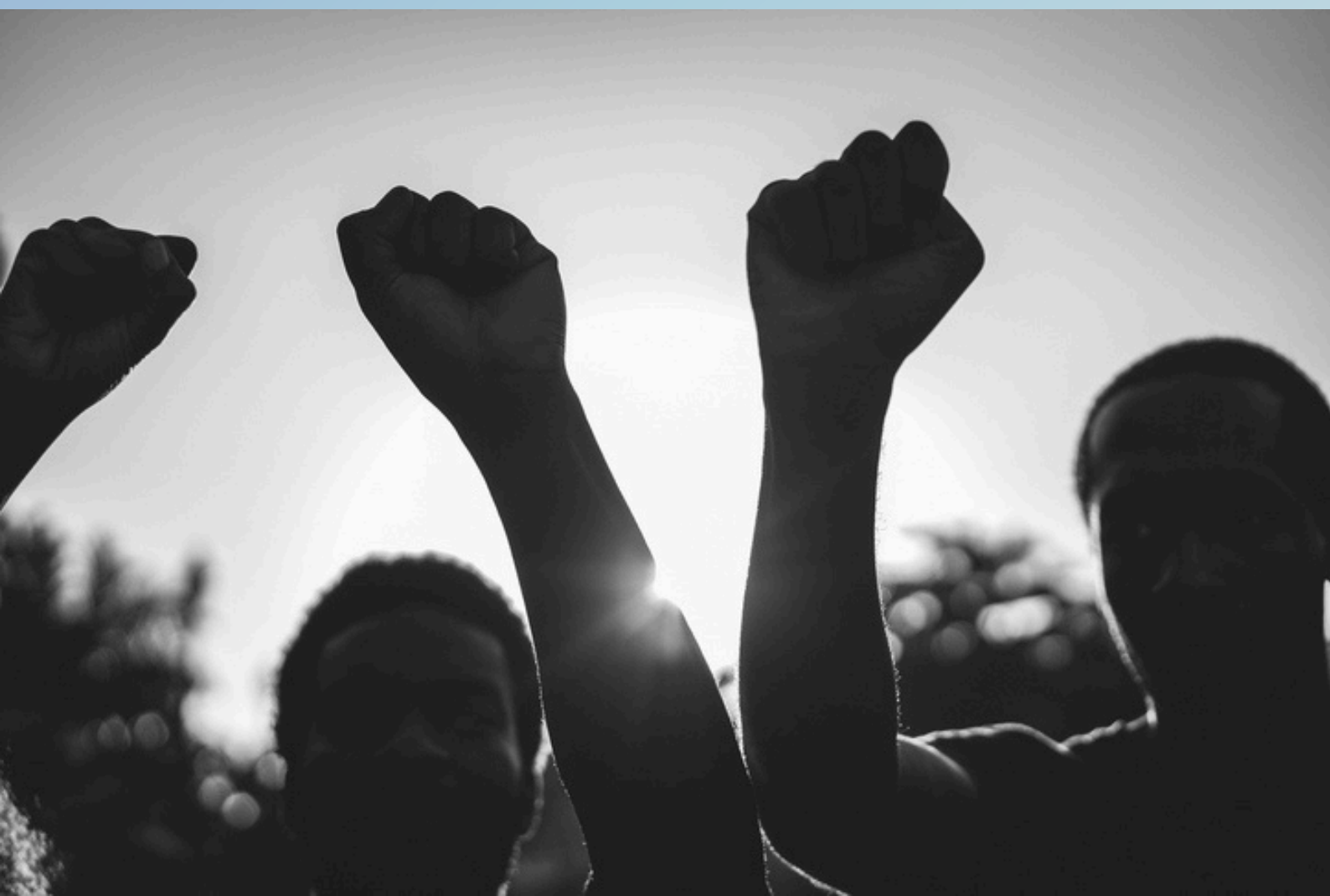




CIVIL SOCIETY
PLATFORM
FOR PEACEBUILDING
AND STATEBUILDING

Civil Society Driving Change in Times of Crises

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



“Wars destroy. Peace builds. In today’s troubled world, building peace is a conscious, bold and even radical act. It is humanity’s greatest responsibility”

**- António Guterres, UN
Secretary-General (7 July 2024)**



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FOREWORD

I am very happy to present the 2024 Annual Report of the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS).

This year's report comes at a time of global uncertainty and volatility. With the rise in armed conflicts, many countries are shifting their focus, redirecting development assistance budgets and prioritising national interests, including the rearmament of their territories. In these turbulent times for peacebuilding and conflict prevention, CSPPS pursued its efforts to amplify the voice and agency of civil society within the international arena. As countries and international organisations recalibrate their agendas, it becomes even more critical to bolster collaboration and mobilise needed resources to advance SDG16+.

To face this systemic crisis, CSPPS continues to play a pivotal role in amplifying the critical role local peacebuilders play in realising more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. In our lobby and networking activities, we continuously bring this under the attention of policymakers and other key partners and stakeholders.

Throughout 2024, CSPPS followed a steadfast course in advocating for a decisive and unified response to the increasing uncertainties. Convinced of the central and cross-cutting role of SDG 16, CSPPS continued to actively support all initiatives that contribute to its achievement. Despite a challenging global context, we remain firmly focused on the 2030 horizon and on the urgency of realising the Sustainable Development Goals.

Whether through emerging projects or well-established initiatives, we bring our network to life by joining forces and working together at all levels—through collective advocacy action, knowledge exchange, and sharing of good practices. In this context, the Platform gathered members and partners during its 2024 Annual Conference, in Berlin and online. The event provided a stage for sharing reflections on the current state of peace, justice and inclusive societies under the theme "Empowering Civil Society in a Volatile World".

Following the conference, CSPPS launched its Berlin Statement that comments on the current crisis, followed by key recommendations to strengthen cooperation towards manifesting greater impact.

In 2024, CSPPS continued its engagement in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS). In the context of this unique tripartite partnership, we call for concerted action against the continuous shrinking of civic space. With our partners, g7+ and INCAF we discussed new parameters for this partnership to be relevant in today's world. As CSPPS, we have shared our priorities for recalibrating our collaboration into a proactive and impactful partnership.

The past year was of pivotal importance as SDG 16 was reviewed during the 2024 High-Level Political Forum in New York. In the realm of SDG16, CSPPS was also present at the SDG 16 Conference, the Summit of the Future, the World Bank Fragility Forum, and at various other international events, to emphasise the support for local peacebuilders and the need for increased investments in preventive actions and peace-supporting initiatives.

Via our Annual Report Civil Society Driving Change in Times of Crises, we share key milestones and achievements manifested in 2024. Throughout the report, members highlight some of the activities they have been involved in throughout the year.

On behalf of all members of the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, we sincerely thank and appreciate all CSPPS partners for their continued support and partnership.

Peter van Sluijs
CSPPS Coordinator



MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

MESSAGE FROM MS. ELIZABETH (LIZ) HUME - CO-CHAIR OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ALLIANCE FOR PEACEBUILDING [United States]

Dear CSPPS Global Network Members and Partners,

As the Executive Director of the Alliance for Peacebuilding,

I believe the CSPPS network is critical now more than ever as we must work to rebuild the peacebuilding sector in light of increased defense budgets and decreased funding for preventing and reducing violent conflict.

To advance the peacebuilding sector it will take all of us globally working together to solve one of the greatest challenges of our time—record breaking violent conflict and fragility. The CSPPS network is a group of dedicated peacebuilders who are working to meet these difficult challenges.

AfP is a proud member of CSPPS, and I am honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Executive Committee and as the Co-Chair. Despite the significant setbacks to the sector, I am confident that CSPPS will be at the forefront of rebuilding and advancing the peacebuilding field.

All my best,

Liz



MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

MESSAGE FROM MR. CHALACHEW WORKU - CO-CHAIR OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

POSITIVE PEACE FOR ETHIOPIA[Ethiopia]

Dear CSPPS Global Network Members and Partners,

I have witnessed firsthand the transforming potential of teamwork in tackling the underlying causes of conflict and fragility in my role as Executive Director and Founder of Positive Peace Ethiopia, a youth-led and focused organization. Threats to inclusive government, rising violence, and instability brought on by climate change are just a few of the interconnected challenges that no single organization can handle alone. But when different voices come together with a common goal, like we do in CSPPS, we increase our ability to create paths toward peace.



For this reason, I am incredibly proud to join an amazing Liz from the Global North as co-chair of the CSPPS Executive Committee. Our collaboration serves as a crucial link between the Global North and South or particular areas, highlighting the importance of fair communication and women's leadership in peacebuilding. Promoting SDG 16+, conflict prevention, and the development of institutions that support justice and inclusiveness, CSPPS continues to be a source of hope in a time when international conflicts are on the rise and multilateral systems are under stress.

As co-chair, I commit to pay attention, pick up knowledge, and make use of this remarkable network's experience. The commitment of CSPPS members and the Secretariat, whose continuous efforts guarantee that local peacebuilders are heard in international discussions, inspires me. We must work together to give priority to creative ideas, promote underrepresented viewpoints, and cultivate cross-border collaborations.

Although the path ahead is difficult, I am certain that collective efforts based on compassion, trust, and shared accountability may make a difference.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the CSPPS Executive Committee and Secretariat for giving me this responsibility. Your support is a strong testament to the transformative potential of young peacebuilders around the world, as well as a vote of confidence in my vision. In my capacity as co-chair, I promise to make sure that youth peace and security agendas continue to be at the forefront of our shared efforts by amplifying their voices wherever possible. Knowing that every action we do together will bring us one step closer to a future where peace is not an aspiration but a reality, let's proceed with bravery.

With gratitude and resolve,

Chalachew

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2024 marked a period of significant turbulence and transition for civil society actors around the world, and CSPPS was not exempt from this. As existing conflicts persisted and new ones erupted, the demand for inclusive dialogue and robust conflict prevention frameworks became more urgent than ever. The global peacebuilding landscape was further complicated by shrinking civic space, political instability, and a notable decline in financial support directed toward civil society organisations.

Amidst these mounting challenges, CSPPS remained determined in its commitment to elevating the voices of local peacebuilders and advocating for sustainable and locally led approaches to conflict prevention and statebuilding. The Platform continued to work in partnership with member organisations to navigate these complex dynamics, reinforce resilience at the community level, and highlight the critical importance of early, preventive interventions.

In light of the global funding landscape, CSPPS also intensified its efforts to mobilise support for CSOs and to call for renewed investment in peace-supporting initiatives. The lessons of 2024 underscore the essential role of civil society in building peaceful and inclusive societies, which is a role that must be protected and strengthened through increased resources, strategic partnerships, and long-term commitments.

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

This Annual Report offers a comprehensive reflection on CSPPS's contributions and engagements throughout 2024. It documents how the Platform amplified the voices of its members, engaged in critical global policy forums, and fostered partnerships to ensure that civil society remains a vital force in peacebuilding and prevention dialogues and decision-making processes. Through coordinated advocacy, strategic convenings, and high-level engagements, CSPPS worked to ensure that the concerns, insights, and innovations of local peacebuilders and grassroots actors are heard at the highest levels.

From active participation in global convenings such as the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the Summit of the Future, and PeaceCon, to spearheading campaigns and declarations that underscore the value of SDG16+ at national and local levels, CSPPS has remained a visible and vocal champion for more peaceful, just, and inclusive societies.

ACRONYMS

AfP: Alliance for Peacebuilding
AJCAD : Youth Association for Active Citizenship and Democracy
APT: Afghans for Progressive Thinking
AR: Annual Report
BMZ: Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
CG: CSPPS Core Group
COP: Conference of the Parties
CSO(s): Civil Society Organisation(s)
CSPPS: Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
CT: Country Team
DAC: Development Assistance Committee
DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo
EC: CSPPS Executive Committee
FDP: Focal Point Deputy
FPO: Focal Point Organisation
FPR: Focal Point Representative
FriEnt: The Working Group on Peace and Development
g7+ group: Group of Seven Plus
HDP: Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus
HLPF: High–level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IDLO: International Development Law Organization
IDPS: International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
INCAF: International Network on Conflict and Fragility
IRSP: International Research by Student Program
JFA: Just Future Alliance
KPSRL: Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law
MFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NSFS: National Forum of South Sudan
OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG16: Sustainable Development Goal on Peace, Just and Inclusive Societies
SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals
SoTF: Summit of the Future
TAA: Tiro Association for Arts in Lebanon
TAP: Transparency, Accountability and Participation
ToR: Terms of Reference
UN: United Nations
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNDESA: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNGA: United Nations General Assembly
UNOY: United Network of Young Peacebuilders
UPR: Universal Periodic Review
V4G: Vision 4 Generation
VNR: Voluntary National Review
YPS: Youth, Peace and Security

ABOUT CSPPS

WHO WE ARE

OUR IDENTITY: CSPPS brings together a diverse representation of civil society actors globally, both from countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence, and international civil society organisations working on issues of peacebuilding, conflict prevention and development at national, regional and global levels. CSPPS supports in-country interventions to amplify the voice of civil society in political dialogues and related policy processes. At the global level, CSPPS is representing civil society in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS), a strategic tripartite partnership for political dialogue gathering civil society actors, governments from the g7+ group, and donors represented by the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF).

OUR VISION: At CSPPS, we strive for international collaboration that brings sustainable peace and inclusive development for all.

WHAT WE DO

OUR MISSION: Our mission is to strengthen the voice and capacity of society to effectively engage in and influence, peacebuilding and statebuilding as a critical contribution to crisis prevention and sustainable peace and development for all.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE: If we shape and influence global and national structures and processes to address sources of destructive conflict and to build resilience, then countries and their citizens will be less likely to resort to violent conflict because they will have means to manage their grievances and build the quality of their lives.

OUR OBJECTIVES:

- 1.Strengthening and broadening civil society engagement and inclusion in peacebuilding and conflict prevention.
- 2.Influencing conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development policies at all levels.
- 3.Shaping and contributing to the IDPS, the Sustainable Development Goals and humanitarian processes with peacebuilding values.

OUR STRATEGY

NETWORKING: Direct engagement, partnership and advocacy in the context of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS), and policy dialogue with relevant stakeholder partners in adjacent domains. Enlargement of the CSPPS network by engaging with potential new civil society partners and provision of support to establish vibrant civil society country teams in g7+ countries.

ABOUT CSPPS

AMPLIFYING: Consolidation and strengthening of civil society coalitions through capacity strengthening peer learning and technical support. Ensuring coordinated civil society engagement within the IDPS process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

LOBBYING: Continued advocacy at the global level for the respect and acknowledgement of peacebuilding values and principles, and promotion of inclusive processes at all levels. Focus on addressing the root drivers of conflict and fragility while also seeking support for preventive actions and peace-supporting initiatives

WHY WE STAND OUT

A FOCUS ON CIVIL SOCIETY: Over the last few years, peacebuilding and conflict prevention initiatives and programmes have increasingly given support to civil society organisations, echoing the growing importance of these actor groups in development cooperation, and recognising their pivotal role in both the domestic and international arenas.

LINKING THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH: CSPPS is a global network of civil society organisations, as well as individual practitioners, experts and academics from both the Global South and the Global North. We strive to foster ongoing dialogue, joint learning and cross-fertilisation between the two spheres on emerging trends and key policy issues.

LINKING SOUTH-SOUTH OPPORTUNITIES: CSPPS stands for a shift of power dynamics in the promotion and implementation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities. In this regard, exploring South-South cross linkages and peer learning cooperation are key elements CSPPS relies on. Such cooperation is possible by the engagement of CSPPS members through the organisation of IDPS regional dialogues, the bi-monthly CSPPS Core Group meetings and through the Just Future programme.

A CORE CONSTITUENCY OF THE IDPS STRUCTURE: CSPPS is part of a unique partnership called the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS). Through its tripartite structure, the IDPS brings together government representatives from fragile states, international donors and civil society. It provides a formalised space within which civil society can voice its concerns on crucial aspects and topical issues of the peacebuilding agenda.

ABOUT CSPPS

TAKING ACTION ON SDG16+: CSPPS tackles the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the prism of SDG16+. Specifically, on grounding SDG16+ into local context through meaningful consultations with civil society and authorities to determine priority areas for action, and localising SDG16+ with governments to catalyse more inclusive, national development processes and programming aligned with SDG16+ targets that enable continuous dialogues with multiple stakeholders. The Secretariat plays an active role in promoting awareness and understanding of the contributions of civil society to the IDPS, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and related policy areas. In addition, the Secretariat organises side meetings and events alongside key civil society and government-led initiatives, engaging relevant stakeholders in discussions focused on SDG16, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

HOW THE PLATFORM WORKS

1. INTERNAL STRUCTURE

At its core, our network hosts country teams of CSOs in all twenty g7+ countries and beyond that are impacted by manifestations of fragility, conflict and violence.

At the country-level, these country teams are coordinated by a **Focal Point Organisation** (FPO). As part of CSPPS, FPOs convene local civil society coalitions into CSPPS **Country Teams** (CTs), and thereby provide analysis, conduct advocacy work, coordinate activities (e.g. capacity strengthening, awareness raising and media outreach) in their home countries, and help civil society actors participate in meetings with governmental and other stakeholders.

- The **Core Group** (CG) is the main forum within the CSPPS, where engagement and leadership in peacebuilding and conflict prevention processes are discussed and decided. CG represents FPOs, CSPPS members and experts.
- Functioning as a subset of the membership, an elected **Executive Committee** (EC) assists the Secretariat in day-to-day decision-making and provides guidance and advice on the Platform's issues and priorities. The EC is led by two co-chairs, one from the Global South and one from the Global North, with a total of nine (9) members who are elected every two years¹. This leadership system aims to reflect CSPPS's core values based on inclusivity and equal representation of its members from across the globe.
- The **CSPPS Secretariat** is coordinated and hosted out of Cordaid, and is based in The Hague, Netherlands. It ensures the functioning of the CG, the EC, and the participation of civil society in IDPS events. It facilitates dialogue between members and disseminates information about their activities.

¹The EC is composed of Ms. Elizabeth Hume & Mr. Chalachew Worku as co-chairs, and of Mr. Peter van Sluijs, Ms. Adama Dicko, Ms. Gwendolyn S. Myers, Ms. Marie-Marguerite B. Clérié, Mr. Musa Ansumana Soko, Mr. Marjus Cevoli, Mr. Taban A. Christopher

ABOUT CSPPS

Together, the Core Group, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat work to amplify the voice and agency of civil society. To strengthen the network of civil society organisations working on peacebuilding and conflict prevention, and to ensure that civil society is included and participates as principal agents of change. Our goal is to ensure that civil society is broadly and meaningfully represented in nationally owned processes.

HOW THE PLATFORM WORKS

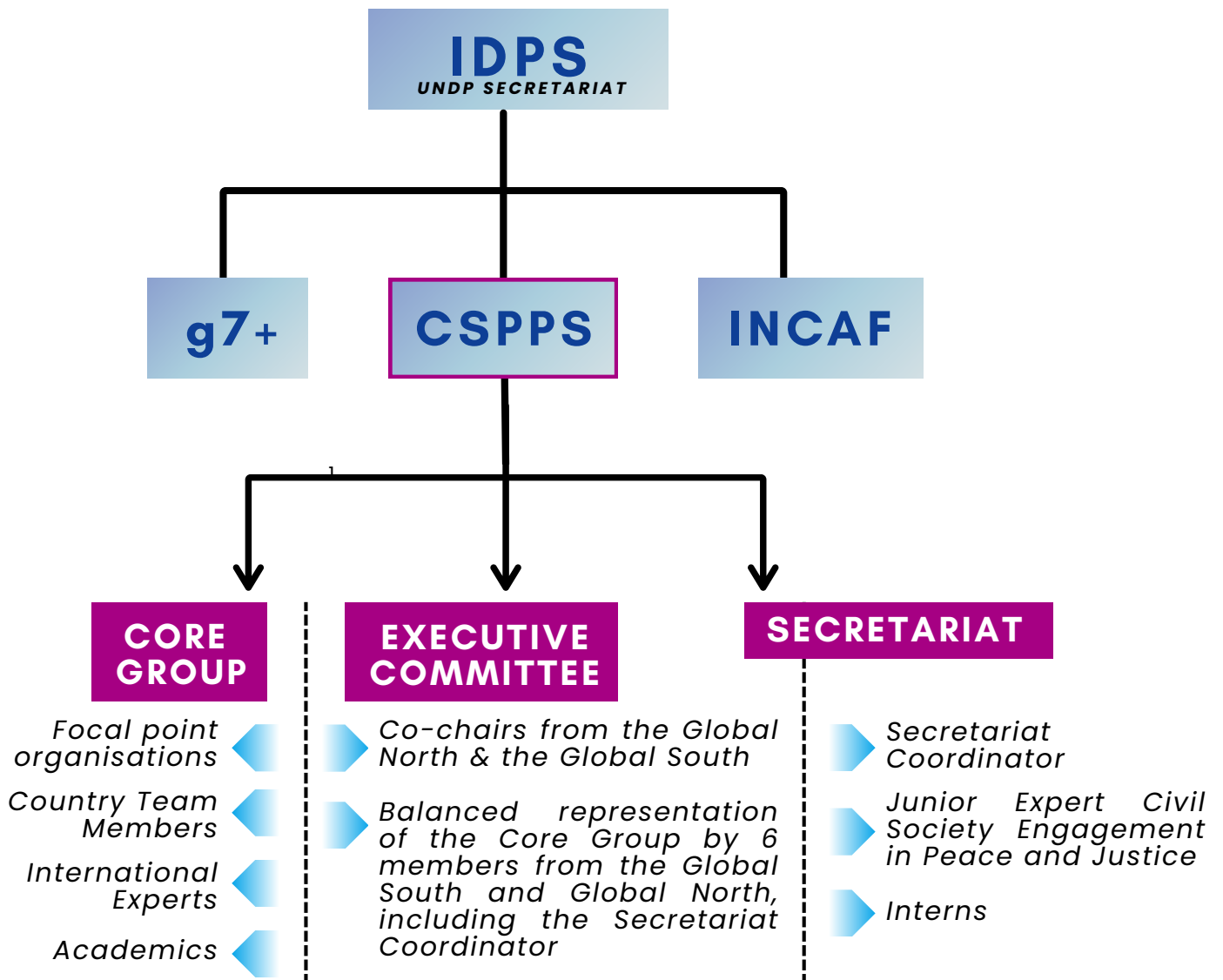
2. WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

CSPPS coordinates and supports civil society participation in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS). The IDPS is a unique tripartite partnership that facilitates dialogue, joint learning, action and mutual accountability for inclusive and effective peacebuilding between donors (INCAF), governments from fragile and conflict-affected countries (g7+), and civil society (CSPPS).

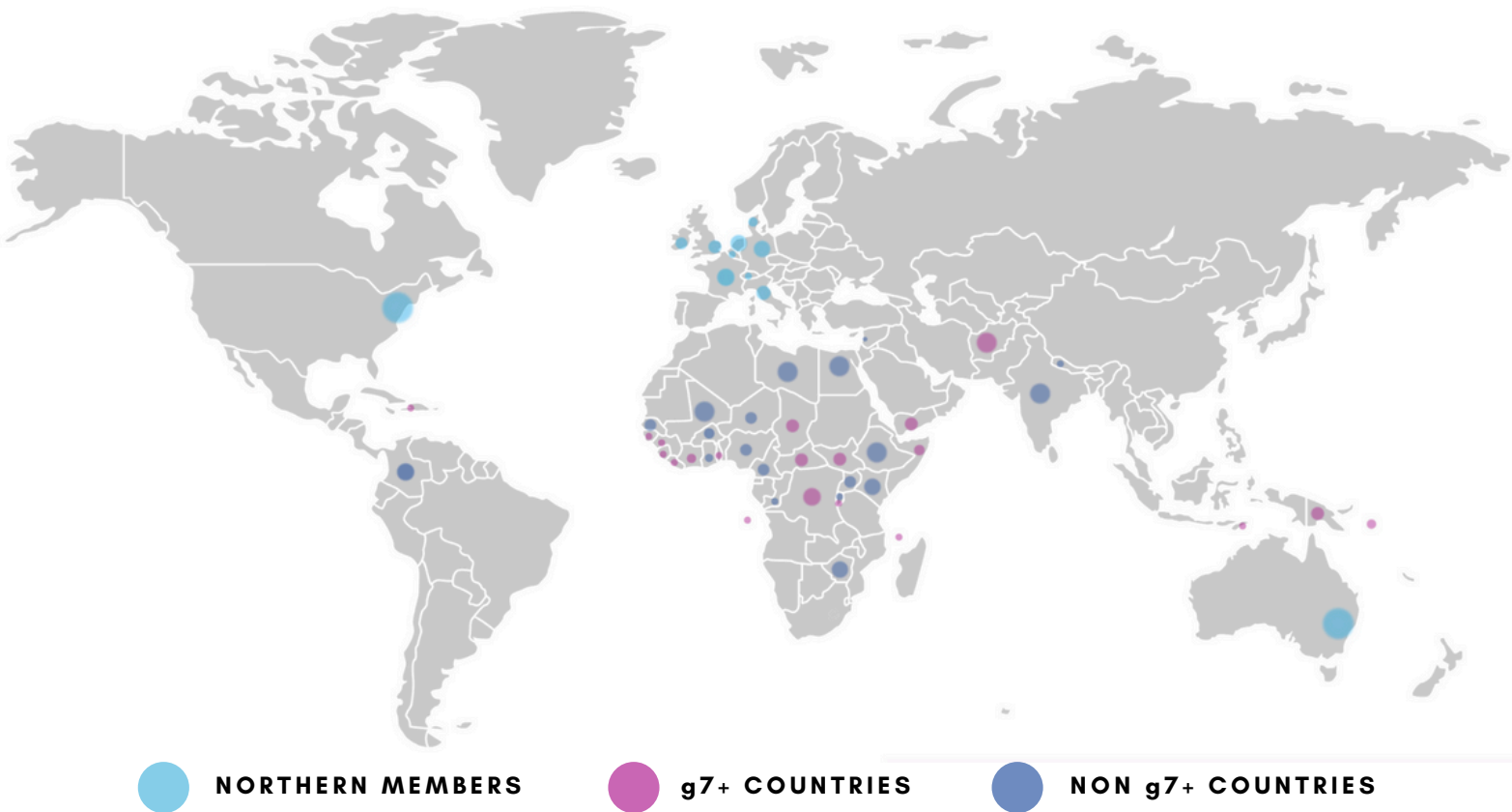
The International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) is a network of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members and key multilateral agencies working in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The g7+ is a voluntary association of countries that are, or have been, affected by conflict and are now transitioning towards democratic consolidation.

This **inclusive tripartite partnership** brokered the **New Deal** for Engagement in Fragile States. The New Deal (ND) was developed in the context of the International Dialogue and signed by more than 40 countries and organisations at the 4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 at Busan, Korea. It aims to end piecemeal solutions by promoting a comprehensive framework for coherent action to help countries transition out of fragility and conflict. At the heart of the New Deal lies the New Deal principles (PSG, FOCUS and TRUST), which guide the actions of the three IDPS constituencies to tackle the challenges and deliver on the goals related to SDG16+.

ABOUT CSPPS



CSPPS IN THE WORLD



**CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBERS
ORGANISATIONS IN ALL 20 G7+
COUNTRIES**

**CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBER
ORGANISATIONS IN 19 NON
G7+ COUNTRIES**

**INTERNATIONAL MEMBER
ORGANISATIONS
IN 11 COUNTRIES**

INTRODUCTION

The year 2024 was a defining moment for civil society worldwide. It marks a year affected by turbulence, transition, and tenacity. Against the backdrop of protracted conflicts and the outbreak of new crises, the space for civic engagement continued to shrink, financial support for civil society organisations declined, and instability that surged mainly because of existing effects of the aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic, but also because of increasing tensions and wars around the world and the worsening climate crisis.

In this volatile global landscape, the escalating tensions and the emergence of new conflicts has placed pressure on international security and multilateral cooperation. The main conflicts and tensions that troubled stability include the escalating tensions in the Middle East, the continuation of the war between Ukraine and Russia, and conflicts in Ethiopia, Haiti, Myanmar, Sudan and The Sahel. With this, the demand for inclusive dialogue, early conflict prevention, and locally led peacebuilding efforts became not only more urgent but absolutely essential.

For CSPPS particularly, 2024 was a year of both challenge and commitment. Despite the complex and often discouraging external environment, the Platform remained focused on its mission: to elevate the voices of local peacebuilders, strengthen civil society capacities, and advocate for sustainable, inclusive approaches to peacebuilding and statebuilding. As civic space narrowed and funding streams dwindled, CSPPS doubled down on its core values which are solidarity, resilience, and collaboration and worked hard to mobilise support for civil society actors on the frontlines of peace efforts.

As this report demonstrates, 2024 tested the resolve of civil society globally. But it also reaffirmed the power of collective action, the importance of local leadership, and the need for continued, long-term investment in peace. Through its advocacy, partnerships, and convening power, CSPPS worked to ensure that civil society remains at the heart of global peacebuilding efforts but also that its contributions are recognised, supported, and sustained.

And, as it was the case in previous years, CSPPS continues to rely heavily on the support of its partners to effectively fulfill its mission of representing Civil Society Organisations during these challenging times. In 2024, financial backing from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has been instrumental in advancing efforts toward achieving the goals outlined under SDG16 and the broader 2030 Agenda.

NETWORKING

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NETWORKING



NETWORKING

In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to build and sustain strategic partnerships is vital for advancing peace, justice, and inclusive governance. For CSPPS, networking is not merely about connection, but it is about collaboration with purpose. As a key networking partner of the Just Future Alliance, CSPPS leverages its global civil society reach to strengthen local civil society actors. Through networking, CSPPS strengthens its advocacy by cultivating spaces for mutual learning, knowledge exchange, and joint action. This section explores the diverse ways in which CSPPS builds and activates its network to drive systemic change and contribute meaningfully through peer-to-peer learning. In this sense, one of our objectives as a Platform is to cultivate our network and facilitate its expansion : that is why we are continuously welcoming new members, including new countries across the globe.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS & EXPANDING COUNTRY TEAMS

As a global network of civil society organisations, CSPPS is always looking to welcome new members that share our values and goals for stronger advocacy efforts. We strongly believe that our strength is in our membership, as when all CSPPS members work together and share their own perspectives, we have the potential to have a significant impact at all levels on issues related to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and statebuilding. Below are a few organisations that joined CSPPS, establishing a presence in new countries, and others that joined CSPPS Country Teams, expanding our presence and influence.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING FOR PEACE

NIGERIA

In April, CSPPS welcomed a new organisation from Nigeria, Children and Young People Living for Peace (CYPLP). CYPLP's aim is to promote workers' rights, their well-being, while fostering collaboration, innovation, and sustainable development in local communities. CYPLP supports employees and employers in finding decent jobs, strengthening institutions, and ensuring justice for all. The organisation adapts international and regional standards to local realities and enhances the understanding and implementation of UN, AU, and ECOWAS mechanisms.

CYPLP engages young people in grassroots communities, training them as peace champions who lead local peacebuilding efforts through small actions. The organisation also promotes sustainable development through partnerships with the private sector, conducts research to address the root causes of poverty and injustice, and develops evidence-based solutions. Its principles emphasise transparency, accountability, equity, and strong partnerships for a more just and sustainable future.

FUNDACIÓN LATIR, EQUIDAD EN EL MUNDO

📍 COLOMBIA

Fundación LATIR, Equidad en el Mundo, is a youth-led and youth-focused organisation dedicated to peace education in Colombia. It aims at enhancing socio-emotional skills and non-violent conflict resolution tools in rural Colombia, to counter the ongoing conflict and violence. At the same time, they place a high focus on peace education, closing the youth unemployment gap, and co-leading a research on YPS Agenda that led to the formation of a National Coalition for Youth, Peace, and Security in Colombia.

Natalia Peláez Pérez, founder of the organisation and CSPPS focal point, discussed with the Secretariat on joining the Platform: *"We wanted to bring together organisations that could be part of a national and international conversation around the YPS agenda from a Colombian perspective."*



Fundación LATIR activities include the enhancement of civic space and the promotion of inclusion through educational programmes and community initiatives, especially working with schools in rural and underserved areas to ensure meaningful and inclusive participation of teachers, students, educators and caregivers.



Fundación LATIR was present at the UN-CSO Dialogue last year and connected with a number of organisations, including from Latin America. *"Through this space, we were able to participate alongside CSPPS and meet some organizations in Colombia that are now part of the Colombian coalition on the YPS agenda,"* tells Natalia. She continues, *"CSPPS has helped us to participate more effectively at the international level on peacebuilding advocacy. It's been important for us to be seen as leading voices in peacebuilding from Colombia".*

This membership represents the first and only representation in Latin America for CSPPS, giving a broader perspective to peacebuilding and conflict prevention issues within the Platform.

Reflecting on this year and foreseeing opportunities for 2025, Natalia continued, ***"I would like to advocate more for prevention and peace education in Colombia."*** *"We're now in a better place to start inviting other organisations from Colombia and the region to join",* she concluded, highlighting a vision to strengthen regional participation in peacebuilding and youth advocacy.

NETWORKING

SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AFRICA FOUNDATION

KENYA

Sustainable Futures Africa Foundation (SFA) joined CSPPS in November 2024. SFA is located in Kenya and is a family foundation committed to bridging generational gaps through innovative intergenerational strategies, with a primary focus on environmental sustainability, peaceful coexistence, and generational continuity. Its aim is to facilitate intergenerational dialogue and collaboration to promote peaceful coexistence and environmental restoration. Key activities of the organisation include hosting monthly intergenerational dialogues on peace and sustainability as well as intergenerational mentorship programs across the country to cultivate thriving, connected communities.

INITIATIVE PLUS

CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE

Initiative Plus joined the Congo-Brazzaville team in the second half of 2024. This human rights and environmental organisation is based in Nkayi, in the Bouenza department. The Bouenza department is home to a number of mining and agro-industrial companies that have a negative impact on the lives of local people. With technical assistance from the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), Initiative Plus is organising training for young people in community and school settings this year (2024) on non-violent conflict resolution strategies. The aim of these courses is to reduce the violent reactions of local people to the pollution caused by companies based in the Bouenza department, where Initiative Plus focuses its activities.

FACILITATE COORDINATION WITHIN THE PLATFORM : TOOLKIT FOR FOCAL POINTS

In 2024, the Secretariat redefined the internal coordination within the Platform, to optimise the communication channels with the members, the networking opportunities and cross-learning exchanges. With this, the Secretariat organised a webinar where the focal point representatives and their deputies provided inputs on how to better define their role and responsibilities in the face of growing numbers of applications to the networks and communications projects. The Secretariat gathered those inputs and launched a focal point toolkit to improve coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels.

THE JUST FUTURE ALLIANCE



CSPPS is the networking partner of the Just Future Alliance, which is a five-year partnership launched in 2021, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It aims to improve security, justice and inclusive politics in decision-making processes through coordinated lobbying, advocacy and support networks for CSOs. The Just Future programme works in six countries, including Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Niger and Mali.

In 2024, CSPPS continued hosting its monthly “Just Future Networking Meetings”, enabling Just Future partners to share insights on local, regional and international challenges, successes and more. More precisely, the “Just Future Deep Dive” allows partners to share updates from their national contexts and approaches to advocacy by fostering mutual learning and exchange of best practices. Throughout the year, various consortium partners participated in the meetings highlighting a range of issues, such as their efforts towards the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the Voluntary National Review or again the Women Human Rights Defender Tool. Participants gained valuable insights from peers, enabling them to refine their advocacy strategies and solutions based on shared experiences. The exchanges help shape future capacity-building methods, ensuring they are relevant and impactful. Moreover, these sessions provide a platform to communicate specific needs and refine capacity development strategies for Just Future partners. This has reinforced the contact, links and collaboration amongst the partners to work together, learn from each other and seek synergies where possible.

JOINING FORCES WITH EXTERNAL ACTORS

In 2024, CSPPS maintained strong ties with its long-standing partners through the continuation of ongoing collaborative initiatives, while also fostering new partnerships within its broader civil society network.

CSPPS continued its engagement as a member of the Steering Committee of the Global SDG16+ Coalition, which unites networks, initiatives, and organisations committed to advocating for progress on SDG16. The Secretariat also sustained its close collaboration with the TAP Network (Transparency, Accountability and Participation for the 2030 Agenda) through a range of joint initiatives and projects. The TAP Network is a broad international coalition of civil society organizations working to advance SDG16 and promote accountability within the 2030 Agenda.



On a bilateral level, CSPPS shared best practices and engaged in collaborative efforts with partners such as UNOY, Cordaid, and other organisations (see below). Through these strategic partnerships, the Platform sought to cultivate meaningful and human-centered connections that strengthen collective action toward the implementation of SDG16 and enhance the support and resources available to its network.

NETWORKING

RESEARCH PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH IRSP/ GRONINGEN UNIVERSITY

CSPPS partnered with the International Research by Student Program (IRSP) at Groningen University, who conducted a research project on the review of SDG16+. With collaboration of the team in South Sudan, the project resulted in the writing of a report on *the Role of South Sudanese Civil Society organisations in the implementation of SDG16+*. The report highlighted the challenges faced in the country, including ethnic tensions, armed rebel groups, state interference, lack of human capital, and insufficient funding. To address these issues, the report recommends strengthening the capacity of CSOs through collaboration with international partners, enhancing coordination through the National Forum of South Sudan (NSFS), and using media like radio to improve outreach. Additionally, it suggests that international organisations, the UN, and the South Sudanese government play supportive roles in improving security, logistics, and the operational environment for CSOs.

COP 29: CLIMATE, PEACE & SECURITY NEXUS AND FINANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

CSPPS and Cordaid co-authored a Position Paper in the occasion of COP29 on the *"Finance for Climate Justice in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings"*. Following the main focus of COP29 on financing climate justice, CSPPS and Cordaid argue for locally-led financial mechanisms and integrated approaches in fragile and conflict-affected settings. These are motivated by a shared concern of advocating and putting forward the vulnerabilities of people directly affected by climate change.

Moreover, CSPPS and two CSPPS-member organisations, Search for Common Ground and International Alert, co-hosted a side event entitled "Scaling up climate action in fragile states: what are the hurdles and how to overcome them?". The session discussed the growing recognition of the intersection between climate action and peacebuilding in fragile states in financing, next to the remaining gaps in addressing these challenges.

CSPPS engaged throughout the year within the Peace@COP group as part of the ECCP community, and in this context endorsed the COP29 principles and the Policy Paper.

PEACECON 2024 - ALLIANCE FOR PEACEBUILDING (AFP) CONFERENCE

As part of the *2024 PeaceConference*, organised by the Alliance for Peacebuilding from September 10 to 12, CSPPS coordinator Peter van Sluijs spoke at the high-level plenary session *"Advancing and Building the Peacebuilding Field: Status Quo No More"*. He was joined by SfCG colleague Shamil Idriss and Ambassador George E. Moose from USIP. This conference provided the opportunity for members within the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention to engage and exchange on ways the peacebuilding community, in a world facing unprecedented fragility and violent conflict, could rally the public, policymakers, donors, and the private sector to champion conflict prevention.

NETWORKING

BUSARA AND THE WORLD BANK'S FRAGILITY, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE (FCV) GROUP CONSULTATIONS ON STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE

In November 2024, Busara hosted a series of consultative workshops in collaboration with the World Bank's Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) Group to discuss how to strengthen resilience in FCV contexts. These workshops aimed to bring together cross-disciplinary experts and practitioners, including those with frontline experience, to generate actionable insights and shape resilience-building strategies in FCV settings. CSPPS invited its members to participate to share their experiences on the challenges and opportunities in the face of these contexts.

SIPRI FORUM ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

In May, as part of SIPRI's 2024 Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development, CSPPS, together with the Alliance for Peacebuilding and XCEPT, co-organised a session on "Coordinated Climate-Conflict Responses: Case Studies of Leveraging Prevention Policies in Coastal West Africa." This session was part of the Platform's broader efforts to engage in networking and foster collaboration among the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors. The Forum provided an innovative space for open exchanges, allowing participants to share knowledge, explore new practices, and discuss ongoing policy developments.



DAC-UN DIALOGUE ON THE HDP NEXUS

In April 2024, CSPPS represented civil society actors during the DAC-UN Dialogue on the Human-Development-Peace Nexus in Paris to present an assessment report on the implementation of the DAC's Nexus recommendations. The report, entitled "The Nexus in Practice. A Spotlight Report by the Peace & Security Thematic Working Group DAC-CSO Reference Group", was made together with the Reality of Aid – Asia Pacific (RoA-AP) and the International Council for Voluntary Agencies (ICVA). Based on a global survey and civil society consultation, it highlights three main challenges: the lack of political will from donors, the failure to prioritise peace and prevention in HDP programmes, and insufficient, fragmented funding.

TOWARDS A “FIT FOR FUTURE” PARTNERSHIP: REVITALIZING THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

A new phase of the IDPS was initiated in 2022 with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assuming the IDPS Secretariat functions. With this, a 2022-2024 Peace Vision was defined to articulate how the partnership, with its constituencies, would strengthen collective action on peacebuilding at every level. Throughout this year, various activities were conducted by the constituencies in context of the process to make the IDPS “Fit for Future”.

First, a CSPPS delegation joined the IDPS Steering Group Meeting both online and in-person in Paris, in May 2024. During these two-days, the CSPPS delegation, together with INCAF and g7+ representatives agreed that there was a need to work on a renewed deal for the IDPS to make it better fit for purpose with the current world’s evolution. In follow-up, CSPPS shared a Discussion Paper “Priorities for a proactive and impactful partnership” to share elements that the Platform feels should be considered in context of the strategic re-think process. Over the summer, consultations between IDPS partners continued in which the constituencies charted a way forward for this unique partnership.

The next steps agreed upon were then implemented in the fall of 2024 with a revision of the IDPS work plan and a decision on key milestones for the partnership to move ahead towards 2025. The recommitment of a group of INCAF donors to the International Dialogue was welcomed, with a quintet of donors replacing Canada as co-chair from the donor side - with Switzerland taking over the co-chair position in the International Dialogue.

In this context, the IDPS continued hosting events with key peacebuilding stakeholders including civil society organisations, international financial institutions, regional organisations, national authorities or development partners. The IDPS held a Coastal West Africa Dialogue in Accra, Ghana in March 2024. A month later, IDPS constituencies gathered in Amman, Jordan for the Youth, Peace & Security Exchange. Read from our members on these events below.



REFLECTIONS ON

THE IDPS EXCHANGE ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY by SAJI PRELIS [*Search for Common Ground*]

1/2



The 2024 IPS Youth, Peace and Security Exchange in Amman proved to be both timely and revealing. As moderator of Session 3 on Lessons from In-Country and Regional Initiatives, I witnessed firsthand the growing momentum around Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) National Action Plans (NAPs), while also observing critical gaps that require our immediate attention.

The Exchange highlighted encouraging developments, particularly the increasing number of countries developing YPS strategies. However, it also revealed a concerning trend: many nations are adopting a product-based approach to NAPs rather than embracing the essential process-oriented nature of youth engagement and what it takes to build trust that endures intergenerationally. This observation has become even more pertinent in 2025's challenging global landscape.

A key insight from the Exchange was the recognition that bringing youth to a "broken table" only perpetuates broken promises. True youth partnership demands fundamental systemic transformation and patient, strategic engagement to establish new political and social paradigms. These new frameworks must recognize young people as legitimate partners in peace and security efforts across all levels - local, national, regional, and international. Moreover, institutions must internalize these norms to collectively address the widening trust deficit between people and between citizens and their institutions. While the Exchange began exploring these critical themes, time constraints limited our ability to delve deeper into practical implementation strategies.

Looking ahead from 2025's vantage point, the urgency of strengthening the YPS agenda has intensified.

We face a convergence of critical challenges: spiraling cost of living, deepening social polarization, dramatic cuts in development assistance, an over-reliance on military approaches to peace, rapidly shrinking civic space, and a profound crisis of faith in democratic institutions. This crisis is further deepened by the inconsistent application of international law and the rules-based order, where standards of justice and accountability vary dramatically between nations. Yet paradoxically, this period of unprecedented disruption presents a unique opportunity for the YPS agenda to emerge as a vital bridge-builder, offering a framework for renewed cooperation and trust-building across generational, social, and institutional divides.

The YPS NAPs Community of Practice², supported by the Government of Finland, exemplifies how we can transform these challenges into opportunities. It serves as a vital platform for cross-country learning and collaboration, enabling government officials, youth leaders, and other stakeholders to share experiences and build mutual understanding. Rather than attempting to implement numerous underfunded activities, the YPS NAPs offer a strategic framework to align and coordinate existing national and local policies, programs, and services - maximizing impact through coherence rather than competition. The Exchange reinforced my conviction that the YPS agenda's true power lies in its human-centered approach and its capacity to unite people across dividing lines, while providing a practical mechanism for coordinating resources and efforts more effectively.

²YPS NAPs Community of Practice:
<https://cnxus.org/theme/ypsnapscop/>

REFLECTIONS ON

THE IDPS EXCHANGE ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY by SAJI PRELIS [*Search for Common Ground*]

2/2

Areas requiring improvement became evident during the Exchange. The format of such gatherings needs reimagining to prioritize genuine dialogue and deliberation over presentation-heavy sessions. With opportunities for in-person exchanges becoming rarer, we must maximize these moments for authentic human-centered listening and learning across generations and sectors.

The current global context of reduced funding and resources, while challenging, offers an opportunity to forge unprecedented collaborations. Drawing inspiration from the World Health Organization's universal vital signs³ framework, we can adopt a similar approach to measuring societal peace through five essential indicators or vital signs : sense of agency, trust in institutions, trust between people, safety, and resource allocation. Just as medical vital signs provide universal metrics for human health regardless of background, these evidence-based social indicators - developed through a decade of rigorous research - offer an objective framework for measuring progress toward a healthy, just, and peaceful society.

The YPS agenda can serve as a springboard for implementing this framework while improving intergenerational trust and institutional cooperation, particularly vital in today's fractured international landscape. By tracking these indicators, we can not only align with SDG commitments but also empower communities to witness their own agency in creating positive change. Most importantly, this approach ensures young people feel genuinely seen, heard, and valued as essential partners in the peace and development process. Moving forward, I recommend:

- Leveraging reduced resources as an opportunity for innovative collaboration and improved coordination across sectors
- Focusing on long-term, strategic engagement rather than quick wins
- Strengthening the connection between local youth initiatives and national/international frameworks
- Adopting the vital signs peace impact framework to measure progress and impact consistently across sectors

The Exchange reinforced that the YPS agenda is not merely about youth inclusion—it's about transforming how we approach peace and security in an increasingly complex world. As we navigate the challenges of 2025, the principles and practices discussed in Amman become even more critical for building a more inclusive and peaceful future.

- Shifting from product-focused to process-oriented approaches in developing YPS strategies grounded in trust and intergenerational collaboration for collective impact

3. See *Peace Impact Framework*: <https://cnxus.org/peace-impact-framework/>

REFLECTIONS ON

THE IDPS DIALOGUE ON COASTAL WEST AFRICA with CLAIRE REGINA AMEYO QUENUM [Association Floraison, Togo]



On the 1st of April, the CSPPS Secretariat met with Claire Regina Améyo Quenum from Togo's country organisation Association Floraison to reflect on the IDPS Regional Dialogue on Coastal West Africa that took place in late March 2024 in Accra, Ghana. **The Dialogue aimed at bringing together a diversity of peacebuilding stakeholders from the region to foster innovative approaches and local initiatives in prevention, peacebuilding and resilience-building.**

Claire emphasized the critical importance of locally-led conflict resolution to ensure stability in conflict-prone and fragile settings. She stressed that locally-rooted approaches not only reflect the realities of communities but also offer sustainable solutions for peace. In this perspective, she advocated for investing in deep context analysis to better understand conflicts and devise locally appropriate solutions.

As the Dialogue was to encourage local approaches, cross-learning exchanges were organised to promote knowledge and experience-sharing. In this context, Claire participated in several sessions though she was particularly sensitive to the discussions around advancing gender-inclusive peacebuilding. One year later, she again emphasized her – and the civil society's – commitment to engaging local women in peacebuilding processes. She insisted women's empowerment was crucial in achieving conflict resolution.

“Women have a key role to play in conflict resolution and have a lot to bring to the table in the Coastal West Africa region. They not only act as mediators during conflicts but also as true liberators and problem-solvers in fragile areas.”

Claire retained the importance of improving responsive governance systems and increasing political commitment. As a conclusion to the discussion, she stressed that collective action from CSOs is crucial to overcome obstacles to peace, with efforts needing to be inclusive and locally-driven, especially given the current context in Coastal West Africa.





AMPLIFYING
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AMPLIFYING

The purpose of this section is to highlight a range of activities CSPPS has undertaken in the past year to continue its efforts in amplifying the voices of those who work in conflict and fragility-affected settings. We firmly believe that their experience should be heard and shared as they possess a deep understanding of local dynamics and on-the-ground realities. Our aim is to include them in international-level discussions, high-level forums, and decision-making processes related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In the current context, global restrictions and the shrinking of civic space further hinder civil society's ability to be heard. Aligned with these principles, and to support local peacebuilders in overcoming these challenges, CSPPS has continued throughout 2024 to provide its members with broader platforms to share their experiences and expertise, inviting them to key events and including them in various projects.

VOICES OF SDG16+ CAMPAIGN

"Voices of SDG16+: Stories for Global Action" is a collaborative video campaign designed to spotlight the important work of civil society on SDG16+ globally, in the context of the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). In this initiative, individuals and CSOs are invited to submit short videos sharing their "stories" of best practices and efforts advancing SDG16+ at local and national levels. This year's sixth edition focused on the theme "Bolstering action on SDG16+ in times of converging crises." A side event was held during the HLPF on July 10, 2024, to showcase selected videos from organisations including Foundation IDEO (Haiti), Norsaac (Ghana), Speak Out Africa Initiative (Nigeria), JAMAA (Democratic Republic of Congo), Fundación Sueños y Huellas (Colombia), and Wahana Visi (Indonesia). The selected videos from the 2024 finalists are available on our [Youtube channel](#).



PEACE CORNER PODCAST

The Peace Corner Podcast is an intern and youth-driven initiative that offers peacebuilders worldwide the opportunity to share stories that voice personal journeys, challenges and solutions for peace, from the grassroots level to the national and international levels. This year, interns from CSPPS and the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) contributed to the eighth season of the podcast, under the theme of "CTRL + Peace: Navigating the Digital Age". This year, Suvetha Suthan, Léna Noel, Gabrielle Arnaud, Charlotte Le Faucheur and Tifaine Amiotte-Suchet recorded an episode, featuring a different aspect of the interconnection between new technologies and peacebuilding, such as interlinkages between technologies and migration, the use of new technology in peacebuilding or again the concept of cyberjustice. All episodes from the Peace Corner Podcast can be listened to on [Soundcloud](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), and [Spotify](#).



BRIEFING PAPERS

In the context of the implementation of the German BMZ grant, CSPPS is developing briefing papers on various themes interlinked to peacebuilding and conflict prevention to demonstrate the multifaceted and diverse work of peacebuilding efforts at CSPPS. These Briefing papers give an introduction on the interlinkages between peacebuilding and conflict prevention with other themes such as gender, climate change or migration. The papers dive into examples of CSPPS members' work around these themes to highlight how these interlinkages play out in practice, from their experience and perspectives. In 2024, the Platform published its first briefing paper on the Gender and Peacebuilding Nexus, available both in French and English.

CSPPS/ DUTCH MFA/ KPSRL - PATHWAYS FOR LOCALLY-LED CHANGE, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Together with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL) and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CSPPS developed the “Unboxing Localisation Trajectory” project with the aim of gathering and sharing existing policies and practices on locally led development within the context of SDG16+. Issued in July, the report, “Pathways for Locally Led Change: Lessons & Recommendations from the Unboxing Localisation’ Trajectory” builds on the findings from different sessions organised with CSOs.

MEMBERS STORIES

In 2024, CSPPS launched a new series to deepen engagement with its members and showcase their contributions to peacebuilding. Each story features one of our members, highlighting their mission, activities, and specific projects. You can explore these stories on our dedicated “Stories” webpage.

SUPPORTING THE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF CSOs IN THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW PROCESS: THE CASE OF SOUTH SUDAN

During the High-Level Policy Forum (HLPF), the main United Nations platform on sustainable development taking place every year in New York in July, Member States have the opportunity to report voluntarily, taking stock and assessing progress and challenges in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national and sub-national levels. This is to be conducted through an inclusive government-led review, otherwise known as the Voluntary National Review Report (VNR), concluding in a presentation of the report at the HLPF.

REFLECTIONS ON

THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW IN SOUTH SUDAN with TABAN A. CHRISTOPHER *[Vision for Generation]*



During the High-Level Policy Forum (HLPF), the main United Nations platform on sustainable development taking place every year in New York in July, Member States have the opportunity to report voluntarily, taking stock and assessing progress and challenges in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national and sub-national levels. This is to be conducted through an inclusive government-led review, otherwise known as the Voluntary National Review Report (VNR), concluding in a presentation of the report at the HLPF.

Under what context did the consultation take place?

The Government of the Republic of South Sudan led in 2024 the first-ever Voluntary National Review (VNR) process in South Sudan. Assessing progress and challenges in the implementation of SDG16, this inclusive government-led review in South Sudan involved close consultations between the government and civil society organisations, including Vision for Generation (V4G).

What motivated V4G to participate in this process?

V4G was motivated by the experience during the UPR process in South Sudan, as it was important to cement its role as a peacebuilding organisation that focuses on inclusive peace, equal justice, and an accountable democratic process. Most importantly, the peace agreement implementation is fragile in the country. It was therefore critical to evaluate the pace of the progress made on its implementation as part of SDG16, and to identify potential challenges and perhaps the influence of V4G and wider CSOs.

The frequent miscarriage of justice in South Sudan is on a whiteboard, so it was important for the team to evaluate and determine implementation around that area. The weak institutions of the country do not allow the justice system to prevail, as the service delivery is challenged, and policy implementation is on the raw. These were important to examine. The availability of Human resources and the high spirit and team spirit of the CSO members were other factors that motivated the team.

How did the consultation process unfold, and what was V4G's role in it?

CSOs convened for consultative meetings to, agree, plan, and establish a functioning committee to lead the process. Several consultations took place, both in-person (in Juba) and online. V4G was at the center of all the processes of coordination, planning, organising, controlling, and reporting. This, therefore, enhanced the integrity, reputation, and relationship between V4G, CSOs with the government. V4G coordinated CSO members whose thematic areas and expertise are in the SDG16 realm.

The process was financially supported by Oxfam, CSPPS, Women Peace International Center under the Just future programme.

What were the key outcomes of this process at the international level?

The VNR process was marked by the debriefing and report submission of a shadow report, drafted by civil society to the government, and a presentation by a civil society representative at the HLPF in New York, in July 2024. Most of the key recommendations from SDG16, which the government presented during the HLPF, were all picked from the CSOs shadow report.

How did the VNR contribute to stronger collaboration between V4G and the different stakeholders of the process?

The dedication and commitment of the CSPPS Country Team were both inspirational and motivational. Throughout the engagement, the scale of advocacy and lobbying was elevated through press conferences, meetings, and public forums—marking another important stepping stone.

Through strengthened collaboration, the VNR process improved coordination between CSOs and the relevant ministries. In this regard, it set a precedent for parallel engagement for the first time.

Leading this process also allowed us to gain increased influence in certain areas of decision-making; for example, country members were invited to share their experiences during the evaluation meeting led by the government. The already strong relationship with the aforementioned ministries never discouraged us. Team strength, coordination within the country, and information sharing were all aligned with our advocacy and lobbying efforts—although joint messages have not yet been developed.





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In 2024, CSPPS actively engaged in a series of high-level events to forge collective strategies, reinforce partnerships, and align on priorities for the years ahead. With a clear focus on SDG16+ and the broader 2030 Agenda, CSPPS continued its advocacy on the international stage. CSPPS advocated for inclusive peacebuilding, demanded greater civic space, and called for bold, transformative commitments that put local voices at the center of global action.

CSPPS 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN BERLIN

In an increasingly volatile and uncertain world, CSPPS gathered its members during its CSPPS Annual Conference 2024 entitled “Strengthening Civil Society in an Unstable World”, the first week of June to discuss strategies to strengthen resilience and peacebuilding efforts.” The goal was to bring together members; encourage relationships and partnerships between members; discuss, identify, and solidify the strategic priorities of the Platform for the next two years; identify potential partnership opportunities with IDPS and BMZ partners, and share reflections on the current state of SDG16 in CSPPS member countries. During the week, a CSPPS side-event to the 2024 FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum was held. It focused on “How to Build a New Climate for Peace?”. Speakers came from civil society and governmental sides to engage in a Davos-style conversation about the multiple perspectives and concrete possibilities for shifting power towards an environment conducive to the collective achievement of a sustainable peace. In this regard, representatives of CSPPS members shared their knowledge and experience, and drew on their own work to demonstrate that less common methods of peacebuilding can have a significant impact.

In this context, the Platform issued the Berlin statement to emphasise the importance of taking action in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (especially SDG16) and recognising the unique value of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS).



REFLECTIONS ON

THE CSPPS 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE with KASSEM ISTANBOULI [Tiro Association, Lebanon]



Reflecting on his experience, Kassem shared that the Conference brought a renewed perspective to his engagement with the Platform. It was the first time he met CSPPS members in person, which gave him the opportunity to have meaningful conversations and build genuine connections. He emphasised that meeting face-to-face made a significant difference and laid the groundwork for stronger future collaboration. He noted that these personal interactions greatly reinforced his sense of belonging within the network, helping him move beyond the more distant relationships formed during previous online meetings.

He pointed out that there are many different avenues through which peace can be pursued. Coming from Lebanon, and considering the escalating situations in both Gaza and Lebanon, he felt it was critical to share experiences and perspectives. While acknowledging that small organisations like his can contribute to peace efforts, he also stressed that the major obstacles remain with those in political power. He expressed the need to continue putting pressure on governments, while simultaneously working at the local level to foster peace.

Regarding the FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum, Kassem particularly appreciated the interactive and participatory elements of the event. He mentioned a video project that captured members' visions of peace and found the sharing of experiences—especially from German members—particularly inspiring. For him, every meeting is valuable, as he believes that without collective action for peace, no positive change can occur.

Looking ahead, Kassem expressed the importance of maintaining momentum and deepening collaboration. He mentioned that working together with other members can help amplify their voices and strengthen their impact.

Being part of the CSPPS network, he said, now gives them a stronger platform and greater opportunities to connect with others at the international level.

Reflecting on the past year, he underlined that the CSPPS membership has been highly beneficial for the Tiro Association. It has strengthened the organisation, opened doors for dialogue, and facilitated new partnerships. This, in turn, has allowed them to bring others into the conversation and build collective strength. As for Tiro Association's priorities for the upcoming year, Kassem affirmed the organisation's commitment to using its CSPPS membership to promote dialogue, lead peacebuilding initiatives, and encourage regional cooperation, especially in a context marked by increasing conflict and instability. He also expressed a desire for continued collaboration and stronger joint advocacy efforts among members of the Platform.



SUPPORTING THE ADVANCEMENT TOWARDS PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

2024 marked a pivotal year for SDG16 as it was reviewed during the High-Level Political Forum. CSPPS engaged within the SDG16 Global Coalition and with other partners to advocate for more peaceful, just and inclusive societies, including at the United Nations level.

In this context, CSPPS co-hosted a **SDG16+ Informal Roundtable Dialogue Series** in the margins of various global forums throughout the year, including the World Bank Fragility Forum, the SDG16 Conference, HLPF, UNGA and the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4). These discussions aimed to identify and address challenges, catalyze political commitments, and strengthen support for civil society engagement in the implementation of SDG16 and beyond. The sessions allowed exchanges on the need for increased and innovative financing, empowering local leadership, integrating SDG16+ across sectors and building solidarity, reframing narratives to gain broader support, enhancing the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms and ensuring inclusivity in decision-making.

CSPPS also remained a key stakeholder in the **SDG16 Conference**, co-organised by the Permanent Mission of Italy, UNDESA and IDLO. Held in the UN Headquarters in New York. The conference gathered government representatives, international organisations, civil society and academia to discuss and find means to get SDG16 back on track. As in previous years and in collaboration with the TAP Network, the Platform gathered contributions and input from civil society organisations to draft the 5th iteration of the **Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+** entitled "Beyond Rhetoric: Securing SDG16+ for Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies". The Declaration calls for urgency toward a more comprehensive approach in achieving SDG16+ and stipulates action-oriented recommendations in five key areas that require immediate action and genuine commitment to peaceful, just and inclusive societies.



During the **2024 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)**, countries reported on their achievements and progress toward the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The CSPPS Secretariat and various members actively participated in various discussions and attended several events hosted by the SDG16 community and beyond. Member States, UN agencies, and civil society representatives shared their efforts to advance the targets of SDG16 both nationally and internationally. The discussions underscored the vital role of civil society in UN processes and emphasised the growing importance of storytelling as a means to highlight impactful initiatives and tangible progress at the local and national levels.

ADVOCATING FOR MEANINGFUL INCLUSION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AT THE UNITED NATIONS

In September, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, CSPPS together with partners from the **SDG16+ Global Coalition** co-organised a high-level side event titled "Peace, Justice, and Inclusive Institutions for a Sustainable Future for All." The event was hosted by the Permanent Mission of Luxembourg to the United Nations and brought together ministers, donor partners, practitioners and civil society representatives. Its goal was to reinvigorate global efforts toward achieving SDG16+, promoting innovative solutions and reinforcing commitments to peace, justice, equality, inclusion, and democratic governance as essential foundations for sustainable development.

During the UNGA, the CSPPS Secretariat also attended the **Summit for the Future**. The event was aimed at bringing world leaders, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders to forge a new international consensus on how to address the current issues and safeguard a safe future. On this occasion, CSPPS co-organised a side event on the 21st of September with the African Development Bank Group, Finance for Peace, UNDPPA, and Interpeace on 'Investing in Prevention: Scaling up – A Call to Action for Development Finance Institutions'. The discussion explored how to put the agenda for peace into action, the role of International Financial Institutions in becoming agents for peace and the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships to effectively invest in prevention and scaling-up peace through peace-positive investments.

2ND UN-CSO DIALOGUE

In an effort to bring the voice of civil society to the United Nations, CSPPS invited members to participate in the 2nd Annual CSO-UN Dialogue on Peacebuilding. Held in December, the event brought together civil society, UN representatives, and Member States to tackle urgent peacebuilding challenges. Amid growing global crises, the event emphasised the importance of inclusive partnerships, trust-building, and meaningful civil society engagement at all levels. CSPPS members contributed insights on enhancing conflict prevention and making peacebuilding more effective. Speakers highlighted civil society's vital role in addressing escalating violence, stressing the need for strong leadership, collaboration, and context-specific and conflict-sensitive strategies. CSPPS welcomed the creation of an impact coalition on peacebuilding and called for the commitments in the Pact for the Future to lead to concrete actions, including better partnerships and funding solutions.

REFLECTIONS ON

THE 2024 KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM, SECURITY & RULE OF LAW ANNUAL CONFERENCE by VINCENT AZUMAH [WANEP]



In November, CSPPS travelled to Dakar, Senegal to participate in the annual conference of the Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (KPAC24), which focused on “Building trust, pacifying power, connecting realities”. KPAC24 was co-organised by the Gorée Institute and REPAOC [CSPPS Focal Point in Ghana].

The 2024 Knowledge Platform, Security & Rule of Law Annual Conference (KPAC24) co-organised by CSPPS in Dakar, Senegal in November 2024 was a real platform for ideas and lessons on how to enhance networking in supporting CSOs work across West Africa. Particularly, the session moderated by CSPPS that discussed “Restrictions of Freedom and Civic Space in West Africa” unearthed relevant issues that do not only need attention but also a follow-up process that would keep the issues on the top-burner to attract CSOs and donor community attention. Even though the session was short and could have benefitted from a better advertisement, it was perhaps one of the best and critical sessions that showcased discussions from the community, national and to the regional strategic levels.

The issues of freedom of expression, the growing self-censoring and the apparent gagging of CSOs is more widespread than initially thought. The regional consequences of these trends on inclusivity, electoral processes and the waning of democracy was clearly espoused at the conference.

The conference and its many great side events also enhanced networking and created an avenue for CSOs and allied organisations doing similar work to begin conversations, collaboration and coordination. These good conversations must be continued and guided to yield greater fruits. In this perspective, the process of networking around youth, women and the inclusion of other vulnerable and marginalised groups in decision-making processes is one key area that promises to bring a lot of organisations in the region together. It is also important to develop a follow-up mechanism to harness the potentials that the networking around the issues could bring.

One key reason why the conference must harness the great ideas and discussions to build a more robust network of CSOs is the importance of safeguarding civic space which the conference has established is crucial for enhancing the protection of rights, fostering social cohesion and advancing democracy in a region bedevilled with increasing threats not only to democracy but also to lives and livelihoods of poor, vulnerable and excluded groups.

Safeguarding civic space in West Africa will also see citizens engagement in activism, community development, advocacy and generally enhancing inclusivity governance, peacebuilding decision making and driving positive change and development as seen in ways that CSOs were able to bring the Liberian war - one of the world’s most chilling wars to an end.

Safeguarding civic space will also ensure the building of resilient and sustainable mechanisms that can withstand and push back the threats of restrictions in fundamental freedoms, intimidations and harassment, violence, terrorism, and also digital right violations such as censorship, surveillance and data protection breaches.

Safeguarding civic space will however not come cheap. There must be series of capacity building in designing and operating early warning and early response systems, capacity building programmes including learning exchanges, develop new digital protection processes and enhance existing ones, support research and knowledge building in a fast-changing context. These actions and processes must not be one-offs but sustained and resourced to protect and promote fundamental freedoms and inclusive democratic decision making and peacebuilding in West Africa.

CONTINUING AND REINFORCING THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH GERMANY

In January 2024, the partnership agreement between Cordaid (on behalf of CSPPS) and the German **BMZ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development** was approved and signed by both parties after which the implementation of activities commenced. CSPPS is grateful for the continued support and partnership with the German government. The partnership provides the Platform with needed support to carry out its core functions: coordinating a global network of civil society organisations that support peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

The partnership is also testament of Germany's commitment and support for the role of civil society in international policy dialogue domains. As CSPPS we look forward to working in partnership with BMZ and other departments in making the case for peacebuilding, conflict prevention and the role of civil society therein. The Platform looks forward to continue this partnership in 2025 and to further engagement with the German government on issues of shared concern including gender equality, climate change, migration, health and pandemic preparedness, food security or digitalisation.



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

UPDATES FROM OUR MEMBERS

REPAOC [SENEGAL]

The Senegalese regional coalition, REPAOC, was admitted to the AfDB-Civil Society Committee 2024-2026 to represent the civil society of the whole West Africa. REPAOC was also invited to come on board as co-host of the 2024 Annual Conference of the Knowledge Platform on Security and Rule of Law, KPAC24 [see p. 33]

ESPACES VERTS SAHEL[CHAD]

Joël Yodoyman developed a project named 'Seeds of Peace' which aims to promote education for citizenship and sustainable development to make it a lever for peace and development, contribute to the consolidation of the national strategy for civic promotion, and to equip young Chadians and make them major players in civic action and the consolidation of national unity. You can read more on this inspiring initiative [here](#).

TIRO ASSOCIATION FOR ARTS [LEBANON]

TAA developed a crowdfunding campaign for peace and children "The Peace Art Bus - Training for Children displaced by the War in Lebanon" to gather funds for the Peace Art Bus to continue to transport children to places and workshops where they can have a safe environment to express themselves, play, learn, and enjoy being with each other.

POSITIVE PEACE ETHIOPIA

In July, PPE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the FDRE Ministry of Peace. This agreement marks a significant milestone in PPE's journey towards fostering peace and development in Ethiopia. PPE was also awarded the ActionAID program "Youth-Let Peace Weavers of Tigray" last November. The program is aimed at the youth and women through peace-building workshops, social media campaigns, and interregional discussions on the issues of misinformation, trauma healing and conflict resolution.

AJCAD [MALI]

Adama Dicko has been awarded the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders-U.S. Department of State. We extend our sincere congratulations on this stellar achievement !

UPDATES FROM OUR MEMBERS

RAYONS DE SOLEIL [CAMEROON]

Fidèle Djebba was elected in August as national President of the National Council for Popular Education in Cameroon. We extend our congratulations to her and wish her the best of luck in this position.

AFGHAN FOR PROGRESSIVE THINKING

APT has now published a series of articles, where 30 young women use their voices and experiences to create compelling stories and raise awareness of the reality in their country. These stories narrate how the Taliban regime has progressively ousted women from their fundamental rights, until recently prohibiting them from raising their voices or speaking to each other outside their homes. You can find the collection of articles [here](#). We encourage you greatly to read and re-share these articles widely to further amplify their voices (X, Instagram, Linked-In) .

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK FOR 2025

2025 will be a pivotal year for the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and civil society at large. As crises, tensions, and armed conflicts continue to escalate, many states are increasingly prioritising the rearmament of national armies, often at the expense of peacebuilding and conflict prevention initiatives. In this context, securing funding and building new partnerships becomes more essential than ever to sustain ongoing efforts. More broadly, this shift in priorities has serious consequences for the whole peacebuilding and conflict prevention domain. International and local NGOs are struggling to advance their missions amid widespread budget cuts and shrinking support. The elimination of vital development assistance represents a serious threat to the promotion of peaceful, just and inclusive societies, as the complementarity between different types of engagement and funding to reduce threats is not well addressed.

In this evolving context, special attention needs to be directed to local actors at the forefront of responding to and resolving conflicts. Consequently, our work on SDG16 is today more relevant than ever, making it imperative to focus our efforts on promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies where institutions function responsively and effectively. In this regard, in 2025, CSPPS wishes to continue bringing the voices of civil societies to the international policy level, notably through the proactive participation in the partnership of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and other policy domains. At the same time we will also pro-actively help to reshape partnerships, to make them fit for addressing the challenges of today's world.

During the coming year, CSPPS aims to continue amplifying local practitioner voices as well as support those who do not have the spaces to get their message out. CSPPS will, thereby, continue to do so throughout various initiatives, such as the SDG16+ Storytelling Campaigns in partnership with other organisations, to highlight the work done by practitioners in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies. In our member stories initiative we will continue to put a spotlight on the efforts of local CSPPS's members in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts as a way to strengthen their voices. Moreover during the upcoming year, CSPPS will lead coalitions in advocating for inclusive governance, ensuring that peacebuilding and prevention processes are responsive to the lived realities of local communities. By enhancing grassroots engagement and strengthening the members' capacities, to foster locally-led solutions that are more sustainable and effective.

CSPPS will pursue its lobbying efforts, on reaching the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development goals through the SDG16+ initiatives. For instance, by spearheading the drafting of the 2025 Rome Civil Society Declaration on SDG16+ and presenting it along with other civil society colleagues at the upcoming SDG16 conference that will be held at the UN headquarters in New York.

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK FOR 2025

The declaration takes stock of the current context and state of play for SDG 16+ issues, which include the existential threats faced by civil society, the budget cuts allocated for peace and development, and the rise of violent conflicts. This is, therefore, going to be an opportunity for CSPPS to call-for action and present a series of recommendations to accelerate and scale up action on SDG16+.

Furthermore, the following year will also be the opportunity for CSPPS to attend networking events to raise awareness on the aforementioned issues that the platform is expected to encounter during 2025, but this will also be the opportunity to share the work that CSPPS and its members have been spearheading. To achieve these goals, CSPPS will actively source for new partnerships and support opportunities to implement and follow up on these matters. Our work as a platform can only be nurtured through long-term support and commitment. The upcoming projects are just the beginning of a broader, sustained effort to translate global initiatives into concrete and impactful actions. Together, all of us can make a difference in shaping a more secure, peaceful and resilient future for all. The Platform is looking forward to continuing this journey in partnership with all of you.

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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**CIVIL SOCIETY
PLATFORM**
FOR PEACEBUILDING
AND STATEBUILDING

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONSULT OUR WEBSITE :
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