Keeping Hope Alive
Christian Aid’s work on peace
Internal investment fund
17/18 review
Christian Aid exists to create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. But together we have the power to transform lives.

We are a global movement of people, churches and local organisations who passionately champion dignity, equality and justice in 37 countries worldwide. We are the changemakers, the peacemakers, the mighty of heart.

We provide urgent, practical help in times of crisis and beyond. We seek to eradicate extreme poverty by tackling its root causes. Together with people living in poverty, we amplify our voices to speak truth to power and create lasting change.

Everyone is equal in the sight of God. For over 70 years this has inspired us to stand together in solidarity with our global neighbours, of all faiths and none.

christianaid.org.uk
Introduction

In 2016, more countries experienced violent conflict than at any time in nearly 30 years. If current trends persist, by 2030 – the horizon set by the international community for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – more than half of the world’s poor will be living in countries affected by high levels of violence. This rise in violence has been accompanied by a global undermining of civil society space and an increase in attacks on those at the frontline of protecting human rights and calling for peace locally, with more than 300 murdered in 2017.

It is clear that peacebuilding efforts are off course and that development and faith-based actors have a role to play in changing violence to peace.

In 2015, Christian Aid established an internal investment fund to encourage a more specific focus on tackling violence and building peace, in line with the organisation’s strategic objectives.

This has involved:

- four annual rounds of funding to date
- £400,000–£500,000 allocated to the fund each year
- projects supported in 16 countries, with budgets of £20,000–£100,000
- projects funded subject to a competitive selection process.

At the end of each funding round, Christian Aid has commissioned an internal review to identify lessons learned. This summary brings together the findings, as a contribution to the impact study on Christian Aid’s work on peace.

Objectives

This fund has been instrumental to the development of our work in this area.

While understanding how violence and violent conflict affects human development was already integral to much of Christian Aid’s work, having a dedicated internal investment fund has enabled us to explore different approaches and expand our work on moving from violence to peace.

Four strategic objectives were identified when the investment fund was established:

- Raise the profile of Christian Aid’s work on peace.
- Leverage additional funding for peacebuilding.
- Generate learning and evidence of impact.
- Help identify clear areas of focus at country level where Christian Aid could contribute to the development of programming on moving from violence to peace.

‘It is clear that peacebuilding efforts are off course and that development and faith-based actors have a role to play in changing violence to peace’
The fund contributed to the development of Christian Aid’s 2016 peacebuilding strategy. The strategy sets out three programmatic outcomes:

1. Those most at risk of violence are safe, secure and more resilient.
2. The risk of gender-based violence is reduced; survivors receive support; women, men and institutions work to change conditions which lead to gender-based violence.
3. Local communities’ peace building efforts are amplified in peace and accountability processes.

Lessons learned

What does it mean to work on peace?

Christian Aid recognises that without a clear focus on peace, there can be no sustainable development, and that we need to work not just in conflict, but on conflict. The challenge for the fund is to set boundaries around what it means to work on peace specifically.

The importance of linking local peacebuilding to national, regional and global processes for transformative change

The fund has supported projects at local, national, regional and global level, recognising that peace must be built at all these levels. However, projects were particularly successful where they linked two or more levels together.

Building bridges between faith-based and human rights actors

Christian Aid is viewed in many instances as both a trusted partner for faith-based organisations and one able to take a critical approach to faith structures where they stand in the way of peace and justice. Some of the projects have bridged the divide between human rights organisations and faith-based organisations.
Ensuring meaningful gender equality
Greater disaggregation of data in round three revealed that while more women than men benefited from the projects overall, there were a greater number of male than female youth participants, and certain projects found it harder to recruit women to leadership positions.

Addressing protection concerns
Working on peace does not necessarily lead to a reduction in violence in the short term, and those most at risk are often the implementing partners. Protection for partners needs to be addressed.

Combating the spread of misinformation
The spread of hate speech and misinformation in conflict-affected communities is a concern, and is exacerbated by social media. Some recent projects have set out to tackle this specifically.

Demonstrating impact
Evidence of impact often came across more clearly in conversations with staff and partners or during field visits, rather than in the project reports. Staff on the From Violence to Peace team are supporting the round four projects to better demonstrate impact.

Considering challenging contexts
By their nature, projects working on violence and peace will be operating in volatile circumstances, where outcomes are difficult to achieve. The challenging context should be considered when reviewing outcomes.

Piloting new approaches
In general, Christian Aid prefers to work with partners over the longer term, and this is particularly important when it comes to building peace. However, the fund was deliberately conceived as a short-term annual fund (although many projects were successful in obtaining a second year of funding). This format our longstanding partners to focus more specifically on peacebuilding, piloting new approaches, and enabled us to develop our expertise on specific issues by partnering with new organisations.

Always learning
Finally, while projects are expected to contribute to the key outcomes and objectives, the investment fund allows scope for flexibility and adaptability. Where circumstances curtail or necessitate a change in project activities, Christian Aid seeks to learn from the experience by gathering information on what happened, how it was handled, and what lessons can be learned.
Our impact

Round one (2015/16)

Angola:

- The Angolan Council of Churches established seven multi-stakeholder peacebuilding clubs in four provinces.
- In 2015, Building Bridges, a regional peacebuilding initiative, held its second roundtable in Windhoek, Namibia, which set out a regional agenda for transitional justice.
- Through the Girls Building Bridges programme, 210 girls received life skills training and participated in awareness raising on human rights and gender-based violence, reaching more than 7,000 people. (Christian Aid's funding enabled 60 girls to benefit from this training.)
- The Evangelical Christian Church of Angola trained 72 community leaders in human rights and peaceful responses to abuses and violence, reaching approximately 2,500 families in 18 villages.

South Sudan:

- Based on participatory conflict analysis, partner Hope Agency for Relief and Development worked with 200 community members on conflict transformation and how to recognise early warning signs, and established peacebuilding committees and forums and broader community work.
- The South Sudan Theatre Organisation trained 83 actors and performed nine interactive street performances to raise awareness of peace and reconciliation.
- Christian Aid carried out significant research into local approaches to conflict transformation, and the national relevance of these models and lessons to key donors shaping responses to peace.
- The South Sudan Council of Churches’ peacebuilding work was supported through the creation of a new peacebuilding and advocacy officer role.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):

- Congo Peace Network trained 100 young people as facilitators of community dialogue to work with their communities to develop safety plans.

Myanmar:

- Partner Non-Violence Peace Force focused on peacebuilding in Karen communities in 25 villages.

Pakistan:

- Christian Aid supported the formation of a Women Peacebuilding Network in Peshawar district by the Pakistan Council for World Religions and the Peace Education and Development Foundation. Fifty women of different faiths were supported to participate on an equal platform with men; more than 400 young people were involved in project activities; and more than 1,200
people were engaged through networking and community consultation.

**Egypt:**
- In Minya province, Christian Aid’s partner Better Life trained 25 teachers and worked with young people to explore rights and duties and challenge accepted ideas. Community peace committees were formed.

**Colombia/Haiti/Brazil:**
- The Inter-Church Commission for Justice and Peace (CIJP) developed its work in Colombia on addressing and preventing gender-based violence. This included a learning exchange with partners from Brazil (Anglican Service for Diaconia and Development) and Haiti (Social Mission of Evangelic Churches). CIJP is now developing a capacity building programme on gender-based violence.

**Round two (2016/17)**
The projects from Angola, DRC, Egypt, Myanmar and South Sudan Projects were given a second year of funding.

- In DRC, a new implementing partner for the project was chosen, Un Jour Nouveau, and the Karen Development Network and the Gender and Development Institute were funded in Myanmar.

**Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory:**
- Christian Aid supported partner Arab Association for Human Rights to implement a youth-led human rights programme for Palestinian secondary school students in Israel. Young adults (university students) were trained as facilitators to lead training in rights awareness and community project planning to 10 groups of secondary school pupils.

**Central America (Honduras):**
- Partner Centro de Desarrollo Humano (Centre for Human Development) works with young people and women in six municipalities in southern Honduras to reduce violence. More than 100 people took part in workshops on gender-based violence and conflict transformation and interactions between youth and women’s networks and government and community structures were improved.

**Round three (2017/18)**
Projects in DRC, Honduras, Myanmar and South Sudan were continued or extended, with new partners and projects coming on board in South Sudan. Six new projects were funded.

**Bolivia:**
- Partners Fundación Machaqa Amawta and the Institute for Transparency and Accountability (UNITAS) trained 473 women and 250 men on Law 243 on harassment and political violence against women. Six organisations formalised their mechanisms for combating harassment and political violence against women, and a national advocacy committee was created, recognised and consulted as a credible representative organisation.
Keeping Hope Alive: Christian Aid’s work on peace

Above: In Nigeria, Christian Aid and partners reached remote communities to involve them in an early warning system for conflict.

Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory:
- Partner Zochrot aimed to educate Israeli society about the Nakba (the 1948 Palestinian exodus) and introduce the concept of transitional justice. Zochrot saw increased interest in Nakba materials and a film festival was popular.

Nicaragua:
- Christian Aid enhanced its expertise in human trafficking by partnering with the Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas. It put the issue on the agenda in three municipalities and nationally.

Nigeria:
- Partner Youth in Support of Community Development aimed to establish early warning and response systems in target communities to prevent tensions from escalating into widespread violence. Peace committees were formed to intervene in farmer/herder conflicts, which led to Fulani herders returning to some villages and the re-establishment of relationships.

Zimbabwe:
- Partner Centre for Conflict Management and Transformation trains young people in Buddie Circles to have a positive influence on the peaceful resolution of violent and potentially violent conflicts over land, water and political allegiances. Three members contested council sets in elections, demonstrating an increase in confidence as changemakers.

Round four (2018/19)
Christian Aid’s From Violence to Peace team decided to invite fewer, larger projects from a more targeted list of countries. The project in Zimbabwe was selected to continue and expand on the previous round, and three new projects were selected in Brazil, Burundi and Myanmar.
Brazil:
- Partner Movement of People Affected by Dams works with women human rights defenders in the Amazon to develop strong community-based protection plans and advocate protection and support from prosecutors.

Burundi:
- The National Council of Churches in Burundi and Inter-Faith Council of Burundi aim to strengthen an inter-faith platform on peace, establishing a conflict analysis system and network of community dialogue facilitators.

Myanmar:
- Following a successful funding bid to the Joint Peace Fund for the previous Myanmar Investment Fund project partner, the investment fund is supporting two new partners in Rakhine state. Peace and Development Initiative and Building Better Society will build and revive traditional practices of community dialogue.

Below: In Burundi, Ernest Nyambere is the catechist in Gatumba parish church and a member of the disaster committee set up by our partner the Anglican Church of Burundi. The Anglican Church will be one of the faiths represented on the Inter-faith Platform for Peace that Christian Aid is supporting in Burundi.
Endnotes


Cover: Girls from the project Girls Building Bridges, run by partner Women’s Christian Union take part in a warm up game, singing and clapping before their class.

Photographs: cover: Christian Aid/Lily Peel; p4: Christian Aid/Amy Smith; p8: YOTASCID/Iliya Magaji; p9: Christian Aid/Sarah Rowe.
Contact us

Karol Balfe
Christian Aid Ireland
Canal House
Canal Road
Dublin 6

kbalfe@christian-aid.org
christianaid.org.uk