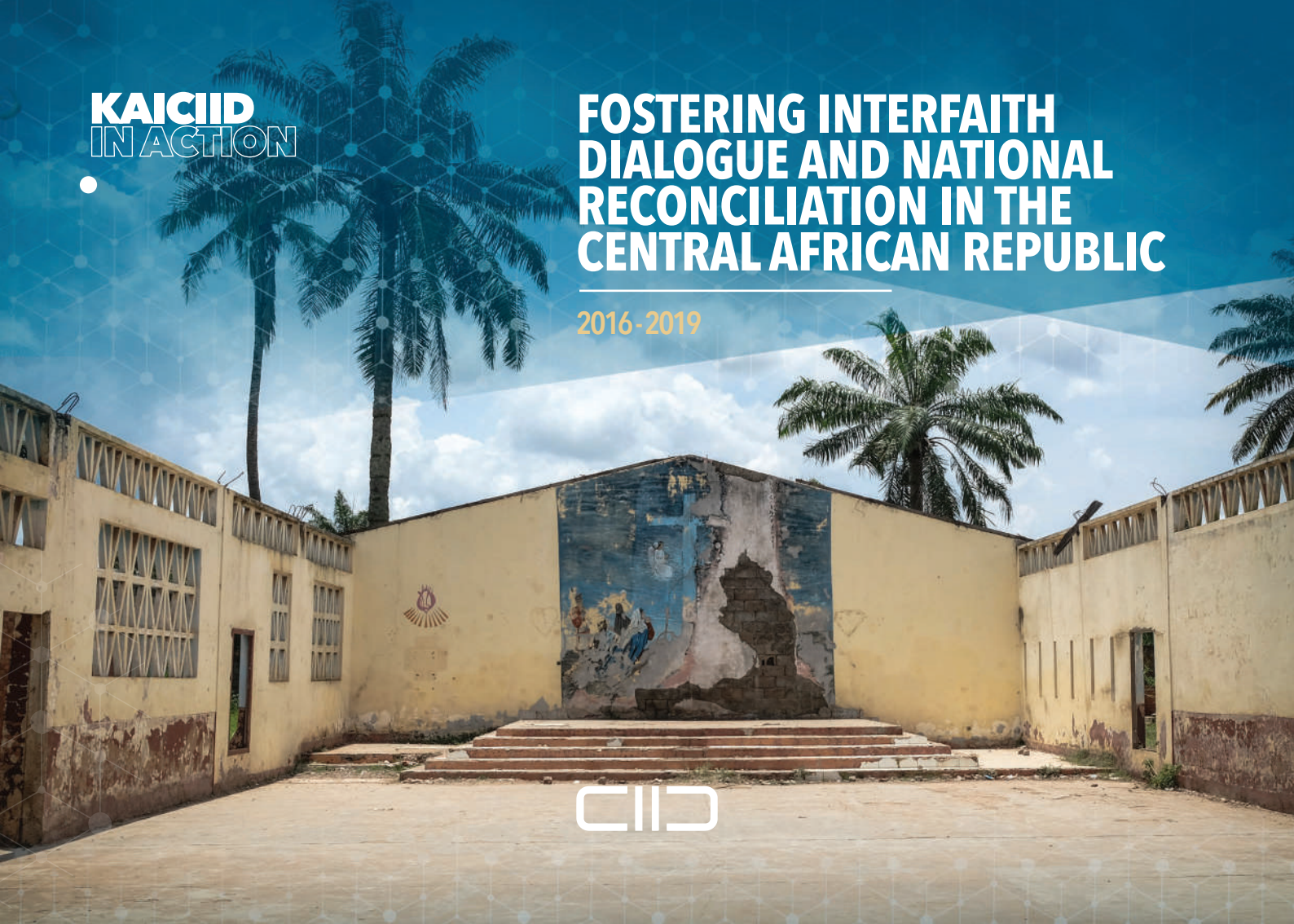


KAICIID
IN ACTION

FOSTERING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

2016-2019



CIID



Young Muslim and Christian activists organize an awareness raising campaign on social cohesion in the 8th district of Bangui, February 2018.



● **Cover photo**
The Parish of St. Michel of Bangui. The site was destroyed during clashes between armed groups in 2013.

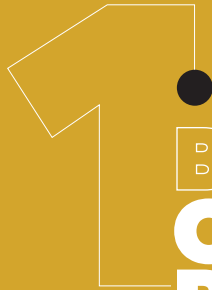
About the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)

KAICIID is the only intergovernmental organization governed by religious representatives and dedicated to the facilitation of dialogue between different cultures and faiths. The Founding States of the Centre (the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Spain, with the Holy See as Founding Observer) constitute the Council of Parties responsible for

overseeing the work of the Centre. Our vision is 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. KAICIID's activities are global in focus, with programming focused on four regions, across Africa, the Arab region and Asia.

●
Youth visit Notre-Dame Cathedral
in Bangui, September 2019. Life is
now back to normal in the capital
after the peak of violence in 2013.





BACKGROUND
ON KAICIID'S
PROGRAMME

IN THE CENTRAL
AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

KAICIID'S BROADER COMMITMENT TO AFRICA

KAICIID promotes dialogue and sustainable peace in Africa at three levels: (1) At the national level, the Centre establishes and supports interreligious platforms which foster collaboration on key issues such as countering hate speech and preventing intercommunal violence; (2) At the regional level, the Centre partners with organizations, including the African Union, to build capacity for religious actors, policymakers and community leaders; and (3) At the grassroots level, KAICIID works with local civil society and faith-based organizations through targeted activities which contribute to social cohesion and national reconciliation.

Why

is it critical to invest in interreligious dialogue in CAR?

The Central African Republic (CAR) has undergone a new surge of violence since March 2013. With more than one million people forcefully displaced (inside and outside the country) since then, the crisis has become one of the worst humanitarian disasters of our time.

During the worst phase of violence in 2014-2015, clashes between armed groups rocked the country, pitting the mainly Muslim ex-Séléka against the Christian/Animist anti-Balaka militias. Since then, the situation has improved thanks to the consistent commitment of the international community, including the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA), and the facilitation of the Khartoum peace agreement on 5 February 2019.

However, the security situation in the country remains volatile and CAR faces the risk of additional intercommunal violence in the future, particularly in the context of elections.

KAICIID's approach in CAR ●

Since 2016, KAICIID has focused its programmatic efforts in CAR, working to restore peace and social cohesion within the country through interreligious dialogue. The Centre's work in CAR is multilayered, and involves a plurality of partners, ranging from key religious leaders and faith-based organizations to civil society activists, women's organizations, journalists and policymakers.

The Centre collaborates closely with CAR authorities (through an agreement with the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and National Reconciliation) to ensure that the peace process is accompanied by effective national reconciliation initiatives, with the support of religious leaders.

Destroyed during the violence in 2013, the Lakuanga Mosque in Bangui is now undergoing restoration efforts through the support of local communities.



KAICIID's key milestones and achievements in CAR



5

**training of
trainers (ToT)
modules**

on conflict resolution provided
for religious and community
leaders.



255

Christian and Muslim religious
& community leaders trained
in interreligious dialogue for
peace and reconciliation.



11

**grassroots
organizations**

working on social cohesion and
national reconciliation
supported in 2019.

16,100

participants
involved in awareness raising,
interfaith theatre and music
performances.



2,200

attendees at interreligious
football matches (with
mixed Muslim and
Christian teams).

**Training of
Trainers Dialogue
Facilitation
MANUAL**

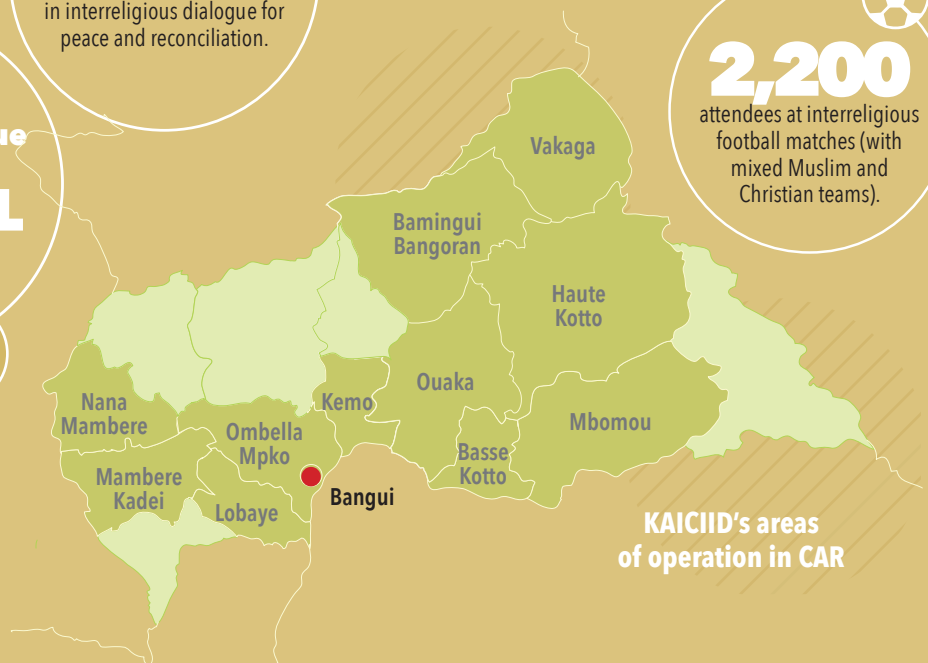
drafted and tailored
to the CAR context



90

**youth and women
community
leaders**

trained in intercommunal
dialogue facilitation.





**FOSTERING
COLLABORATION
AMONG LEADERS
OF DIFFERENT FAITHS**



KAICIID Secretary General Faisal bin Muaammar welcomes participants to the Vienna Interfaith Conference on CAR, November 2016.



The PCRC Headquarters, Bangui, September 2019.

The three founding leaders of the PCRC: Cardinal Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Imam Kobine Layama and Pastor Nicolas Guérékoyaméné-Gbango



Supporting

an inclusive, sustainable national interfaith dialogue platform

In 2013, as violence intensified in CAR, key national leaders of the Catholic, Evangelical, and Muslim communities joined forces to de-escalate the crisis. Together, they established the Platform of Religious Confessions of CAR, or “Plateforme des Confessions Religieuses de Centrafrique” (PCRC). Over the past few years, the PCRC has successfully defused tensions at the local level by deploying high-level religious leaders on the ground and conducting mediation initiatives between armed groups. KAICIID has supported the platform since 2017, helping to build and strengthen branches (or “antennae offices”) across CAR.

We the leaders of the PCRC appreciate the collaboration with KAICIID, which has helped to support our dialogue and advocacy actions on the ground. These efforts had a major impact in supporting a resolution of the Central African crisis and facilitated tolerance, the process of the return of the displaced persons, for peace, and the principle of living together in CAR.

Engaging religious leaders in early warning systems

Because religious leaders and organizations are actively engaged with local communities, they are well positioned to serve as early warning mechanisms.

In this regard, the Centre plans to support the National Ministry of Humanitarian Action and National Reconciliation with the establishment of local peace and reconciliation committees (LPCs), ensuring that religious leaders, as well as members of civil society, are included in these diverse structures. The LPCs are tasked with completing regular security reviews and coordinating with authorities to address root causes of tension.

In addition, KAICIID supports the PCRC's local branches by establishing ongoing channels of communication between local and national religious leaders and civilian authorities on security concerns in the region. This is particularly important given the limited presence in the field of State institutions and army and police forces.

February 2018, monitoring mission of PCRC leaders to Bangassou, Mbomou prefecture, following an intensification of community tensions.



Religious leaders have multiple tools to prevent escalation of violence - for example, they can directly address the public and raise awareness, provide victim support, issue public statements, and coordinate with authorities on strategic response.

In May 2018, gunmen targeted the parish of Notre Dame of Fatima in Bangui, killing a priest and 25 followers. In order to prevent further violence, the PCRC issued a statement condemning the attack, which was widely transmitted through national radio stations.

In July 2018, the local peace and reconciliation committee of the southern Kemo prefecture alerted authorities to rising tensions between Muslim Fulani cattle breeders and a group of local Christian youth. As a result, a special mission of military and government officials was deployed to the region in order to deter violence.

Supporting

engagement between

religious leaders and policymakers

KAICIID advocates for the inclusion of the religious leaders in discussions and deliberations with policymakers, particularly on peace, development and social cohesion issues. The Centre has consistently facilitated collaboration between religious representatives and government officials. For instance, it has supported joint field visits by policymakers and religious leaders to various prefectures, to advance reconciliation plans and express solidarity to victims of violence.



PCRC leaders engage with law enforcement authorities during a field visit to Bangassou, Mbomou prefecture, February 2018.



Maxime Kazagui, CAR Minister for Communication and Media, opens a KAICIID-supported workshop on conflict sensitive journalism, Bangui, October 2018.



**STRENGTHENING
THE CAPACITY OF RELIGIOUS
AND COMMUNITY LEADERS
TO PROMOTE INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

Training

a new generation of peacemakers on interreligious dialogue

As part of its collaboration with the PCRC, KAICIID has designed and implemented a Training of Trainers (ToT) series on intercultural and interreligious dialogue as a tool for conflict transformation, which it hosts in towns and cities across the country. From January to March 2018, KAICIID conducted a series of ToTs in Berberati, Bi-rao, Bouar and Mbaiki, which were geared towards equipping women and youth leaders with mediation and dialogue facilitation skills.



KAICIID Senior Adviser Dr. Patrice Brodeur trains members of 8 local antennae offices of the PCRC, Bangui, September 2019



Bachir Khalid,

Imam of Bambari:

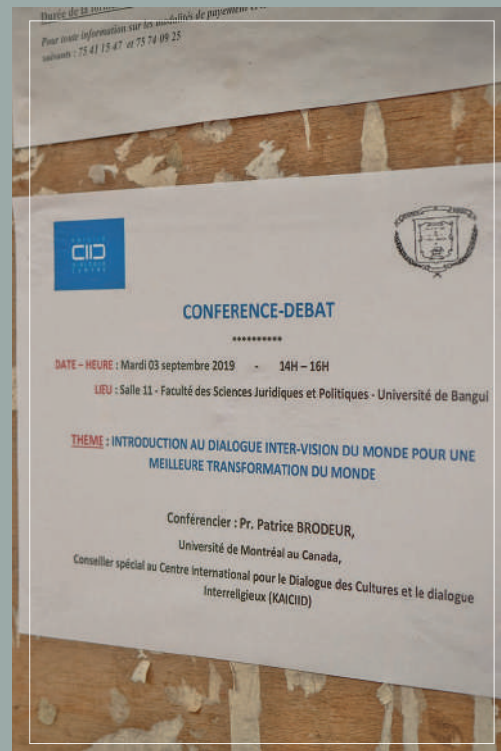
"I thank KAICIID because it helped me to be fully aware of the root causes of our conflict, and to think how best we can react to a situation of danger".



Clarisse Mamehou

Women's Catholic Coordination
Group of Bangui:

"The training conducted by the PCRC and KAICIID greatly helped me to consolidate the skills to conduct awareness raising on social cohesion among women and the general population".



CAICIID Senior Adviser Dr. Patrice Brodeur holds a masterclass in intercultural dialogue and “intersivions of the world” at the University of Bangui, September 2019



**USING
INTERRELIGIOUS
DIALOGUE TO
REDUCE VIOLENCE
AND PROMOTE
INTERFAITH HARMONY**

Supporting pilot projects

to foster social cohesion in Bangui and in the prefectures

In addition to its work with the PCRC and the government, KAICIID supports grassroots organizations in the implementation of dialogue initiatives which promote social cohesion and reconciliation, as well as prevent/counter hate speech. To this end, the Centre launched a small grants programme in 2019, inviting local organizations in CAR to submit quick impact proposals that build bridges between the country's religious and ethnic communities.

Examples of recent quick impact projects supported by KAICIID



In March 2019, KAICIID supported the Youth Action NGO for the Promotion of Human Rights and Development to advance the free movement of civilians in the PK5 district (the mainly Muslim enclave of Bangui). The project involved the clean-up of the local market and the cleaning and repair of a local school and the Central Mosque.



In February 2017, the Centre worked with local youth from the 7th district of Bangui to organize a football match bringing together former fighters from both the anti-Balaka and ex-Séléka militias.



In February 2018, KAICIID collaborated with the NGO "CARPE" to support the return of Muslim internally displaced persons (IDPs) to the 8th district of Bangui.



KAICIID-trained journalists in Sibut (central CAR) broadcast a special radio programme on the situation of Fulani herders, April 2019, as a follow-up to the trainings on conflict sensitive journalism.

Connecting religious leaders with traditional and new media

Media and information play an important role in community interactions – particularly in regard to incitement to violence. Therefore, conflict sensitive journalism is key to ensuring that media outlets provide accurate facts and avoid religious and ethnic stereotypes, bias or discrimination. For these reasons, KAICIID and the PCRC have consistently worked with both traditional and social media operators in the country, building their capacity to detect and counter hate speech.

In October 2018, KAICIID and the Office of the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide trained a group of over 30 journalists on conflict sensitive journalism. As a follow-up to this training, the participants established a Network of Journalists Sensitive to Conflict, which – through KAICIID support – has now expanded to the national level.



PCRC founding leader Imam Layama delivers an interview with UN radio in CAR, Guira FM



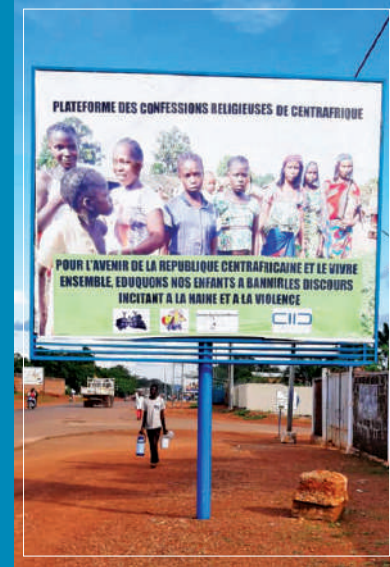
General Assembly of the “Network of Journalists Sensitive to Conflict” September 2019



COLLECTIVE ACTION

to countering hate speech

KAICIID recognises that collective action involving a wide array of stakeholders, including civil society organizations, students and the general public, is needed to prevent rumour-mongering and stop the spread of misinformation. For this reason, in 2019, the Centre supported the PCRC's nationwide advocacy campaign against hate speech. The campaign included the development of a training manual for community leaders offering tools for preventing/countering discrimination and incitement to violence. The campaign also comprised a series of trainings for religious leaders, policymakers, journalists and civil society activists which took place in Bangui, as well as in Berberati, Bouar and Sibut.



STOP

Billboards set up in Bangui as part of the PCRC/KAICIID national campaign to counter hate speech, August 2019.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

February 2018, PCRC leader Cardinal Dieudonné Nzapalainga joins a mission to Bangassou, Mbomou prefecture, to provide humanitarian support to mainly Muslim IDPs.

**As a student,
activist, blogger,
journalist and
individual, please:**



Follow the PCRC and
KAICIID online.

Contact the
PCRC/KAICIID to
discuss collaboration on
research activities, such as
policy issues related to social
cohesion and intercommunal
harmony, peacebuilding and
conflict prevention, etc.

Contact
the Platform of
Religious Confessions
(Plateforme des Confessions
Religieuses de Centrafrique
- PCRC) to join a training
activity or interreligious
dialogue event.

Apply to
the KAICIID
International/
Regional Fellows
Programme.

As an organization



**Contact
KAICIID and
the PCRC to discuss
possible synergies and
collaborations, on their
key priorities:**

Promoting
interfaith dialogue
and the national
reconciliation
process.



Countering
hate speech.



Supporting
early warning and
response systems.



**Consider
providing financial
support to the PCRC and
to other local stakeholders
involved in interfaith
dialogue for peace
in CAR.**

Engaging
journalists and social
media influencers on
social cohesion.

For additional information,
please contact:

THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE CENTRE (KAICIID)

Schottenring 21, 1010 Vienna, Austria

Email: Office@kaiciid.org

Phone: +43 1 313 22 0

<https://www.kaiciid.org>

OR

PCRC - SECRÉTARIAT GÉNÉRAL

Rue 102 Sissongo, Bangui, Central African Republic

Email: pcrcra@gmail.com

Phone: +236 72 87 53 89/+236 75 31 37 17 /+236 72 02 14 05

Website : <http://www.pcrc-rca.org/>

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