



annual report 2019



AGENCY FOR
PEACEBUILDING

introduction

We are very glad to be able to share AP's Annual Report 2019.

The main highlight this year, and a sea change moment for us, was the organization of the first ever edition of the Bologna Peacebuilding Forum. Hosted on the European campus of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Bologna, the event brought together people from the non-governmental sector, from local institutions and from academia to discuss the changing relationship between governments and civil society in peacebuilding. With the Forum our intention was to create a space where people working on peace could exchange experiences and ideas: we did create it, and the response that we got went beyond our expectations.

This has also been the year in which we consolidated our expertise on the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, concluding a wide-ranging, complex piece of research for the United States Institute of Peace, which sought to assess its work in supporting youth and peacebuilding initiatives around the world. And we grew our learning portfolio, conducting a record number of evaluations—five—while also moving towards a comprehensive learning approach.

Lastly, this year we officially realized our first training initiative, where we tried to bring conflict management tools and concepts to representatives of migrants' associations active in Bologna. This assignment represented a maturation of our partnership with the Municipality of Bologna, which started three years ago, and has really put us on the map as an organization whose tools and expertise can also contribute to social cohesion locally.

Much as 2019 has been a momentous year, we are aware that a more challenging time lies ahead. At the time of writing, the Coronavirus crisis has already exploded, testing the limits of the international system. Conflict is on the rise, as people, communities and nations try—yet often struggle—to come together to respond and adapt to the pandemic.

This is a challenge, one that we feel that we can contribute to overcoming, and this will be what we want to do.

Bernardo Monzani, President

table of contents

- 3 | About AP
- 4 | Bologna Peacebuilding Forum 2019
- 5 | Youth, Peace and Security
- 6 | Promoting Migrants' Participation in Bologna
- 7 | Evaluation and Learning
- 9 | Publications
- 10 | Financial Outlook
- 10 | Partners and Supporters

about ap

The Agency for Peacebuilding (AP) is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to promote conditions that can enable the resolution of conflict, reduce violence and contribute to a durable peace across Europe, its neighbourhood and the world.

Created in 2015, AP is the first Italian organisation specialising in peacebuilding. This allows us to occupy a unique role in the European landscape: on the one hand, we interpret and synthesize relevant topics for the benefit of Italian agencies and institutions working on peace and security; on the other, we highlight experiences, capacities and resources specific to the Italian system, which can contribute to the resolution of violent conflict.

vision

Violent conflict is the result of multiple and complex causes; resolving it, therefore, requires a strong commitment on the part of both local and international actors. Yet, this commitment is all too often lacking, which results in conflicts that are left to degenerate into ever greater cycles of violence.

Contrary to this reality, AP's overall vision is of a world where conflicts can be transformed—through research of innovative solutions that are non-violent and sustainable—into opportunities to promote cooperation based on open and honest dialogue.

Conflict is in fact the manifestation of existing differences between people, institutions and nations, as well as the reciprocity that binds their actions. If effectively managed, conflict can represent an opportunity to resolve common challenges and support human development. However, insufficient efforts can risk generating further violence. Because of this, AP works to manage conflicts non-violently, promoting diversity and reciprocity and collaborating with other actors engaged in building peace.

approach

AP works on the basis of five guiding principles:

- The use of civil capacities and tools;
- The primacy and leadership of individuals and groups who are directly affected by violent conflict;
- Reciprocity as a precondition for establishing relationships that are truly equal between individuals, communities and agencies that are engaged in finding solutions to conflict;
- An appreciation of the diversity that exists among people, communities and institutions; and
- A peacebuilding approach that is concrete, results-oriented and open to confrontation, innovation and creativity.

bpf 2019

On April 2nd, 2019, AP organized the first Bologna Peacebuilding Forum (BPF), which took place at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Bologna.

BPF is a framework for dialogue and exchange between scholars and practitioners working on conflict resolution, peacebuilding and development. This year, the event explored the changing relation between civil societies and political institutions in building peace. It was a success in terms of participation, quality of the interventions, and networking opportunities. The BPF will be repeated annually.

BPF 2019 was a clear success in terms of participation, quality of interventions and networking opportunities. For the future, we look forward to further developing this initiative, to create space for sharing ideas and building networks for peace and cooperation. The report from the event's discussions is available [here](#).

"The Bologna Peacebuilding Forum was an incredible opportunity where researchers and practitioners working on peacebuilding, and international cooperation more generally, could exchange and debate. We have created a space that is open to all, that is sustainable and that we can reconvene every year, to discuss the main challenges in building peace at different levels."

Bernardo Venturi, AP Director



Johns Hopkins
School of Advanced International Studies in Europe (SAIS Europe)
Bologna, Italy | Via Andreatta, 3

youth, peace and security

an agenda for change

There is a need to give young people the space to lead and make decisions related to peace and security, in line with the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 adopted in December 2015, but still little implemented worldwide. This means including young people at the table where decisions related to peace and security are made and valuing their voices as much as those of other actors.

AP has sought to contribute to the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda that UNSCR 2250 formally established. In March 2019, we launched an international call for articles from young researchers, activists, and practitioners working in youth-led or youth-focused organizations. We aimed to elevate both the narratives of these young change-makers and their incredible, diverse work.

The call was very successful, and we were able to publish a total of 11 articles, which represent a vast array of youth peacebuilding experiences from all over the world. We had, for example, a young female peace-builder from Iran talk about creating a youth-led training initiative on peace and security, called Peace-Mentors; the Head of Society at the British Council in the Philippines wrote about the positive role that social entrepreneurship had in activating young people's role in the conflict-affected Bangsamoro province; and a researcher at the Conflict Alert and Prevention Center (CENAP) in Burundi presented the results of facilitated dialogues among the youth wings of the different political parties.

All articles published can be found [here](#).

meta-review of usip's youth peacebuilding programmes

Over the last decade, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has been a steadfast contributor to the development of the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda, monitoring or participating in policy discussions and supporting a wide scope of initiatives across the world, which were specifically aimed at promoting the role of young people in peacebuilding. In 2018, USIP thus decided to commission a meta-review of its youth peacebuilding portfolio in order to reflect on, and learn from, its experiences. AP was selected to complete this assignment.

AP conducted the meta-review in two phases. In the first one, we conducted an extensive desk-based research, reviewing more than 200 documents from 51 projects, which USIP had either implemented or financially supported between 2011 and 2018. These projects were very diverse, having been implemented in 17 countries, not counting those that had a regional or global dimension. In the second phase, we focused on 11 project case studies, and conducted a total of 50 interviews and 10 focus group discussions in five countries (Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Pakistan and Tunisia), with staff members from USIP and grantee organisations, local partners, stakeholders and former participants.

The final report was completed in October 2019 and presented USIP with a thorough analysis of its work in support of youth. It also included a number of recommendations to improve its practice in the future.

"We engaged with the United States Institute of Peace and their partners in a meta-evaluation exercise of their peace work with and for youth. It was a unique learning opportunity for all, crucial to develop theory and practice in the context of the emerging Youth, Peace and Security agenda."

Celina Del Felice, AP's Senior Adviser for Youth, Peace and Security

promoting migrants' political participation in bologna

needs assessment on migrants' political participation in bologna

Throughout the last two years, AP has been working with the Municipality of Bologna, in Italy, to support the civic and political participation of migrants and new citizens at the local level, and to tackle different forms of discrimination. Discrimination and marginalisation of migrants and new citizens are indeed very much still present in Italy and tailor-made strategies and responses must be adopted at the local level.

In this framework, after conducting a research study in 2018, this year AP designed and conducted a needs assessment report that looked at the interests, priorities and needs of migrants' associations active in Bologna.

Specifically, we analysed the activities, needs and priorities of migrants' associations active in Bologna, with a focus on the perception that they have of the Intercultural Centre "Massimo Zonarelli", a space that occupies a central role in the city's support to migrants, and whose mission is to promote integration, human rights, and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

Through a survey targeted towards 45 associations, we gathered data on the nature and scope of their work, how they currently contribute to the Intercultural Centre, and how they would like to see the role of Centre evolve in the future. The analysis thus yielded interesting findings, chief among them the desire of associations to communicate with each other more than they are currently doing, with the Centre playing more of a coordination role than it has. Associations have also expressed a desire to focus more on project-based activities, something for which they feel they could be supported by the Centre through more targeted trainings.

The analysis was handed over to the Municipality of Bologna, which is using it to improve the way it engages migrants and promotes their civic and political participation.

training workshops for migrant associations

As part of its work with the Municipality of Bologna, this year AP also designed and delivered a training course for civil society organisations on anti-discrimination and conflict transformation. The course allowed participants, who came from migrant's associations active in Bologna, to discover how techniques of conflict transformation can help them to overcome daily discrimination.

The training course was conducted in the context of a project entitled "Places, Rights and Cultures". The project, which has been funded by the Emilia-Romagna Region, aims to reinforce a culture of human rights, peace and intercultural dialogue as drivers of reconciliation and development. The project was led by the Municipality of Bologna and involved several local civil society organizations. AP was the lead on the project's training component.

The training itself focused on building participants' competencies on anti-discrimination as well as conflict management. The different modules thus focused on human rights awareness, active listening and intercultural mediation.

"The workshop with members of migrants' associations became a real safe space for participants to voice their concerns, doubts and even frustrations. The debate went beyond an often granted 'common ground' to dive into personal, ethical and professional dilemmas. And I believe that getting to the roots is crucial when it comes to trying to grasp the complexity of 'cultures'."

Mikael Sustersic, AP's Junior Adviser

evaluation and learning

evaluating initiatives to counter violent extremism in kenya and tanzania

Over the last three years, AP has regularly worked with organisations interested in learning from their peacebuilding work. A focus of these efforts has been East Africa, and Kenya and Tanzania specifically, where a rise in violent extremism, coupled with long-standing social and political grievances, have caused a rise in violent conflict, especially among communities of different religions. Through evaluations, AP thus aims to increase the impact of organizations engaged in various peacebuilding initiatives.

In 2019, AP completed two evaluations covering four projects that had been implemented in East Africa. Both evaluations were conducted in partnership with the international non-governmental organisation Search for Common Ground (Search).

The first evaluation focused on two projects that Search had completed in Tanzania, “Pamoja! Strengthening Community Resilience to Violent Extremism”, whose goal was to strengthen community resilience to key drivers of violent; and “Katika Usalama Tunategemeana: A Community-Owned Approach to Promoting Moderate Voices and Preventing Violent Extremism”, whose goal was to empower communities to prevent violent extremism.

The second evaluation looked at two projects implemented by Search in Kenya, “Justice for Peace”, whose overall goal was to increase constructive engagement between criminal justice sector actors and communities at risk of violent extremism in Coastal Kenya; and “Inuka! Supporting vulnerable youth to participate in community peace and security efforts in Coastal Kenya project”, whose overall objective was to increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community peace and security efforts involving vulnerable and marginalized youth in Coastal Kenya.

Overall, the evaluations found that both projects were relevant to target communities, but always in the specific context of violent extremism. Search’s efforts were definitely complicated by the context, where discussing violent extremism can be taboo. In general, however, project activities were very effective at increasing collaboration and inclusive engagement between stakeholders and at-risk and marginalised communities. And while they also faced challenges, their contributions to impact are noteworthy.

The final reports for the two evaluations are available upon request (info@peaceagency.org).

“medfilm for all” learning workshop

AP designed and facilitated a learning workshop as part of the final evaluation of the “MedFilm For All” project, which it is conducting in partnership with the Italian non-governmental organisation WeWorld-GVC Italy.

The “MedFilm For All” project seeks to contribute to human development and gender equality through the diffusion of audio-visual content about social issues in the Southern Mediterranean region. WeWorld-GVC Italy are implementing activities in five countries: (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories and Tunisia). The evaluation workshop brought together partners from each country (over 20 participants) to reflect on the results achieved during the project, using a Theory of Change methodology. It was a fruitful meeting that effectively launched the final project evaluation, which AP will complete in early 2020.

evaluation and learning

evaluating initiatives to fight discrimination and xenophobia in Italy

AP also conducted evaluations in Italy. Working together with the Italian non-governmental organization CEFA Onlus, we looked at assessing two projects implemented by the organization in various locations, both funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

The first evaluation focused on “Facciamo Tombola”, a large project whose goal was to promote understanding and responses to social exclusion phenomena linked to xenophobia, racism and radicalization. The project engaged teachers, students and social workers in four cities (Bologna, Naples, Palermo and Verona), accompanying them through different pathways meant to provide them with tools to contrast discrimination, as well as platforms to raise awareness against xenophobia and racism. The evaluation found the project to be highly relevant to the needs expressed by all target groups. It was also effective, succeeding in particular to engage a lot of people in all locations, and also creating new formats for engaging teachers and students in particular. Findings also pointed to the need to give more in-depth exposure to the topics, and to focus on sustainability, which varied significantly from one location to the next.

The second evaluation focused on “Tra la Via Emilia e il Sud”, whose goal was to provide tools to create inclusive narratives on multiculturalism and intercultural cohesion, which could contract emerging intolerance, racism and xenophobia. A relatively small project, it featured activities in three municipalities outside of Bologna (Valsamoggia, Spilamberto e Savignano sul Panaro). The initiative’s relevance was amply confirmed by all those who took part to activities, including young people and local government representatives. In terms of effectiveness, the highlight was the production and dissemination of an original movie, which served to mobilize the participation of many people living in the municipalities, and which generated a lot of interest—the movie’s projections were all sold-out. The evaluation noted how interesting and innovative the project was, recommending a review of training activities and a greater focus on sustainability.

The final reports for the two evaluations will be published in 2020.



publications

articles

In 2019 we published a total of 13 articles:

Can social contact reduce prejudice? Exploring the assumption in Nigeria

Federica Sustersic (November 19, 2019)

We've got time: Peacebuilding through the arts in Kosovo and Serbia

Vana Filipovski (November 5, 2019)

Digital platforms to counter violent extremism among youth: Do they work?

Saagarika Dadu and Aleksandra Lasota (October 22, 2019)

Dialogue among youth: A means to prevent violence in Burundi

Tatien Nkeshimana (October 7, 2019)

Talking Peace in Tehran

Yalda Khosravi (September 23, 2019)

Youth Engagement in Nuclear Disarmament: Rethinking Peace and Security

Anna Ikeda (July 31, 2019)

Voice without opportunity: Understanding challenges to youth participation in Tunisia

Alissa Pavia (July 12, 2019)

Using Positive Voices to tackle youth radicalization in Nigeria

Vivienne Bamgboye (June 28, 2019)

From the Backyard to the United Nations: The PeaceMentors initiative in Iran

Shadi Rouhshahbaz (June 13, 2019)

Strengthening Youth Resilience through Entrepreneurship in the Philippines

Maria Angel Abad (May 28, 2019)

Using Peacebuilding to Counter Violent Extremism: Lessons from Kenya and Tanzania

Bernardo Monzani and Anthony Sarota (April 30, 2019)

A Conflict Sensitive Lens on the Upcoming Humanitarian Aid Operations in Burkina Faso

Alessandro Totoro (March 27, 2019)

The Announced Withdrawal of the United States from Syria: Reactions and Perspectives on the Peace Process

Stefano Marinelli (January 31, 2019)

reports

We published the following reports in 2019:

Bologna Peacebuilding Forum 2019

Event report, April 2019

Countering violent extremism and strengthening community resilience in Tanzania

Evaluation report, February 2019

Report di analisi dei bisogni delle associazioni del Centro Interculturale Zonarelli

Bologna, Research Report, September 2019 (available in Italian only)

"AP's website always hosts new perspectives on topical challenges to peacebuilding. The articles always merit reflection, coming from voices that are at the same time new and authoritative."

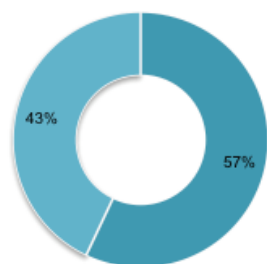
Alessandro Totoro, AP associate

financial outlook

AP's total income for fiscal year 2019 was €129.897. Our total expenditure was € 105.658--the difference is due to projects that started towards the end of the year, which are going to be implemented largely in 2020. Comparing these numbers to those of 2018, income has grown by 19%--a considerable and positive change--while expenditure by 3%.

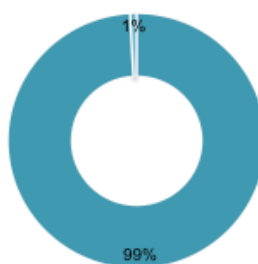
The following graphs provide a snapshot of our finances for this year. Further information can be found in AP's annual financial statements, which are published separately.

sources of income



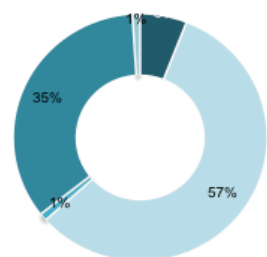
■ private institutions
■ public bodies

types of expenditures



■ programme costs
■ operating costs

expenditures by programmatic area



■ bpf
■ research
■ training
■ evaluation and learning
■ operating costs

partners and supporters

For all the activities completed in 2019, AP wants to acknowledge and thank all of its main partners and supporters:

CEFA Onlus
Centro Studi di Difesa Civile (CSDC)
Emilia-Romagna Region
Intergovernmental Authority
on Development (IGAD)
Johns Hopkins School for Advanced
International Studies (SAIS Europe)
Municipality of Bologna
Oxfam America
Oxfam Belgium

Oxfam Great Britain
Peaceful Change Initiative (PCI)
Prometeia
Rotary Club Bologna Ovest
Search for Common Ground (SFCG)
Scuola Superiore di Sant'Anna
United Nations High Commissioner
for Refugees (UNHCR)
United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
University of Bologna
WeWorld-GVC Italy Onlus