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## LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER AND CEO

2020: It was always going to be a big year for ICAN.

To mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the women, peace and security agenda (WPS), we planned the launch of the global She Builds Peace Campaign and Call to Action.

Our goal has been to bring greater global recognition and support for Women Peacebuilders. Women who stand up to violence and take on the responsibility to protect communities while those with the power of the guns, bombs and drones target civilians.

But the year was like no other. The rollercoaster started on January 7<sup>th</sup> as the threat of an Iran-U.S. war compelled us to issue a public statement:

“the possibility of a third world war flickered across our screens... This event...shows de-escalation is not enough...[It] has worsened the situation in Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and Afghanistan. So, we women peacebuilders...spanning the world have one word to share with global leaders and the world: Enough!”

The incident reaffirmed the importance of the locally rooted, globally connected work of our partners in the Women’s Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL). Just as we regrouped however, the COVID-19 pandemic engulfed us, threatening to sideline the urgent call for ceasefires and peacebuilding.

But our partners did not stop. They didn’t even miss a beat. True to their nature, from Indonesia to Yemen they became first responders, sharing guidelines about masks, hand washing and PPE. As trusted interlocutors they dealt with spikes in domestic violence and produced food packages for those in need.

At ICAN we did not stop either. We anticipated how the world would turn inward to address their domestic crises and lose sight of fragile contexts. We saw the cuts in aid funding. We feared the rise of extremism as governments failed to respond to citizens’ basic livelihood needs and militants filled the vacuum, providing aid while preaching anger and fear. With international actors absent and public mistrust in their states growing, we anticipated that our partners would be even more indispensable.

In March 2020 I wrote to our WASL partners to share our perspectives and promise to them. We pivoted our work and re-allocated funds so our partners had the resources needed to withstand the pandemic and carry on their critical community work safely. Through our advocacy, we highlighted the urgent need for gender-responsive COVID-19-related aid.

We also took advantage of the virtual space by setting up a weekly global check-in call and inviting ministers and ambassadors from around the world to meet our partners. We piloted new skills-building initiatives for our partners including using mobile phones for video reporting and security and risk assessments.

In October, as part of the She Builds Peace campaign, in time for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, we launched three frameworks on the recognition, protection and financing of women peacebuilders. The studies and our ongoing advisory work are already influencing the actions of numerous governments.

In December we successfully advocated to have the recognition and protection of women peacebuilders mandated in UNSCR 2560, the latest in the WPS agenda.

In between we did not lose sight of the struggles for racial justice in our neighborhoods in the US. We pledged to take action against racism and discrimination by joining over 200 organizations in our field in support of the Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security solidarity statement.

In short, despite being in lockdown, it was a busy year.

We still have much to do. The pandemic has unleashed further militarization, authoritarianism and hate speech globally. But it has also proven the importance of our mission and approach.

I am grateful to have extraordinary partners by our side—from the WASL network to governments and international organizations—that are critical to our community of practice. As always, I’m humbled to have the trust of ICAN’s supporters, board and team.

Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, MBE

”  
We still have much to do. The pandemic has unleashed further militarization, authoritarianism and hate speech globally. But it has also proven the importance of our mission and approach.  
”



## ICAN'S MISSION

The International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) is a US-based non-profit organization that promotes inclusive and sustainable peace in countries affected by violent conflict, extremism, militarism, and closing political space. Recognizing the gendered impact of conflict and the transformative role of women peacebuilders (WPBs), we fulfill our mission through a dual strategy of:

- Shaping and influencing the peace and security policies of governments, multilateral organizations, and the wider international community by providing thought leadership, strategic advice, and gender-responsive analysis and operational guidance; and
- Sustaining and strengthening a global movement of innovative, locally rooted WPBs to have voice and influence wherever matters of peace, violent conflict, rights, and human security are determined.

ICAN brings the word and spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the global Women, Peace and Security agenda to life.



WOMEN'S ALLIANCE FOR SECURITY LEADERSHIP

A leading alliance of locally rooted, globally connected independent women peacebuilders and women-led peacebuilding organizations addressing violent conflict, militarism and extremism by fostering peace, resilience, equality, and pluralism



Transforming the policy and practice of preventing and countering violent extremism through gender analysis, technical support, and advocacy that highlights the pioneering work and expertise of women peacebuilders



A global call to action to stand with women peacebuilders by recognizing their work, ensuring their participation in peace and security processes, and guaranteeing their protection and sustainable funding



Providing cutting-edge policy and programmatic guidance and strategic accompaniment to peacebuilders and international actors to enable gender-responsive and inclusive peace processes



The only independent, multi-donor global fund dedicated to financing and providing technical assistance to women-led peacebuilding organizations

# OUR STRATEGY AND APPROACH

ICAN implements the following *5 strategies* across all of its programs:

## Innovate and Thought Leadership

Given its position as a bridge between the international policy community and locally rooted women-led peacebuilding organizations across the world, as well as its expertise in gendered security and peace analysis, ICAN offers a unique perspective and nexus on many of the most pressing issues of our day. We believe in women's inherent right to be present in shaping peace and security in their societies.

We advocate for the added value of a gendered lens, demonstrating the pragmatic, fresh solutions that women bring, and providing policy makers with practical guidance. ICAN helps to define, broaden, and improve the discourse and practice of peace, the resolution of wars, and the prevention of violent extremism.



## Build and Sustain the Movement

ICAN spearheads the global Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL), bringing together 91 locally rooted, women-led peace organizations in more than 40 countries and enabling their access to international policy arenas. ICAN takes a holistic approach to the nature and practice of its partnerships by providing personal, professional, and institutional support. This helps strengthen the individuals involved and sets in place organizations and structures to enable more people to participate and deepen the bench with younger generations.

## Mobilize and Provide Resources

ICAN provides access to financial resources, as well as strategic advice, mentoring, and capacity-building development for its partners so their work can have broader and deeper impact in their communities.

## Tell the Stories

Sharing the stories of ICAN's partners' inspirational work is critical to raising awareness and generating wider understanding and support for women peacebuilders. ICAN undertakes this through traditional and digital publication of articles, as well as audio-visual tools that are integrated into its policy outreach and disseminated across social media.

## Enable Access and Connectivity

ICAN provides a critical platform to foster communities of practice and thought leadership on existing and emerging issues of peace and security with a gendered lens and from the perspective of women. Our signature Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) gatherings are designed to ensure a free flow of analysis and exchange among diverse stakeholders, from the local to the global and across sectoral experts. Through regular contact with its partners, ICAN is also able to receive critical early warning news and cutting-edge analysis and insights from the frontlines and helps ensure they are adapted into policy.



Abductees' Mothers Association: On the Front Lines of Yemen's Prisoner Swap



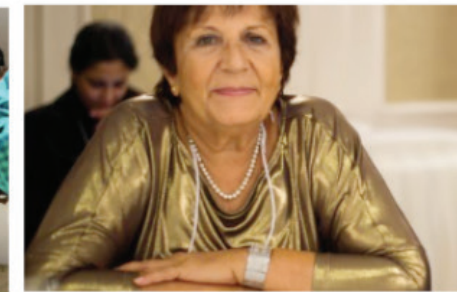
How Hamsatu Allamin Changed Boko Haram to Boko Halal in Nigeria



"Let us go where the guns are loud": How Esther Omam Builds Peace in Cameroon



Boko Haram and Banditry: Northeast Nigeria's Deteriorating Security Situation



Despite Tragedy, Peacebuilder Khedija Arfaoui Remains Resilient



Peace Heroes: How Nigerian Psychologist Fatima Akilu Rehabilitates Extremist Societies



## EXCERPT OF ICAN'S MARCH 2020 LETTER TO WASL

### A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER: ICAN'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

In March 2020 we analyzed the landscape and pivoted our programming to address the urgent pandemic context while maintaining a focus on our mission. We built our core strengths of:

#### 1. Supporting our WASL members, including by:

- Re-allocating funds for our organizational activities to directly support our partners;
- Holding weekly solidarity Zoom calls, which also yielded real-time analysis of trends across conflict zones;
- Providing them summaries of WHO and U.S. CDC guidelines on COVID-19 prevention for dissemination locally;
- Providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) resources and offering sessions on MHPSS and domestic violence during COVID-19;
- Establishing a WASL humanitarian group to share information on producing soap, hand sanitizers, etc. where there was neither soap nor water; and

#### 2. Expanding our strategic communications and policy advocacy work to:

- Maintain attention to crisis settings, the urgency of ceasefires, and peacebuilding;
- Immediately calling for gender-responsive COVID-19 programming;
- Successfully advocating to donors to allow flexible funding for peacebuilders;
- Challenging military budget allocations and calling for human security and development priorities;
- Ensuring the UN Security Council's latest WPS resolution calls for the recognition and protection of women peacebuilders;
- Connecting our partners directly with government ministers and ambassadors globally;
- Continuing our publications and public advocacy to highlight the critical role of women peacebuilders and gender responsiveness in addressing the pandemic.



Dearest Friends,  
 Every day we are hearing the news of the latest statistics and the most recent spread of this new virus. As we watch our own countries react, we at ICAN are again reminded and humbled by your strength and dignity amidst the many and constant challenges you face. It is our privilege to know and have you in our lives, and to learn from you.

It is revealing to us all, yet again, how critical it is to have community-based systems and structures in place.

We are caught in a state of stagnation and uncertainty. We don't know how long or how deep this crisis will last.

But here is our promise to you all. You can be certain that the entire team at ICAN will do what we can to be here for you.

Please know that your work as peacebuilders remains essential and urgent. Your expertise in allaying fears, in building community, in reaching the most vulnerable, in reminding people of the gendered aspects of this illness, in raising awareness and working to prevent a rise in violence against women, in dealing with the racism and hatred that might arise—all of these issues—are and will be profoundly important.

We are still a global family. Until we can be together again, please stay safe and well.

With Love

The ICAN Team

## January

### AWARD

Sanam Naraghi Anderlini received the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) award for services to international peacebuilding and women's rights

### WASL

Joint statement on US, Iran and the Proxy Wars in the Middle East

### She Builds Peace

Briefing to the Group of Friends of WPS on She Builds Peace Campaign

### Better Peace Initiative

Farsi/Persian language translations released: Gender Responsive Ceasefires (animation) Gendered Community Policing (animation)

10 Pointer on Gender Responsive Transitional Justice released

## February

### WASL

Protecting Women Peacebuilders GSX workshop in London, UK

### Better Peace Initiative

Russian language translations released: Gender Responsive Ceasefires (animation) Gender Transitional Justice (animation)

Training with Syria Partners in Lebanon

### Innovative Peace Fund

Africa Regional Training in Kampala, Uganda

### Gender & Extremisms

Munich Security Conference co-organized side event: The Role of Women in Countering Violent Extremism

## March

### She Builds Peace

Global and D.C. Launch of the Campaign

Campaign activities in Albania, Algeria, Cameroon, France, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Yemen.

## April

### WASL

First Community Check-in Call

WASL Community Check-in Guests: HRH Countess of Wessex; UNDP Assistant Secretary General Asako Okai; Norwegian Ambassador to US, H.E. Ambassador Kåre Aas

### She Builds Peace

Campaign activities in Sudan, Tunisia

### Better Peace Initiative

Syrian WASL members brief the German Federal Foreign Office and Civil Society

### Innovative Peace Fund

First COVID-19 grant disbursed

## May

### WASL

WASL Community Check-in Guests: Sweden Minister Foreign Affairs, H.E. Ann Linde; State Secretary Norway's Ministry Foreign Affairs, Marianne Hagen

ICAN Domestic Violence and COVID-19 Session

ICAN Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Session

### Gender & Extremisms

Peacebuilding in the Age of Corona GSX virtual workshop part 1

### She Builds Peace

Campaign activities in Sri Lanka

### Innovative Peace Fund

Launch of the Bridge Funding stream

## June

### WASL

WASL Community Check-in Guests: Canada's Minister of International Development Karina Gould; Canada's Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Maryam Monsef

### Gender & Extremisms

Peacebuilding in the Age of Corona GSX virtual workshop part 2

### Innovative Peace Fund

Launch of the Flexible Funding stream

# 2020 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

## December

### WASL

WASL Community Check-in Guest: HRH The Countess of Wessex

### AWARD

Fatima Al-Bahadly, Al-Firdaws Society, honored with MENA Frontline Defenders Award 2020

### She Builds Peace

Campaign activities in Afghanistan, India, the Philippines

### Better Peace Initiative

Gender Responsive Mediation Training for Women Mediators of the Commonwealth

Refresher session with Syrian community-based organizations

### Innovative Peace Fund

Gender Responsive Peacebuilding Training for partners

## November

### She Builds Peace

Funding Women Peacebuilders Framework released and launch event

Campaign activities in Cameroon, Pakistan

### Better Peace Initiative

Why do the WPS and YPS agendas matter? Co-hosted event

Forbes: Women Peace Builders Are Essential For Sustainable World Peace - Jackie Abramian, informed by Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, Rana Allam, France Bognon

## October

### She Builds Peace

Recognizing Women Peacebuilders Framework released and launch event

Protecting Women Peacebuilders Framework released and launch event

Campaign activities in Colombia, the Maldives

### Better Peace Initiative

Amplifying Voices for Peace: Women at the Peace Table – The New Norm” Co-hosted event

New York Times: Women at the Peace Table Yields Better Results. Why Is It Still So Rare? - Alexandra E. Petri interview with Sanam Naraghi Anderlini

## September

### WASL

WASL Community Check-in Guest: Canada's Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rob Oliphant

### AWARD

Rosa Emilia Salamanca González, CIASE, selected as a Finalist of USIP's 2020 Women Building Peace Award.

Muna Luqman, Food4Humanity, awarded Kroc Institute 2020-2021 Women PeaceMakers Fellowship

### Better Peace Initiative

Farsi/Persian language translations released: Better Peace Tool

Kiswahili language translations released: Gendered Peace Negotiations (animation) Gendered Community Policing (animation)

### She Builds Peace

Campaign activities in Afghanistan, Armenia, Egypt, Morocco

## August

### WASL

WASL Community Check-in Guest: US Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Kelley E. Currie

### She Builds Peace

Campaign activities in India

### Innovative Peace Fund

\$1 million in grants disbursed to partners

## July

### WASL

WASL Community Check-in with United Nations Security Council

### Better Peace Initiative

Le Monde diplomatique: Where are the women peacemakers? - Sanam Naraghi Anderlini



Washington, D.C. Launch of She Builds Peace with Norway's Ambassador to the U.S. (2013-2020), Kåre R. Aas: March 2020



## SHE BUILDS PEACE: CAMPAIGN LAUNCH AND CALL TO ACTION

Women peacebuilders work on the frontlines of conflict, dedicating their lives to ending violence and promoting just and inclusive peace in many of the world's most war-torn and violent settings. When others run away from crises, women peacebuilders run in to solve them.

In 2000, women peacebuilders were the inspiration and engine behind UNSCR 1325 that, for the first time in history, called for the inclusion of women in matters of war prevention and peacemaking. Yet 20 years on, the promise of the agenda remained unfulfilled.

A key gap has been that while the theory and practice of peacebuilding has grown exponentially since the 1990s, peacebuilders as a cohort of practitioners and experts whose work is informed by certain concepts, values, approaches, and skill sets are still not widely recognized.

As trusted and responsible actors in their communities, they take an inclusive approach to represent and respond to the needs of their communities. As research has shown, by investing in women peacebuilders and enabling their inclusion in decision making, we enable transformation within their communities.

In honor of ICAN's WASL partners and other women peacebuilders globally, in 2020, ICAN launched the She Builds Peace global collaborative campaign and call to action to bring new energy, practical creativity and impetus for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and widen the women, peace and security agenda.



Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, Rajaa Altalli and Hassina Neekzad, Washington, D.C. Launch of She Builds Peace: March 2020

The campaign calls on governments, multilateral organizations and other stakeholders committed to peace, rights and human security to stand with women peacebuilders by:

- Taking specific steps to ensure their recognition and representation in formal peace processes,
- Adopting protection mechanisms to ensure their safety, and
- Adopting equitable and sustainable funding practices to sustain their work.

ICAN produced three frameworks, each including a brief and operational guidance to inform the Call to Action (See pages 26, 40 and 54). We held campaign events at the Norwegian Embassy in Washington, D.C. to mark International Women's Day and online with the European Union in November.



”

In a year that so much of the world stopped, ICAN's leadership and team doubled their efforts, never letting us, in the policy world forget the courage and contributions of women peacebuilders. It's been humbling to see our WASL partners once again show that no job is big or small to protect their community. They rose to every challenge to protect their communities.

I am proud to stand with women peacebuilders everywhere.

Senator Mobina Jaffer (British Columbia, Canada) Chair, ICAN Board of Directors

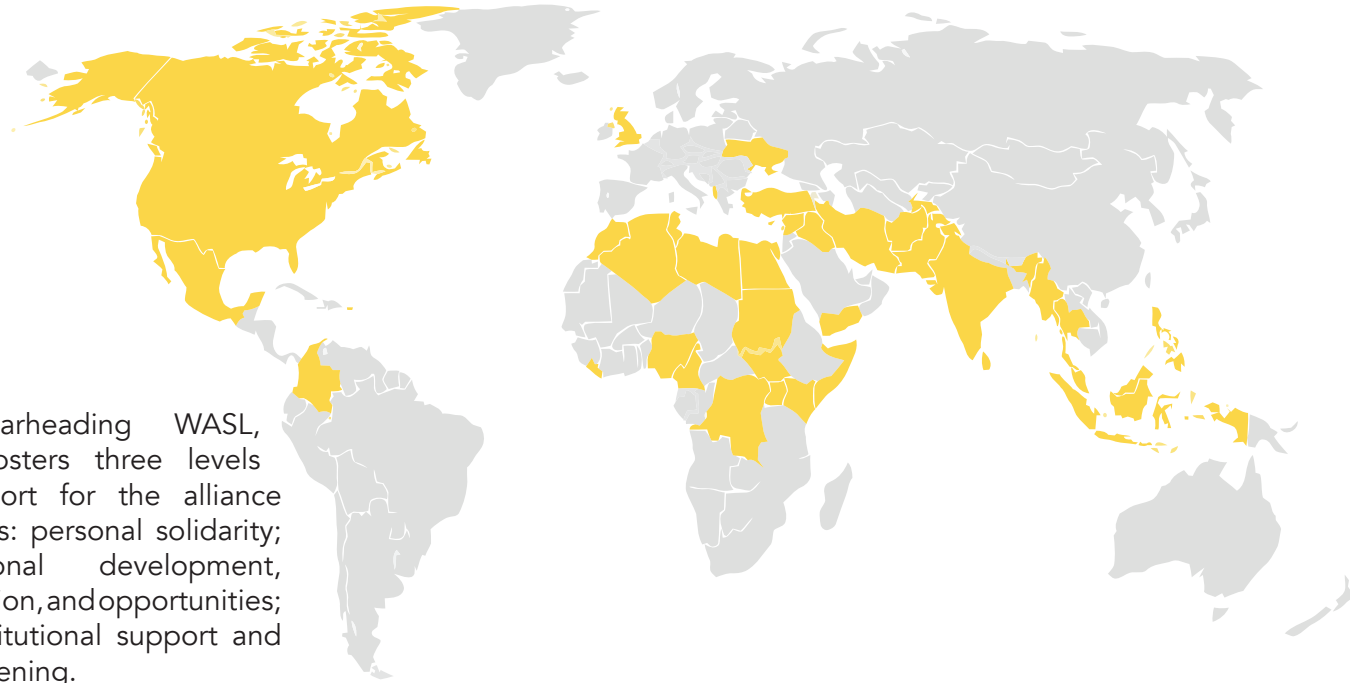
”



Protecting Women Peacebuilders Global Solutions Exchange with guest of honor, HRH The Countess of Wessex, London: February 2020

# WOMEN'S ALLIANCE FOR SECURITY LEADERSHIP (WASL)

Our “locally rooted, globally connected” approach to partnership is exemplified in WASL. Launched in 2015, WASL is a leading global alliance of independent women-led organizations and practitioners specializing in peacebuilding and countering and preventing violent conflict, extremism, and militarism by promoting peace, resilience, equal rights, and pluralism.



In spearheading WASL, ICAN fosters three levels of support for the alliance members: personal solidarity; professional development, recognition, and opportunities; and institutional support and strengthening.

Beyond serving as a platform for real-time information sharing, analysis and collective action, in a year characterized by isolation, the peer-to-peer support and solidarity that WASL provides was invaluable to our partners who were frontline responders to 2020's multiple crises.



## WASL WEEKLY COMMUNITY CHECK-INS

From April 2020 we started weekly virtual gatherings for our partners. These ongoing WASL Community Check-ins, allow our partners to share how the COVID-19 pandemic affects them and how they are responding while continuing their peacebuilding work. It is also an opportunity to share warning signs about rising extremism and other forms of insecurity. We document the cross-country analysis of trends in real time and disseminate them widely to inform the international community. Our efforts have led to growing recognition and appreciation of the unique contributions of women peacebuilders in fragile contexts.

“A silver lining of the pandemic was that it gave us the incentive and opportunity to gather our community virtually on a regular basis to serve as a sounding board and be in solidarity with each other.”

Melinda Holmes, WASL Program Director

**WASL COMMUNITY CHECK-IN THEMES**



The WASL community check-ins provide extraordinary insight into the realities on the ground in conflict affected settings, where COVID-19 became another crisis within existing crises. We opened our space to politicians, diplomats, journalists and academics to have direct contact with our partners and better understand these complexities, and to hear directly the strategies and solutions that women peacebuilders have adopted.

The interactions not only informed policy making, but reinforced relationships with these allies and provided moral support to WASL members on the frontline.

“ You are the ones with the information and the practical know-how. You are the ones doing the job and not waiting for the bigger wheels to set in motion. We recognize you as first responders, leaders, role models, mediators and stabilizers. I and Norway stand with women peacebuilders. ”

Marianne Hagen, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

“ I’m here to learn and hear from you— you are on the frontlines; you’re doing the heavy lifting. I’m here as a Minister but I’m also here as a sister looking to find ways to support you, lift you up and make sure your voices are heard and your work is seen around the world. ”

Karina Gould, Minister of International Development, Canada

**the 1st WASL COMMUNITY CHECK-IN** with SPECIAL GUEST HRH THE COUNTESS OF WESSEX

APRIL 2 2020

47 PARTICIPANTS, 26 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED, 21 SPEAKERS

THIS PUTS INTO STARK REALITY WHAT IS IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW: THE PROTECTION OF COMMUNITIES. THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE DOING. THANK YOU FOR BEING CREATIVE and BRAVE and INNOVATIVE.

HRH COUNTESS OF WESSEX

**CHALLENGE:** LACK OF AWARENESS, CONFUSION, FEAR

**RESPONSE:**

- DEVELOPING and DISSEMINATING COVID-19 MESSAGING
- TRANSLATING LOCAL LANGUAGES - CAMEROON PIDGIN ENGLISH
- ENSURING MESSAGING IS ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH VISUAL or HEARING IMPAIRMENTS IN KENYA

**CHALLENGE:** SPIKE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, YOUTH & TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY

**RESPONSE:** SET UP HELP LINE IN KASHMIR PROVIDING PHONE PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT IN MALDIVES

**CHALLENGE:** INADEQUATE or COMPLETE LACK of HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

**RESPONSE:** ASSISTING SPECIFICALLY MARGINALIZED and VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

**CHALLENGE:** POLICE ARE ENFORCING CUREFF BY BEATING UP PEOPLE. SOME PEOPLE SEE CORONA AS A MERCY VIRUS - THEY ARE READY TO DIE.

**RESPONSE:** YEMENI PARTNER TRAINED 150 YOUNG MEDICS

**CHALLENGE:** MEDICAL WORKERS INFECTED FACILITIES SHUT DOWN

**RESPONSE:** LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS and CIVIL SOCIETY ARE SO INTEGRAL to the WHOLE QUESTION of HUMAN SECURITY and NATIONAL SECURITY.

AS DIFFICULT AS IT IS EVERYWHERE, IN CONFLICT ZONES IT IS FEELLY UNIMAGINABLE.

Call to Action

MELINDA HOLMES WASL PROGRAM DIRECTOR, ICAN

SANAM NARAGHI ANDERLINI, FOUNDER & CEO, ICAN

WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS ARE LEADING THE CHARGE AGAINST THE PANDEMIC in THEIR COMMUNITIES

HOW ARE WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS RESPONDING TO COVID-19?

COVID-19 RAPID RESPONSE IS NECESSARILY PEACEBUILDING WORK!

WASL PARTNER KENYA

WASL PARTNER YEMEN

## GLOBAL POLICY MAKERS AND WASL



## THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL IN CONVERSATION WITH WASL

On 30 July 2020, recalling the first civil society meeting with UN Security Council (UNSC) members in 2000, ICAN invited 18 outgoing and incoming members of the UNSC to join the WASL Community Check-in.

For nearly two hours they met with 33 of our partners from 25 countries. The dialogue flowed, not with the prepared remarks that are a hallmark of formal UN settings, but in genuine exchange about the facts on the ground, queries and responses, pledges and solutions.

The discussions touched on the state of current peace processes, the threat that peacebuilders face and their need for protection, warning signs of rising conflict and the resurgence of violent extremism under the cover of COVID-19, and the creativity and persistence of women peacebuilders as they take on the responsibility to protect their communities.

Recognizing the contributions of women peacebuilders to addressing the pandemic and sustaining their peace work, many of the UNSC members requested similar future sessions.

We support the implementation of 1325 by advocating for the inclusion of women in local crisis prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding and by supporting gender-sensitive projects on the ground.

By having you speak with the Security Council we hope to connect our insights and discuss how we can better implement the WPS agenda on the ground.

I stand with women peacebuilders.

Ambassador Christoph Heusgen  
 Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations



# a DATE to REMEMBER.

## The UN SECURITY COUNCIL in CONVERSATION with WASL



WE STAND WITH WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS!

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AMBASSADOR to the UN

18

CURRENT and FUTURE UNSC AMBASSADORS and DEPUTY AMBASSADORS

SPECIFIC TARGETS for MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION of WOMEN SHOULD BE A PRECONDITION for ANY UN-LED MEDIATION EFFORT.

GERMAN MINISTER of STATE



33 WASL PARTNERS from 25 COUNTRIES

WE WANT TO HAVE A GENUINE EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE UN'S SECURITY COUNCIL and OUR PARTNERS in WASL who ARE A UNITED NATIONS of WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS.

SANAM NARAGHI ANDERLINI CED & FOUNDER, ICAN

### REALITIES on the GROUND DURING COVID-19

THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IS FAILING YEMENIS.

YEMENI PEACEBUILDERS WERE PREEMPTIVE in PROVIDING FOOD and SANITATION and CALLING FOR A CEASE FIRE WHEN COVID-19 HIT

DESTROYED INFRASTRUCTURE IN LIBYA INCLUDING WATER, ELECTRICITY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORTATION

WASL PARTNER, YEMEN

COVID-19 HAS BECOME A COVER and EXCUSE for MORE VIOLENCE

WE ALL NEED to TAKE CONCRETE STEPS to MANAGE the RISKS and THE DISPROPORTIONATE HEAVY BURDEN that COVID-19 PUTS ON WOMEN and GIRLS.

ESTONIA DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE to the UN



### THREATS that PEACEBUILDERS FACE and THEIR NEED for PROTECTION

PLEASE HELP US PROTECT THOSE who ARE BUILDING PEACE!

THE PEACEBUILDERS ARE RISKING THEIR LIVES EVERY DAY to BRING PEACE.

WE NEED U.N. PROTECTION - WE ARE TARGETED by MULTIPLE GROUPS and THIS AFFECTS OUR WORK

SANAM NARAGHI ANDERLINI CED & FOUNDER, ICAN

WHO IS PROTECTING US? WHO IS HELPING US? WE BELIEVE IN THE UN and WE WANT to KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO to PROVIDE US WITH SUPPORT and PROTECTION.

WASL PARTNER, CAMEROON

### CREATIVITY and PERSISTENCE of WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS

WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS BUILD the BRIDGE BETWEEN the COMMUNITY and our GOVERNMENT.

- COMMUNITIES KNOW US and TRUST US
- WE'VE FACILITATED the RELEASE of 944 DETAINEES
- WE ARE the FIRST RESPONDERS to ANY DISASTER or PANDEMIC
- PEACE IS NOT ACHIEVED THROUGH TALKING BUT ACTION

WASL PARTNER, ALBANIA

ONE IMPORTANT LESSON IS THAT THERE IS ROOM for IMPROVEMENT WITHIN the UN.

BELGIUM DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE to the UN



OUR PRIORITIES ARE to INCREASE WOMEN'S MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION in the PEACE PROCESS in PARTICULAR in SOUTH SUDAN, YEMEN, and AFGHANISTAN.

UK POLITICAL COORDINATOR at the UN



### STATE of CURRENT PEACE PROCESSES



WE MUST INCLUDE LOCAL AFGHANS, who UNDERSTAND the ROOTS of the PEACE PROCESS

UN ENVOY'S CURRENT APPROACHES to INCLUDING WOMEN DON'T MEET our ASPIRATIONS or our SACRIFICES

WILL IT BE ENSURED THAT the PEACE PROCESS WILL BE INCLUSIVE and BRINGS IN WOMEN and MINORITIES who KNOW WHAT IS NEEDED?

WASL PARTNER, AFGHANISTAN

WE FEEL OUTCAST and FACE CONTINUAL EXCLUSION FROM the PEACE PROCESS.

WASL, YEMEN

## PROTECTING WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS

Women peacebuilders use dialogue and engage with different parties to negotiate humanitarian access, challenge extremist ideologies and violence, and facilitate peace talks, reconciliation and social healing.

But in a rapidly polarized world, where civil space is also shrinking, this engagement with “the other” and seeking to forge a common middle ground is putting women peacebuilders at increased risk. Peace work is becoming dangerous.

In October as part of the She Builds Peace campaign ICAN published “[Protecting Women Peacebuilders: The Front Lines of Sustainable Peace](#)”. The report draws on three years of consultations with women peacebuilders internationally, that culminated in a two-day Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) workshop in February 2020 in London.

54 participants across civil society and governmental organizations from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America addressed:

- The nature of threats and risks that women peacebuilders face due specifically to their peacebuilding work and gender;
- The gaps in existing national and international protection policies and mechanisms; and
- Practical solutions for the development of an operational framework for governments and international actors.

The report captured discussions and concludes with a four-part operational guidance for states and multilateral institutions to protect women peacebuilders.

Throughout the year we worked with the UK government and others who pledged their support to implement the operational guidance on protection.

### Operational Guidance to Establish and Enhance the Protection of Women Peacebuilders

1. Building a Legal and Political Safety Net for Women Peacebuilders
2. Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Threats to Women Peacebuilders on the Ground
3. Security for Women Peacebuilders at the Peace Table and in International Spaces
4. When Emergency Assistance and Relocation of Women Peacebuilders is Necessary



“The UK has supported ICAN to develop the Protection Framework for women peacebuilders.  
As the Security Council’s penholder on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, we urge all member states to commit to its recommendations.”  
The Rt. Hon. James Cleverly MP, Minister for Middle East and North Africa, UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)



## Protecting Women Peacebuilders

*THE FRONT LINES OF SUSTAINABLE PEACE*

“We’re pleased to support the work of ICAN and announce that Canada formally endorses ICAN’s Protection Framework and will be promoting it among our missions abroad.”  
Janice Charette, Canada’s High Commissioner to the UK (2016-2021)



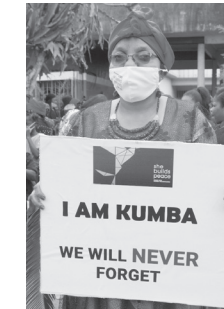
# SHE BUILDS PEACE GOES GLOBAL

Throughout 2020, from Mexico to Malaysia, Sudan to Syria, across 25 countries, WASL partners launched their campaigns. Events ranged from meetings with national, regional, and local government officials to workshops with women peacebuilders, youth, and media campaigns.



Colombia

With the onset of the pandemic, many WASL partners moved their launches online, with innovative solutions ranging from a hackathon with Tunisian youth to a six-day online webinar in Kashmir, India. They are also including the campaign's three operational frameworks into their community outreach, governmental advocacy and humanitarian work.



Cameroon



Afghanistan



Albania



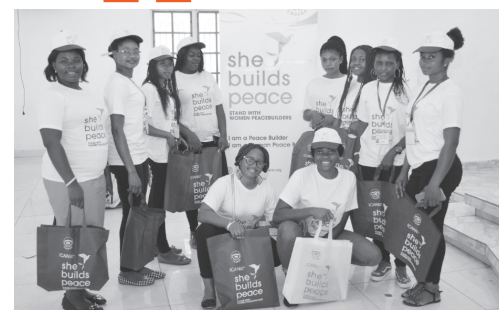
Algeria

The She Builds Peace campaign is important because it acknowledges me and the work I do... The campaign amplifies the courage and resilience of women peacebuilders who often work at great risk with little or no funding.

Robinah Rubimbwa, National Coordinator, Coalition for Action on 1325 (CoAct), Uganda



Armenia



Cameroon



Egypt



France



Indonesia



Kenya

**UNSCR 1325**  
SHE BUILDS PEACE  
STAND WITH WOMAN PEACEBUILDERS

JOIN OUR WEBINAR

700hrs hours to 1800hrs  
12th October 2020

**Dr. Mariyam Shakeela (MODERATOR)**  
Former UN Women Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, Regional and Country Office for South Asia, UN Women, Regional and Country Office for South Asia, UN Women, Regional and Country Office for South Asia

**Mossarat Qadeem**  
Co-founder of FEMANA - Women's Trust, a private organization for providing counseling, legal assistance, and shelter to women victims of violence in Pakistan.

**Melinda Holmes**  
Program Director at the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) for the South Asia Region.

**Neelam Raina**  
Assistant Professor of Gender and Development at the University of Toronto, Canada, and Inclusive Generation.

**Asra Ahmed**  
Executive Director of the Task Force on Gender Equality in Maldives, a joint initiative of the Government of Maldives and UN Women.

**Visaka Dharmadasa**  
Founder and Chair of Association of Women's Studies in Sri Lanka, a national organization for women's studies in Sri Lanka.

**Mohamed Shihab**  
Chief Minister, Villavil - Child Rights Ambassador, Women's Rights Commission of Maldives, Board Member, Family Promotion Society, Maldives.

**AMBASSADOR I Irene Omotison Namboka (DDG KEYNOTE SPEAKER)**  
Former UN Women Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, Regional and Country Office for East Africa, UN Women, Regional and Country Office for East Africa

Maldives

The She Builds Peace campaign is important to me because it opened my eyes with more clarity to the concept of peace, to demasculinize conflict, to detach the concept of peace from only wars and armed conflict, to shift women beyond the humanitarian front of the story, and to view women not just as victims of conflict but as agents of peace with unique insights and skills of inclusivity and collaboration.

Dr. Mariyam Shakeela, Chairperson, Addu Women's Association (AWA); former Cabinet Minister, Government of the Maldives



Myanmar



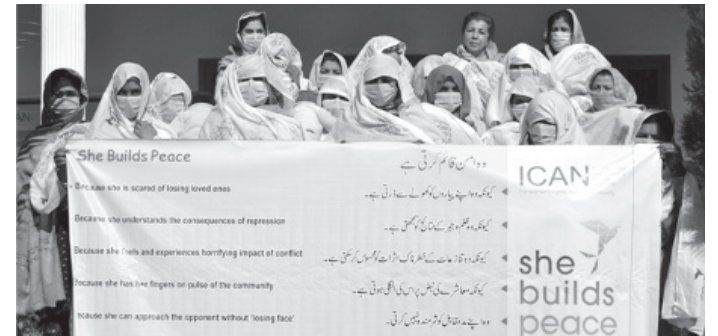
Mexico



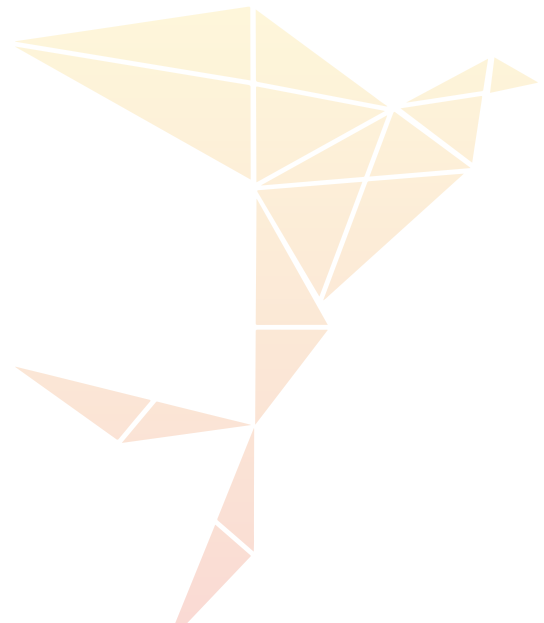
Malaysia



Nigeria



Pakistan



Tunisia



Syria



Uganda



Sri Lanka





Discussion on UNSCR 1325 and women's roles in peacebuilding to launch She Builds Peace in Balkh Province, Afghanistan

## BETTER PEACE INITIATIVE (BPI)

The BPI promotes inclusive and gender responsive peace processes. We develop practical guidance and offer advisory services that include gendered conflict and peace analyses and inclusive peace process design, innovative multi-media and multi-lingual tools, such as animated explainers and short to-the-point advocacy briefs.

In 2020, through our strategic accompaniment, including rapid response grants through the IPF, we supported our WASL partners and other women peacebuilders' participation in official peace talks, and we continued to develop our flagship guidance tools and trainings.

During this 20th anniversary year of the landmark UNSCR 1325 we also increased our public advocacy focusing on the nexus between COVID-19 and peacebuilding.



We support our partners—the women peacebuilders who tirelessly engage across the lines of conflict—in their demands to be included in the peace processes that will determine the future of their countries.

Helena Gronberg, Program Director, BPI

## STRATEGIC ACCOMPANIMENT

**Afghanistan:** We supported our Afghan partners in their advocacy for inclusion in the intra-Afghan peace talks. In direct response to a request from the women negotiators in the Government delegation we developed a research paper in Farsi, entitled Peace and Women in Islam. The paper highlights the core beliefs and practices of Islam. It analyzes matters of peace, acceptance of diversity, nonviolence, family law, human rights, democracy, and political participation within Islam. (for more see Tools and Guidance, pages 37-37).

**Cameroon:** As the conflict in Cameroon has intensified, we have regularly helped WASL partners strategize their mediation efforts and community peace dialogues. We continue to provide remote advisory support, personal solidarity and financial grants to enable their community humanitarian work and political peacebuilding work.

**Sudan:** In October, as the Sudanese Transitional Government negotiated a partial peace deal, we provided a rapid response grant to WASL member, Enass Muzamel, the Executive Director of Madaniya, to participate in the process. Muzamel established contacts with the negotiating parties, including militias, as well as women's groups and other civil society entities. She continues to engage in the peace and transitional process, providing a needed gender lens to the transitional justice efforts and ensuring that women's experiences of war and contributions to peacebuilding and recovery are recognized.

We are not asking for our international allies to fight our battles, we will do that ourselves, but we need the space, we need the opportunities to be there.

Wazhma Frogh, Co-founder of Women & Peace Studies Organization (WPSO), Afghanistan

It was a great opportunity that allowed me to participate in a big national event, in which it was difficult for me to participate without ICAN's support. It is very important that my participation was recognized, and my voice was heard regarding the issues of Sudanese women in conflict areas and their effective participation.

Enass Muzamel, Executive Director, Madaniya, Sudan

# PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Throughout the year, our senior leadership took part in high profile advocacy events and targeted discussions to sustain attention on the work of women peacebuilders, and consistent need for inclusive and gender responsive peace processes and COVID-19 recovery.

In Spring 2020 we joined Yemeni WASL partner Food4Humanity in issuing public statements calling for an immediate ceasefire, the release of detainees and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN echoed the statements and reached out to our partners.

Our Syrian partner, the Center for Civil Society and Democracy (CCSD), published numerous open letters, including to the UN Security Council calling for a nationwide ceasefire, humanitarian support, and the release of detainees.

Starting in April we dedicated many WASL calls to issues such as women's participation in peace processes and a call for a global ceasefire, inviting guests to hear directly from our peacebuilders (see pages 19-25).

Our public outreach included opinion pieces, interviews and coverage in mainstream media outlets, including the New York Times, Le Monde Diplomatique, the BBC World Service, Forbes, and the Mediator's Studio podcast.

## THE MEDIATOR'S STUDIO



## LE MONDE diplomatique

THERE TO SPEAK FOR ALL THOSE WITHOUT VOICES

### Where are the women peacemakers?

Who should be but isn't at the peace talks table for the many wars afflicting the daily lives of millions? Women. They do the work on the ground but are cut out of negotiations for peace.

BY SANAM NARAGHI ANDERLINI



## The New York Times

### Women at the Peace Table Yields Better Results. Why Is It Still So Rare?

Female peace builders and female-led organizations are often the ones running toward the problem while everyone else is running away, says the author Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini.



Connected or muted? New opportunities for women's participation in peace processes during the Covid-19 pandemic: In May, Ine Eriksen Søreide, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, invited Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, and other experts on women's participation and leadership in peacebuilding to a high-level dialogue, moderated by BBC's Lyse Doucet.

We need to support, fund, and protect women peacebuilders to bring women's representation in even more than before.

Helga Schmid, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

In negotiation [conflict] parties must be willing to be inclusive of women and civil society or these processes probably won't get anywhere

Ine Eriksen Søreide, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Norway

Instead of power-sharing, let's talk about responsibility sharing. Women peacebuilders are taking on the responsibility to protect their communities in conflicts and crises. Let's ask 'why are war makers so afraid of having women peacebuilders at the peace table?'

Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, CEO and Founder, ICAN

Amplifying Voices for Peace: Women at the Peace Table—The New Norm: In October, to mark the 20th anniversary of SCR 1325, ICAN partnered with the German Federal Foreign Office and the Foreign Ministries of Finland, France, Italy, Norway, UK, Spain and Sweden, the EU's External Action Service and the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks to address commitments for systematic inclusion of women peacebuilders in peace processes.



## BPI TRAININGS

During 2020, we delivered four sets of trainings comprised of 16 sessions. Adapting our certificate course on gendered and inclusive mediation to different contexts, sessions were conducted in English, Arabic and Farsi.

**Syrian Peacebuilders:** In late February with support from UN Women, we held the first of three bi-lingual (Arabic/English) workshops with partners representing Syrian community-based organizations (CBOs). Sessions included role-play exercises, trust building, and interactive discussions. It was also an opportunity to share and discuss engagement in the ICAN spearheaded She Builds Peace Campaign. The workshop, held in Broummana, Lebanon was our last in-person workshop before the pandemic hit.

**Afghan Women Peacebuilders and Politicians:** In December we joined Musawah for Women in Peace Negotiations: Opportunities, Challenges and Strategies to deliver a Farsi language training session for 29 Afghan women's rights activists and politicians involved in the Afghan peace process. The objective of the session was to provide strategies on inclusive ceasefire negotiations; gender-responsive disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDR); and conflict-related sexual violence, and share lessons learned for ensuring women's inclusion in the peace process.

## TRAINING SESSION TOPICS:

### Women's Participation and Inclusive Peace Process Design

### Gender Responsive and Inclusive:

- **Ceasefire negotiations**
- **Devolution/ power- and responsibility sharing**
- **Disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation**
- **Transitional justice**
- **Conflict-related sexual violence**
- **Gender and community-based peacebuilding**



**Ukrainian peacebuilders:** In December we joined the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue and 18 Ukrainian representatives of women's organizations, for a session on strengthening the role of women's initiatives in the peace process. We presented our Better Peace Initiative tools and shared approaches and strategies for successful inclusive dialogue, including why it is important for lasting peace.

### Women Mediators across the Commonwealth:

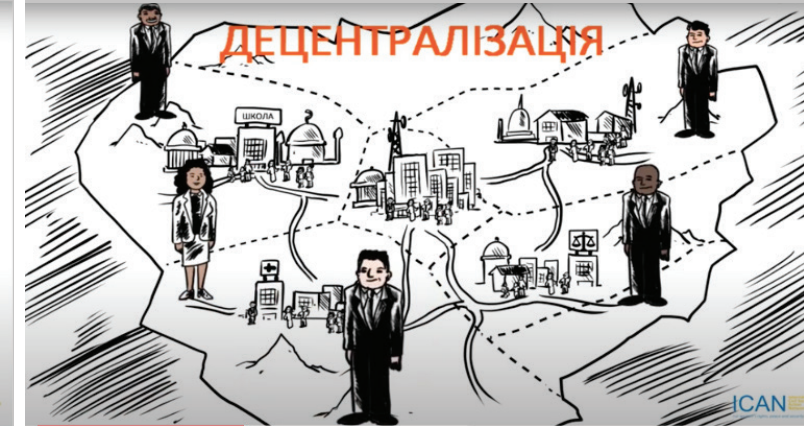
The Women Mediators across the Commonwealth (WMC) also requested our training. As COVID-19 forced us to transfer to online programming, we adapted the BPI Certification course into an 18-hour online program—combining presentations, discussions, visual explainers (animations), and simulations—delivered over three weeks. The WMC participants ranged in location from Australia to Zimbabwe.

## TOOLS AND GUIDANCE

Throughout the year, we continued to develop and translate the BPI tools and guidance materials into multiple languages.

We published two new practical guidance documents:

- 10 Steps to Ensure Gender Responsive Transitional Justice Processes (English, Farsi and Arabic).
- 10 Steps Operational Guidance on Ensuring Women’s Participation in Track One Peace Processes, as part of our She Builds Peace Campaign.



We added two new languages to the BPI library of resources, releasing two BPI animations in Kiswahili and three in Ukrainian. During the course of the year, we also launched three animations in Russian and two in Farsi.

## BPI RESOURCES

NEW IN 2020

NEW IN 2020

+1

+1

BETTER PEACE  
TOOL  
1

PARTICIPATION  
FRAMEWORK  
1

10-STEP  
GUIDES  
4

NEW IN 2020

+2

LANGUAGES AVAILABLE  
16

THEMATIC  
ANIMATION  
VIDEOS  
4

Coinciding with the start of the Intra-Afghan talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government in September, we released the BPI’s flagship resource, the Better Peace Tool (BPT) booklet in Farsi/Persian. First published in 2015 (second edition in 2018), the BPT outlines the most common excuses and barriers for inclusion and lays out steps for how to overcome them and effectively include women peacebuilders.



## RECOGNIZING WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS

“Recognizing Women Peacebuilders: Critical Actors in Effective Peacemaking” is a flagship report published in time for the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325.

The report tackles the ambiguity and use of general terms in the policy arena that have hindered the recognition and participation of women peacebuilders as key actors in peace processes.

It highlights the specific characteristics and motivations that propel women to become peacebuilders in the face of violence and conflict.

It also reflects on their strategic use of traditions, cultural practices, religious teachings, and kinship structures, alongside national and international laws, to pursue peace and justice.

The report offers a 10-point operational guidance and examples of precedence for guaranteeing the participation of women peacebuilders in Track One peace processes.

### Operational Guidance to Guarantee the Participation of Women Peacebuilders in Track One Peace Processes

1. Support independent women peacebuilder delegations to take part in peace talks.
2. Design inclusive processes where women and other marginalized groups have fair representation.
3. Convene meetings early on, encouraging systematic interactions from the start of the process.
4. Invite women as official observers and convene the women to negotiate on the issues on the agenda.
5. Invite women peacebuilders to regularly speak to delegations about issues on the negotiation agenda.
6. Provide all delegates with gendered tools and training, including gendered briefing papers.
7. Fund women peacebuilders early, throughout the process and, during implementation of agreements.
8. Allow flexibility for ongoing grants or provide new additional “rapid response” funding to women peacebuilders.
9. Assist with issuing and expediting visas to enable last-minute travel to peace talks/ pre-talks, provide other travel support, and assist in obtaining security clearances and access.
10. Before committing funding or political support, insist on the inclusion of women peacebuilders and consult with women peacebuilders to determine the viability and vulnerabilities of agreements.



Regarding implementation, we will focus on women peacebuilders in peace processes... Support, Funding and Protection are the three key words here.

Michelle Müntefering, Minister of State, Federal Foreign Office, Germany

## Recognizing Women Peacebuilders

### CRITICAL ACTORS IN EFFECTIVE PEACEMAKING

Outlining the similarities and differences and overlaps between women peacebuilders, human rights defenders, politicians, ex-combatants, mediators etc. is truly helpful because the competence and the experience of women peacebuilders becomes concrete, specific and tangible.

Marita Sørheim-Rensvik, Norwegian Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, 2015-2020



Townhall on Women, Peace, and Security, Munich Security Conference, Munich: February 2020



## GENDER & EXTREMISMS

ICAN's Gender & Extremisms program highlights the importance of gender analysis and women's leadership for the effective prevention and countering of all forms of violent extremism. We conduct analysis and research, document good practices, and provide trainings on effective programming to international institutions. The co-option, coercion or control of women is central to the ideology of extremist movements globally, so they also deliberately target women who dare to stand up and speak out locally, challenging their vision. Key to our strategy is highlighting the pioneering success and expertise of WASL members in addressing extremism by promoting peace, resilience, equality, and pluralism, tailored to and rooted in their local contexts.

In 2020 globally, extremist movements were quick to exploit the fear and uncertainty generated by the pandemic to further their own goals. In our weekly WASL calls, partners from Morocco to Somalia and Pakistan described how local groups filled the vacuums left by the states, to provide food and income, while often challenging the messages of hygiene, and co-opting religion by claiming that COVID-19 only affected non-believers.

During the year ICAN's senior team and WASL partners participated in high level policy discussions on violent extremism and COVID-19, offering real time analysis and challenging the status quo.



## SPOTLIGHT: EXTREMISMS AND WOMEN, PEACE SECURITY MAKES A DEBUT AT THE MUNICH SECURITY FORUM

In February 2020, with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and German Federal Foreign Office, we co-organized a Town Hall on Women, Peace and Security at the Munich Security Conference, the first in the conference's 56-year history. At the event, moderated by the BBC's Lyce Doucet, Sanam Naraghi Anderlini raised the strategic ways in which violent extremist groups recruit women, tapping into their influential social roles to further their cause, while deliberately targeting women peacebuilders who rise and counter their violent ideologies effectively.

WASL partner Hamsatu Allamin, Founder and Executive Director of the Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development, offered insight into the realities of the Boko Haram movement, the absence of good governance and the growing attacks on women and girls in Nigeria. She shared her strategies for addressing the needs of victims and undertaking effective prevention and deradicalization in communities, working with Islamic scholars and local media.

Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, Nurshadrina Khairadhania, Hamsatu Allamin, Azadeh Moaveni and Lyce Doucet, Munich Security Conference, Munich: February 2020

I realized I must change the narrative from 'Boko Haram,' which means western education is forbidden, to 'Boko Halal,' which means western education is accepted, hence I came up with a counter-narrative.

Hamsatu Allamin, Founder and Executive Director, Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development, Nigeria

# SPOTLIGHT: RISING EXTREMISM AND PEACEBUILDING IN THE AGE OF CORONA

In May 2020 ICAN hosted a second Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) gathering on the nexus of peacebuilding and gender responsive COVID-19 recovery in fragile and conflict settings. The discussions highlighted the threats to local civil society organizations as development aid resources diminish and are directed towards emergency humanitarian support. The multi-stakeholder virtual gathering brought policy makers, practitioners and scholars together with ICAN in partnership with the LSE Centre for Women, Peace, and Security.

We are working in these communities because we know them, their realities and their languages. We make use of existing networks and local knowledge to coordinate responses.

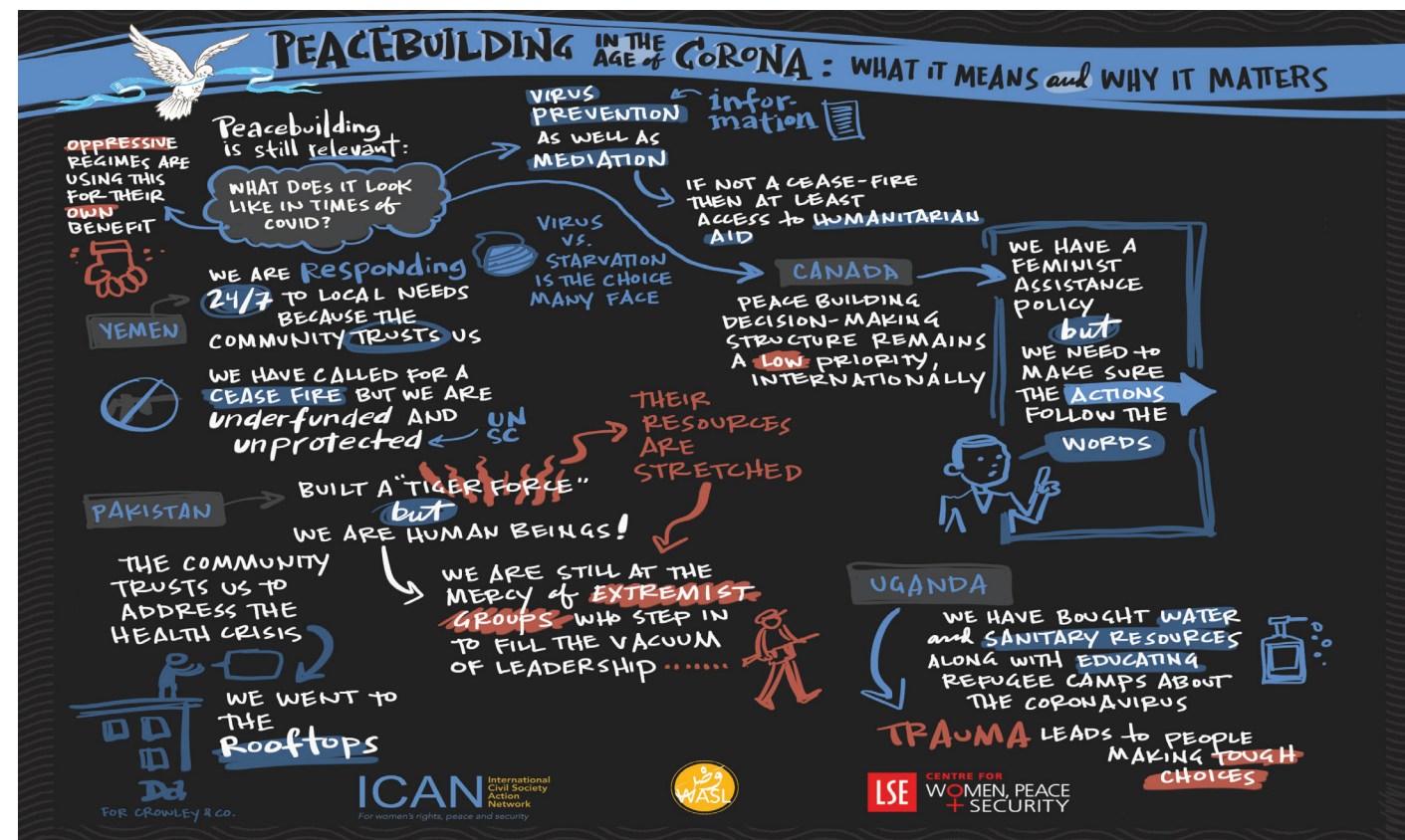
WASL member, Cameroon

During the exchange WASL partners identified numerous trends contributing to rising xenophobia and extremism.

There was also clear consensus and urgent concern that if civil society disappears—whether due to rising authoritarianism, lack of funding, or security threats—these gaps will also become vacuums for negative actors to fill. The early warning signs of extremism will not be heeded, leading to a multiplication of these groups' strength. Local civil society is a bulwark against, and first responders to such crises, yet the sector is facing its greatest challenges.

Governments are trying to politicize and securitize issues to suit their needs and to divert attention from their failings in dealing with COVID.

WASL member, Kashmir



Extremists are attacking health workers—are we, as civil society organizations, next?

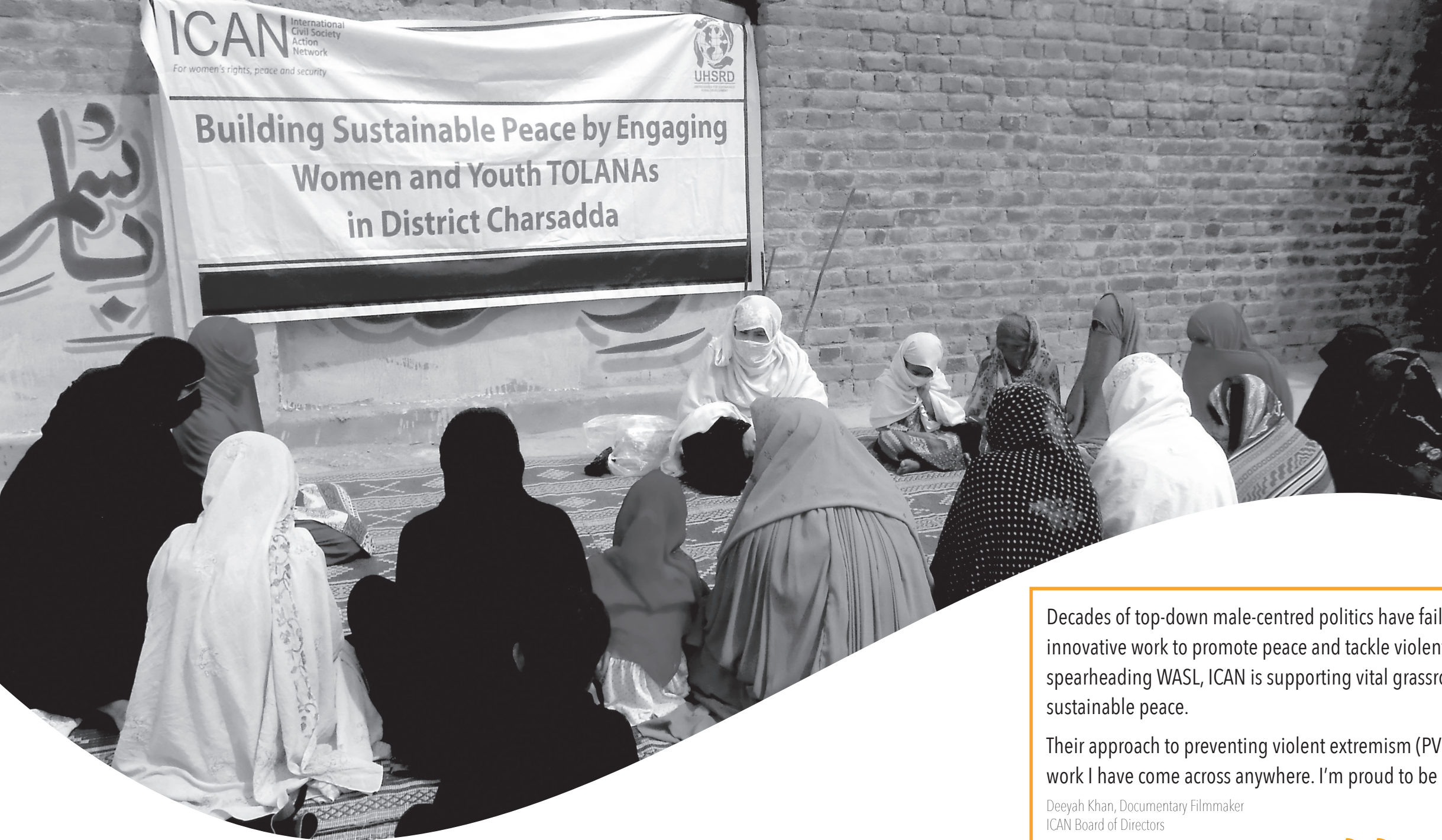
WASL member, Somalia

We are the first responders, the most knowledgeable of community needs and the most trusted by communities. Whether natural or manmade disasters - communities look to us for support.

WASL member, Pakistan

Many regions have been militarized again; people are scared again. ... COVID creates the vacuum which allows these insecurities.

WASL member, Colombia



Our partners detect early warning signs and work to prevent and counter extremisms. With their access and trust in their communities they are well-positioned to understand the cultural aspects, build counter narratives and take a holistic approach to PVE.

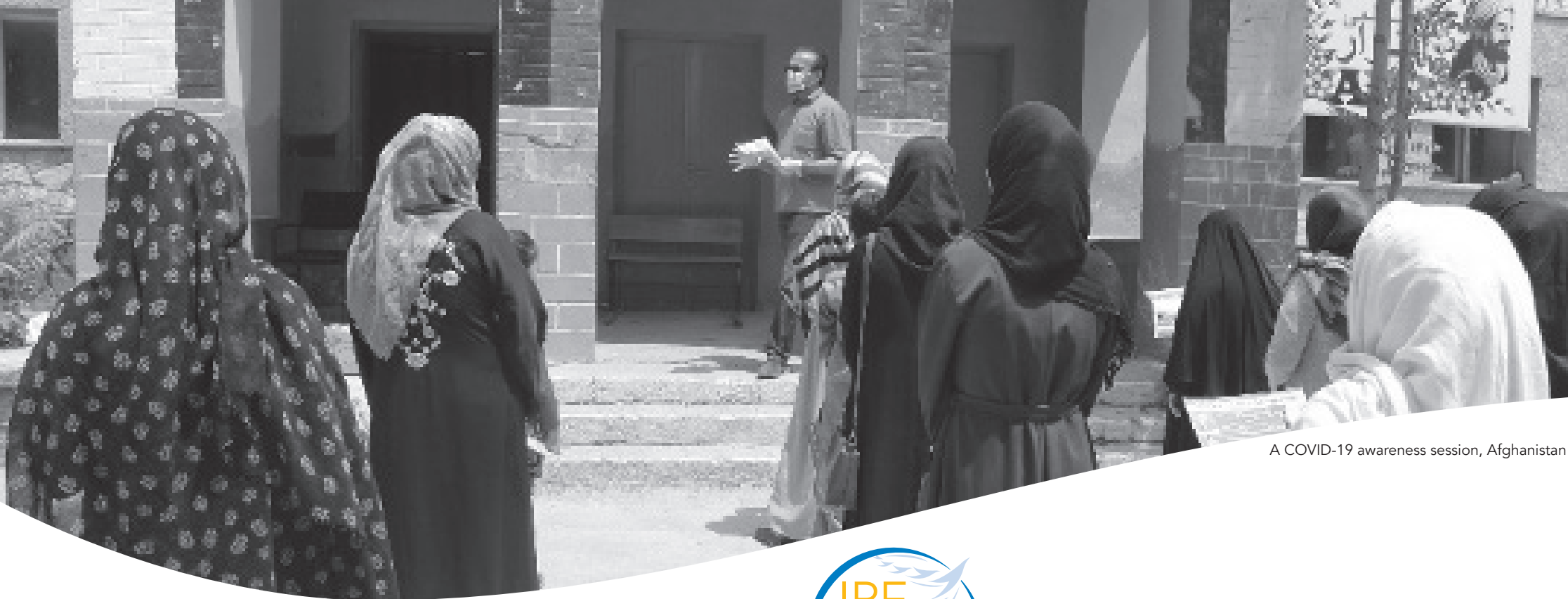
Stacey Schamber, Senior Program Officer, ICAN

Decades of top-down male-centred politics have failed us again and again. ICAN's important and innovative work to promote peace and tackle violent extremism is a critical antidote. Through spearheading WASL, ICAN is supporting vital grassroots activism that represents our best hope for sustainable peace.

Their approach to preventing violent extremism (PVE) is some of the most effective, results driven work I have come across anywhere. I'm proud to be a member of ICAN's board of directors.

Deeyah Khan, Documentary Filmmaker  
ICAN Board of Directors





A COVID-19 awareness session, Afghanistan



COVID-19 awareness and PPE distribution, Kenya

## INNOVATIVE PEACE FUND (IPF)



ICAN's IPF is the first and only independent, multi-donor, global grantmaking mechanism wholly dedicated to providing financial support and technical assistance to women-led peacebuilding organizations in countries affected by violent conflict, extremism, transition and closed political space.

We knew that women peacebuilders often face the challenge of addressing the impact of multiple, simultaneous crises. So from its inception the IPF has operated on the principle of 'investing in trust'. We value the knowledge, trust and access that women peacebuilders have developed in communities as they respond to crises. We trust them to identify priorities for action.

The IPF was developed in a participatory process with WASL members. From the outset, the purpose was to fill existing funding gaps pertaining to women-led organizations addressing critical peace and security issues in fragile and conflict affected settings. The fund's work evolves and adapts to their changing needs.

“  
Do we prioritize the resources for COVID-19 or peace? We can't make that decision. Health is one of the key factors in peace.  
”

Rosa Emilia Salamanca,  
Executive Advocacy Advisor, Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social Económica (CIASE),  
Colombia

## INVESTING IN TRUST

### What the IPF Supports:

To address the realities of 2020 we adjusted our strategy by:

- Redirecting our programming funds allocated for workshops and meetings to increase grants for our WASL partners through the IPF;
- Increasing our advocacy policy focus to highlight the importance of gender sensitive COVID-19 recovery and the essential role of women peacebuilders;
- Responding to our partners' needs by expanding the IPF's focus to seven areas of funding; and
- Developing new funding streams to give our partners greater flexibility and ability to determine their actions.



## INVESTING IN WOMEN

### How the IPF Provides Funding:

The IPF offers four different funding streams that were developed in response to our partners' needs.

- Project-Based**  
 Funding to support specific proposed activities or interventions.
- Flexible Funding**  
 Program and institutional support allows partners freedom to adjust activities and budget within the scope of the approved project.
- Bridge Funding**  
 Temporary funding support for operations or activities when ongoing projects were halted due to COVID-19.
- Rapid Response**  
 Urgent and short-term support to engage in critical policy processes or respond to other urgent incidences.

“The IPF allows partners to define the needs of their communities and respond in a quick way. They don't have to pick with crises to address. It is one comprehensive and flexible respond.”

France Bognon, IPF Program Director

## THE IPF IN 2020

<b>GRANTS: 32</b>	<b>COUNTRIES: 19</b>	<b>AVERAGE GRANT SIZE</b>
<b>TOTAL COMMITTED</b>		<b>\$37,000</b>
<b>\$1.6 MILLION</b>		
<b>2015-2020: \$4,232,972 DISBURSED</b>		



## SPOTLIGHT: AFRICA REGIONAL TRAINING IN KAMPALA, UGANDA

ICAN also offers strategic support and technical assistance to IPF partners through one-on-one mentoring, group trainings and workshops. In 2020 the IPF Team conducted an in-person regional workshop in Kampala, Uganda with 22 individuals representing 12 African WASL partner organizations receiving IPF support. In addition to Ugandan participants, we had partners from Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia.

The workshop focused on refining partners' program development, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes, and documentation through multi-media skills to better capture their impact on their communities.

”

You have given me so much push that I feel very satisfied and comfortable empowering my community, something I had yearned for so much but never had the means.

*Clotilda Andiensa Waah, Coordinator, Center for Advocacy in Gender Equality and Action for Development (CAGEAD), Cameroon*

”

”

ICAN gave us the ability to plan as members from the community. And in reality, this is an important difference compared to other organizations, who come with ready made projects and deal with us as contractors. This grant is like a partnership.

*Abdalaziz Salim, Executive Director, Al Tahreer, Iraq*

”

## FUNDING WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS

In November, ICAN launched the third She Builds Peace Framework, "Funding Women Peacebuilders: Dismantling Barriers to Peace".

Despite 20 years of policy development, evidence and political rhetoric in support of women's peacebuilding, only 0.2% of bilateral aid directed at conflict and fragile states reaches these critical local actors.

Drawing on in-depth consultations with local beneficiaries, bilateral and multilateral donors, and peer funding organizations, the brief analyzes and addresses the following three persistent obstacles that are often presented by donors:

- Lack of evidence proving women's efficacy, contributions, and impact on peacemaking
- Identification of credible local recipients and managing the "risk" associated with these contexts
- Administrative hurdles of handling multiple small grants

The report offers a detailed operational guidance for the international private and public donor community framed around four key pillars.

Under each pillar, the guidance addresses:

- Poor funding practices & the 'what not to do';
- Good practices & the 'what to do'; and
- Practical steps detailing 'how to do it'.

### Operational Guidance to Improve Grantmaking to Women's Peacebuilding Organizations

1. Articulate Clear Vision and Strategy of Achieving Inclusive Peace and Human Security
2. Create Equitable Relationships
3. Value the Strengthening of Organizational Sustainability in Local Contexts
4. Streamline Grant Processes



Let's get other donor governments around the table virtually, let's go through some of these recommendations. What are the best practices of other donors, how are we duplicating efforts, are there things we can streamline amongst our donor community?

Krista House, Deputy Director,  
Peace and Stabilization Operations Program,  
Global Affairs Canada

## Funding Women Peacebuilders

*DISMANTLING BARRIERS TO PEACE*

The fact is, currently donors don't really channel money to gender equality in conflict situations... and government's themselves are not identifying the work women peacebuilders do.

Paivi Kannisto, Chief Peace and Security Unit, UN Women

## IPF GRANT IMPACT

### LEBANON: RESCUE ME

#### Psychosocial Support as Emergency Response

##### Background

Based in Beirut, Lebanon, Rescue Me is a young non-profit organization with a vision of social development and safer homes, schools and communities through crime prevention. General Director, Nancy Yammout, has experience supporting trauma survivors in a Palestinian camp. Through its lifespan Rescue Me has provided emergency psychosocial support to refugees and other vulnerable populations experiencing intense trauma.

##### Issue

On August 4, 2020, two large-scale explosions occurred at the port of Beirut, Lebanon, causing more than 200 deaths, 7000 injuries and the destruction of approximately 15,000 homes and businesses. Within a week, it was apparent that the mental health of Beirut's population was quickly deteriorating. Rescue Me recognized that the short- and long-term impacts of intense, untreated psychological trauma can have catastrophic impact on both an individual and their communities.

##### Solution

With an IPF Rapid Response funding grant of \$20,857 Rescue Me's "One Pulse Initiative" immediately responded by providing the necessary emergency psychosocial support to adequately rehabilitate the Beirut community.

Rescue Me's General Director, Nancy Yammout, trained 26 social workers to provide emergency psychosocial support for adults and children experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder, loss and grief, survivor's guilt, suicide, depression, anger, anxiety and fear. The team then facilitated online therapy appointments and in-person sessions for survivors. Rescue Me published a series of educational videos about trauma on social media to reach out to beneficiaries and direct people to their treatment resources.



Since the explosion, I have not seen Mohammad smile even once. God bless you for making him laugh.

Parent of a Child Beneficiary



##### Impact

In under three months, the Rescue Me social workers provided 250 beneficiaries with appropriate psychosocial support sessions, including up to six follow-up sessions for 60 of these beneficiaries.

Rescue Me responded to requests from parents to provide psycho-social intervention sessions for children who had witnessed the blast, most of whom were in a state of shock. Their response also expanded—after conversations with hospital administrations—to include health care workers at Wardieh Hospital, who were frontline responders to the explosions.

With the support of their IPF grant, Rescue Me was able to create a rapid response team that provides 24/7 psychosocial intervention and mental health care.

## IPF GRANT IMPACT

### SRI LANKA: ASSOCIATION OF WAR AFFECTED WOMEN (AWAW)

#### The Road to Reconciliation in Sri Lanka: Resilience Building and Social Cohesion

##### Background

Visaka Dharmadasa founded AWAW in Sri Lanka in 2000, after her son went missing while serving in the military. In her grief, she led a delegation of mothers of missing servicemen into the jungle to meet with those responsible—the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Ms. Dharmadasa created AWAW as a space for women impacted by the civil war to come together across ethnic and religious divides to strengthen democracy, advance women's rights, promote equal participation and achieve sustainable and inclusive peace in Sri Lanka.

##### Solution

As mistrust has grown, inter-community dialogue has decreased. AWAW's 2020 IPF project sought to prevent violent extremism (PVE) by fostering social cohesion, building trust and mitigating further polarization between ethnic and religious groups. AWAW convened 25 leaders from different districts and ethnic backgrounds to collectively develop a PVE roadmap for immediate action.

AWAW also formed three peer committees, composed of ethnically and religiously diverse women, and organized a People-to-People dialogue which brought together clergy of all faiths, academics, civil society and youth for knowledge exchange and trust building with the aim of "healing minds through understanding".

##### Issue

After a decades-long civil war, Sri Lanka confronts the challenges of effectively implementing transitional justice and reconciliation processes. The country is also facing complex new patterns of extremism and radicalization alongside historical ethno-religious tensions. Religious tensions have been heightened since the tragic 2019 Easter Sunday's coordinated bomb blasts and there has been a rise in religious leaders spreading divisive and hateful rhetoric.



##### Impact

Following their engagement at the 'People-to-People' dialogue and , the multi-faith religious leaders report better communications among themselves and feeling better equipped to jointly address issues in their communities and mitigate disputes due to improved conflict resolution skills.

The cross-community activities and dialogue within the peer committees had a notable impact on building trust. In a symbolic show of solidarity, on the anniversary of the Easter bombings, one of the multi-ethnic and multi-faith peer committees united to clean various places of worship that were at the epicenter of the blast. The simple act of participating in this activity was an overt rejection of the existing divisiveness among different ethnicities and religions. It was a declaration of their respect and acceptance of all people, regardless of family or religion. Having established this trust, the peer committees will remain active, being watchful of warning signs of violent extremism in their respective communities.

### YEMEN: FOOD4HUMANITY

#### The Frontlines of Yemen's COVID-19 Response

##### Background

Established in 2015, Food4Humanity (F4H) is one of Yemen's first women-led non-profit civil society organizations. F4H was founded by Yemeni women volunteers working on the ground in the areas most affected by famine, humanitarian crises and violent extremism. In addition to humanitarian aid, F4H strives to strengthen community resilience against radicalization and support livelihood initiatives. F4H also conducts advocacy work calling for the cessation of hostilities in Yemen and an inclusive peace with equal participation and representation in the peace process.

##### Solution

With their knowledge of humanitarian corridors, ability to negotiate access, and understanding of the real needs of the Yemeni population, F4H was well-positioned to respond to the pandemic. Through a special COVID-19 IPF grant of \$27,900, F4H pivoted their work to:

- Provide humanitarian response and localize the COVID-19 prevention guidelines;
- Carry out a digital and print awareness campaign;
- Establish a women-led health and awareness center in Taiz;
- Conduct training for women living in high-risk slums on virus prevention and;
- Provide the trainees with tools for sharing the information with their communities.

In parallel to this F4H also called for an urgent and comprehensive aid effort and an immediate ceasefire to allow health and aid workers to continue their critical work.

##### Issue

As the deadly war continues in Yemen, the uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in 2020 threatened to exacerbate an already dire humanitarian situation. Ongoing clashes between armed groups on the ground and continued aerial bombings put immense strain on weak medical services, making it dangerous and difficult for humanitarian organizations to respond or deliver aid. Despite being underfunded and excluded from decision-making, women-led peacebuilding organizations fill the gaps left by the state and international organizations in reaching the frontlines of the war and the country's remote areas, while also advocating strongly for a ceasefire, and an end to international support for the warring parties.



##### Impact

As an immediate response, F4H provided 200 households with food parcels, trained a total of 50 women on COVID-19 prevention, and distributed full PPE gear to 80 doctors and nurses in Sanaa, as well as 200 masks to medical staff in Aden and Hodeidah. For the long-term, F4H's interventions in communities has earned them trust and provided opportunities to access new groups for their peacebuilding interventions. Their project opened new channels of communication between F4H and government offices, security officials and other entities in Sana'a and elsewhere. These new relationships have improved the safety of volunteers.

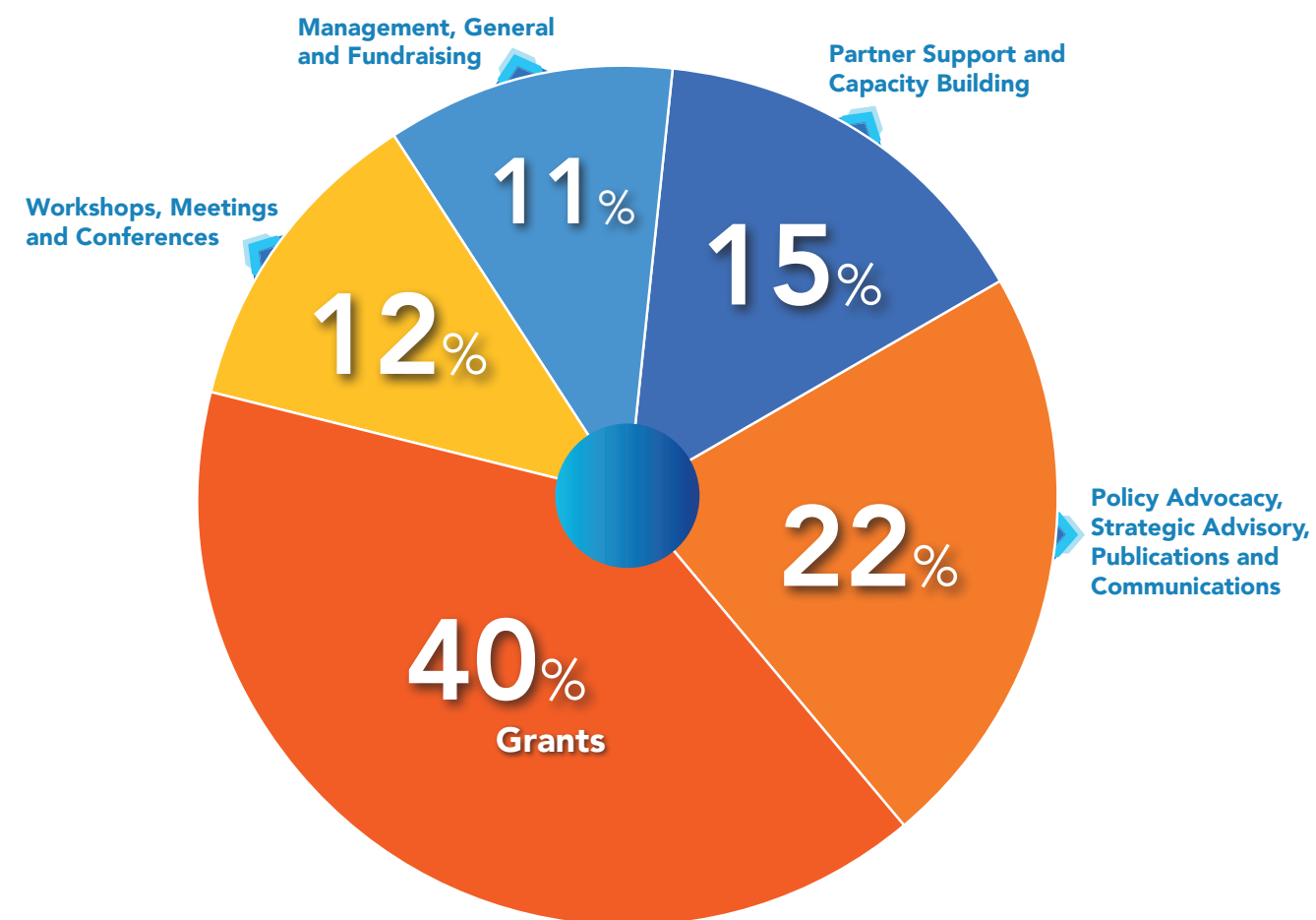
F4H's mediation efforts have also benefitted as they are perceived as a positive actor in communities. The increased trust and credibility have created new avenues for the participation of F4H's Founder and Chair, Muna Luqman, in security dialogues related to the conflict on national scale and to local community security conflicts in the city of Taiz.

# FINANCIALS

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT IN NUMBERS 2020		STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>ASSETS</b>	
INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	100,020	CASH, INVESTMENTS & EQUIVALENTS	1,756,269
FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATE GRANTS	130,000	GRANTS & OTHER RECEIVABLE	87,403
GOVERNMENT / IGO GRANTS	2,654,902	PREPAID EXPENSES	314,698
FEES FOR SERVICE	23,866	DEPOSITS	6,832
OTHER (MISCELLANEOUS) REVENUE	4,903	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,763,101</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,913,691</b>	«LIABILITIES»	
«EXPENSES»		ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	129,484
PROGRAM SERVICES	2,425,894	DEFERRED REVENUE / ACCRUED EXPENSES	295,340
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL OPERATIONAL	284,526	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>424,824</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,710,420</b>	UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	278,930
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>203,271</b>	RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	1,059,347
		<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,338,277</b>
		<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,763,101</b>

ICAN allocates nearly 90% of its funding to program services: grants, capacity building and partner support, trainings and advocacy. 40% of ICAN's total 2020 expenses was direct financial support to ICAN's partners. Between 2019 and 2020 ICAN increased its total income by approximately \$800,000, there was a significant increase in our direct financial and technical support to our partners.

## EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITY, 2020





## SUPPORTERS

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ICAN is grateful to the following government entities, foundations, and individuals without whose support our work would not be possible, and to our WASL members for their tireless commitment to peacebuilding:



Norwegian Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office



REGERINGSKANSLIET  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Sweden



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FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE STUDIES



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**PLOUGHSHARES FUND**

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Afghan Women Network (AWN)  
Afghan Women News Agency (AWNA)  
Afghan Women Skills Development Center (AWSDC)  
Afghan Women's Organization for Equality (AWOE)  
Armanshahr/OPEN ASIA  
Women & Children Legal Research Foundation  
Women & Peace Studies Organization (WPSO)

### Albania

Women Center for Development & Culture Albania (WCDCA)

### Algeria

Djazairouna Association of Families and Victims of Islamist Terrorism  
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### Armenia

Women for Development NGO

### Cameroon

Center for Advocacy in Gender Equality (CAGEAD)  
Hope Advocates Africa  
Pathways for Women's Empowerment and Development (PaWED)  
Reach Out Cameroon

### Colombia

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### Democratic Republic of the Congo

Gender, Citizen Participation, and Development Consultation Office

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Women's Center for Guidance and Legal Awareness (WCGLA)  
Women for Justice Foundation (WJF)

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Yakjah Reconciliation & Development Network

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Asia Muslim Action Network (AMAN) Indonesia  
C-SAVE  
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Women's Voice for Peacebuilding

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Coast Education Center (COEC)

### Lebanon

Rescue Me Association

### Liberia

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## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

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- **BPI**  
Better Peace Initiative
- **BPT**  
Better Peace Tool
- **CSO**  
Civil Society Organizations
- **CVE**  
Countering of Violent extremism
- **EU**  
European Union
- **FCDO**  
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK)\*
- **GSX**  
Global Solutions Exchange
- **IGO**  
Intergovernmental Organization
- **IPF**  
Innovative Peace Fund
- **MHPSS**  
Mental Health Psychosocial Support
- **NGO**  
Non-Governmental Organization
- **P/CVE**  
Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism
- **PD**  
Program Director
- **PPE**  
Personal Protective Equipment
- **PREP**  
Peace, Resilience, Equal Rights and Pluralism
- **SGBV**  
Sexual and Gender Based Violence
- **UN**  
United Nations
- **UNDP**  
United Nations Development Program
- **UNSC**  
United Nations Security Council
- **UNSCR**  
United Nations Security Council Resolution
- **WASL**  
Women's Alliance for Security Leadership
- **WHO**  
World Health Organizations
- **WPB**  
Women Peacebuilder
- **WPBO**  
Women Peacebuilding Organizations
- **WPS**  
Women, Peace and Security



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\* In September 2020, the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) merged to form the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).



*For women's rights, peace and security*



Women's organizations have filled crucial gaps in the provision of services and information on the pandemic, especially at the local level.

Women peacebuilders have played a vital role in public health messaging in low trust and conflict-affected communities.

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General  
marking 20 years of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women,  
Peace and Security,  
October 29, 2020

