



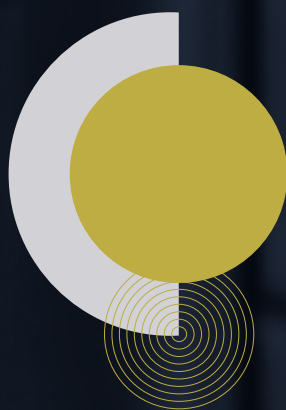
2023

ANNUAL REPORT



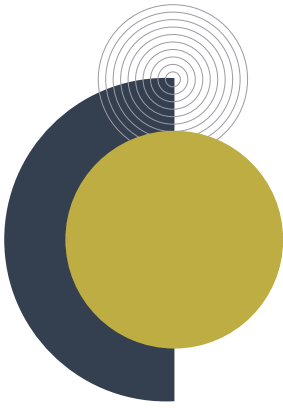
KAICIID DIALOGUE CENTRE





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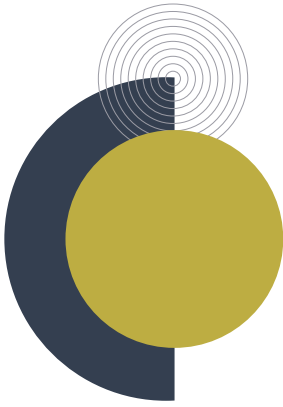
Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-IPR	Association of Southeast Asian Nations – Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
AU-IFDF	African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum
CSO	Civil society organization
DJF	Dialogue Journalism Fellowship
ECOSOCC	Commission Economic, Social and Cultural Council
ECRL	European Council of Religious Leaders
EPDF	European Policy Dialogue Forum
EuLeMa	European Muslim Leaders’ Majlis
FBO	Faith-based organization
IDFP	Interfaith Dialogue Forum for Peace
IPDC	Interreligious Platform for Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arab World
KAICIID	International Dialogue Centre – KAICIID
KIFP	KAICIID International Fellows Programme
MJLC	Muslim Jewish Leadership Council
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ODIHR	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PaRD	International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development
PCRC	Plateforme des Confessions Religieuses de Centrafrique [Platform of Religious Confessions of Central Africa]
RfP	Religions for Peace
RJSC	Réseau des Journalistes Sensibles aux Conflits [Network of Conflict-sensitive Journalists]
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
IATF-MFAC	Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the UN Interagency Taskforce on Religion and Sustainable Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WOSM	World Organization of the Scout Movement



2023

ANNUAL REPORT



About KAICIID



Council of Parties

Austria, Saudi Arabia, Spain and the Holy See as a Founding Observer



Mission and vision

MISSION

A unique mandate with a mission to promote dialogue to foster respect among cultures and religions

VISION

A world in which there is respect, understanding and cooperation among people; justice, peace and reconciliation; and an end to the abuse of religion to justify repression, violence and conflict



Impact of our work

7,000+

DIALOGUE PRACTITIONERS TRAINED

500+

FELLOWS GRADUATED FROM 92 COUNTRIES



MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS REPRESENTED ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism

5

DIALOGUE PLATFORMS ESTABLISHED AROUND THE WORLD

6

INTERRELIGIOUS NETWORKS ESTABLISHED AND SUPPORTED

13

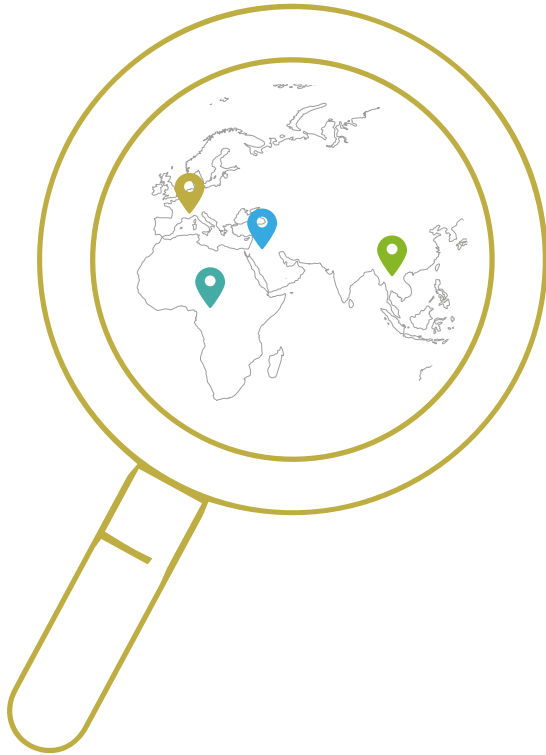
ACTIVE MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (IGOS), INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (INGOS) AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

10

PROJECT-BASED COOPERATION AND LICENCE AGREEMENTS ACROSS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, INGOS AND PLATFORMS



Where we work



INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE INITIATIVES:

AFRICA

Supported Network of Conflict-sensitive Journalists (Réseau des Journalistes Sensibles aux Conflits - RJSC) and the Platform of Religious Confessions (Plateforme des Confessions Religieuses de Centrafrique - PCRC) in the Central African Republic. Established the Interfaith Dialogue Forum for Peace (IDFP) and the Network of Policymakers and Religious Leaders to Support Reconciliation, Peace and Security in Nigeria

ARAB REGION

Launched the Interreligious Platform for Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arab World (IPDC), the Network for Religious Christian and Muslim Faculties and Institutes in the Arab World, and the Social Media Regional Network.

ASIA

Supported establishment of the Southeast Asia Dialogue Cities Conference.

EUROPE

Established the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC), supported the European Muslim Leaders' Majlis (EuLeMa), and launched the Network for Dialogue.



What we do



WE DEVELOP CAPACITY

Capacity development is at the core of KAICIID's programmes. We provide in-person and online training as well as resources and support to individuals and partner organizations through the E-Learning and Fellows programmes among others. We collaborate with dialogue experts, religious leaders, educators, policymakers and their respective institutions, to equip them with the necessary tools to integrate dialogue into their communities effectively..



WE CONVENE

As a convener, KAICIID establishes and supports interreligious networks and dialogue platforms around the globe, and hosts conferences, local workshops and other fora. We bring together religious leaders and policymakers to promote dialogue as a fundamental aspect of policymaking aimed at tackling global problems such as COVID-19, climate change, inequality and poverty. Through our work, we aim to recognise and promote the invaluable contributions of religious communities to peace and development, and to work with them to solve global challenges.



WE WORK REGIONALLY

Whether it is due to religious differences or conflict over land or resources, dialogue is essential in jointly overcoming challenges. KAICIID's programmes promote social cohesion through dialogue in communities around the world. We build platforms where sustained dialogue can take place in conflict-prone situations and societies in Africa, the Arab region, Asia and Europe.

STAFF UPDATE



Total staff posts

64 POSTS



Staff nationality

KAICIID's multinational staff come from **24** countries

STAFF PER COUNTRY

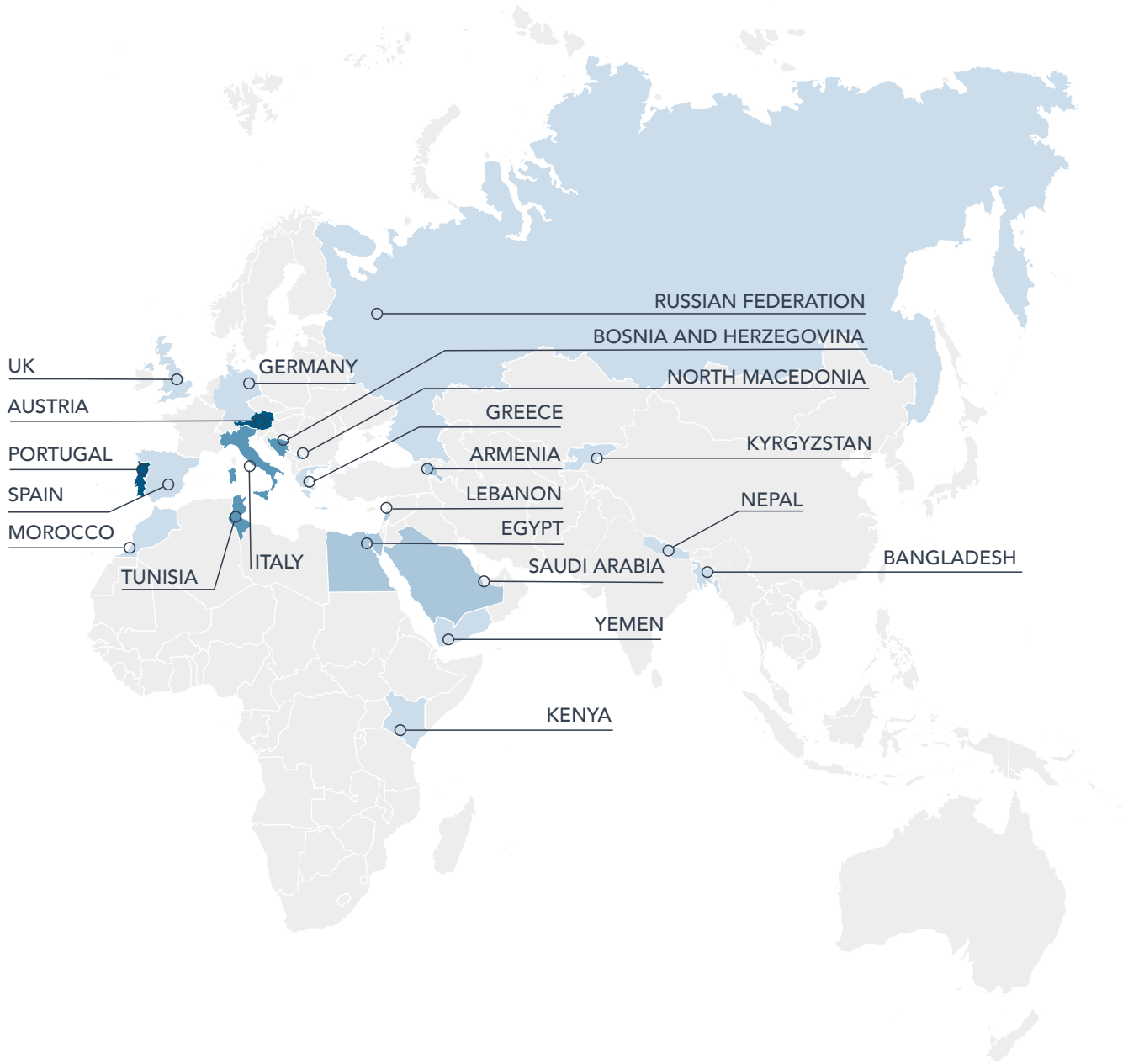


BY CONTINENT

Continent	% of Staff
Africa	13%
Asia	15%
Europe	60%
North America	7%
South America	5%
Total	100 %

BY MEMBER AND HOST STATES

Country	% of Staff
Portugal	24%
Austria	11%
Saudi Arabia	4%
Spain	2%
Other States	59%
Total	100%

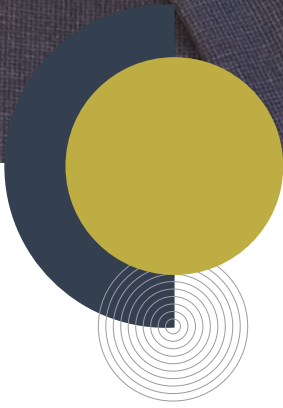


Staff by gender

MALE
51%

FEMALE
49%

Dr. Zuhair Alharthi
Secretary General
The International Dialogue Centre – KAICIID



Foreword

Dear partners and friends,

As we stand at the crossroads of history, tasked with confronting some of the most daunting challenges of our time, the power of interreligious and intercultural dialogue has never been more critical. Our organization is committed to leveraging this power to advance the global agenda for peace and sustainable development.

As multilateralism faces new challenges across the international community, I led the KAICIID Secretariat in establishing the Centre in the Lisbon headquarters in our new host country, Portugal, and highlighting the pivotal role of interreligious and intercultural dialogue. With the support of the Executive Office, I continued the vital work of furthering strategic partnerships. Throughout the year, I met with religious and secular dignitaries. Each conversation serving to deepen collaboration and mutual understanding, as well as building relationships and exploring collaborative opportunities with existing and potential partners.

Climate change calls for an unprecedented global response, grounded in the moral conviction and stewardship espoused by all major religious traditions. Our team has worked closely with UN entities including the United Nations Environment Programme on e-learning courses that support faith-based organizations and religious actors to not only mitigate the impacts of climate change but to also champion the principles of ecological justice and sustainability. We've also worked closely with the African Union, the World Resources Institute and others to harness our partnerships with faith communities and jointly tackle food insecurity and the need for climate resiliency.

Ongoing conflicts, including in Gaza, Myanmar, the Sahel and Ukraine, weigh heavily on our hearts. These crises remind us of the fragility of peace and the human cost of conflict. In these times of turmoil, interreligious and intercultural dialogue serves as a beacon of hope, by promoting reconciliation and peacebuilding. Over 500 of our Fellows, equipped to be mediators and champions for dialogue, are actively working to sow seeds of sustainable peace in 92 countries worldwide. KAICIID promotes peace and security through its platforms and networks, and its work with partners including the African Union, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, including their Institute for Peace and Reconciliation.

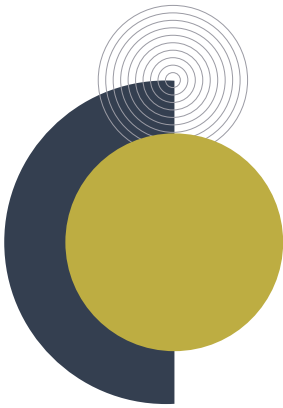
Our Network for Dialogue and Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council are hard at work on policies and initiatives which foster understanding and cooperation among communities in Europe. Through the collective efforts of faith-based organizations, we have witnessed the power of faith to heal, to welcome and to rebuild lives, particularly when it comes to refugees and migrants. We continue to support this work through our Network for Dialogue and our annual European Policy Dialogue Forum.

Finally, KAICIID's work on global development agendas, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union Agenda 2063 represent our collective aspirations for a world that thrives on equality, justice, and environmental stewardship. Achieving these ambitions requires more than just political will and financial investment; it calls for a transformation in the hearts and minds of individuals and communities around the globe. This is where the unique strength of interreligious dialogue comes into play. By building bridges between different faith communities, we unlock the potential for solidarity and action that transcends borders and differences.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to our partners and the many individuals who contribute to our mission. The path ahead is not easy, but with continued collaboration and commitment, we can create a more just, sustainable and peaceful world.

May our continued efforts in interreligious and intercultural dialogue inspire further action and cooperation, guiding us closer to the realisation of our shared goals for humanity and the planet.

Thank you,
 Dr. Zuhair Alharthi
 Secretary General
 International Dialogue Centre – KAICIID



CHAPTER 1

Organizational Update



MULTILATERALISM AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The world is grappling with challenges that far exceed the capacity of any single State to manage, including climate change, global health crises, and escalating conflicts. Traditional mechanisms of international cooperation are being stretched beyond their limits. The complexity of modern threats – be they environmental, technological, or geopolitical – demands a reinvigorated and dynamic approach to international relations. In this pivotal moment, KAICIID stands ready to drive forward a multilateral system based on the pillars of dialogue and diversity.

Championing dialogue at the UN and other high-level institutions

KAICIID champions dialogue in the halls of the highest international and regional institutions. The Centre works closely with United Nations (UN) bodies, such as United Nations Environment Programme Faith for Earth, the African Union Commission (AUC), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations – Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), to help strengthen partnerships and improve collaboration on global development agendas.



Throughout 2023, KAICIID reaffirmed its commitment to global collaboration through memberships across seven pivotal networks and platforms. These include the Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the UN Interagency Taskforce on Religion and Sustainable Development (IATF-MFAC), the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20), the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD), the Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, the Joint Learning Initiative for Faith and Local Actors (JLI), and the Moral Imperative Initiative of the World Bank Group.

MEMBERSHIP IN

7 networks and platforms, including in:



6 advisory committees or steering groups



10 workstreams or working groups on topics relating to food security (SDG 2); freedom of religion or belief; gender equality and empowerment (SDG 5); multilateralism (SDG 17); peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16); and water, environment and climate action (WeCARE) (SDGs 6, 13, 14 and 15)

10 PROJECT-BASED COOPERATION agreements



5 KAICIID-supported platforms



2 Higher education institutions



2 INGOs



1 IGO licence agreement

In May, KAICIID joined the IATF-MFAC Annual Retreat, at the UN Headquarters in New York. This gathering, which focused on “Fostering Deeper Relations”, was a crucial platform for enhancing collaboration and strengthening the Centre’s ties with key faith-based actors and UN bodies. Participants included members of the United Nations Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development, chaired by the United Nations of the Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Advancing dialogue between religious leaders and policymakers

In June, KAICIID's Secretary General participated in the Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue in Marrakesh. This event, which welcomed over 700 delegates, was organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Mohammadia League of Religious Scholars, Religions for Peace and the UNAOC, under the patronage of the Kingdom of Morocco. Key outcomes from this conference included the launch of the parliamentary report on religion and belief, and the development of the Marrakesh Communique, both of which are pivotal in promoting global interfaith dialogue.



Celebrating the Portuguese Day of Religious Freedom and Interreligious Dialogue, celebrated in June, KAICIID's Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi and Deputy Secretary General Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro welcomed the President of the Portuguese Parliament, Augusto Santos Silva, who visited the Centre's headquarters accompanied by a delegation of Members of Parliament. During the visit, the President learned firsthand about the impact of KAICIID's interreligious and intercultural dialogue work in Portugal and globally. The visit to KAICIID also included a meeting with religious leaders for an open dialogue. The President of the Portuguese Parliament, along with the Members of Parliament, heard from the leaders of 13 religious communities in Lisbon about their views on the Portuguese law on religious freedom, as well as their concerns and challenges.



In Lisbon, we feel at home, and the harmony among religious communities in Portugal facilitates our work. We gather today with respected religious leaders in Portugal to celebrate in an atmosphere of warmth and respect for all religions, emphasising our common values more than our differences. I assure you that KAICIID will continue to promote peace through dialogue, which can only be achieved with cooperation from religious leaders, policymakers, and all other stakeholders."



Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, on welcoming President of the Portuguese Parliament, Augusto Santos Silva at the Centre's headquarters

Additionally, this past year, KAICIID's Secretary General and staff contributed to the thematic report of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, addressing transformative responses to hatred based on religion or belief. The report will be presented to the 55th session of the UN Human Rights Council, to be held February–April 2024.



SECRETARY GENERAL DR. ZUHAIR ALHARTHI

held over 

100

MULTI- AND BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH
ACADEMICS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND
RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Joining the high-level week at the UN General Assembly

In the framework of the UN General Assembly high-level week in September, KAICIID co-sponsored an event organised by the Trilateral Partnership of Regional Faith-based Networks for the SDGs. A KAICIID delegation also joined a side event titled “Innovative Peacebuilding to Advance Freedom of Religion and Belief”, which was hosted at the Baha’i International Community Headquarters. Additionally, KAICIID’s delegation attended the American Jewish Committee’s Human Dignity Award ceremony to honour H.E. Shaykh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, the President of the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace, and Chair of the Islamic Law Council of the United Arab Emirates, who has been a long-time supporter of KAICIID and a champion for interreligious and intercultural dialogue.





ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS AND SDGS AS CORE OBJECTIVES. Another critical meeting held during the high-level week underscored the essential role that intercultural and interreligious dialogue plays in fostering a peaceful and sustainable world. KAICIID’s Secretary General and staff joined the UNAOC Group of Friends High-Level meeting, discussing topics ranging from the sanctity and protection of religious sites to strengthening the foundations of interreligious dialogue. The conversation also highlighted the crucial roles that women and youth play in peacebuilding, the need to address hate speech, and the connection of these efforts to the broader context of human rights – all of which align closely with KAICIID’s core objectives.

KAICIID also played an active role in supporting the organisation of the Kofi Annan Faith Briefing, organised by IATF-MFAC. The Centre focused on giving input to the design and planning of the activity at the Working Group on Multilateralism. With a focus on how faith-based organizations (FBOs) have allied with UN agencies to further the SDGs, the event was a testament to the power of faith in driving global change.



The platforms provided by the Multi-Faith Advisory Council and initiatives like the Kofi Annan Faith Briefings amplify the voices of faith-based communities, reinforcing our collective mission for a harmonious and sustainable future. Such collaborative efforts underline the significance of dialogue and partnership in our journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.”

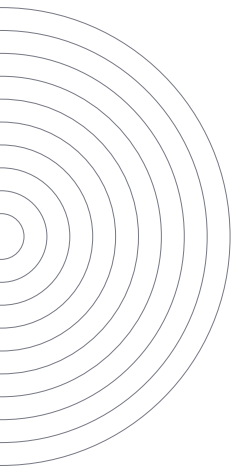
Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi



In October, KAICIID was chosen to serve as co-chair of PARD’s Steering Board during its General Assembly and Annual Forum in Berlin. KAICIID has co-led PARD’s sustaining peace workstream, and is actively engaged in the workstreams on gender, freedom of religion or belief, and water environment and climate action (WECARE).

Empowering the voices of young people

At an institutional level, in addition to working towards gender equality through its Gender and Empowerment (PaRD workstream) and Gender Equality (IATF-MFAC working group), KAICIID addresses the issues of youth. For instance, in October, KAICIID’s leadership attended the Council of Europe’s North–South Centre 29th Lisbon Forum, titled “Human Rights, Environment and Economic Crimes: Youth at the Forefront”.



Also in October, KAICIID renewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). Through partnerships with WOSM as well as seven institutes for higher education, the Centre created dialogue training programmes that equip young people with the skills to become agents of change in their communities and to meaningfully contribute to decision-making processes for peace.



As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our collaboration this year, we are honoured to have WOSM as a steadfast partner in advancing youth leadership. Our shared initiatives, such as the Dialogue for Peace project, have reached thousands of young people, equipping them to counter hate speech and foster social cohesion within their communities.”

Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, at the MoU signing with WOSM



On the same day, the Centre signed an MoU with another long-standing partner, Religions for Peace. The MoU cemented a partnership that dates back to 2012. Additionally, as of May 2023, KAICIID’s Secretary General, has been an Honorary President of Religions for Peace. An appointment made in appreciation for the Secretary General’s work promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

Working towards social cohesion with refugees and migrants

In December, KAICIID’s Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General delivered remarks at the “Promised Lands” event in Lisbon, organised to observe International Migrants Day and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This event, co-organised with the International Organization for Migration and the UN Migration Agency highlighted the indispensable contributions of migrants to global development and the need for peaceful coexistence between people of different religions and cultures. Also in December, KAICIID’s leadership attended the North–South Prize ceremony. This event celebrated the efforts in integrating internally displaced persons and addressing climate change.





Meetings between KAICIID and the Vatican stands as a testament to the power of dialogue¹

In 2023, KAICIID's Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi held two pivotal meetings with His Holiness Pope Francis, underscoring the enduring partnership between KAICIID and the Vatican in fostering global peace through interreligious and intercultural dialogue. These encounters, one in June at the Vatican and another during the August World Youth Day celebrations in Lisbon, highlighted a mutual commitment to dialogue as a transformative force for global unity.

KAICIID was established following a historic meeting that took place in 2007 between the late King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, in his role as Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and Pope Benedict XVI. The meeting was an initial gesture of reaching out across centuries of misunderstanding, and of setting aside certainties in favour of dialogue. The two leaders discussed the founding of an interfaith initiative, which led to the establishment of KAICIID in 2012. The Holy See remains an Observer of the actualisation of KAICIID's mandate.

During their meeting in June, Dr. Alharthi expressed his gratitude to Pope Francis for the Vatican's critical role in the establishment and support of KAICIID.

"The Vatican has played a significant role in raising the importance of interreligious dialogue as a necessary means towards creating universal peace. I am honoured to meet with Pope Francis to reaffirm our efforts in dialogue and the importance of an enhanced commitment to these efforts ahead of his visit to our Host Country, Portugal," said the Secretary General.

¹ International Dialogue Centre's Secretary General Calls for Continued Commitment to Universal Peace through Interreligious Dialogue in Audience with Pope Francis; World Youth Day Highlights: KAICIID Engages with Pope Francis and Leads Grassroots Activities



A further meeting took place at the World Youth Day celebrations in Lisbon, emphasising the practical impacts of KAICIID's work. Pope Francis met not only with KAICIID's Secretary General but also with graduates of KAICIID's Fellows Programme. The Fellows, representing major world religions - Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism - shared their firsthand experiences of how dialogue has bridged divides and fostered respect across diverse religious communities.

Pope Francis lauded the KAICIID's initiatives, stressing the Centre's role in promoting understanding and its relentless efforts to foster an atmosphere conducive to peaceful coexistence.

"Pope Francis' unwavering support for KAICIID and his belief in our mission was evident. Our mutual commitments to fostering peace and understanding resounded strongly during our meeting," said Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi.

Dialogue is not just a method but a necessary pathway to harmony and peace. The partnership between KAICIID and the Vatican stands as a powerful testament to the potential of interreligious and intercultural dialogue to address global challenges. It exemplifies how sustained, thoughtful interactions between religious leaders can catalyse real change, fostering an environment where peace can flourish.





GOVERNANCE UPDATE

KAICIID is governed by two principal bodies: the Council of Parties and the Board of Directors. The Centre's founding Member States – the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Spain, with the Holy See as a Founding Observer – constitute the Council of Parties, responsible for overseeing the work of KAICIID. The Board of Directors comprises high-level representatives of major world religions, including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.



Council of Parties

The Council of Parties consists of representatives of parties to the Agreement for the Establishment of KAICIID, with the Holy See as a Founding Observer. It is responsible for several key functions within KAICIID, including the election of members of the Board of Directors and the appointment of the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General.

The Council approves the organization's work programme and annual budget. It also has the authority to nominate individuals from major religious, faith-based, and cultural institutions to join the Advisory Forum, based on recommendations from the Board of Directors. Additionally, it approves international agreements and the establishment of partnerships with other organizations that can support KAICIID's objectives. Finally, the Council of Parties decides on the admission of new parties and observers to the Establishment Agreement.

Since KAICIID's foundation, the Council of Parties has provided continuous support. In 2023, this included endorsing four new collaborative agreements with international institutions and renewing the Centre's Memoranda of Understanding with key strategic partners, including the African Union (AU) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).



Board of Directors

Throughout KAICIID’s history, its Board Members have been instrumental in contributing directly to the Centre’s programmes and activities by providing strategic input. They have strengthened the overall visibility and credibility of the Centre by representing it at various prominent gatherings.



From left to right, top to bottom:

OUTGOING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS

(UNTIL 30 SEPTEMBER 2023):
 Dr. Hamad Al-Majed, Dr. Kezevino Aram, H.Em. Cardinal Miguel Ayuso, H.Em. Metropolitan Emmanuel, Rev. Kosho Niwano, His Virtue Prof. Dr. Allahshukur Pashazade, Chief Rabbi David Rosen, Dr. Mohammad Sammak and Rev. Richard J. Sudworth

The current Board of Directors' term ended on 30 September 2023. The KAICIID's Council of Parties is currently in the process of appointing a new Board of Directors for a renewable term of four years.

As the Centre awaits the nomination of its new members of the Board, some of its former Members have been instrumental in carrying out the mission of the Centre.



Advisory Forum

The Advisory Forum is a consultative body comprising influential leaders from world religions and religious and cultural institutions and communities across the world. The Advisory Forum supports the activities of the KAICIID Board of Directors and advises on its programmes.

Through the vast pool of knowledge of Advisory Forum members, the Secretariat is briefed on developments in regions where KAICIID operates.

Members contribute alongside the Secretariat to guarantee the successful implementation of the KAICIID programme of work. Members help raise awareness of KAICIID and advocate for its goals in all corners of the globe.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

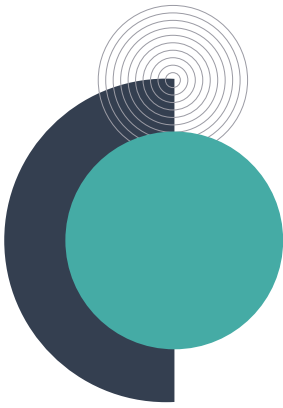
The 2023 programme and budget were approved by the Council of Parties at a total of 17.5 million euros (including the supplementary budget), covering the programmes and activities of the Centre.

The cash surplus from the 2022 financial year and further voluntary contributions received during 2023 from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provided the financing for the 2023 programme and budget. The total 2023 expenditure reached 17.498 million euros. (This figure is subject to the final audit of the 2023 financial statements.)

DISTRIBUTION OF 2023 EXPENDITURE



- Programmes division
- Executive office of the Secretary General
- Communications division
- Operations division



CHAPTER 2

Cross-Cutting Issues



KAICIID's commitment to promoting interreligious dialogue integrates the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly focusing on cross-cutting priorities of gender equality (SDG 5), youth (SDGs 4 and 11), and inclusive decision-making, meaningful participation in policymaking and the principle of leaving no one behind (SDG 4).

The inclusion of a diverse range of voices, particularly those of women and young people, in decision-making processes is imperative. These voices bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions that are critical in navigating the complexities of today's global landscape.

The Centre’s programmes, either engage women and youth directly, or support KAICIID trainees, such as the Fellows, to implement initiatives that focus on the participation and empowerment of women and youth. In addition to promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a contributor to inclusive policymaking, KAICIID convenes religious leaders, women, youth and other members of under-represented communities, and gives them a voice in decision-making processes.



Supporting policy engagement, and meaningful inclusion of women and youth in dialogue

KAICIID’s strategic partnerships, including the renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Organization of the Scouts Movement (WOSM), underline its focus on youth leadership and the global scope of dialogue initiatives. Notable among these are the Dialogue for Peace programme, Dialogue Badge, and the Baseline Study of Spiritual Development in Scouting.

DIALOGUE FOR PEACE

benefitted ✓



1,000+ young people from **120** countries

At the international and regional levels, KAICIID engages in regular consultations with key international experts on issues of gender and youth. Through active memberships with the Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the UN Interagency Taskforce on Religion and Sustainable Development (IATF-MFAC) and International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD), the Centre participates in the gender working group, gender equality and empowerment work stream, and the education working group, respectively.

The Centre's collaborations with the African Union (AU) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations – Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) focus on integrating interreligious dialogue into regional policy-making processes, ensuring policies reflect the needs and contributions of diverse religious and cultural leaders, including women and youth.

At the 2023 World Youth Day in Lisbon, KAICIID facilitated several Dialogue Encounters as part of the city's youth festival, emphasising its commitment to equipping young leaders with dialogue skills. A highlight was the audience with His Holiness Pope Francis, providing KAICIID Fellows Alumni a rare opportunity to engage with a global religious leader.



In Africa, within the KAICIID-supported Interfaith Dialogue Forum for Peace (IDFP), the forum's strategic areas of focus include gender and children's rights, as well as the inclusion of women and youth. In 2023, a gender rights sensitisation project engaged both women and religious leaders, aiming to strengthen community-led peace efforts.

WOMEN HOLD

40%

of IDFP **leadership** positions





KAICIID has also supported the intersections of faith and policymaking through its many networks and platforms. For example, in Nigeria, KAICIID facilitated the establishment of the Network of Policymakers and Religious Leaders to Support Reconciliation. The Network's members recognise that policymaking and implementation need religious voices in order to deescalate the interreligious and intercultural conflicts that threaten the country's stability. The Network fosters better informed and more inclusive policies which take into account the sensitivities and needs of Nigeria's diverse community groups.

The Interreligious Platform for Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arab Region (IPDC) has committed to implementing five projects designed to strengthen the collaboration between religious leaders and policymakers in addressing hate speech. These projects will be implemented at the local and national levels in five Arab countries, with the support of KAICIID.

The Centre implemented projects in the Arab region equip women and youth with the skills needed to lead peacebuilding efforts and shape media narratives in a region marked by a complex socio-political landscape. KAICIID has trained women interreligious and intercultural dialogue activists (She for Dialogue) and journalists (Dialogue Journalism Fellowship – DJF); as well as supporting women in grassroot-focused initiatives (Dialogue360).

SINCE 2022,
SHE FOR DIALOGUE

16 **women** (interreligious and intercultural dialogue activists), from: **5** Arab countries

7 **Initiatives** (1 regional, 6 national) implemented

DJF TRAINED

25 **women** (journalists), from:

15 Arab countries
The **2023 cohort achieved** 50% : 50% gender balance



IN 2023,
DIALOGUE360
SUPPORTED
WOMEN TO

- directly run 1/3 of initiatives,
- be part of 70% of initiative implementation teams, and
- comprise over 50% (4,865) of direct beneficiaries of implemented initiatives

200 **policymakers** involved in implemented initiatives

In 2023, KAICIID's Southeast Asia Dialogue Cities Conference which provided a forum for sharing effective practices in making ASEAN cities more inclusive for persons with disabilities, women, the urban poor, and other marginalised groups. Women and youth leaders contributed to the conference, illustrating the active engagement of these groups in shaping dialogue and policy.

As a follow-up to the conference, KAICIID supported the establishment of three working groups. By gathering various stakeholders to develop initiatives on the importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in cities. With this conference, the Centre created a space for different stakeholders, including government, religious and interfaith actors and practitioners, with a special focus on women and youth, to come together and explore how to improve the culture of dialogue in their respective cities.



60 + **women and youth leaders** contributed to conference

3 working groups established at conference,
Women, youth, and research and **policy** in interreligious dialogue
1 KAICIID supported initiative implemented



In Europe, the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC), supported by the European Muslim Leaders’ Majlis (EuLeMa), regularly engages with the European Commission and Parliament, and local governments on policies related to issues including religious slaughter, minority rights and freedom of religion and belief.

The MJLC Ambassadors Programme nurtures young leaders from the Muslim and Jewish communities, fostering dialogue and leadership skills. Additionally, the young experts both led and participated in discussions about the social inclusion challenges faced by young refugees at the 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF).



2/3 of MJLC Ambassadors are **young women**, at least 1 major initiative developed for young women



5th EPDF (and expert meeting) **attendees and participants comprise**

30%

YOUNG LEADERS



Globally, the KAICIID Fellows Alumni Network (KFAN) provides graduates with ongoing learning and professional development opportunities to learn key concepts of policymaking and engaging with policymakers. As the KAICIID International Fellows Programme (KIFP) expands, it increasingly emphasises gender responsiveness. The selection committee prioritises gender balance and representation in participant selection. Once graduated, Fellows Alumni are invited to monthly online sessions, including at least one session annually focused on the role of women in interreligious dialogue. Additionally, many Fellows’ initiatives are specifically designed to empower women and youth.



35 **30% OF FELLOWS ALUMNI WERE** years or younger at the time of Fellowship

38% of all Fellows are women, with 2023 cohorts’ Fellows made up of



All KIFP initiatives directly targeted to benefit: **Youth** 36% **Women** 23%

KAICIID’s 29 e-learning courses are linked with global development agendas and tailored to enhance skills in dialogue and peacebuilding among women and youth. Special cohorts include youth activists from organizations such as the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF) and WOSM. Many of the courses are designed to equip religious actors with the skills to better understand of climate policy, and support religious and other actors in engaging in policy processes to implement the SDGs.

Since 2022, the webinar series “Women’s Voices” amplifies the voices of women of faith and their leadership roles in diplomacy, science and technology (STEM), preserving sacred sites, tackling gender-based violence, and promoting peace.

Since 2022,



**Women’s
Voices**
webinars held



Walking the talk on inclusivity and empowerment of women and youth, and in policymaking²

The cross-cutting issues of incorporating dialogue into policymaking, and empowering women and youth, are synergised in the implementation in all of KAICIID's local, regional and global programmes. Two such projects are run by the Europe Region Programme, showcase the powerful impact of this approach to promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

The first MJLC Ambassadors Programme took place in 2023. Mentored by MJLC members, young Muslim and Jewish leaders worked together in choosing dialogue over discord. Through their shared experiences and initiatives, the young ambassadors are driving the narrative of interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a catalyst for breaking down barriers of miscommunication and prejudice.

By collaborating to implement their initiatives, the ambassadors developed trust, understanding and mutual respect, not only among themselves, but among the beneficiaries of their initiatives, contributing to unity and social cohesion at a time of escalating tensions. Additionally, by ensuring gender parity of the young ambassadors, KAICIID improved not only the inclusivity of the programme, but also the effectiveness of initiatives, especially those that benefit women.

A similar impact was seen at the 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum, where the voices of youth were front and centre, engaging with policymakers and religious leaders to sculpt a more inclusive society. By sharing their insights and ensuring that policies reflect their diverse realities and aspirations, the young participants were able to have their voice heard and contribute to truly inclusive decision making.

In bringing youth to the dialogue table and giving them voice, KAICIID demonstrates its dedication to empowering youth and embedding their perspectives in policymaking. The two projects are merely an example of the impact of KAICIID's convening power and 'walking the talk' of empowering youth, working towards gender equality, and embedding dialogue practices into policy-making processes.

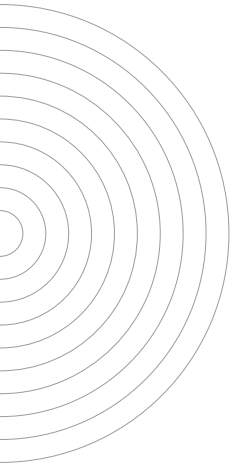
¹ Young Muslim and Jewish Ambassadors Choose Dialogue Over Stereotypes and Conflict; Engaging Youth Voices for Social Inclusion: A Retrospective on the 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum in Rotterdam



CHAPTER 3

Promoting Interreligious Dialogue Locally





KAICIID operates within four key regions: Africa, the Arab region, Asia, and Europe. The Centre’s regional programmes exemplify the Centre’s commitment to promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a means to address a spectrum of local challenges. Across diverse geopolitical landscapes, KAICIID convenes policymakers, with local and national religious leaders and civil society actors to foster dialogue aimed at enhancing social cohesion, mitigating conflicts, and combating hate speech.

These efforts are crucial in protecting sacred sites and addressing other interconnected issues such as ethical and religious education, migration and the climate emergency. Through such engagements, KAICIID underscores the transformative power of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in bridging divides and fostering mutual respect and peaceful coexistence among diverse communities.

AFRICA

In 2023, the African continent continued to face challenges ranging from political instability and ethnic conflicts to socio-economic disparities and environmental crises. Historical grievances and contemporary disputes over resources continue to be compounded by socio-economic disparities, leaving many regions vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity. Additionally, environmental crises, such as droughts and floods, driven by climate change, threatened the livelihoods and stability of numerous communities. The political and security situation in the Central African Republic, exacerbated by conflicts in neighbouring regions, remains precarious. Persistent religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria, underscore the urgent need for effective dialogue.

KAICIID’s Africa Region Programme strategically addresses this complex landscape by building resilient interfaith networks and partnerships with regional entities such as the African Union (AU). Through collaborative dialogue and community-engagement initiatives, KAICIID aims to foster peace, security, and social cohesion across the continent, by mitigating conflicts and enhancing mutual understanding among diverse religious and ethnic groups.

In 2023, KAICIID continued support of the implementation of the AU’s Agenda 2063 alongside the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council and by providing operational and technical assistance to the African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum. The Centre also continued to enable religious leaders to engage effectively in policymaking.

Promoting peace and national unity during electoral periods through extensive interreligious engagement, supporting local and regional peace initiatives, protecting sacred sites, and incorporating dialogue into educational frameworks to contribute to long-term peace and stability. Finally, in partnership with Arigatou and UNESCO, three African states (Kenya, Mauritius and the Seychelles) are taking part (along with Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal) in the Ethics in Education Fellowship.



Working regionally to support the AU and Agenda 2063

AFRICAN UNION INTERFAITH DIALOGUE FORUM (AU-IFDF). In 2023, KAICIID continued its partnership with the African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AU-CIDO), in providing essential technical and operational support to the African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum (AU-IFDF). The partnership has been instrumental in offering religious leaders a collaborative platform to pinpoint critical intervention areas, address the needs of African citizens comprehensively, and engage with policymakers on shared challenges.

In February 2023, KAICIID, together with 11 members of the AU-IFDF Steering Committee, joined the Interfaith Harmony Week, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to discuss the pivotal role of religious communities in promoting human dignity, environmental conservation, and freedom of religion or belief. The event saw the participation of 200 individuals, with KAICIID contributing to a key panel at the African Union Nelson Mandela Hall, on "Building Harmony Around Shared Religious Concerns" discussing the vital role of religious leaders in promoting peace.

In November, KAICIID supported the fourth General Assembly of the AU-IFDF Steering Committee. This event, held in Kigali, Rwanda, on the theme of "Faith in Harvest: Sowing Seeds of Climate Resilience", was pivotal in facilitating an in-depth exchange of knowledge on how climate change affects vulnerable communities and ecosystems. It also served as a platform to empower a diverse group of stakeholders – ranging from faith leaders and policymakers to youth representatives and farmers – providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to champion climate action and sustainable farming practices effectively.



The AU-IFDF General Assembly’s being held in Kigali provided an opportunity to showcase the outcomes of research conducted and implemented in Rwanda throughout 2023. KAICIID, in collaboration with the World Resources Institute (WRI), supported the research aimed to uncover actionable strategies whereby religious communities can contribute significantly to reducing food loss and waste, while its implementation exemplified the potential of the cross-sector collaboration by involving government authorities and faith-based organizations (FBOs) in addressing food insecurity by improving food availability and sustainability.

Also in November, in cooperation with the AU-IFDF, AU-CIDO and the All African Council of Churches (AACC), KAICIID organised a two-day strategic workshop in Pemba, Mozambique. The event aimed at consulting stakeholders active in Cabo Delgado to develop a locally owned strategy and action plan for forming Interreligious Peace Committees in the area. The collaboration involved local government representatives, the Mozambican Interreligious Committee, and 20 local and international NGOs, marking a significant step toward peacebuilding in the region.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL (ECOSOCC). KAICIID partners with the African Union and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) on the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the realisation of the SDGs. Together, the two organizations work towards building a strong partnership between governments and all segments of Africa’s civil society. KAICIID in particular champions faith-based voices and interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

In March 2023, an ECOSOCC delegation attended the Centre’s headquarters. KAICIID’s Secretary General welcomed the delegation, with the two organizations reflecting on the achievements of the partnership and of the advancement of the AU’s Agenda 2063, with an eye for further collaboration. The discussion included a review of the 2022 Citizens’ Forum on Unconstitutional Changes of Government organised in Lusaka, Zambia, and the need for a joint follow-up of the action plan.





KAICIID remains dedicated to expanding its programmes in Africa. Our collaboration with AU ECOSOCC is instrumental in fostering interreligious dialogue and social cohesion in Africa."

Secretary General, Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, meeting with ECOSOCC's Presiding Officer Officer Khalid Boudali, Head of Programmes Kyeretwie Osei, and African Union Legal Counsel Representative Lagizaber Beyene Bekele.



In April 2023, KAICIID engaged in an ECOSOCC event focused on enhancing dialogue and collaboration on peace and security in Africa, with stakeholders from the AU, regional bodies, and civil society organizations (CSOs). This event underscored the critical role of civil society, especially faith-based organizations (FBOs), in peace efforts and conflict resolution. Alongside, ECOSOCC facilitated a workshop to develop a roadmap for a database of CSOs involved in peace and security, aiming to increase their awareness and capacity to integrate peace and security issues at various levels, in line with key regional peace frameworks.

As an implementing partner, KAICIID contributed to two panels at the AU-ECOSOCC's Citizens' Forum on Democracy and Digital Governance in July 2023, emphasising the importance of digital literacy and the inclusion of religious leaders in digital governance discussions. The Forum saw participation from 250 key stakeholders, including UN agencies, AU departments, CSOs, FBOs, media, academia and the Kenyan State Principle for the State Department of Information Communications Technology.

Central African Republic



Plateforme des Confessions Religieuses de Centrafrique (PCRC)

STRENGTHENING LOCAL AND REGIONAL PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS. In 2023 KAICIID continued its support for high-level religious leaders engaged in frontline conflict mediation and peacebuilding through the PCRC (translated to Platform of Religious Confessions of Central Africa). The Centre ensured the provision of technical and operational support, alongside skills and capacity enhancements, to the interfaith platform. Thereby ensured the PCRC secretariat and its 16 prefectural antennae offices remained effective and active in defusing tensions and resolving conflicts. For example, in September, representatives of the antennae offices received technical training in project monitoring, evaluation and implementation.



50 representatives
from ✓

16 prefectural antennae offices trained in project monitoring, evaluation and implementation

14 of the 16 existing antennae offices were able to implement activities in their prefectures

Furthermore, in 2023, the PCRC collaborated with the local UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) to restore Ali Bouar mosque in Bangui and establish an inter-religious dialogue committee for its protection. This initiative represented a significant step towards reconciliation between the Christian and Muslim communities in the neighbourhood. It also demonstrated the power of partnership between religious leaders and UN peacekeeping efforts.

In April 2023, KAICIID sponsored H.E. Cardinal Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Archbishop of Bangui and a PCRC leader, to attend the 3rd Mafra Dialogues as a keynote speaker. In his speech, the Archbishop emphasised the need for political leaders to promote religious tolerance and respect for diversity. The Archbishop's visit to Lisbon also facilitated important discussions with high-level officials and religious leaders on the dynamics of conflict in CAR and the African continent.



KAICIID's collaboration with the PCRC through the Archbishop of Bangui, Cardinal Dieudonné Nzapalainga, highlights the critical role of interreligious dialogue in promoting mutual respect and understanding. Together, we can work towards building peace and ending conflict in the Central African Republic."

Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, welcoming the Archbishop of Bangui, Cardinal Dieudonné Nzapalainga



In July 2023, KAICIID signed an MoU with the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and National Reconciliation to facilitate the creation of Local Peace and Reconciliation Committees (LPRCs) as per the Khartoum peace agreement. Through this partnership, KAICIID is directly supporting the implementation of the recommendations stemming from the 2015 Bangui National Forum aimed at conflict resolution. KAICIID provided training and support to LPRCs in Bas-Oubangui and Ombella-Mpoko, underscoring its commitment to grassroots peacebuilding efforts.

RÉSEAU DES JOURNALISTES SENSIBLES AUX CONFLITS (RJSC). In Bangui, KAICIID supported the RJSC (translated to Network of Conflict-sensitive Journalists) in organising an awareness-raising event for 40 local journalists. This initiative focused on the negative impacts of hate speech and the importance of responsible reporting, especially in the context of the upcoming constitutional referendum. The RJSC's pledge for impartial and sensitive reporting, endorsed by the Ministry of Communication, aimed to mitigate the risk of post-referendum violence.

PROMOTING DIALOGUE IN EDUCATION CURRICULA. Also in July, KAICIID organised a three-day training for five professors from the University of Bangui on using interreligious dialogue for conflict resolution. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to integrate dialogue modules into the university's conflict resolution curricula, aiming to establish a sustainable capacity-building model that can be replicated across the region.

Nigeria

FOSTERING COOPERATION AMONG NIGERIA'S RELIGIOUS LEADERS THROUGH THE INTERFAITH DIALOGUE FORUM FOR PEACE (IDFP). As Nigeria approached its 2023 general elections, the country faced significant political tensions and escalating insecurity, including continuous assaults close to the nation's capital by Islamist and other armed factions. Throughout, KAICIID continued to provide operational, technical and resource support to the Interfaith Dialogue Forum for Peace (IDFP) platform, bolstering its role as a pivotal actor in interreligious dialogue for the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

KAICIID published the IDFP Interfaith Code of Conduct, aimed at fostering cooperation among Nigeria's Christian and Muslim religious leaders and the broader interfaith community. This Code seeks to counter stereotypes, ethnic, and religious profiling, prevent and resolve violence, and improve interfaith relations for peaceful coexistence among different religious groups.

In January 2023, KAICIID supported the 2023 IDFP Peace Conference and General Assembly held in Abuja, Nigeria. Themed "Religion and Ethnicity: Safeguarding the 2023 General Elections," the event provided a space for discussions on maintaining peace during critical electoral processes. High-level visits were also conducted to the patrons of the IDFP platform, including Rev. Daniel C. Okoh and Sultan Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, to affirm their continued backing of the IDFP's legitimacy and efforts.



In October, KAICIID supported the IDFP leadership training and retreat event, focusing on preparing its newly elected leadership with the skills needed to effectively fulfil their roles. The training welcomed 50 participants, including members of the Executive Committee and Central Coordination Council, representing an equal distribution of Christian and Muslim religious leaders who guide the platform's plans and activities.

MONITORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF VIOLATIONS. A collaborative agreement was signed between KAICIID, the Kukah Centre, the National Human Rights Commission in Nigeria, and the Nasrul-Lahi-il Fathi Society of Nigeria to promote and protect freedom of religion or belief. This initiative focuses on advocating for policy changes and implementing awareness activities to foster respect and tolerance. Additionally, it aims to gather accurate data to support claims of freedom of religion and belief violations, addressing structural limitations and improving perceptions of the government's capacity to manage such concerns effectively.

COMBATING FOOD INSECURITY AS A RESULT OF CONFLICTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE. KAICIID has worked to spotlight the role of religious communities in combating food insecurity exacerbated by climate change and violent conflicts. In 2023, the Centre worked with the IDFP, the International Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) on a documentary which presented the outcomes of workshops aimed at enhancing cooperation between religious leaders and state officials in Benue and Rivers states. This project highlighted the critical need for sustainable and holistic approaches that bring together religious leaders and policymakers.





Conflict transformation in CAR: Incorporating interreligious dialogue in conflict resolution curricula³

In the heart of Bangui in the Central African Republic (CAR), an innovative collaboration is unfolding between KAICIID and the University of Bangui. The collaboration aims to expand the scope and impact of interreligious dialogue training. In a step towards expanding the tools available for conflict transformation and peacebuilding, the Centre, together with the University of Bangui is working to integrate an interreligious dialogue module into the curriculum of the university's Conflict Resolution Master programme.

The comprehensive module teaches more than merely theoretical knowledge in facilitating local reconciliation. It contains a practical component, allowing students to apply the theory of interreligious dialogue into real-life scenarios. The practical approach enables trainees to apply their newly learnt knowledge to facilitating local reconciliations. The hands-on experience will be achieved through a conflict resolution and mediation apprenticeship, affiliated with the university. KAICIID is currently generating interest among key partners to establish a case referral system for the apprenticeship component of the module.

With the cooperation and assistance of KAICIID Fellows in CAR, the module was piloted in 2023, with KAICIID delivering interreligious and intercultural training to the relevant University of Bangui professors, who are to incorporate the module into the curricula of the Conflict Resolution Master programme. By the end of 2024, KAICIID and the University of Bangui aim to have the module fully integrated into the university's curricula, with new cohorts of students enrolling in the Master's course and adding knowledge of interreligious dialogue to their peace-making toolkit. KAICIID's role will evolve supporting the apprenticeship programme and ensuring its effectiveness.

The final phase, projected for 2025, will focus on transitioning full ownership and management of the programme to the University of Bangui. This phase might also explore expanding the project to potentially include a comprehensive course on interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

The programme is not merely about knowledge transfer; it is about creating a self-sustaining ecosystem of peacebuilding. Graduates will be encouraged to form an interreligious dialogue clinic, producing knowledge material and mediating cases. The aim of the clinic is to support various peacebuilding entities, including religious structures (e.g., PCRC), governmental bodies (e.g., LPRCs) and UN, international and peacekeeping efforts (e.g., MINUSCA).

The programme aligns with, and supports, the peacebuilding architecture of CAR, including the Government's efforts towards reconciliation and peacebuilding. The programme's successful implementation will enhance the government's ability to maintain the social contract with its citizenry.

³ Transforming Conflict Resolution in Central Africa Republic: KAICIID's Pioneering Initiative with Bangui University

ARAB REGION

In 2023, the Arab region continued to grapple with significant social and political challenges, amidst a backdrop of heightened tensions and ongoing conflicts. Contentious national elections and intense protests highlighted deep societal divisions, continued erosion of democratic norms, and a profound disenchantment, particularly among the youth and various ethnic groups, with current political regimes.

The fallout from global crises, notably the impact of the war in Ukraine on energy and food prices, exacerbated existing socio-economic struggles across the region. The Israeli–Palestinian conflict also escalated tensions, illuminating the intricate and often strained relationship between regional politics and media narratives, and contributing to widespread frustration and calls for significant political and social reform.

Platform for Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arab World (IPDC)

In 2023, under the umbrella of the Interreligious Platform for Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arab World (IPDC), KAICIID’s Arab Region Programme continued its work of investing in grassroots development initiatives, and equipping journalists to report more ethically on religious and ethnic communities. The IPDC Steering Committee convened in March 2023, in Beirut, Lebanon. Discussions focused on evaluating past activities and planning future projects to combat hate speech through enhanced collaboration between religious leaders and policymakers.



The committee refined existing and formulated new projects to be implemented across various Arab countries. The projects aim at leveraging religious platforms to foster national and local dialogue. In true spirit of interreligious dialogue, the meeting was bookmarked by visits to prominent religious figures in Lebanon, including the Grand Mufti and leaders from the Shia and Druze communities, and concluded with a visit to Maronite Patriarch Mar Bechara Boutros Al-Rahi, underscoring the IPDC's commitment to strengthening interfaith relations.

Dialogue Journalism Fellowship (DJF)

First piloted in 2021, KAICIID launched the Arab region Dialogue Journalism Fellowship (DJF) for the second consecutive year. The fellowship, executed in partnership with Al-Hayat Center and under the auspices of the IPDC, is part of the KAICIID's Media for Peace Programme that also contains the Media Policy Forum.

The fellowship is designed to be a lasting resource for journalists. In addition to enhancing journalistic skills, participants are taught to integrate an understanding of conflict dynamics in the region, understand the role of religion in promoting peace, as well as their own identity in their reporting, and their potential contribution to countering hate speech, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. By promoting diversity, and bolstering journalists' ability to ethically report on issues of interreligious and intercultural relations, identity and pluralism, the DJF works to bridge religious and cultural divides through responsible journalism.

In 2023, the DJF began in June with an online launch event, welcoming returning and new journalists from the 2022 and 2023 cohorts. During the event, the new fellows were introduced to KAICIID's mandate and became familiar with the 'Media for Peace' project and its overarching goals.





The strategic partnership with the media aligns perfectly with the vision and objectives of the International Dialogue Centre. We firmly believe that the media, in all its forms, wields immense influence as a force for change and is an essential component of any future peace building strategy”.

Secretary General Dr. Alharthi, at the launch of the 2023 DJF



After the launch, new cohort of journalists commenced the first of three workshops. The initial four-day workshop took place in Amman, Jordan in June. Sessions covered topics such as the role of media in policymaking, hate speech and disinformation on social media and gender-based hate speech.

In September 2023, the second workshop was conducted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The training sessions covered interreligious dialogue in practice, conflict resolution and transformation, and inclusive policymaking. The third workshop took place in December, in Lisbon, Portugal. The topics of the training sessions were SDGs, arts and media for peacebuilding, countering fake news, hate speech, and ethics in media.

Having completed the required components, the DJF participants attended the graduation ceremony in Lisbon. Finally, throughout 2023, journalists from the 2022 DJF, were supported by KAICIID to implement interreligious dialogue and dialogue in the media initiatives.




30 MID-CAREER JOURNALISTS
 from 14 Arab countries, attended

3 workshops

26 journalists from 2022 cohort, implemented

15 media dialogue initiatives, across 11 Arab countries

Dialogue360

In 2023, KAICIID continued its Dialogue360 project, designed to amplify the work of local organizations and institutions that are committed to fostering interreligious and intercultural dialogue and building peace and coexistence within the Arab region. It strategically aligns local and regional efforts to counter hate speech, manage crises, protect cultural and religious sites, and promote common citizenship and inclusive education.

The programme places a strong emphasis on collaborating with policymakers and religious leaders to safeguard vulnerable communities. Importantly, Dialogue360 focuses on ensuring the sustainability of the supported initiatives, thereby achieving extended reach and lasting benefits of each at both individual and societal levels.

In 2023, Following a call for proposals and a rigorous selection process, KAICIID, through the Dialogue360, supported 40 grassroots dialogue initiatives from 12 Arab countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen). The Centre provided technical and resource support to local partners in implementing interreligious and intercultural dialogue initiatives that aligned with the four Dialogue360 themes: education and common citizenship; countering and preventing hate speech; enhancing the role of interreligious dialogue in crisis response; and protection of cultural heritage and religious sites.

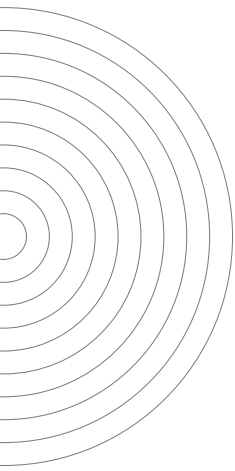
The 2023 Dialogue360 cohort was launched in March, via an online event that gathered over 75 key stakeholders including KAICIID's Secretary General, members of IPDC and representatives from local and regional partner organizations and religious institutions.



Every day, we face many challenges and crises that confirm the urgent need for dialogue, and we all know that we do not have the luxury of time, and we must go to the field and work with many partners hand in hand at the local, national, and regional levels. Success cannot be achieved solely at the individual level. Long-term strategic partnerships must be established."

Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, in his opening remarks during the Dialogue 360 online launch event





In June 2023, the initiative partners met again for a comprehensive capacity-building week, where partners participated in training sessions aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills in areas such as design thinking, empowerment and inclusion, theory of change, and monitoring and evaluation, equipping them to lead their initiatives effectively and sustainably. Training covered practical aspects of how to implement dialogue-driven projects that can adapt to and address local needs and challenges. Additionally, throughout 2023, the Arab region team met Dialogue360 partners from 2023 and previous years in person in Tunisia (January), Jordan (March), and Lebanon (June) to discuss the benefits and challenges of initiative implementation.

100
PARTICIPANTS

representing ✓

34 partner organizations benefitted from:
5 capacity-building training sessions



Implemented initiatives included training religious leaders and educators, to facilitating dialogue sessions and religious sites tours, highlighting the project's broad impact on promoting peaceful coexistence and social cohesion across the Arab region. Initiative results have shown significant engagement from policymakers and local communities.

The wide array of initiatives under Dialogue360 achieved remarkable engagement from various stakeholders, including policymakers, and yielded notable advancements in promoting dialogue and understanding. The initiatives varied, with some focusing on educational programmes for religious leaders and teachers, while others facilitated intercultural dialogue sessions and tours of cultural heritage sites, all aimed at reinforcing peaceful coexistence and understanding across diverse communities.

4,856

DIRECT AND
4+ million indirect
beneficiaries



of nearly
40 initiatives, produced >

- 100+** training workshops and ToTs
- 90+** dialogue sessions, roundtable discussions, and network-level meetings
- 30+** articles, reports, policy papers, and manuals
- 15** social initiatives, and awareness and advocacy campaigns
- 110+** radio programmes, podcasts, videos, and short documentaries
- 85+** artworks, visuals, and illustrations
- 24** religious site visits
- 4** theatre plays



Giving voice to diversity: The rich tapestry of identities in the Arab region ⁴

The Dialogue360 initiatives, spearheaded by grassroots organizations across the Arab region, have been catalysts for fostering interreligious and intercultural dialogue and understanding. These initiatives aim to reshape the socio-political landscape by engaging directly with the communities most affected by issues of hate speech and marginalisation. One remarkable initiative is the "Echo of Mercy" in Lebanon, which focuses on empowering Syrian women in local communities. By including these women as principal participants, the initiative not only gives them a voice but also enhances their agency in community dialogues - a critical step toward inclusive dialogue processes.

Similarly, the "Participate and Talk" initiative in Jordan is aimed at the energetic youth demographic. Here, students are not just participants but creators of change; they actively contribute to developing peace clubs within their schools. These clubs serve as platforms for students to engage in dialogue and learn the values of coexistence and civic responsibility from an early age. Another impactful initiative is the series of interreligious site visits facilitated in Egypt and Tunisia. Supported by local ministries, these visits allow participants to explore diverse religious and cultural sites, fostering a physical and metaphorical space for interreligious and intercultural interaction. These experiences are pivotal in breaking down barriers and building a foundation for mutual respect and understanding.

Adding to these transformative efforts is the "Voices of Tomorrow" initiative in Somalia, which concentrates on the empowerment and education of Somali youth and women through community radio. This initiative trains young people and women to produce and host radio programmes that discuss local issues, promote gender equality, and advocate for peace. The initiative does not only provide participants with journalistic skills but also a platform to voice their concerns and aspirations, contributing significantly to local discourse and community resilience.

The "Identity Podcast: Diversity Dialogue in the Arab Region," created by Abdullah Al Jbour, exemplifies the power of media to influence perceptions and encourage dialogue. Through this series, listeners are introduced to the complex tapestry of the Arab region identities - from the Amazigh in the Maghreb to the lesser-known communities like the Sabians and Yazidis. Each episode invites experts to dismantle misconceptions and offer insights into the rich ethnic and cultural mosaic of the region, broadcasting a message of unity and understanding.

These initiatives are just a few examples of how Dialogue360 is activating local networks to address critical local, national and regional issues effectively. Through training, direct engagement, and policy advocacy, these initiatives not only highlight the need for dialogue but also create sustainable pathways for peace and coexistence in the Arab region. Their ongoing impact underscores the transformative power of community-driven efforts in building a more inclusive society globally.

⁴ Reshaping Dialogues: 'The Identity Podcast' - Illuminating Arab Societal Dynamics

ASIA

In 2023, Asia continued to be a dynamic region marked by a complex security landscape, rapid urbanisation, cultural diversity and significant religious pluralism. More than half of the population currently lives in urban areas, and it is projected that this number will increase to almost 70 per cent by 2050. Countries from Southeast Asia, in particular, experienced substantial urbanisation, highlighting the importance of addressing religious and cultural diversity in cities. KAICIID's Asia Region Programme focuses on navigating this diversity in the region by prioritising interreligious and intercultural dialogue, especially through educational and training initiatives.





Training of ASEAN officials

In 2023, KAICIID continued providing interreligious and intercultural dialogue training to ASEAN government officials. Additionally, since 2021, the Centre has collaborated with the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) to develop a training programme and materials tailored to the Southeast Asian context.

The newly adapted training materials were piloted in Bangkok, Thailand, from November to December 2023, through five intensive in-person training days. These sessions not only covered theoretical and practical aspects of interreligious and intercultural dialogue but also included cultural immersion experiences. Participants celebrated the Loy Krathong festival, a significant annual event in Thailand, and visited local communities, including the Kudi Chin-Kudi Khao area in Bangkok.

Officials from 10 ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste, attending as an observer state, benefited from the training. They gained insights into the theory and practice of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, focusing on its importance in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.

A 5-day **in-person training** provided for



26 ASEAN government officials

from 10 ASEAN states and Timor Leste



KAICIID's partnership with ASEAN-IPR is a testament to our commitment to building bridges between policymakers and local communities. By fostering a shared understanding and respect for religious and cultural diversity, KAICIID is empowering ASEAN officials to craft policies that uphold social cohesion and peace within the region. We aid in nurturing the roots of peace, moderation and tolerance, fostering a future where dialogue triumphs over discord."

Deputy Secretary General Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro,
on behalf of Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi



Promoting social media as a space for dialogue

KAICIID further advanced its work in the South and Southeast Asia region through the “Social Media as a Space for Dialogue” project. The project aims to combat division, hatred and violence by empowering interreligious and intercultural dialogue champions to foster narratives of inclusivity, mutual respect and cooperation across social media platforms.

Starting from June 2023 and building on the “training of trainers” (ToT) sessions held in 2022, the Centre supported the social media campaigns of six newly qualified master trainers. These campaigns were carried out across Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan. They played a significant role in increasing awareness about the risks of hate speech and offensive language, emphasising the value of respectful dialogue on social media platforms.

SUPPORTED IMPLEMENTATION OF

2 national “**Social media as a space for dialogue**” ToT workshops, and ✓

6 social media campaigns, across

4 countries: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Pakistan



In June and August, KAICIID further expanded the pool of master trainers by supporting ToT workshops led by two project graduates in Indonesia and Bangladesh. These efforts contributed to the expansion and long-term viability of the project throughout Asia.

Supporting dialogue and ethics in education

In partnership with Arigatou International and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), KAICIID continued the Ethics Education Fellowship, developed for educators and ministry of education officials in Asia (Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal) and Africa (Kenya, Mauritius and the Seychelles). The programme encompasses a systematic and comprehensive approach to teaching ethics, with the aim of instilling ethical values of respect, empathy, and dialogue in students. The first phase of the fellowship, initiated in 2022, was the training of government officials in creating a conducive environment for integrating ethics in curricula through appropriate policies and practices.

In the first half of 2023, KAICIID and its partners oversaw the implementation of the second, national capacity development phase of the fellowship. The Centre supported the provision of national teacher training workshops throughout the provinces of participating countries. KAICIID brought together ministry officials and other policymakers with school teachers and other educators from each country. Through training and convening with relevant policymakers, the fellowship is designed to equip government officials and educators with the tools and knowledge to effectively implement ethics education in classrooms.



Ethics Education Fellowship workshops held,

in **6 Asian** (Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal) **and African** (Kenya, Mauritius, and the Seychelles) **countries**, with:



323 teachers trained, providing **4,000** children with improved access to ethics education

In November 2023, KAICIID co-hosted a pivotal webinar, "Transforming Education for Global Citizenship and Peaceful, Inclusive Societies," featuring international experts. This event explored education's transformative role in fostering social inclusion and peace, complementing our national teacher training workshops.

Incorporating dialogue in cities

In May 2023, KAICIID hosted the first Southeast Asia Dialogue Cities Conference, in Bangkok, Thailand. Organised with the support of Thailand's Institute of Buddhist Management for Happiness and Peace, the three-day event promoted a greater understanding of how cities can foster unity and cooperation through dialogue, thereby bridging cultural, ethnic and religious divides across the Southeast Asian region. The conference provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge and best practices, as well as facilitated regional collaborations between participants.





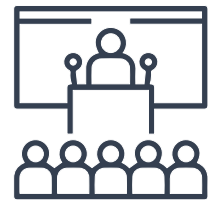
For nearly a decade, KAICIID has worked in Southeast Asia promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and establishing platforms which convene policymakers and religious leaders to solve the world's global challenges. National governments alone cannot achieve the ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda. Instead, cities and regions are ideally positioned to make catalytic changes and to transform the global agendas into concrete actions."



Deputy Secretary General Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro,
in his opening remarks at the conference, on behalf of Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi

The conference was attended by dialogue practitioners, experts, policymakers, leaders from religious communities and youth and women-led organizations from five cities across Southeast Asia. The conference's three working groups on inter-religious dialogue covered KAICIID's cross-cutting issues of the participation of women and youth and the incorporation of dialogue through policy, as well as dialogue in research.

1st Southeast Asia **Dialogue Cities** Conference held, attended by



60 + interreligious dialogue practitioners, experts, policymakers, youth and women leaders from,



5 Southeast Asian cities:
Bangkok, Davao, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and Yogyakarta

In recognition of KAICIID's work in the region, the Centre was invited to participate on a panel at the "Nepal Dialogues Summit" hosted by UNESCO in November 2023, and held in the UNESCO regional office in Kathmandu, Nepal.



KAICIID and ASEAN-IPR partnership: A truly regional approach towards interreligious and intercultural dialogue⁵

In 2021, in a step towards fostering peace and understanding across Southeast Asia, KAICIID joined forces with ASEAN-IPR to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue in navigating the region's rich tapestry of faiths and cultures. The partnership between the two organizations reflects a shared commitment to leveraging dialogue as a powerful tool for conflict resolution and community building.

Aligned with KAICIID's mandate to promote justice, peace and reconciliation, as outlined in its Establishment Agreement, and the ASEAN-IPR's commitment to peace and stability, as enshrined in the Bangkok Declaration, this training programme marks a significant advancement in integrating interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a real tool in fostering social cohesion, conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

Over the past two years, recognising the unique challenges and opportunities presented by Southeast Asia's diversity, KAICIID and ASEAN-IPR worked to equip officials from ASEAN member states with essential skills in interreligious and intercultural dialogue. KAICIID applied its transformational approach to dialogue training, offering modules that combine theoretical knowledge with practical application. Thus, sessions on the history, theories, methods and outcomes of dialogue were complemented by interactive modules that offer a blend of lectures, discussions, simulations, and role-plays, tailored to geographical and contextual needs of the region. The adapted training, piloted between 27 November 2023 and 1 December 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand, encourages participants to apply interreligious and intercultural dialogue strategies to real-world scenarios.

The developed approach not only trains but enables, by offering additional resources to ensure the continued success of the programme. Moreover, the initiative serves as a platform for networking, fostering regional and global collaborations that extend the impact of dialogue beyond the immediate participants to a broader array of stakeholders.

"KAICIID's partnership with ASEAN-IPR is a testament to our commitment to building bridges between policymakers and local communities. By fostering a shared understanding and respect for religious and cultural diversity, KAICIID is empowering ASEAN officials to craft policies that uphold social cohesion and peace within the region. We aid nurturing the roots of peace, moderation, and tolerance, fostering a future where dialogue triumphs over discord," said Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Antonio de Almedia Ribeiro, in his opening remarks on behalf of the Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi.

Through this programme, KAICIID and ASEAN-IPR are setting a new precedent for a truly regional approach to promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue. The collaboration between the two organizations offers a forward-thinking approach to understanding and leveraging Southeast Asia's dynamic diversity, a future where dialogue triumphs over discord, paving the way for a more peaceful and understanding region.

⁵ Building Cultures, Fostering Peace: KAICIID's Role in ASEAN's Interreligious Dialogue Initiative

EUROPE

The year 2023 witnessed significant movement toward Europe with asylum applications approaching levels not seen since the 2015 refugee crisis. Furthermore, Europe continued to host approximately 4.4 million beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine, underscoring the continent's ongoing commitment to sheltering those displaced by conflict. This dual surge in numbers has not only tested the capacities of the European Union (EU) but also highlighted the robustness and challenges of its asylum and refugee integration policies.

Additionally, global conflict, such as the escalation of violence in the Middle East, have exacerbated religious and ethnic tensions within Europe, leading to increased anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim incidents within European borders. This alarming trend underscores the urgent need for enhanced interreligious and intercultural dialogue and social cohesion programmes. European communities and leaders must address these challenges by fostering environments of mutual respect and understanding, aiming to dilute the tensions fuelled by external conflicts.



KAICIID's Europe Region Programme promotes peaceful coexistence through its platforms, Network for Dialogue, Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) and the European Muslim Leaders' Majlis (EuLeMa). The platforms address issues of social inclusion of refugees and migrants, as well as countering hate speech and the protection of sacred sites. KAICIID convenes policymakers with religious leaders, in support of inclusive policymaking based on religious literacy and the principle of freedom of religion or belief.

Network for Dialogue

The Network for Dialogue is a KAICIID-supported platform comprised of well-established faith-based and secular actors in the area of refugee and migrant inclusion in hosting communities. The network mitigates hate speech and prejudice against refugees and migrants throughout the continent, as well as to promotes social cohesion with host communities. Network for Dialogue members actively contribute to social inclusion for refugees and migrants in Europe through dialogue and engagement with European policymakers.

Among the activities in Europe, KAICIID and Network for Dialogue produce policy documents based on the outcomes and recommendations of the European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF) and disseminate these papers across the high-level fora on the issues of refugee and migrants across Europe.

The ninth Network for Dialogue meeting took place in May 2023. The in-person meeting provided an enriching environment, facilitating stronger interpersonal connections between network members. Members learned about each other's grass-roots projects in different European countries, gaining new knowledge and practical skills to implement in the network's individual and collaborative projects, and apply in direct engagement with refugees and migrants.



28 Network for Dialogue members,



FROM
16 European countries

21 ATTENDEES at 9th Network for Dialogue meeting

EUROPEAN POLICY DIALOGUE FORUM (EPDF). Interreligious and intercultural dialogue is central to strengthening social cohesion in Europe by promoting equal rights, human dignity and respect for diversity. The yearly EPDF addresses the challenges and best practices related to social cohesion through the social inclusion of refugees and migrants. The EPDF connects religious actors, policymakers and other experts working in the field of social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe.

Organised by KAICIID, in partnership with the Network for Dialogue, the European Council of Religious Leaders/Religions for Peace Europe (ECRL/RfP Europe), and the local partner Multicoloured Religions Rotterdam. The EPDF is also supported by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Netherlands.



The EPDF is a testament to our commitment to fostering dialogue and understanding among diverse groups. In today's world, addressing social inclusion is more crucial than ever. This forum is a platform for building bridges, creating meaningful conversations, and finding actionable solutions."

Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, speaking to the forum's significance



EMPOWERING AND AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING. In March 2023, KAICIID gathered delegates, including young people, for a two-day expert meeting in Lisbon on the issue of improving social inclusion of young people in urban areas in Europe. The discussion focused on how to harness dialogue and partnerships between religious and secular actors to bridge social divisions and polarisations in European societies. The main insights from the meeting fed three input papers that formed the basis of discussions at 5th EPDF that took place later in 2023.



9 OF 25 EXPERTS at pre-EPDF meeting,



under **30** years old

- 3 input papers for discussion at EPDF generated, resulting in
- 3 policy briefs published after EPDF

Young people are typically the focus of policy debates without having their voices heard in the discussions. The expert meeting provided a platform for the young delegates to speak directly about the issues that impact them, addressing barriers to employment and education and highlighting how gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliation contribute to societal exclusion. Three key topics emerged from the meeting.

- The role of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in combating hate speech and xenophobia, emphasising the importance of providing safe emotional and physical spaces for young refugees and migrants to share their experiences and frustrations;
- Ways cities and local governments could include young people in the integration of young refugees and migrants; and
- How faith-based actors and local policymakers could support the inclusion of young people in these decisions.

As in previous years, the discussions laid the groundwork for policy recommendations, which are compiled into input papers for the upcoming EPDF.



Young people are increasingly engaged in the future of European societies. They care, but they want to be heard. The role of young people as key actors in building inclusive, cohesive and peaceful societies is often ignored or rarely recognised. Fostering effective social inclusion at such an unprecedented time is a shared responsibility which requires the collaboration of faith-based and secular actors alike. This is precisely what the annual European Policy Dialogue Forum is about.



Deputy Secretary General Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro



In November 2023, KAICIID held its 5th EPDF in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, around the theme “Young People and Social Inclusion in Cities”. The forum was attended by policymakers, religious leaders, academics and civil society representatives. Over the course of three days, the forum featured plenary sessions and in-depth discussions, including those based on the input papers developed from the expert meeting in March.

Stakeholders engaged in rich dialogue and collaborative planning aimed at addressing the challenges faced by young people in urban environments and promoting inclusive societal structures in Europe’s cities. The outcomes and recommendations of the EPDF contributed to the revision of the input papers into policy briefs on the three subjects.

EPDF
ATTENDED
BY

130 stakeholders

FROM **40** countries and 7 religions




It is within our cities that we find the path for change. Cities play a pivotal role in actively engaging community members in solutions, and they are crucial in the pursuit of social inclusion. This includes the vital role played by young refugees and migrants.”

Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi



I am particularly proud to see the EPDF taking place in Rotterdam, and seeing the themes we discussed earlier this year translated into input papers that ignite the spark and fuel the conversation. This gathering of diverse voices, cultures and especially the younger attendees we have, demonstrates the power of collective efforts in shaping more inclusive and cohesive societies.”

Deputy Secretary General Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro



PROMOTING EPDF OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS. Throughout 2023, KAICIID, as well as members of the Network for Dialogue (N4D), disseminated the policy documents based upon the outcomes and recommendations of the 3rd and 4th EPDFs at a variety of events, that brought together international and regional organizations, national and local policymakers, and religious and civil society actors and organizations. The aim is to introduce and engage entities to migrant and refugee inclusion through interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

6 KAICIID and N4D dissemination events of EPDF



> **OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING**

- 4 policy briefs
- 2 policy papers
- 2 research papers
- 1 expert meeting report

In January 2023, Network for Dialogue members attended the European Summit of Refugees and Migrants, “New Voices on Inclusive Europe”. Network representatives presented the policy documents based on the outcomes of the 3rd and 4th EPDF to policymakers from the European Parliament and European Commission.

15 direct and 141

indirect beneficiaries

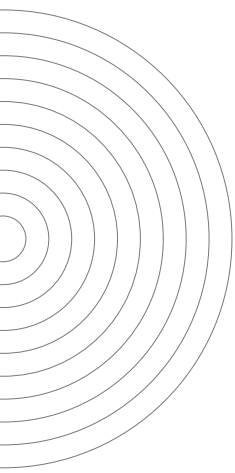


OF EPDF POLICY DOCUMENTS

dissemination at the **European Summit of Refugees and Migrants**

In June, KAICIID attended the European Academy of Religion's sixth annual conference at St Andrews University, which drew over 700 delegates from across Europe. The KAICIID delegation included members of the Network for Dialogue and the MJLC, among others. The delegation hosted two panels focusing on "Religion, Youth and Countering Hate Speech in Europe" and "Religious Cultural Heritage and the Role of Interreligious Dialogue".


Also in June, KAICIID co-organised with ECRL/RfP Europe the Supplementary Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, presenting "The Words of the Soul: Religious Leaders against Hate Speech" at the OSCE ODIHR Hofburg Centre in Vienna, Austria. The side event drew around 65 participants, including key diplomatic representatives from OSCE member states including Canada, Germany, the Holy See, Italy, Spain and the United States, along with CSOs focused on tolerance, anti-discrimination, and youth empowerment.



In July, KAICIID delivered a lecture at the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) Summer School on Migration and Human Rights. The session, titled "Why Religion Matters: Talking about Migrant and Refugee Inclusion", engaged 35 young practitioners from 24 countries. Due to the positive reception, an additional interactive discussion was held the following day.

35 YOUNG PRACTITIONERS, from **24 countries** engaged 

In October, KAICIID co-organised, with the support of the ECRL/RfP Europe and the OSCE ODIHR, the event "Why Words Matter: Religious Leaders against Hate Speech" on the sidelines of the Warsaw Human Dimension Implementation Conference. The event was attended by members of the OSCE diplomatic corps, along with representatives from civil society and FBOs.

50 PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED, including  members of the OSCE diplomatic corps

In December 2023, the Network for Dialogue attended the UNHCR Global Refugee Forum in Berlin, a pivotal event held every four years that draws approximately 4,000 participants from 168 countries. The network members showcased its commitment to enhancing dialogue and social inclusion for refugees and migrants across Europe by presenting EPDF policy documents at the forum's side event titled, the Refugee Hub.

10 direct and 50 indirect **beneficiaries** of EPDF 
POLICY DOCUMENTS DISSEMINATION
at the Global Refugee Forum

During the Global Migration Film Festival, marking International Migrants Day and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, KAICIID collaborated with the IOM and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe (UNRIC) on the screening of "Io Capitano" at São Jorge cinema in Lisbon, featured a panel discussion, which was attended by 70 key stakeholders including government and diplomatic representatives.



500 attendees viewed the film,



INCLUDING – 70 key stakeholders
– 1 panel held

Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC)

Formally founded in 2018, the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) publicly convenes a growing number of Muslim and Jewish religious representatives from around Europe who are committed to defending human rights and promoting inter-faith solidarity. The MJLC membership is made up religious leaders across Europe, including the Conference of European Rabbis (CER) and the KAICIID-supported platform European Muslim Leaders Majlis (EuLeMa). EuLeMa, founded the same year, brings together and allows for better coordination between various Muslim communities, allowing for their cohesive representation with other religious and secular institutions.



The MJLC Board members work together to ensure the rights of their respective communities are respected, while also representing their communities' interests to European policymakers. The MJLC seeks address anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim sentiment, while ensuring that Muslim and Jewish community leaders across Europe are well-equipped to support their communities, including through the principles of interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

COUNTERING ANTI-JEWISH AND ANTI-MUSLIM HATRED IN EUROPE. In May 2023, seven MJLC delegates travelled to Poland to visit the former Nazi death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, where they stood together in Muslim–Jewish solidarity to honour victims and say 'Never Again.' The delegation, including MJLC Board Members and Young Ambassadors was joined by Christian and Muslim educators from the Austria University College of Christian Churches of Teacher Education. The trip served to raise awareness of the atrocities committed at Auschwitz while highlighting interreligious cooperation and mutual respect between Muslim and Jewish communities.

In June, MJLC held its Board Meeting in Lisbon, Portugal. The first such gathering since KAICIID's relocation. The meeting was hosted by the MJLC Co-Chairs, Mufti Nedzad Grabus of Sarajevo and Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt of Moscow. The Board, comprising senior Imams and Rabbis from across Europe, focused on strengthening Muslim–Jewish solidarity and discussed strategic plans to combat rising anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish rhetoric.

Following the Board Meeting, MJLC members met with KAICIID's leadership, and officially opened up MJLC membership to women, enhancing inclusivity and recognition of women's contributions in interreligious and intercultural dialogue. The board also agreed to sign a Collaboration Agreement with KAICIID, marking a significant step towards the Council's operational independence and sustainability.

In October 2023, among the escalating conflict between Israel and Palestine, more than 30 Muslim and Jewish religious leaders convened through various events in Seville, Spain, to discuss issues of joint concern and make plans to stand together more effectively against anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred. The first such event was the General Assembly of EuLeMa, where the members put together a plan of activities for 2024. This was followed by an MJLC Board Meeting. Alongside the higher-level meetings, a public events programme took place on topics of the empowerment of women in European Muslim and Jewish communities, and the role of interreligious dialogue in countering hate speech.

These drew a wide audience of local community and policy experts on the topic of freedom of religion and belief in Europe, including Alexandre Guessel, the Special Representative on antisemitic, anti-Muslim, and other forms of religious intolerance and hate crimes at the Council of Europe; Isabel Albás, Deputy Mayor of Cordoba; and Jose Luis Bazan, Legal Advisor for Migration and Asylum and for International Religious Freedom, COMECE.



EMPOWERING YOUNG AMBASSADORS. In 2023, the MJLC successfully closed out the first cohort of its Ambassador Programme, designed to foster cohesion between young Muslim and Jewish leaders across Europe. Throughout the year-long engagement, and under the mentorship of MJLC religious leaders, participants are equipped with the skills to facilitate interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and to effectively address hate speech and prejudice. Two young leaders, one Muslim and one Jewish, from each of the participating cities collaborated, under the guidance of their mentor, to design and implement dialogue-based initiatives, which focus on promoting interfaith understanding and social cohesion.

Initiatives were carried out in Warsaw, where dialogue was fostered through collaborative art – ceramics, painting and cooking; Frankfurt, where young women from both Jewish and Muslim communities came together to explore one another's religious and cultural backgrounds through shared meals and visits to religious sites; and London, where a joint community dinner was organised by the young ambassadors.





United in times of conflict: A show of Muslim-Jewish solidarity ⁶

At a time when tensions were running high, with violent incidents and inflammatory rhetoric spreading throughout Europe, MJLC members chose to come together to advocate for peace and solidarity. In October 2023, the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) Board members gathered in Seville, Spain, less than a week after the start of the Israeli-Palestinian armed conflict.

The Rabbis and Imams of the MJLC Board had been working together since 2018, building trust and longstanding friendships. Although dialogue was not easy, the Rabbis and Imams of the MJLC Board were able to lean on their developed trust and longstanding friendships, built over the years of their collaboration in the MJLC, to reaffirm their commitment to Muslim-Jewish solidarity. Despite meeting so soon after the start of the conflict, the MJLC Board members issued a powerful statement underscoring the importance of interreligious dialogue during these turbulent times.

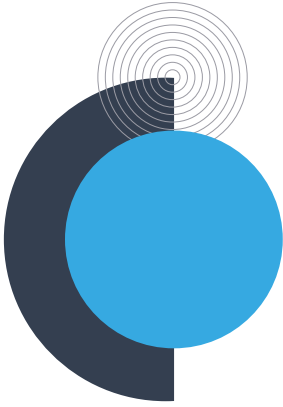
The MJLC expressed deep concern over the mistrust and prejudice arising from the conflict and reiterated that an attack on one community is an attack on all. They emphasised that the violence occurring in the Middle East does not reflect the teachings of Islam or Judaism, both of which abhor violence and terrorism. The statement condemned any acts of hostility against Jews, Muslims, and their institutions, calling for international law to prevail and for sacred sites to be protected. The MJLC called on local and national authorities, as well as media representatives, to involve religious leaders in promoting peace and preventing polarisation.

Addressing the EuLeMa assembly on behalf of Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General, highlighted the importance of interreligious dialogue in these trying times. His message of hope and shared faith resonated with the attendees, reinforcing their belief in the power of dialogue to bridge divides and foster a more inclusive Europe.

Sheikh Faid Mohammed Said, a distinguished member of EuLeMa and the MJLC, expressed the significance of their gathering, emphasising that religious leaders must be sources of serenity and guidance during turbulent times. His words echoed the collective sentiment that, despite the current context, Board members were committed to nurturing their communities' values of tolerance and respect.

With anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim incidents on the rise in Europe, the meeting in Seville, despite its challenging context, symbolised a unified front against hate speech and violence. The gathering provided a much-needed source of hope across Europe. The MJLC's powerful message resonated with European institutions, demonstrating that, even in difficult times, dialogue and peaceful cooperation are essential. The Board's reaffirmation of its commitment to interreligious solidarity and its call to action serves as a reminder that unity can prevail over discord, especially when religious leaders and community members work together.

⁶ A United Pursuit in Difficult Times: MJLC and EuLeMa Convene in Seville for Groundbreaking show of Muslim-Jewish Solidarity



CHAPTER 4

Promoting Interreligious Dialogue Globally

KAICIID promotes interreligious and intercultural dialogue globally through the KAICIID International Fellows Programme and the E-Learning Programme and online resources. These programmes create a multiplying effect by engaging with religiously and culturally diverse individuals – dialogue practitioners, religious leaders, policymakers, educators and members of the media profession – from across the globe, providing them with the tools to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue within their local communities.

As part of its capacity development work, KAICIID works to mainstream dialogue into the policies and practices of relevant institutions, as well as bringing women and youth to the dialogue table and empowering their voices. By ensuring that these cross-cutting issues are addressed in each of its regional and global programmes, the Centre works to create an enabling environment for interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

KAICIID INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS PROGRAMME (KIFP)

The KAICIID International Fellows Programme (KIFP) is an ongoing capacity-development and networking programme designed to connect and cultivate a network of leaders committed to fostering sustainable peace in their communities. The KIFP training programme equips Fellows with dialogue skills to tackle real-world challenges and involve their institutions and communities through effective collaboration for change.

The KAICIID Fellows Alumni Network connects KIFP training graduates with a vibrant community of global changemakers, fostering an environment of opportunity and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The Fellows Alumni Institutional Network seeks to incorporate and promote dialogue at the institutional level.





Training the 2023 KIFP cohorts

The 2023 Fellows attended in-person week-long training sessions, online sessions, e-learning courses and visits to religious sites. In 2023 three cohorts participated in the Fellows Programme, the Africa, Arab region and international cohorts.

The first two in-person training weeks were held in different locations. The Africa cohort's first training week took place in Nairobi, Kenya, while the second in New Delhi, India. The first training sessions for the Arab region and international cohorts took place in Tunis, Tunisia, and Strasbourg, France, respectively, with both cohorts attending their second sessions in Bangkok, Thailand. The third training session brought the cohorts to Lisbon, giving the three cohorts to meet, consolidate their knowledge and present their initiatives.

The graduation for all cohorts took place in November, immediately after the third and final training session. During their year of training, Fellows designed 64 individual and joint initiatives, including youth camps, workshops, school visits, and art initiatives, focusing on promoting peace through dialogue, countering hate speech, and empowering youth and women in interreligious relations.



FELLOWS TRAINING

- INCLUDED**
- 3 week-long in person training
 - 8 monthly online sessions
 - 2 e-learning courses
 - 1 individual or shared initiative



69 FELLOWS FROM
6 religions, graduated
from 3 cohorts



- 21 Fellows International cohort
- 22 Fellows African cohort
- 26 Fellows Arab region cohort

64 INITIATIVES
completed across



- 5 global regions and
- 38 countries, with
- 20,000+ direct beneficiaries of the initiatives

KAICIID Fellows Alumni Network (KFAN)

The KAICIID Fellows Alumni Network (KFAN) is the ongoing network of the 500+ Fellows who have graduated from KAICIID’s training programme. Upon graduation, the Fellows – educators, religious leaders, peacemakers, dialogue practitioners and policymakers – join KFAN, becoming Fellows Alumni.

The KFAN programme, provides Fellow Alumni with continued networking and professional development opportunities through monthly online sessions, regional chapters, a training of trainers, and a variety of other resources and support both initiatives and personal development or learning, such as attending conferences.

This ensures that each Alumni Fellow is well equipped to contribute to the prevention of conflict and enhancement of social cohesion by promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue across geographical and religious borders.



500+ FELLOWS ALUMNI

from 92 countries,

- represent 14 global religions
- and multiple diverse denominations

In 2023, the Fellows Alumni Network hosted 14 monthly (12 in English and 2 in Spanish) online sessions for Fellows Alumni. The sessions, provided with Arabic interpretation, tackled issues such as utilising interreligious and intercultural dialogue to combat poverty, enhancing education in higher educational institutions, empowering women in dialogue, and empowering youth to facilitate peace and address hate speech.

OF 500+ FELLOWS ALUMNI, 400+ attended

- 14 online sessions, presented in 2 languages
- 16 Alumni Fellows completed ToT training

In May, the Fellows Programme facilitated the launch of the Indian Fellows Alumni chapter in Delhi, making it the tenth KFAN national chapter. In August, KFAN launched the North American Fellows Alumni Chapter, within the context of the Parliament of World Religions (PoWR) convention in Chicago, USA. The launch provided 22 North American Fellows Alumni an opportunity to connect, identify the dialogue needs of their communities, as well as obtain the networking and policy engagement skills to address those needs going forward.

The PoWR convention allowed the Fellows to connect and engage with other Fellows Alumni attendees from around the world, as well as with religious and community leaders, dialogue practitioners and policymakers from various religious backgrounds and confessions.



"[This goes] beyond a mere gathering, this meeting is an avenue for these Fellows to strategise, network, and birth ideas that promote positive change in our diverse communities. By harnessing the collective wisdom and energy of our Fellows Alumni, we aim to create ripples of positive change, furthering a world where understanding and cooperation between diverse religious and cultural backgrounds isn't just a vision, but a lived reality."

Secretary General Dr. Zuhair Alharthi



A highlight in the work of the network took place in the context of World Youth Day, held in August 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal. Ten Fellows Alumni from five continents (Africa, the Arab region, Asia, Europe and Latin America) and representing five world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism), had the opportunity to meet with Holiness Pope Francis. The meeting was a profound once in a lifetime experience, inspiring and motivating the Fellows to elevate their commitment to interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

2 FELLOWS ALUMNI, Chapters launched (regional and national)

- 12 initiatives supported implemented by Alumni Fellows
- across 9 countries
- reaching almost 3,000 direct and 20,000 indirect beneficiaries

10 Fellows from

- 5 continents and 5 world religions met His Holiness Pope Francis

In September, 16 Alumni Fellows were selected and completed the Fellows Programme Training of Trainers (ToT) project, as part of their professional development. The training is designed to serve as a lasting resource for KAICIID and the Fellows Programme. Its primary objective is to create expert facilitators and trainers in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, enhancing the Fellows' knowledge of dialogue methodology and the capacity to teach and disseminate dialogue skills, in educational settings within their institutions and among partners.

Additionally in 2023, KAICIID supported 12 initiatives that were implemented by Fellows Alumni. Post-graduation initiative support allows the Alumni Fellows to continue and sustain their momentum in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue efforts in their communities. The initiatives were implemented in 9 countries (Central Africa Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and South Africa). Themes addressed included interfaith education, the prevention of hate speech and protection of holy sites.

KAICIID Fellows Institutional Network (KFIN)

The KAICIID Fellows Institutional Network (KFIN) was launched in March 2023. The network is designed to allow religiously diverse people to engage with their respective higher education institutions about interreligious and intercultural dialogue in ways that respect their beliefs, customs, practices and values. In so doing, KFIN brings together 40 formal religious education institutions from across the globe, with the aims of building and strengthening the relationships and cooperation

among these institutions, with their respective Fellows and among each other, and increasing the scale of mainstreaming of high quality interreligious and intercultural dialogue in curricula.

In November, KFIN held a workshop, gathering 22 participants from eight different educational institutions in Africa. A special focus of the workshop was gender inclusivity in implementing interreligious and intercultural dialogue activities by the KFIN member institutions.

40 partner
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

– 34 attended KFIN launch

1st KFIN WORKSHOP
GATHERED

– **22 participants**, from 8 KFIN member higher education institutions in Africa





Justine's Journey: Uniting Voices Through Interreligious Dialogue ⁷

In March, KAICIID unveiled a documentary series, with the premiere featuring Justine Auma's remarkable journey as a KAICIID Fellow. The film captures Auma's transformative experience through training in Nepal and Portugal, and her impactful work in Uganda, epitomising the power of interreligious dialogue in fostering social cohesion.

Auma's narrative begins in high school religious clubs and unfolds into a profound dedication to bridge diverse faiths and cultures. The documentary, "Justine: A KAICIID Fellow's Journey," shares her initiatives tackling the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 in Uganda. From training religious leaders to facilitating community dialogues on critical issues, her efforts showcase dialogue's potential for societal betterment.

The film, first in a series showcasing KAICIID Fellows' inspirational stories, allows viewers a glimpse into the real-world application of interreligious dialogue. Auma's work in her volunteer role at St. Austin's Roman Catholic parish in Mbale leverages the arts to promote peace among youths, engaging them in writing and performing songs about peace, which resonate across different faiths.

The documentary's release was complemented by a Q&A session. Auma humbly shared, "Despite the troubles we see in society, there is a large force of people out there yearning for, and willing to promote peace. We only need to find these people and organise them to be able to have a dialogue."

KAICIID Secretary-General, Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, echoed this sentiment, recognising the Fellows Programme as transformative, not just for the fellows but also for their communities. Attendees, including current and former fellows, lauded the Programme's role in personal growth and the opportunity to engage with diverse religious practices.

In sharing her story, Auma not only illuminates the personal impact of the Fellows Programme but also ignites a collective call to action, inviting others to join in the pursuit of a harmonious world where dialogue triumphs.



⁷ An Interview with Justine Auma: Embracing the Power of Dialogue Through Her KAICIID Fellow's Journey; A KAICIID Fellow's Journey Sheds Light on the Impact of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for Peace and Understanding

E-LEARNING PROGRAMME AND ONLINE RESOURCES

KAICIID's E-Learning and Online Resources include digital knowledge tools, e-learning courses and thematic webinars, which teach dialogue as a tool to solve global issues. All e-learning courses are linked with global initiatives and development goals for sustainable peace. The Connect2Dialogue online networking platform fosters best practices and knowledge exchange by connecting interreligious dialogue practitioners and experts from across the globe. The webinars bring together thought leaders and practitioners to address the most relevant issues of the day.

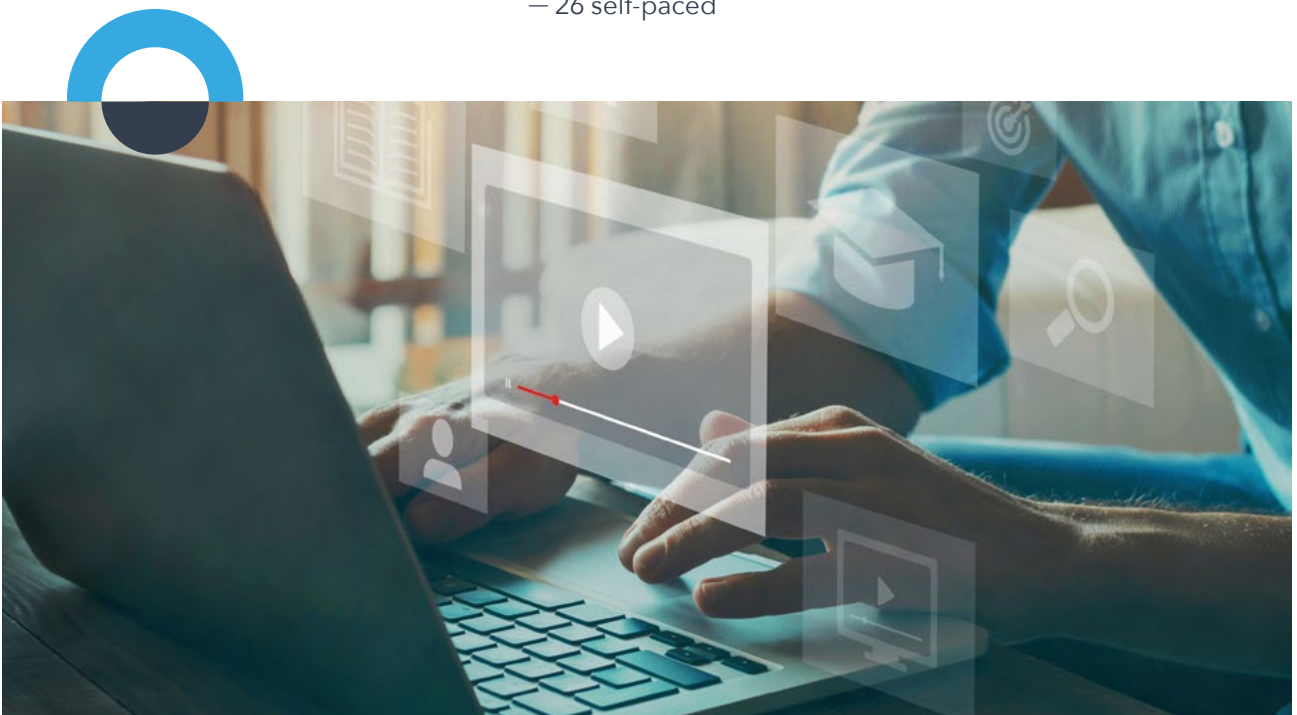
E-Learning Programme

KAICIID's e-learning courses provide religious actors and communities the knowledge to tackle global crises – from climate change to risk reduction in the aftermath of disasters, to effective humanitarian response and support for the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The e-learning courses are interactive, free of charge and designed to benefit dialogue professionals and the general public in developing and building on their knowledge and capacity for interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

30 **E-LEARNING** COURSES
in 4 languages (Arabic,
English, French and Portuguese)



- 4 moderated/instructor-led
- 26 self-paced



In 2023, KAICIID continued to expand the provision of its resources, successfully developing and delivering a range of new and adapted KAICIID courses. A translated Intercultural Communication course, being the first course offered in Portuguese. A new course designed to improve oversight of grants, was developed in collaboration with KAICIID's Monitoring and Evaluation Team. A six-module course was also created in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, and the Making Cities Resilient Global Initiative (MCR2030). The Centre also renewed its partnerships with UNEP, ICLEI and MCR2030 to further develop courses addressing pressing global issues, such as engaging faith actors in climate resilience and disaster risk reduction.

Also in 2023, the full range of e-learning courses, both new and old, were integrated into the training programmes and educational curricula of prominent organizations and universities such as UNEP, University for Peace (UPEACE) and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF). They also included participants from the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) organization, and the KAICIID-supported Network for Dialogue.

Courses on topics, such as environmental activism and using dialogue to strengthen peace and social cohesion, were tailored and offered in a moderated format to special cohorts, such as the Fellows Programme's International and African cohorts, and the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF).

- **700+** certificates issued across all courses
- **47** moderated courses publicly provided
- **13** moderated courses provided to partners and beneficiaries of KAICIID's programmes

Online Resources

CONNECT2DIALOGUE. KAICIID's E-Learning Programme and Online Resources is not limited to e-learning courses, however. Participants are also able to further their professional development via Connect2Dialogue – a digital networking platform that fosters best practices and knowledge exchange by building partnerships between interfaith practitioners, experts and other global stakeholders.

11,000+ visits 

3 TOP COUNTRIES:
– USA, UK and India

In 2023, KAICIID Fellows from the Asia Region continued to pilot the Connect2Dialogue.org platform with, leading to functionality and user experience improvements. The platform continued to serve as a hub for up-to-date, open-access online resources, including “Who is Who” and “IRD” directories of individuals and organizations, respectively, working in interreligious dialogue, internationally, regionally, nationally and locally.

WEBINARS. KAICIID webinars convene prominent faith leaders and other religious actors, civil society and non-governmental organizations, academics, policy experts and government representatives to discuss pressing challenges related to peace, human rights and sustainable development. In 2023, KAICIID organised a series of five thematic webinars, of which three were part of a special webinar series focused on amplifying the voices of women of faith.

During World Interfaith Harmony Week, in February 2023, KAICIID’s webinar, “Best Practices in Implementing Grassroots Interfaith and Intercultural Activities in Local Communities”, showcased interreligious and intercultural activities from around the world. Another webinar, “Climate Change and the Importance of Indigenous Knowledge”, hosted in October 2023 with the IF20i Environmental Working Group, focused on how Indigenous knowledge and faith practices can support climate justice.

BEST PRACTICES WEBINAR

21 participants (audience)
+ **214** viewers online



CLIMATE CHANGE AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE WEBINAR

39 participants (audience)
+ **133** viewers online

KAICIID’s “Women’s Voices” series, launched in 2022, brings together interreligious panels of women to discuss certain themes in line with UN and other international days. The panel discussions aim to answer important questions about how women can be mainstreamed into policy and faith-based initiatives. These webinars discuss how faith can play a role in strengthening women’s participation and empowerment, together with how meaningful participation is beneficial for societal outcomes. In 2023, the series focused on amplifying the voices of women of faith by highlighting their roles in diplomacy, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and in efforts to prevent violence against women and girls.





3 WOMEN'S VOICES

webinars held in 2023

- **100+** participants (audience)
- **+ 278** viewers online



In May, KAICIID celebrated International Women’s Day and the UN’s 67th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women with a webinar on innovation and technology for gender equality. Discussions highlighted the challenges and successes facing women of faith in STEM, together with their efforts in emphasising the importance of closing the gender gap and fostering inclusive environments.

In July, timed with the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, KAICIID’s second webinar in the series highlighted the journeys of women grassroots peace activists, who began their efforts in local community reconciliation and progressed to significant roles in diplomacy or government. It also aimed to spotlight the contributions of women diplomats, pushing for greater inclusion in policymaking and peace negotiations. This webinar was held in collaboration with Tanenbaum and the Peacemakers in Action Network.

In November, KACIID joined the UN’s “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence (GBV)” campaign with a webinar that focused on the leadership of religious communities in raising awareness about GBV prevention and promoting change.





Partnership is at the Heart of KAICIID's E-Learning Programme ⁸

KAICIID and UNEP have been collaborating in developing e-learning course, and exploring and promoting the role religious leaders, institutions and actors can play in addressing the consequences of climate change. UNEP's collaboration in this educational endeavour extends beyond course development. The UNEP's staff participate in the jointly developed courses, which are run and moderated by KAICIID, to better understand the interplay between interreligious dialogue and environmental sustainability.

Azmaira Alibhai, UNEP's Faith and Ecosystems Coordinator, emphasised the dual benefits of UNEP's collaboration with KAICIID, "It's about building meaningful partnerships that respect and leverage the unique perspectives of faith-based organizations in addressing environmental challenges."

KAICIID's e-learning programme is designed to be flexible, catering to the specific requirements of diverse groups. Through moderated discussion forums, participants from various backgrounds share their experiences, fostering a collaborative learning environment. This setup not only bridges knowledge gaps, but also promotes the exchange of best practices. On benefitting from these courses, Alibhai added, "These courses not only provide knowledge but also foster a supportive network where UNEP staff and others can explore practical questions and challenges they face in the field,"

SAYoF is another organization that approached KAICIID for assistance in empowering its members through specialised e-learning courses. The courses agreed upon by KAICIID and SAYoF as being most pertinent to its members were Intercultural Communication, and Engaging Faith Actors to Support the Implementation Process of the Sustainable Development Goals. The latter course was developed by KAICIID in collaboration with UNEP, aiming to enhance the capacities of young peacebuilders and change-makers across the region.

To further enrich this learning experience, KAICIID provided supplementary online orientation sessions. These sessions allowed participants to delve deeper into course content, clarify doubts, and discuss the application of their new knowledge in real-world scenarios relevant to South Africa. Beyond the benefits derived by the participants, KAICIID reflects on the outcomes and feedback from the sessions, which are crucial for adapting future e-learning opportunities to meet the evolving needs of SAYoF members. This approach allows for KAICIID to tailor its content to the needs of partners from diverse regions.

Qhawekazi Mene, a youth development specialist at SAYoF, highlighted the transformative impact of participating in the tailored and moderated courses: "Our members gained invaluable insights into aligning their efforts with global objectives, significantly enhancing their roles as advocates for peace and sustainability."

This educational exchange between KAICIID and its partners UNEP and SAYoF exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to learning and collaboration, preparing a new generation of leaders to tackle global challenges through the lens of interreligious and intercultural understanding and sustainable development. The e-learning courses serve as a springboard for 'local to global' conversations, equipping participants with the tools needed for effective engagement with communities and faith leaders on pressing global issues.

⁸ Partnership is at the Heart of KAICIID's E-Learning Programme







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