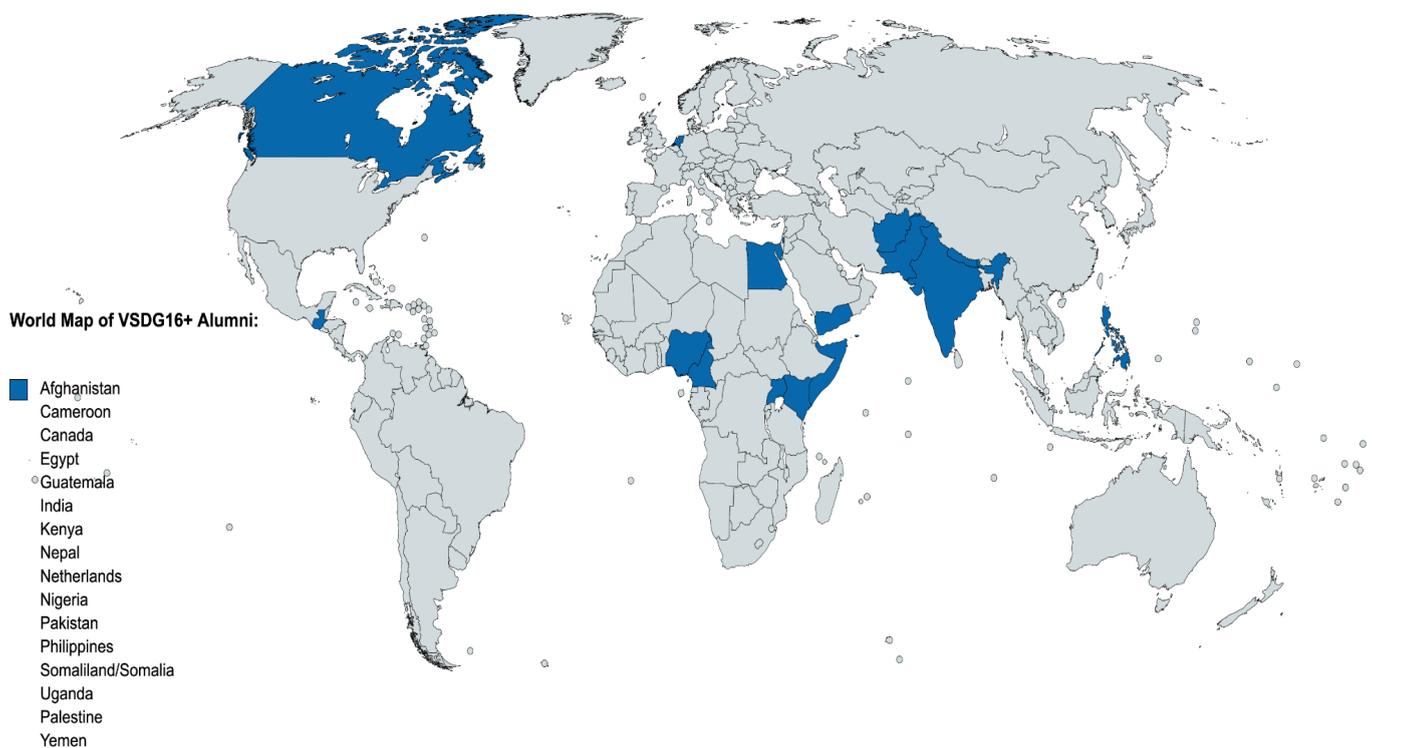
#### ★ HLPF2021

Last year's campaign was placed under the theme "Resilient Recovery Through Local Action on SDG16+" and took place on Tuesday, 13 July 2021.

This online event featured 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. Their stories highlight how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the efforts of activists and organizations around the world, and how they have worked to respond to the challenges and obstacles presented by the ongoing crisis. Showcasing innovative actions and solutions on how to best attain the targets of SDG16 is more relevant than ever, as it will impact the world's overall ability to achieve sustainable development and work towards resilient recovery.

## *Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action - Alumni Network*

Each year, the VSDG16+ Campaign elected the best videos and compiled a list of finalists with whom CSPPS has kept in close touch. Out of this continued effort, a network of alumni has been created and solidified by sustained efforts to share best practices and lessons of their work towards the completion of SDG16+ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The below world map illustrates the countries represented by the finalists in all three combined editions.



## *Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action - Alumni Profiles*

In this compilation of alumni profiles, you can learn more about what prompted the alumni to participate in the Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action and the biggest achievements accomplished through their participation, as well as inspiring lessons and practices learned in the implementation of SDG16+ and the world of peacebuilding.

Country	Organisation	Alumni	Edition	Contact
Afghanistan	<a href="#">Afghans for Progressive Thinking (APT)</a>	<a href="#">Sofia Ramyar</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:sofia.ramyar@apt.org.af">sofia.ramyar@apt.org.af</a>
Canada	<a href="#">The Global Sunrise Project</a>	<a href="#">Kasha Sequoia Slavner</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:theglobalsunriseproject@gmail.com">theglobalsunriseproject@gmail.com</a>
Guatemala	<a href="#">Women's Justice Initiative (WJI)</a>	<a href="#">Kate Flatley</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:kateflatley@womens-justice.org">kateflatley@womens-justice.org</a>
Kenya	<a href="#">Kesho Alliance Organization</a>	<a href="#">Umulkher Harun</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:umulkheirharun@gmail.com">umulkheirharun@gmail.com</a>
Nepal	<a href="#">Nagarik Aawaz (NA)</a>	<a href="#">Chhatra Amatya</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:ganga@nagarikaawaz.org.np">ganga@nagarikaawaz.org.np</a> <a href="mailto:risal8@hotmail.com">risal8@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:hari@nagarikaawaz.org.np">hari@nagarikaawaz.org.np</a>
Nigeria	<a href="#">Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development</a>	<a href="#">Dr Tola Winjobi</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:tolawinjobi58@yahoo.com">tolawinjobi58@yahoo.com</a>
Pakistan and India	Chai Ki Dukaan	<a href="#">Rudrani Dasgupta</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:rudrani.d@gmail.com">rudrani.d@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:chaikidukaan1947@gmail.com">chaikidukaan1947@gmail.com</a>
Philippines	<a href="#">Center for Peace Education (CPE)</a>	<a href="#">Bianca Pabotoy</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:apabotoy@mc.edu.ph">apabotoy@mc.edu.ph</a>
Philippines	<a href="#">Young Women + Leaders for Peace Program-Philippines (YWLP)</a>	<a href="#">Sophia Dianne C. Garcia</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:garcia.sophiadianne@gmail.com">garcia.sophiadianne@gmail.com</a>
Somaliland	<a href="#">Center for Policy Analysis (CPA)</a>	<a href="#">Ismail Mohamed</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:ismailfarjar@gmail.com">ismailfarjar@gmail.com</a>
Uganda	<a href="#">Alternatives to Violence Project</a>	<a href="#">Bangirana Narcisio</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:brightbangi@gmail.com">brightbangi@gmail.com</a>
Yemen	<a href="#">Youth Without Border Organisation for Development (YWBOD)</a>	<a href="#">Maged Sultan</a>	2019	<a href="mailto:maged.alkholidy@ywbod.org">maged.alkholidy@ywbod.org</a>
Egypt	<a href="#">Justice Call</a>	<a href="#">Khaled Emam</a>	2020	<a href="mailto:Khaledemam2030@gmail.com">Khaledemam2030@gmail.com</a>
Nigeria	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Initiative (OLPHI)	<a href="#">Loretta Ota Ahuokpeme</a>	2020	<a href="mailto:ladyofperpetualhelpinitiative@gmail.com">ladyofperpetualhelpinitiative@gmail.com</a>
Uganda	<a href="#">Center for Conflict Resolution (CECORE)</a>	<a href="#">Patrick Bwire</a>	2020	<a href="mailto:bppatricks@yahoo.com">bppatricks@yahoo.com</a>
West Bank	<a href="#">International Legal Foundation (ILF)</a>	<a href="#">Ghadanfar Kamanji</a>	2020	<a href="mailto:aibrahim@ilf-wb.org">aibrahim@ilf-wb.org</a>

<b>Yemen</b>	<a href="#">Youth Without Border Organisation for Development (YWBOD)</a>	<a href="#">Olla Alsakkaf</a>	2020	<a href="mailto:olla.alsakaf@ywbod.org">olla.alsakaf@ywbod.org</a>
<b>Afghanistan</b>	<a href="#">Afghans for Progressive Thinking (APT)</a>	<a href="#">Ajmal Ramyar</a>	2021	<a href="mailto:ajmal.rmr@apt.org.af">ajmal.rmr@apt.org.af</a>
<b>Cameroon</b>	<a href="#">Women in Alternative Action (WAA)</a>	<a href="#">Justine Kwachu Kumche</a>	2021	<a href="mailto:waacameroun@yahoo.com">waacameroun@yahoo.com</a>
<b>The Netherlands</b>	<a href="#">Free Press Unlimited (FPU)</a>	<a href="#">Leon Willems</a>	2021	<a href="mailto:willems@freepressunlimited.org">willems@freepressunlimited.org</a>
<b>Palestine</b>	<a href="#">International Legal Foundation (ILF)</a>	<a href="#">Asil Ibrahim</a>	2021	<a href="mailto:aibrahim@ilf-wb.org">aibrahim@ilf-wb.org</a>

# 2019 EDITION

*“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and  
equality”*

*9-18 July 2019*

## Afghanistan: Afghans for Progressive Thinking (APT) - Sofia Ramyar



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

APT works to [promote a just and inclusive society](#) by building young men and women's critical thinking skills to challenge the status quo and become informed leaders that will help peace in their societies and provide inclusive learning opportunities for internally displaced children who will contribute to a peaceful Afghanistan.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

I wanted to showcase that the Afghan youth are taking part in the global movement working hard to contribute to advancing SDG16+ in Afghanistan and continue to influence policy circles to support the civil society and grassroots-led activities around SDG16+. I wanted to share the success stories of Afghan youth, and show the world how resilient Afghan youth are and what are the challenges that they face every day, and how they overcome them to build

peace in Afghanistan. Moreover, I wanted to learn how other countries with different and similar contexts to our country have been working to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies and what strategies they have used to overcome the challenges.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

I showcased the two biggest achievements of APT for the year 2019. The selection of the first Afghan Youth Representative to the UN who addressed world leaders at the UNSC for the first time in the history of Afghanistan and advocated for young people's access to their human rights, peace, and justice.

APT organized a National Youth Jirga that brought 100 youth from across the country to exchange their views on the importance of youth's role in the process and after that. The result of this gathering was drafting a resolution that was shared with the Afghan government and the international community.

What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

What I took away from my participation in the VSDG16+ Campaign was that we, Afghan youth, are not alone in our struggle to contribute to building peace in our society. Youth around the world are dealing with similar challenges in the efforts that we young Afghans have undertaken toward SGD16+. Moreover, being a woman and leading changes in a country like Afghanistan where active war is going on is never an easy task. But the recognition we receive from our partners

like CSPPS is a motivation to keep moving forward. I learned that every small action we take toward SDG 16+ is contributing to a bigger cause and that is a peaceful and just Afghanistan and a peaceful world.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

I became part of an inspiring group of global young leaders who came from diverse backgrounds but work for a common cause that helps build a just and inclusive world. Being part of this group helped me to learn from them, and how we can support each other. Additionally, I have made incredible friends that keep me inspired to continue the work I did for positive change in Afghanistan.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Afghanistan has been described as one of the toughest places to be a woman and I experienced that through leading APT for six years. During this time, I learned that change takes time and that is what I tell

myself every day, certainly every time I face a challenge that looks unbearable. That is the commitment that is required of us as women and leaders in Afghanistan. I have seen change before my eyes and



see it daily. This change, beyond the news and political turmoil, is what gives hope and the drive for many of us to keep moving forward. There is a lot of potential in Afghan youth and they need the international community's support in realizing that potential.

Watch APT's video here: [▶ Voices of SDG16+: Afghans for Progressive Thinking](#)

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## Canada: The Global Sunrise Project - Kasha Sequoia Slavner



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

[The Global Sunrise Project](#) is a social enterprise that creates positive impact media. Using documentary films, social media campaigns, photo exhibits, and workshops, we educate audiences about intersecting global issues, like peace and disarmament, the climate crisis, and gender equality. By highlighting creative solutions, we seek to motivate people to take action towards advancing the SDGs.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

As a Gen-Z, I know that all life on earth is facing multiple existential threats. The climate crisis is one, wars, the threat of nuclear war and the pandemic are as well. As a filmmaker and peace advocate in my own community, I feel it's critical to use my skills to highlight the issues I feel passionately about and to amplify the work of grassroots activists who are doing everything they can to create a just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

I showcased how media and storytelling can be powerful tools used in peace advocacy. I highlighted that the narratives we craft and share can either contribute to our apathy towards an issue or motivate us into action by presenting solutions, breaking down stereotypes, and helping us envision the world we want to achieve for present and future generations.

**“By highlighting creative solutions, we seek to motivate people to take action towards advancing the SDGs.”**

What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

Participating in the campaign and alumni meetings has helped me to foster global connections with others working towards achieving peace. Through my interactions with other alumni, I've broadened my understanding of SDG16 from their firsthand experiences in their own communities and learned from their challenges and successes in their organizations. To create peace, we really need to work together across borders, sectors, and age groups. Being part of such a diverse group has truly enriched

my work as a filmmaker and peace advocate.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

Since the Voices campaign, I was inspired to create my new documentary [1.5 Degrees of Peace](#), which follows the work of youth bringing together the issues of peace and climate justice. We have been able to start a partnership with the Redford Centre as our fiscal sponsor, and have received a grant from the Shawn Mendes Foundation to work on the demo for the film. The film went into production in the late fall.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Coalition and relationship building with organizations that work in advancing other SDGs that are also affected by SDG16 is important for ensuring we can create intersectional, inclusive solutions that will be more sustainable.

**“To create peace, we really need to work together across borders, sectors, and age groups. Being part of such a diverse group has truly enriched my work as a filmmaker and peace advocate.”**

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The COVID-19 pandemic halted the possibility of travel, which has slowed down our production schedule. We’ve also lost the ability to do in-person screenings and workshops in schools, which was a main component of our outreach work.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

We had the privilege of migrating our work partially online, and have begun translating our in-person workshops into virtual interactive workshops. We’ve also begun the screening process looking for subjects we can follow in the film and are considering some virtual directing depending on how COVID-19 continues.



Watch Global Sunrise Project's video here: [Voices of SDG16+: Global Sunrise Project](#)

### Guatemala: Women's Justice Initiative (WJI) - Kate Flatley

What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

WJI improves the lives of indigenous Guatemalan women and girls through education, access to legal services, and the prevention of gender-based violence.

Rural indigenous women face significant barriers to accessing justice, including weak institutional responses, inaccessible services, and norms condoning VAWG. WJI addresses gaps through a community-based approach, combining rights education with accessible legal services and justice system capacity building.





### What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

We saw the Voices of SDG16+ campaign as an excellent opportunity to share our work and experiences with a wider audience and to learn from a global community of experts and practitioners working to advance SDG16 at a national and local level.

### What aspect of your work did you showcase?

We showcased our Community Advocates Program, which trains a coalition of indigenous women leaders to defend human rights, including women's right to live free from violence and improve access to justice in their communities. Our ecological approach strengthens institutions, transforms harmful social norms, and connects community-based responses to the national GBV response, creating more equitable and inclusive communities in Guatemala.

### What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

Participating in the Voices of SDG16+ Campaign provided WJI with an important opportunity to share our work and experiences with global leaders in the field. Through the campaign, we gained experience advocating for greater investment in SDG16+ and the important role that community-based organizations play in advancing SDG16+ at the local level. The Campaign allowed us to learn from experts working on the front lines to advance peace and justice in their societies.

### What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

Since participating in the VSDG16+, WJI has begun testing models for scale through expansion into three new municipalities and by training community-based organizations in Guatemala and Honduras to implement its legal empowerment methodologies. This growth is possible through partnerships with the Tinker Foundation, UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, and Rainforest Alliance through a USAID funded project. In March 2021, WJI was selected as one of 30 finalists for the World Justice Challenge.

**“Through the campaign, we gained experience advocating for greater investment in SDG16+ and the important role that community-based organizations play in advancing SDG16+ at the local level.”**

WJI has continued to build the capacity of Community Advocates, improving the sustainability of our work and helping WJI to respond to new challenges during COVID-19.

**“WJI addresses gaps through a community-based approach, combining rights education with accessible legal services and justice system capacity building.”**

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

WJI provides legal services in the local Maya language and accompanies women as their cases move through the legal system, where historically they have experienced high levels of discrimination and exclusion. Through legal accompaniment and the provision of culturally appropriate services, WJI increases indigenous women’s access to justice and helps them secure their rights. Additionally, WJI conducts VAWG sensitivity workshops with local community leaders, government officials, and justice operators. By building the capacity of the actors that make up these institutions, WJI improves responses to survivors of violence and ensures that public services are more effective, accountable, and inclusive.

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

WJI has confronted unprecedented challenges in carrying out its work during the COVID-19 pandemic. We had to halt all in-person activities for six months in order to follow strict government lockdowns and protect the health and safety of our staff and program participants.

The pandemic has led to a dramatic increase in violence against women and girls throughout Latin America. In Guatemala, the resulting lockdowns, court closures, and restrictions on mobility heightened the risk of violence while reducing available services. 77% of the legal services that WJI has provided since the start of the pandemic have been related to violence.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

During lockdown, WJI and our Community Advocates identified food scarcity, VAWG, and lack of COVID-19 information as the most urgent needs.

In response, WJI launched a hotline that connected women to its remote legal services; it delivered emergency supplies, providing 12,825 individuals with a month of food and distributing 5,200 masks; and with 4 local partners, it developed radio programs about COVID-19 and VAWG.

Read more about WJI’s [WJI's commitment to SDGs](#) and [COVID Response](#)

**Watch WJI’s video here:**  [Voices of SDG16+: Women's Justice Initiative](#)

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## Kenya: KESHO ALLIANCE ORGANIZATION - Umulkher Harun



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

Preventing and countering violent extremism for a peaceful and just society. We work with youth from nomadic areas to share counternarrative messages and peacebuilding activities.



What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

We wanted to [showcase our grassroots peacebuilding work](#) globally.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

We shared a video of the work we do in Garissa Kenya.

What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

I was able to meet key stakeholders in the field of peacebuilding, some of whom we still keep in touch with.

What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

We were able to contribute to local policies in our country back at home.

What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?

Peacebuilding is a communal effort and I have learnt to work on it as community service and not project-based.

What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The civic space is being threatened as we are not able to mobilize and speak up

against injustices we face while advocating for peace and addressing police brutality. Curfew impositions and limited gathering has made us resort to social media as our advocacy tool-the new normal.



How have you adjusted to these challenges?

We have evolved since last year. We now incorporate Zoom and Twitter chats as a way of raising awareness especially to prevent online radicalization and cyberbullying awareness.

**“Digital advocacy is hard when the major part of our work involves gathering and meetings but we will not stop even as the pandemic exists. The voices of youth must be heard as we gear towards the final cusp of the SDGs.”**

Watch The Kesho Alliance Organization’s video here:

 [Voices of SDG16+: The Kesho Alliance](#)

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## Nepal: Nagarik Aawaz - Chhatra Amatya

What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

Nagarik Aawaz (NA) is a peacebuilding organization and its goal is 'Just and Peaceful Nepal'. We provide a platform and resources for youths and women leadership, as we believe they are the main pillars to create and sustain peace in society. Platforms for trust and relation-building in communities open avenues to collaborate for sustainable development by addressing deep-rooted [structural violence](#).

**“Peace work as per Nagarik Aawaz is value-driven. It should be an internal journey of a peace practitioner. Therefore, peace work needs ample spaces for creativity and adaptability.”**

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

Nagarik Aawaz has been doing groundwork in peacebuilding since 2001.

NA's theory of change for peacebuilding came from its elicitive experience. The youth leadership program by providing them safe spaces to learn and grow, matched with SDG16+. An ally recommended NA to participate in Voices of SDG16+. After seeing the similarity between NA's work and the video campaign, we decided to showcase this story.



**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

Safe space in the community for creating a critical mass of youths led by a young woman to address the structural issues and build relations to sustain peace in the community.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

Exposure of international context, opportunity to advocate peacebuilding work in Nepal and learn from other local organizations in the world.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

NA bought a piece of land in 2017. In 2019 and 2020 we made significant progress in establishing a permanent peace centre with local peace practitioners, and a critical mass of 24 community youths. NA aims to build a platform (a durable peace entity in Nepal) for all peace practitioners and people to learn, exchange stories and acknowledge the effects of armed conflict and peace work.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

- Providing a platform for youths and women where they feel safe to learn and build relations.
- Trust in leadership of youths and women to mobilize resources.
- Being part of the community (living in the community) will help in grounded peace work.

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Mobility was the greatest challenge. Mobility is vital as NA works in human connections and the area NA works is still not accessible by the internet. This hampered our work of bringing people together.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

NA trusted the leadership and knowledge of local organizational partners, youths and women leaders.

Watch NA's video here: [Voices of SDG16+: Nagarik Aawaz](#)

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**Nigeria: Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development - Dr Tola Winjobi**



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

CSCSD's main objective is to pressure governments and other stakeholders to account to SDGs and give the lives of people a meaning through upholding justice, human rights and development. Reinforcing the assertion that SDG16 underpins the entire 2030 Agenda and that SDG16 is linked with all other SDGs, CSCSD collaborates with other development actors and organizations in engaging on issues around Goal 16 of the SDGs, which is to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

We were prompted by the urge to let the world know that CSCSD has been active in working around SDG16, especially those targets of SDGs like peace and human rights, access to justice, accountability, violence against women and children, irregular migration, and human trafficking. We were also prompted by the need to promote team spirit and teamwork through networking. CSCSD is a network of close to 2000 members working in different areas of the SDGs. The video campaign therefore provided the opportunity to bring to the limelight the work of those member organizations.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

Within the time limit offered, we were able to feature member organizations working around issues like peace and human rights, access to justice, accountability, violence against women and children, irregular migration and human trafficking.

**“Teamwork is the best lesson learnt. While we work together we can achieve more.”**

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

One person from our coalition was sponsored to attend the VNR/HLPF 2019 in New York. And we also get information and documents from time to time.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

We didn't accomplish anything after the video campaign but we have been doing remarkably well campaigning around SDG 16 at the country level.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Teamwork is the best lesson learnt. While we work together we can achieve more.

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

1. Lack of funding; even our partners from the global north have not been supportive. There are many project proposals on our table that we cannot

implement because there is no financial support.

2. We couldn't hold meetings together as before because of the stringent measures imposed by the government to safeguard against COVID-19

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

We have adjusted by doing the little we can do at our own level while we consult with individuals for support. We also turn our activities into hybrid while we allow for a minimum number to participate at physical meetings and the rest online.

**“It is not enough for the NGOs in the global north to collaborate with those in the global south, the need to support the latter financially in implementing their project is paramount.”**

CSPPS and TAP Network have not attained the pass mark in supporting their partners in the global south. They have tried but much needs to be done.

Watch CSCSD's video here:  [Voices of SDG16+: CSCSD Nigeria](#)

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## Pakistan and India: Chai Ki Dukaan - Rudrani Dasgupta

What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?



Chai Ki Dukaan aims to provide a digital space for Pakistanis and Indians to connect with each other through stories of friendship. It promotes peace and friendship between Indians and Pakistanis.

**“Storytelling is a powerful tool to get people to understand and empathise with you. It builds connections and is a great way to build a community.”**

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

This was the year we started our campaign to promote peace between India and Pakistan in the wake of the Pulwama incident. We wanted our

message to reach a wider audience, and tell stories across the world. We felt this campaign would be a way to showcase these narratives.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

We showcased the everyday stories of friendship and co-existence between ordinary Indians and Pakistanis.



What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

We received support from the international community and built a network of like-minded people who believed in peace and partnerships like we do.

What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

We networked with other young Indo-Pakistani peacebuilding movements,

featured on Change Makers of Pakistan; *The Telegraph* (India) featured stories by Indians and Pakistanis across the world.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Storytelling is a powerful tool to get people to understand and empathise with you. It builds connections and is a great way to build a community.

Watch Chai Ki Dukaan's video here: [Voices of SDG16+: Chai Ki Dukaan](#)

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The pandemic and the consequent socio-economic disruptions have been very challenging as people's attention was drawn to these major life-changing events in their lives.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

We have kept the digital space, mainly our [Facebook page](#), open to people who would like to showcase their stories.

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## Philippines: Center for Peace Education (CPE)-Miriam College - Bianca Pabotoy

**What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?**



The Center for Peace Education (CPE)-Miriam College is an advocacy centre that promotes the building of a culture of peace through its education, advocacy, women and youth organizing,

and networking programs. CPE's theory of change is that reduction of violence and a culture of peace can be achieved when people develop the will to address local and global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and work collaboratively and nonviolently for justice, equality and human dignity.

**What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?**

The SDG16+ campaign was (and continues to be) a good opportunity to raise awareness of the intersection of the WPS (Women, Peace and Security) Agenda and the SDGs through our local initiative.

It's a good way to showcase how it is possible to be [implementing the WPS](#)

[Agenda while aligning itself to the fulfillment of the SDGs](#) - especially to Member States who may have yet to begin the localization of their own National Action Plans for WPS.

**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

Our localization initiative of the Philippine National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security - WePeace, a capacity building training to form women peacekeeping teams in four areas across the country addressing four different conflict lines.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

Learning of different SDG16+ initiatives addressing different conflict settings, and showcasing different possibilities of participation by different stakeholders.

With the Voices alumni network: there is a wide range of advocates which could be tapped for local awareness-raising initiatives on issues that relate to what they do/conflict issues in their country.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

CPE's participation in the SDG16+ Annual Showcase Forum in Dili, Timor-Leste building global networks and learning about the local SDG16+ initiatives in the Philippines through the Filipino participants.

We have also produced two materials covering the work of WePeace in 2019.

First is 'At the Frontline: Women Peacekeepers in the Philippines' (Publication) - Concluding its first year of implementation, this publication documents WePeace's training process, community stories, and training modules from four different areas across the country.

Following the publication, CPE produced Sparks of Peace: Women Peacekeepers in the Philippines' (full-length documentary) - The film documents the beginnings of the Philippines' National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2010; women and peacebuilding at the grassroots level; and stories of the women of WePeace from Kalinga, Quezon Province, North Cotabato, and Surigao del Sur.



**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

We need to constantly emphasize the importance of civil society space in any forum because the realities of conflict-affected or vulnerable communities may not be as enunciated by other stakeholders. Civil society enjoys a certain amount of independence to really

be more critical about what is happening or how decisions are made at the community level.

### What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The digital divide and shift of funding priorities:

Online training is impossible not only because of the lack of infrastructure but also due to the resistance of communities to this shift. In the Philippines, conflict-affected areas barely have mobile signals, and our participants are also of a higher age group so introducing Zoom is something that requires a whole other training altogether. In 2020, priorities of funding have also shifted towards initiatives that directly address the pandemic (i.e. humanitarian aid).

### How have you adjusted to these challenges?

The Philippines is still unclear on lockdown measures, with an on and off rise of spikes in COVID cases. Given that it is an archipelago, travel by boat or plane is necessary in order to conduct training, which significantly increases the risk of being exposed to the virus.

The most we can do is provide a communication allowance but even then,

not all participants even have mobile devices.

Securing funding is also still challenging because the situation in the country has not improved thus a lot of communities are still in need of direct humanitarian aid.

**“There’s been a lot of significant setbacks on peacebuilding initiatives in the past years. Armed encounters have continued throughout the lockdown and because the attention is all towards COVID-19, HR concerns are shelved and unprioritized.”**

The Philippines will also have its national election this year - 2022. This election is pivotal on how issues such as human rights, human security, and peacebuilding will be approached by the incoming administration. We approach this significant change in governance by taking note of key priorities of the incoming cabinet, looking for new opportunities to lobby our advocacies on WPS and peace education from national to local agencies and government units.

**Watch CPE’s video here:**  [Voices of SDG16+: Center for Peace Education Miriam College](#)

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## Philippines: Young Women+ Leaders for Peace Program-Philippines (YWLP) - Sophia Dianne C. Garcia

**What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?**

The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders' (GNWP) Young Women Leaders for Peace Program enhances the leadership potential and peacebuilding skills of young women in conflict-affected environments and humanitarian situations to meaningfully contribute to preventing and countering violent extremism by promoting synergies between the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, and the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda.



**What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?**

What prompted me to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ campaign was the fact that I wanted to share with the world the initiatives of our network. That young people from different parts of the Philippines are contributing towards realizing the Sustainable Development Goals for their communities and their country. I wanted to send a message, through the video that I sent for the

campaign, that the youth are not just part of the future, they are also part of the now who will shape the world that the next generations will live in.

**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

The work of YWLP that was showcased included the community discussions on the Bangsamoro Organic Law, choosing the right leaders in line with the 2019 midterm elections, and good governance. The work of YWLP in advancing the principles of human rights, gender equality and even youth participation were also highlighted with emphasis on the synergy between SDG 16 and SDG 5.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

Being able to participate in this campaign and a couple of alumni meetings became an avenue to meet and learn from other advocates who are creating platforms guided by the principles of SDG16+. It also gave me the opportunity to share with a wider audience the initiatives of YWPL in relation to creating a just and humane society.

The Voices of SDG16+ Campaign gave me a deeper understanding of the importance of the SDGs and achieving it before 2030.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

After participating in the campaign, the network was still able to implement two additional community youth discussions on youth and good governance. In the year 2020, when the pandemic began the network organized campaigns, training for new members, community discussions for the youth on peacebuilding which all happened online. The network also organized gender sensitive COVID-19 response relief operations by distributing dignity kits in different areas in the Philippines.



**“The Voices of SDG16+ Campaign gave me a deeper understanding on the importance of the SDGs and achieving it before 2030.”**

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Mobility constraints, hence, we had to look for ways to continue engagement with our network members.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

Collaboration from different sectors is important, which also relates to ensuring that when it comes to peacebuilding and in the context of SDG16+, meaningful participation and inclusive processes are vital.

Constant communication and collaboration with the members of the network played a significant role in ensuring that our initiatives will be carried out despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

**Watch YW+PL's video here:** [Voices of SDG16+: YW+PL video](#)



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## Somaliland: Center for Policy Analysis (CPA) - Ismail Mohamed



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

The Center for Policy Analysis (CPA) was established to help the Horn of Africa region countries to build peace, democracy, human rights, and effective governance systems where all citizens are equal. CPA is working for the advancement of Rule of Law, Access to Justice, Sustainable Peace and strengthening the democratic institutions.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

Since CPA and the Somaliland SDG16+ Coalition are working on the awareness-raising and realization of the targets of the SDG16+, CPA decided to link its grassroots advocacy efforts to the Global Efforts. One of the most interesting opportunities was to be part of the Voices of SDG16+, which linked our domestic advocacies to the global forums. That is why I applied for the Video Campaign.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

CPA focused on SDG16.7 “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels”, particularly the role of youth in leadership positions.

What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

As an Alumni of Voices of SDG16+, it really changed my way of thinking, networking, and experience to SDG16+. It really increased my knowledge of SDG16+ targets, how other countries in the world are doing and the importance of uniting the efforts and resources of the civil society in different countries to realize the global agenda.



What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

One of the most significant accomplishments is the increase of civil

society networking from the local or regional level to the global level, bringing expertise from other international and national civil society from other corners of the world.

**“As an Alumni of Voices of SDG16+, it really changed my way of thinking, networking, and experience to SDG16+.”**

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Most of our activities are based on advocacies and meetings linking the grassroots voices to decision making

Watch CPA’s video here: [Voices of SDG16+: Center for Policy Analysis](#)

offices, to increase public accountability so that the voices of the citizens reach the decision-making offices. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic disturbed most of our planned activities which were postponed, cancelled, or changed from in-person to virtual advocacies. Since most of our grassroots voices cannot have access to attend the Zoom conferences, it became more difficult to carry out successful grassroots advocacies.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

We used both in-person and virtual to organize meetings. During the in-person meetings, we followed the COVID-19 protocols, including social distancing, masking and limiting the number of participants.

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## **Uganda: Alternatives to Violence Program – Bangirana Narcisio**

**What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?**

To promote self-esteem, respect for diversity, cooperation, conflict resolution and community building. Our work greatly contributes to reducing all forms of violence and working with communities to end conflict and insecurity.

**What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?**

We needed to showcase the most reliable grassroots peacebuilding approach/tool that transforms an individual spontaneously - particularly how to reduce all forms of violence at individual, workplace, family and community levels. It was a golden opportunity for us to show the world that there are less laborious approaches to building peace at the individual and community levels.

**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

We showcased the objectives, content, delivery methodology, and impact, all summarized in the short video.



What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

Stronger networks, lessons on approaches for peaceful coexistence, realization of the information gap in relation to SDG16+, skills on program design to suit interventions in SDG16+.

**“We need to lobby for more funding for peace. Without peace and stability, development in most of our fragile states will remain a dream. We have to draw a strategy to reverse the trend to have more funds for peace than violence/arms production.”**

What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

- Awareness-raising on the SDG16+ in my organization, helped over 100 refugees overcome trauma effects and equipped them with basic conflict resolution skills.
- Helped sort both land use and livelihoods-related conflicts between pastoralists and cultivators in some Rwenzori communities.

What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?

- Interventions for peacebuilding should be mainly grassroots/community-based.
- Governments should institute peace-specific infrastructures like the ministry for peace or functional peace directorates.
- The issue of regional or country-based activities prior to the UN HLPF every year should be considered.

What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Our approach being interactive, COVID-19 has made it difficult for us to conduct physical activities. There is no funding coming in whether for airtime or internet bundles for communication.

How have you adjusted to these challenges?

When the lockdown was relaxed, we started having small meetings with the former participants to share the goings-on.



Watch Alternatives to Violence Project's video here:

[Voices of SDG16+: Alternatives to Violence Project Uganda](#)

## Yemen: Youth without Borders Organization for Development (YWBOD) - Maged Sultan



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

The main objective is to empower young men and women and engage them in civil

life to ensure better situations for themselves and others.

This key objective is related to SDG16+ because YWBOD works on engaging youth and local communities to [promote peaceful and inclusive societies](#) for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

The situation in Yemen was a motivation to participate in the Voices of the SGD16+ video campaign. As a local CSO, we want our voices to be heard and make all the world realize the situation here and how we contribute to improving in line with the SDG16+.

The campaign was an opportunity to amplify the local voices in Yemen to decision-makers and stakeholders.



**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

In addition to the situation in Yemen, young men and women engagement in peacebuilding and social coexistence was the aspect of our work showcased. It reflected how young men and women can be a driving force towards the SDG16+ if they have the opportunities and spaces and this is what we in YWBOD do.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

The SDG16+ was effectively introduced to local communities and many local and national stakeholders and actors, engaging some, including young men and women, to contribute to.

**“The campaign was an opportunity to amplify the local voices in Yemen to decision-makers and stakeholders. “**

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Successfully implementing SDG16+ requires listing and addressing the people's needs that should be considered in all the projects and activities.

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The safety risks were a big challenge in addition to the changes in donors' priorities and people's needs made working on other issues less effective.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

Integrating our activities and projects with COVID-19 response activities and projects to meet the people's needs and donors' priorities.

**Watch YWBOD Yemen's video here:** [Voices of SDG16+: Youth Without Borders](#)

# 2020 EDITION

*“SDG16+ and COVID-19: Local Actions for Global Solutions”*

*1-16 July 2020*

## Egypt: Justice Call - Khaled Emam



**What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?**

[Justice Call](#) was established in 2018 on the basis of identifying the correlation between human rights and conflict. We're a community of lawyers, human rights defenders, and researchers committed to developing civil society capacity, building peace, and advocating for human rights and justice in the MENA region. We believe that the road to peace-building begins with the awareness of justice and human rights. As a result, Justice Call works to promote human rights and the rule of law through the localization of SDG16+. This is done by enabling young people and the organizations led by

young people to drive sustainable change towards a peaceful, democratic and just society. We actively work on projects in Egypt, Libya, Sudan and Syria, among other countries.

**What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?**

To raise our voices and to show the work we are doing around Goal 16 at the international level using video.

**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

We presented our capacity building programmes with Arab youth on justice, peace and human rights.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

Through our participation in the SDG16+ voices campaign, we were able to join a wide range of civil society organizations working to implement SDG16+ around the world, which enabled us to share opinions and experiences with them. Recently, as a result of our participation in the campaign, our organization Justice Call became a member of the CSPPS, which means more partnerships and the exchange of resources and experiences with CSOs around the world.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

The most important achievements we have reached after joining the campaign

was the launch of [the regional coalition for youth, peace, and security](#) in the Middle East and North Africa (MCYPS), as well as the launch of the first regional network on WPS and the Prevention of Atrocity Crimes in the MENA region, [The Women's Regional Network on Prevention](#) (WRNP).

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

We learned that providing adequate protection for civil society organizations is a prerequisite and indispensable for achieving sustainable development goals, as these goals will not be achieved without the participation of civil society organizations. We also learned that young peacebuilders are most vulnerable in terms of security and safety, particularly those who work in conflict areas.

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

In general, CSOs and human rights defenders in Egypt are subject to grave violations that include detention,

enforced disappearance, torture, and travel bans. This repression forces many into exile and to give up their work since their relatives are harassed and even detained. Authorities frequently use terrorism charges against peaceful activists, while many activists are also prosecuted and convicted under vague charges such as "illegally receiving foreign funds" and "operating without legal permission".

During the pandemic, our work becomes riskier because of authorities' attacks and hacking on the internet, considering that the internet becomes essential for all types of work that we do.

**“We believe that the road to peace-building begins with the awareness of justice and human rights.”**

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

We have created a digital security policy that includes new tools for meetings and workshops, as well as new tools for communicating and working with partners and beneficiaries.

**Watch Justice Call's video here:** [Voices of SDG16+ 2020: Justice Call - Egypt](#)

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## Nigeria: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Initiative (OLPHI)- Loretta Ota Ahuokpeme



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

Sustainable policy reforms through peacebuilding processes at all levels for secured lives.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

For visibility & promotion of our work, to showcase our little effort that we have been doing in our little quarter to the world; to measure and assess if our work meets with the best practices and add our voice to other CSOs and NGOs work to the various campaigns related SDG16+ to address the social, health, environmental gaps and reduce violence in our world.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

Peacebuilding for us is an encompassing word that includes – Health advocacies – COVID-19; Malaria, Communicable and Non-communicable Diseases.

Gender Advocacy - Reducing Violence Against Women & Girls at all Levels; Supporting Women Participation into elective and appointive position & decision making; inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes in local and national levels; facilitating the Raising women voices in International, National and local levels.

Climate Change – Tree planting for mitigation (Saving our Planet and environment); CleanUp Exercises; Sensitization and Advocacy on mitigation and adaptation to climate change; advocacy on proper waste management system and waste to wealth creation through recycling. Organizing and coordinating Climate Actions in-person and online with other advocates and activists.

Peacebuilding and confidence training for women, girls, youths, men and children on peacebuilding processes and advocacy tools for engagement which include Conflict analysis, Alternative Dispute Resolutions through mediations, negotiations and dialogue. We are part of the Partners for Peace Institute for Economic and Peace (IEP) Ambassadors whose presentation and Project has been chosen to be showcased during the IEP Nigerian Ambassador program in February 2022 to our Rotarian Ambassador cohort.

**“We have been able to come to terms with the shift to technology and the digitalized world and have keyed in. Based on that I have been engaged in so many online presentations and speaking arrangements. I have also enrolled in so many online courses that are assisting the work I do.”**

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

I gained confidence that our work stands the test of time; it placed us in the cycle of NGO players around the globe. Sharing of experiences with other alumni across the world. Gained ideas on how other countries react and treat social issues.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

I learnt from the shared experience of other Alumni members on best practices and activities that could be replicated with country specifics. I have also learnt to intensify efforts in driving and promoting the SDGs. Stepping down SDGs in local communities and several media engagements speaking on SDG 16+ and other SDGs.

**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or**

**your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Sustainable Development Goals are all about Human Rights and we must work to make an impact in our society and world. We are going to highlight some of our work that drives and promotes the SDGs and Human Rights

Health Advocacies with COVID-19 precautions; Community Mobilization on Immunization and gaps created by COVID19 & the vaccine introduction; Free Community Outreaches in Ihechiowa, Arochukwu Local Government Area Abia State with most of the Indigenous Doctors, Nurses and other health workers across the globe being fully involved in different angles from Funding to being present to carry out the physical diagnosis and Avu in Owerri West Local Government Area, Imo State. This outreach also featured health talks and education.

We supported and partnered with the Abia State Primary Health Care Agency's (ASPHCA) Maternal, Newborn & Child Health Week with the distribution of Vitamin Angels Commodities donated to us by our Donor & Partner Vitamin Angels USA (that we have worked with since 2014) to Primary Health Care Centres in Arochukwu Local Government Area and monitoring of the service delivery to clients at those primary Health care centres on Nutrition Promotion and Education.

Advocating for Reduction of Sexual & Gender-Based Violence through Mediations & Follow up with arrests and prosecution in partnership with Rivers State Response Team on GBV, The Nigerian Police and African Women

Lawyers (AWLAN) as well as International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) has not been easy. Since the COVID 2020 we have recorded up to 2000 cases that have been followed up to a conclusion.

Environmental Clean-ups to demonstrate cleanliness and drive and support #BeatPlasticPollution campaign to mitigate climate change. CleanUp exercises, Sensitizations and Advocacy on Proper Waste Management in markets, schools and communities. Training on Recycling processes for community beneficiaries in Rivers State. Climate Actions Walks and Awareness and advocacies with partnerships across the globe both in person and online.

Partners for Peace (P4P) in the Niger Delta has provided a serious platform for our growth in peacebuilding supported mostly by Foundation for Partnership Initiative in the Niger Delta (PIND) as well as West Africa Network in Peace building;

Policy formulations for the Partners for Peace Network in the Niger Delta as the National Deputy Coordinator of the Network and different interventions in community conflict and leadership tussles.

High court in Rivers State gave our Network – Partners for Peace in the Niger Delta (P4P) leverage to mediate in a high-level community Leadership tussle in one community in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Partners for Peace in the Niger Delta Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) cohort passed through the IEP Ambassadors Program and our cohort's presentation and project was chosen to be showcased at the 2022 IEP Nigerian

Ambassador program in February to our Rotarian Ambassador cohort.

In partnership with Civil Society Advance Forum on Sustainable Development, we have been localising the SDGs in schools, communities, with civil society organizations sharing experiences and knowledge as well as printing the abridged version of the Sustainable Development Goals and distributing the same freely. We have been working with Killer Robot Campaign (KRC) on the Ban on Killer Robot Campaign across the globe but especially in Nigeria. We have carried out a series of engagement online meetings with Nigeria Parliamentarians to sign into the Ban treaty. Schools, communities and civil societies were not left out. This campaign is tied to SDG16+ with targets 16.3, 4 & 6.



**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Limited number of in-person engagements at the grassroots; reduced funds available from engagements invited to; Funding is becoming scarce – most individuals that support with material resources are no longer able to; Limited activities because of lack of funding; insecurity has increased; Gender-Based

Violence is on the increase and we continue to respond to these cases without external funding.

How have you adjusted to these challenges?

It's not been easy adjusting to the low awareness and infomedia in the public space for my country Nigeria. Digital engagements are for elites; grassroots people are yet to understand the use of technology for engagements.

Watch OLPHI's video here:

 [Voices of SDG16+ 2020: Our Lady of Perpetual Help - Nigeria](#)

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### Uganda: Center for Conflict Resolution ([CECORE](#)) - Patrick Bwire



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

CECORE aspires to promote a culture of peace. Its purpose is to empower

individual women and men, communities, organizations and institutions to transform conflict effectively by applying alternative and creative means of resolving and preventing violent conflicts. CECORE's core work is peacebuilding, conflict transformation and prevention, and therefore relate directly to SDG16+.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

We were prompted by the desire to bring out the voices of the local communities that are often not heard on global platforms. It was also a key opportunity to share best practices in peace work and to amplify the call for prioritisation of peacebuilding and conflict prevention work. On the other hand, it is an opportune space to interact and learn from other peacebuilding actors across the world.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

CECORE/GPPAC showcased the [study findings](#) on Uganda's progress on SDG16+ that was conducted ahead of Uganda's VNR and HLPF 2020. It pointed out recommendations like; prioritization of peace and conflict prevention (SDG16+) – *which is a bedrock for the realization of even the rest of the SDGs*, enhancement of SDG awareness, meaningful participation, inclusion and strengthening of peace structures, and Localization of SDGs. We also highlighted project success stories like the [peace champions](#) that have transformed youth and young adults in post-conflict communities in Uganda from “champions of violence to champions of peace”.

**“CECORE/GPPAC [study](#) on the review of Uganda's progress on SDG16+ affirms that; The realization of SDG16+ is key for transforming the lives of people and that SDG 16+ is a key prerequisite and central pillar for the realization of the rest of the SDGs. At the same time progress on SDG16+ is also an indicator that all other SDGs are being realized. Therefore, if prioritization of peace and conflict transformation is increased, great strides will be realized towards the realization of the SDGs.”**



What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

CECORE/GPPAC has used the video and the key issues raised there-in as a basis for engagement, advocacy and interventions at the national and international levels.

It has also enhanced our visibility and provided a venue through which the local voices are able to be heard at the global level. Furthermore, the alumni platform meetings have enabled experience sharing and learning from other peace actors from other parts of the world.

What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

We have registered significant progress toward the localisation of SDGs. We are piloting SDG localisation in Kaabong district in Uganda – with the hope of drawing best practices for the rest of the districts in the county. In addition, CECORE/GPPAC in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister is in the process of developing an SDG localisation manual to guide actors in the county in localising SDGs.

What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?

We learn that the localisation of SDGs is key – as this bridges the often disconnect between the global and the local. As highlighted in the SDG16+ [video](#), SDGs can only make sense if they translate into meaningful change in the lives of communities on the ground. It is therefore important that we “localise the global agendas and globalise the local voices” – something that can be enhanced by SDG localisation.

**“We were prompted by the desire to bring out the voices of the local communities that are often not heard on global platforms.”**

What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The greatest challenge has been the limitation in reaching out to the rural

communities affected by violent conflict. Outreach methods such as community sensitization through “barazas”, community dialogues, community parliaments, sensitisation meetings were halted. Although online and social media platforms are slowly being adopted, the majority of rural communities affected by violence are unable to access online technology. Furthermore, peacebuilding and conflict resolution interventions like counselling, dialogue, and mediation require person-person interactions to be effective.

How have you adjusted to these challenges?

We have responded by conducting ToT trainings to community peace actors such as youth and women peace committees – with the aim of having a trickle-down effect in the community. Related to this, we work with peace actors at the community level using a “door-door” peer approach, and “everyone reach one” approach. The use of community-based radio for radio talk shows, spot messages are also being used to enhance community sensitisation.

Watch CEDORE's video here:

 [Voices of SDG16+ 2020: CECORE \(Center for Conflict Resolution\) - Uganda](#)

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## West Bank: International Legal Foundation (ILF) – Ghadanfar Kamanji



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

We make justice a reality for poor people by fighting to guarantee high-quality legal representation for everyone arrested or detained. Around the world, we provide criminal defence services and build sust guarantee high-quality legal representation for everyone arrested or detainainable, effective legal aid institutions.

[ILF](#) work advances many of the SDGs set forth by the UN -- poverty elimination (Goal 1), gender equality (Goal 5), reduced inequality (Goal 10) and more -- but [Goal 16](#) is core to ILF mission.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

We continually engage individual member states, pressing for commitments of resources and greater action to expand legal aid provision for poor and marginalized populations.

The video reflects the work of [ILF lawyers](#) in Palestine during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the measures lawyers are taking to protect their health and clients' health from the pandemic.

What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

The participation helps [ILF](#) to get to know the foundations and the institutions that participated in the VSDG16+ Campaign. Also, ILF exchanges knowledge during the Alumni Meetings with these foundations.

The video was a useful tool in helping to reflect the [ILF lawyers work in Palestine](#) during the COVID-19.

What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

ILF West Bank was able to continue its critical work. As front-line workers responsible for ensuring the rights and safety of their clients, they led the fight to release vulnerable detainees, including by filing pretrial bail motions and advocating to judges and prosecutors that clients be released to eliminate unsafe conditions in detention centres during COVID-19. ILF West Bank further worked to ensure the release of clients who fell under the COVID-19 related presidential amnesty of prisoners who had served half of their sentences and were not convicted of serious offences.

**“We make justice a reality for poor people by fighting to guarantee high-quality legal representation for everyone arrested or detained.”**



**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILF collected statistics from Reform and Rehabilitation Centers on detained and incarcerated persons and used the information to advocate for upholding their health and safety through letters sent to key leaders and justice stakeholders i.e. President of the State of Palestine. While praising the President's amnesty which resulted in the release of incarcerated people who had served 2/3 of their sentences, the ILF advocated that this action be taken further, and include those at risk and who were serving

sentences of minor offences, regardless of the time that had already been served on their sentence.

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The COVID-19 outbreak led to a lockdown and declaration of a state of emergency beginning March 5. As a result, courts were only open for serious or emergency cases, bail motions, detention extension sessions and to retrieve imprisonment orders and urgent motions. Though court restrictions limited justice sector activities, ILF West Bank lawyers continued to show up daily for their clients. On March 22, Palestinian President Abbas issued an amnesty order for incarcerated persons who had served at least half their sentences (except those convicted of certain serious offences) as part of efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

ILF West Bank worked to ensure that all eligible clients who were serving time in prison were released. After investigation, ILF West Bank determined that all but one client had been named in the pardon. For the remaining client, ILF West Bank worked with the prison and prosecution to file a request, which is still pending, for pardon to the President's office based on the fact that the client had already served more than half of his sentence.

**Watch ILF's video here:**

[Voices of SDG16+ 2020: International Legal Foundation - Palestine](#)

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**Yemen: Youth Without Borders Organization for Development (YWBOD) -  
Olla Alsakkaf**



**What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?**

We aim at building the capacities of youth, enhancing community peace and coexistence, raising awareness and strengthening youth's roles.

Our objectives support the implementation of SDG16+. We aim through our activities to build better societies.

**What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?**

I have always considered myself as a voice of peace. I have been working on peacebuilding for almost three years in addition to my social activities that started ten years ago.

When I read the announcement of participating as a voice of SDG16+, I understood that it was a chance to let my voice be heard and a way to promote peace.

**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

I spoke about the projects that we have been working on and how they go along with the SDG16+ objectives. I also highlighted the difficulties we face during our work in peacebuilding.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

My participation in VSDG16+ helped me get to know other global peace voices. Listening to their experiences widened my knowledge and pushed me to do more to promote peace in my country. My participation made me more confident and gave me the chance to speak about my achievement to the world. I am thinking more seriously about my future after my participation.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

Four months after my participation I was chosen as a member of the YPS Pact-Yemen. I was invited to participate and speak in many webinars and conferences. I have also started working on research and consultations.



What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?

The SDG16 is not something easy to achieve. I learnt from my work to be patient. To have big dreams and go through small steps toward achieving it. Be satisfied with what you do and continue your efforts even if you have not succeeded yet.

Watch YWBOD's video here:

[Voices of SDG16+ 2020: Youth Without Borders Organization for Development - Yem...](#)

What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Fear is the greatest challenge I faced during the outbreak of COVID-19. Losing people around you and witnessing the suffering of people and being afraid of what is coming tomorrow.

**“Always believe in what you are doing. Your belief will support you to keep going.”**

How have you adjusted to these challenges?

I adjusted to this challenge by facing my fears. I worked on initiatives to provide hospitals with the needed materials. I also joined awareness-raising campaigns on how they can protect themselves

# 2021 EDITION

*“Resilient Recovery through Local Action on SDG16+”*

*13 July 2021*

## Afghanistan: Afghans for Progressive Thinking (APT) - Ajmal Ramyar



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

Afghans for Progressive Thinking (APT) is working to promote youth leadership, education, and a culture of peace. Since its inception in 2010, APT activities have impacted and inspired over 40,000 youth and children to build a vision for a just and inclusive society and work as peacebuilders realizing this vision and contributing to positive changes in the community.

APT works on SDGs - particularly SDG16+ - through our debate program,

Leadership development program, Mehrabanon School in Mazar – e- Sharif for internally displaced students and the Annual Afghan Youth Representative to the United Nations.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

We had already participated in the SDG16+ in the previous year and we saw a significant impact of implementing it in Afghanistan, therefore, in 2021 we wanted to go a step further and raise awareness of the SDG16+.

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

We already have some programs in place that are in line with the SDG16+ goals. Programs in APT include debate tournaments about peace and security, youth representatives to the UN, and our school program, which we all showcase in the video campaign.

Watch APT's video here: [Voices of SDG16+ 2021 - Afghans for Progressive Thinking](#)

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## Cameroon: Women in Alternative Action (WAA) - Justine Kwachu Kumche



What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

WAA Cameroon's main objective is to support initiatives that promote gender justice, equality, peacebuilding and sustainable opportunities for women, youths and girls in Cameroon and the Central Africa Sub-region. Based on the objective to promote community peacebuilding, WAA Cameroon is actively engaged in localizing SDG16+ at local communities. WAA Cameroon ensures inclusiveness in the localization of the SDG16+ by engaging women, girls, youths, traditional authorities and the Queens for Peace in process referencing UNSCR 1325 and 2250.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

The need to continue to raise awareness of and localise SDG16+ following recommendations from the VNR report by WAA and GPPAC spurred the desire to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign. Recommendations from the video campaign could prompt social

cohesion and community engagements. As the video continues to go viral, we hope that stakeholders would get interested in supporting local voices that promote the Women and Youth Peace and Security agendas in their communities to ensure inclusive and sustainable peace processes.

**“The VSDG16+ Alumni has become a family ready to support each other as we all share common goals and priorities.”**

What aspect of your work did you showcase?

The VNR on SDG16+ carried out in partnership with GPPAC, the localisation of SDG16+ and the UNSCR 1325 and 2250, engaging Queens for Peace in community peacebuilding, the training of youths in peacebuilding and conflict prevention in the crisis regions as community change agents, as well as establishing peace clubs in schools and communities through youth to enhance positive change in youth attitudes, trained youths as connectors for peace while providing them with skills on income-generating activities as alternatives to gun violence, training of

psychosocial caregivers in the conflict-affected regions, dissemination of advocacy gadgets for community mobilisation and awareness-raising campaigns.

### What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?

Experience sharing and knowledge learning are incredible for participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings. The campaign and meetings have given us the opportunity to showcase our work globally which has equally enhanced our visibility. Interacting with global members is an added value to ensuring innovations in our local actions. The VSDG16+ Alumni has become a family ready to support each other as we all share common goals and priorities.

### What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?

Sharing our localisation of SDG16+ experiences across national and international spaces has enhanced our visibility and opened chances for prospective partnership in accelerating peacebuilding processes for a better Cameroon.

### What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?

Youth and women inclusion in peacebuilding processes is critical in ensuring sustainable and inclusive peace. Moreso, conflict transformation whereby community members have ownership of peace processes enables the bottom-top

approach to crisis prevention. Involving the media, local and administrative authorities, religious and traditional leaders and CSOs is a pathway in building synergy and sustainability and sustaining peace and the localisation of SDG16. WAA's innovative approach of training Youth Connectors for Peace and supporting them with the means to generate income for themselves helps in deterring them from acts of violence.



### What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

COVID-19 restrictions generally slowed down the execution speed of the project and increased cost to align with government measures, e.g., face masks, hand sanitisers, restrictions on the number of persons per meeting as well as difficulties in organising face-to-face meetings. Also, the resistance from some people in respecting the barrier measures put in place by the WHO, regarding COVID-19 is a challenge in achieving set goals and objectives in localising SDG16+. Delay in project implementation has been due to general lockdowns and restrictions of movements.

“Greater funding to influence policymaking at the level of different stakes that will promote the localisation of SDG16+. Support greater funding for youth groups/youth-led initiatives and women rights groups at local levels to further localise SDG16+. Also, aspects of promoting youth and their participation in local development and local governance projects could be reinforced, other disadvantaged and minority groups within communities like the indigenous populations, albinos, physically challenged should be fully engaged in decision making at the local level through programs that

take care of their minority rights as far as localisation of SDG16+ could the future phase of the campaign.”

How have you adjusted to these challenges?

We have resorted to organizing webinars where workshops are mandatory, we ensure the strict respect of all COVID-19 restrictions measures including social distancing and the compulsory wearing and use of face masks and hand sanitisers. Also, mass sensitisation of host/beneficiary communities on the dangers of COVID-19 and measures to stay safe in realising the project. Some of these communities have been trained on how to produce their own hand sanitisers.

Watch WAA's video here: [Voices of SDG16+ 2021 - WAA Cameroon](#)

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### The Netherlands: Free Press Unlimited (FPU) - Leon Willems

What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?

To make independent news and information available to everyone.

People need that information to control their living conditions and to make the right decisions.

To that end, press freedom and access to information are indispensable. That is why Free Press Unlimited supports local media professionals and journalists, particularly in countries with limited

(press) freedom. We enable them to give people access to the information that helps them survive, to develop themselves, and with which they can monitor their governments.

What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?

Since the start of the pandemic, journalists in the Sub-Saharan countries are experiencing increasingly more harassment. This manifests itself in arrests, detention, and the misuse of

legislation by governments to silence journalists and limit freedom of expression and transparency. One of the key lessons from the recent Ebola epidemic is the crucial role of reliable, timely and independent information, and the protection of media freedom in times of crisis. Our statement is therefore that, now more than ever, independent journalism, citizen reporting, open public discourse, and the free flow of information are indispensable.

**“Our statement is therefore that, now more than ever, independent journalism, citizen reporting, open public discourse, and the free flow of information are indispensable.”**

**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

The campaign Together for reliable information in 17 sub-Saharan countries and building resources for independent media in those countries to provide the public with fact-based information on COVID-19. We highlighted a video explainer from DR Congo highlighting the crucial importance of debunking fake news and providing people with access to fact-based real-time information regarding the COVID-19 virus to re-establish trust for the public in a fragile environment.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

Connections and the firm assertion that what we have been doing makes sense to people from other sectors of the SG16+ coalitions.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

By joining forces in these challenging times, we are able to swiftly respond to the needs on the ground in a select number of countries, providing the groups most at risk with independent and reliable information about COVID-19. Besides that, independent media and journalists in Sub-Saharan Africa are supported with essential materials and resources for the sake of capacity building.



**What best practices / lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

Working in coalitions across borders and providing links for media to exchange beyond borders is indeed a productive way of assisting information dissemination and that donors can learn from ruling out competition for resources by organising and funding broad coalitions to provide what is most needed.

We also carried out work on VNR shadow reporting in Sub Saharan and Asian countries as demonstrated in the report we attached to this. The report is available [here](#).

**What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The increased repression against independent journalists during the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions on freedom of movement and newsgathering

efforts by journalists and increased legal restrictions curtailing the ability of the media to work independently.

**How have you adjusted to these challenges?**

We provided emergency assistance to journalists that faced repression, including legal assistance and put a lot of effort into advocacy towards international fora such as the AU-EU-UN and donor countries to highlight these obstructions, in some cases with results.

Read PFU's latest articles on [Together for reliable information in Africa](#); [Challenging Covid-19 by debunking fake news](#) and [The Covid-19 pandemic puts Nepalese media in survival mode](#).

**Watch FPU's video here:**  [Voices of SDG16+ 2021 - Free Press Unlimited](#)

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## **Palestine: International Legal Foundation (ILF) - Asil Ibrahim**

**What are the main objectives of your organisation? And how is your work related to SDG16+?**

We make justice a reality for poor people by fighting to guarantee high-quality legal representation for everyone arrested or detained. Around the world, we provide criminal defence services and build sustainable, effective legal aid institutions.

The ILF's work advances many of the SDGs set forth by the UN -- poverty elimination (Goal 1), gender equality (Goal 5), reduced inequality (Goal 10) and more -- but Goal 16 is core to ILF's mission.

**What prompted you to participate in the Voices of SDG16+ Video campaign?**

ILF has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and plays a unique advocacy role at national and global fora. We bring on-the-ground experience defending vulnerable populations together with high-level policy knowledge and technical expertise. We advocate for high-quality legal aid systems, along with robust data standards and benchmarks, to ensure justice is truly provided for all.



**What aspect of your work did you showcase?**

We continually engage individual states, pressing for commitments of resources and greater action to expand legal aid provision for poor and marginalized populations.

In our video and presentation, we showcased the work of ILF lawyers in Palestine during the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, our work to defend the health, safety, and basic rights of children in contact with the criminal justice system amidst the pandemic.

**What have you gotten out of participating in the VSDG16+ Campaign and Alumni Meetings?**

Through our participation, we have met many individuals and organizations doing this work around the world. We have been able to learn from each other and to share knowledge and experiences to

advance access to justice on a global scale.

**What have been your most significant accomplishments since you participated in the Voices campaign?**

The ILF has continued its critical work on the frontlines to ensure the rights and safety of people in contact with the law. Amidst the pandemic, the ILF has secured the release of more than 190 people. This work has been critical to protecting vulnerable people in conflict with the law as detention centres are high-risk environments for the spread of COVID-19.

**What best practices/lessons learned would you want to highlight in the context of implementing SDG16+? Or your work related to peacebuilding and Human Rights?**

One takeaway is the need for cooperation in times of crisis. The ILF has strong working relationships across the justice sector. This helped ensure that we could continue to provide quality legal aid for vulnerable people and help people get back to their families amidst the pandemic. Additionally, we were also able to effectively coordinate with prosecutors to keep children out of detention.

As trusted experts in Palestine, the ILF also sent letters to the President of the State of Palestine, Ministry of Justice, High Judicial Council advocating for the maximum level of action to decarcerate and prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in detention centres.

“The right to counsel is an essential part of a fair trial that has been threatened around the world and in Palestine due to COVID. Emergency measures must therefore include guarantees of due process of law in order to ensure they do not negatively impact the rights of counsel as it is critical to access to justice and to continuing to advance SDG16+ in this time of crisis.”

What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The Covid-19 outbreak led to a lockdown and declaration of a state of emergency beginning March 5. As a result, courts

were only open for serious or emergency cases, and certain restricted activities such as the increase of restricted movement, and the increase of the checkpoints. Additionally, an increase in checkpoints and restrictions on movement meant that many lawyers all over Palestine were struggling to reach their clients.

How have you adjusted to these challenges?

One way the ILF responded was to establish an emergency room at the court through which we provided on-the-spot counsel for our own clients and those whose lawyers were unable to travel. This allowed us to reach people quickly and efficiently. We also shared resources on how to maintain health and safety amidst COVID-19.

Watch ILF's video here: [Voices of SDG16+ 2021 - The International Legal Foundation](#)

## *Call to Action*

The Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action campaign provides a unique and dynamic opportunity for a call for accelerated action and increased awareness of the work of local civil society partners in this domain.

The Alumni Profiles and their personal stories presented in this booklet feature both challenges and successes in pursuing the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at national and sub-national levels. Their continued efforts exemplify how SDG16+ is being implemented and is helping to positively change people's lives – despite the impact and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

But they cannot do this work alone. We thus call on the international community and on national actors to support local peacebuilder's drive to implement SDG16+ and achieve the global goals for a better future for all. The work showcased in this booklet demonstrates the critical role civil society actors play in their local contexts as drivers of sustainable development, and it is the shared responsibility of all stakeholders to listen to their voices and to further support them in the important work they do.

The Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action campaign will continue its efforts in the years to come. We thank all partners for their continued support and hope that you will continue to work with us in amplifying the work done by the people and organisations featured in this booklet.



# CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM FOR PEACEBUILDING AND STATEBUILDING

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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