



AGENCY FOR  
PEACEBUILDING

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

**Agency for Peacebuilding**

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## ABOUT THE AGENCY FOR PEACEBUILDING

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. Founded in 2015, AP is the first Italian organisation specialising on 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 the experiences, capacities and resources specific to the Italian system, which can contribute to the resolution of violent conflict.

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.

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 the 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.

[www.peaceagency.org](http://www.peaceagency.org)

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## SUMMARY

The year 2021 has been marked by the ongoing effects of the pandemic, which has continued to affect how everyone works and to put pressure on our relationships—with partners, collaborators and donors. And when the pandemic has not been on the front pages, the news has been none the better: armed violence has continued to be on the rise, while cooperation on matters of peace and security remains thoroughly difficult to muster. The takeover of Afghanistan in August, by the resurgent Taliban, will probably go down as one of the principal events for which the year 2021 will be remembered. Importantly, this tragic event has further cemented the belief, held by many, that the era of liberal peacebuilding is now officially over.

It is important to note, however, that 2021 was not an entirely negative year. With the end of an era come opportunities to shape a new one, and continued debates on inclusion, de-colonisation and social justice have imbued peacebuilding discussions and practices with fresh perspectives and a new energy. In Italy specifically, the topic of peace, and how to contribute to it, is receiving more attention now than it ever did.

**In the context of all these challenges and opportunities, it has been important that AP has continued to grow.** Highlights of our work have included new and fruitful learning partnerships with the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD), the International Nuremberg Principles Academy and the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), which helped to gather new insights into where and how peacebuilding work can best succeed. The third edition of the Bologna Peacebuilding Forum, which focused on the links between climate change and conflict, was also very successful. Internally, we welcomed three new members and embarked on a new strategic planning phase.

**All in all, we are, today, the most confident we have ever been about the contributions we can make to peacebuilding efforts in Italy and elsewhere.** Looking forward, we will want to capitalise on this confidence to become an even stronger and more active organisation, by continuing to partner with established institutions, but also by seeking to work more and more with those actors actively engaged in peacebuilding processes.

*Bernardo Monzani, President*

# OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Throughout the year, our work has been guided by three overarching objectives, which were discussed and agreed by AP's members at the end of 2020. The objectives were defined taking into account the international context, still very much affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and our ambition to become a more consolidated organisation, in terms of both our programmes and our internal processes.

Our objectives for the year were:

## 1) To consolidate and promote AP's existing expertise (thematic and geographic)

Over the last three years we have launched efforts in a number of countries and on a variety of issues, yet the pandemic has limited our ability to develop and consolidate these efforts. Looking to 2021 as the year where a transition away from the emergency might take place, we therefore wanted to make sure we could still build on what we have already started - focusing, in other words, on what we had already launched.

Practically, this meant making a commitment to:

- Consolidating our work to advance the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda,
- Consolidating our advocacy and research efforts on Italy's role in peacebuilding and conflict prevention,
- Evolve our evaluation efforts into a learning portfolio, and
- Expanding our engagement in the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO).

## 2) To increase AP's fundraising capacity

Over the years, we have increased our ability to secure the funding necessary to support AP's core operations. Yet, as our portfolio of projects has expanded, we have also felt the need to establish longer-term relations with donors. This has been the focus of 2021.

## 3) To consolidate our communication efforts

Last but not least, over the years we have also successfully established a public profile, through our website and our social media channels. Yet, we also felt the need to consolidate our communication efforts, institutionalising in particular a professional figure to support and grow our profile, not just on social media, but also on more traditional platforms.

# BOLOGNA PEACEBUILDING FORUM 2021

**The Bologna Peacebuilding Forum (BPF) is AP's flagship event and a framework for dialogue and exchange between scholars and practitioners working on conflict resolution, peacebuilding and development.**

In what ways does climate change affect violent conflict? What opportunities – if any – can the climate emergency and related environmental challenges provide to enhance the prospects of durable peace? How is climate change impacting peace processes in the Mediterranean region?

The third edition of the Bologna Peacebuilding Forum addressed these and other questions related to the nexus between peacebuilding and climate change. The Forum is not new to tough questions and cutting-edge analysis and debates. Starting in 2019, it has established itself as a major annual gathering fostering open and constructive dialogue on critical issues facing the peacebuilding field. In this, the Forum seeks to bridge knowledge gaps by offering space for dialogue between peacebuilding scholars and practitioners. Furthermore, the gathering strives to expand the discussion to larger audiences, including foreign policy experts, relevant civil society actors, policymakers, academics and the general public.

This year, the two-day event, which took place on 18 and 19 May, 2021, was organised together with the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS Europe) and also with several new partners. In particular, we partnered with the New Med Research Network, an ongoing research, outreach and dissemination project focussed on salient social, political, economic and security issues in the Mediterranean region. The New Med Research Network is coordinated by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), one of Italy's premiere and most well known think tanks, and supported by the Fondazione Compagnia San Paolo.

Structured around four panel sessions, the Forum saw researchers and practitioners discuss different dimensions of the complex linkages between climate, environment and conflict. As in previous editions, the quality and expertise of speakers was extremely high.

These included: Oli Brown from Chatham House's Environment and Society Programme, Ayan Mahamoud from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Farah Hgazi from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) who discussed the links between climate, conflicts and peacebuilding; Julie Raasten from the European Institute for Peace (EIP), Mariko Peters from the

European External Action Service (EEAS) and Carnegie Europe's Olivia Lazard, who presented the evolution of environmental peacebuilding; a keynote address by Grammenos Mastrojeni, from the Union for the Mediterranean, who discussed environmental security and climate change in the Mediterranean; and interventions from Jüergen Scheffran, University of Hamburg, Marwa Daoudy, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, Yara Asi, Arab Center, Ruth Hanau Santini, Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale" and World Food Programme, and Andrea Dessì, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI).



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Official poster for the Bologna Peacebuilding Forum 2021 (Credit: Agency for Peacebuilding)

Overall, more than 400 participants attended the online Forum, nearly quadrupling the number of participants who attended the 2019 edition. This increase, in and of itself, marks a significant positive outcome and an indicator of the saliency of the issue chosen.

A final report for the event is available on our website.

# GENERATING NEW KNOWLEDGE FOR PEACEBUILDING

## Identifying Lessons Learned for the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy

The Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) is an institution tasked with the promotion of democracy outside of Denmark's borders. Created 10 years ago, DIPD has evolved over time and recently adopted a new strategy, covering the period from 2021 to 2025. Starting from this commitment, DIPD's leadership decided to embark on a learning exercise to map out the Institute's experiences up until now. And AP was chosen as the partner to deliver this exercise.

The focus of the exercise was on how to ensure long-term change in and through DIPD's work. This was an easy task, given the extent and scope of the Institute's interventions, which have assisted political parties and civil society organisations in almost 20 countries. For this reason, DIPD and AP decided to focus on five case studies: DIPD's work in Colombia, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal and Tanzania. Data collection took place in each location, often in spite of difficult conditions linked to the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to political instability. This notwithstanding, the research produced strong and high-quality information, which resulted in a learning catalogue describing the lessons learned from the work done by DIPD over the past 10 years.

In particular, the recommendations from the learning exercise point towards the importance of the overall partnership approach, and how this needs to always be at the core of democracy-building processes. In particular, success, in terms of outcomes and impact, was clearly linked to the extent to which partnerships take the partner's needs as their starting point: this means that, where the partner has significant ownership, this creates the foundation for long-lasting change. A mutual partnership includes avoiding the traditional donor-recipient relationship, both in cooperation methods and in strategic content.

The final report from the assignment, entitled "Learning Catalogue: Documenting Strategic Lessons Learned from DIPD Activities 2011-2020", is available on DIPD's website.



## A Roadmap for the International Nuremberg Principles Academy

Between September and November 2021, AP conducted research for the International Nuremberg Principles Academy, to develop a roadmap outlining cooperation efforts in international criminal justice. The goal of the roadmap was to respond to the demands for clarity in terms of the needs, objectives, and goals in the field of cooperation in international criminal justice. International criminal justice represents, indeed, quite a wide field, creating various challenges for actors, like the Nuremberg Academy, that want to contribute to promoting cooperation. Effective judicial cooperation is, in turn, a crucial element for effective peacebuilding, in particular given the role that international institutions such as the International Criminal Court have in preventing the occurrence of gross human rights violations and in ascertaining and administering responsibilities in cases of armed conflict.

It is for this reason that AP decided to work in partnership with the Nuremberg Academy in the context of this assignment. The research consisted of a literature review and a background analysis of cooperation in international criminal justice, interviews with informants from the international law field, and a focus group discussion focused on cooperation with victims of international crimes.

Ultimately, the roadmap helped to frame the main pillars of cooperation and then addressed possible efficient and effective initiatives to enhance this cooperation. Lastly, it identified primary areas of work, so as to direct possible strategies of intervention on the part of the Nuremberg Academy.

## Capturing Conflict Trends in Tanzania

At the end of 2021, AP conducted a Conflict Snapshot & Baseline Study in Zanzibar for the project "Strengthening Community Peace Mechanisms in Zanzibar" led by Search for Common Ground. The report has recently been published by Search for Common Ground.

Among the recommendations provided in the report, AP's research team, which was composed by AP's Director, Bernardo Venturi, and AP's Senior Advisor, Hashim Pondeza, highlighted the need to dedicate time and attention to the specific conflict dynamics of Pemba Island, to foster cross-party dialogue and to continue to give a central role to youth and women.

# ADVOCATING FOR PEACE

## Engaging Italian Institutions on Peacebuilding

During the year, AP has continued to contribute to developing the specific identity of Italy's peacebuilding and conflict prevention sector. To achieve this, AP worked with several partners—from specialised agencies within the government to think tanks and NGOs—in order to promote a concrete and honest dialogue on how to improve Italy's contribution to peacebuilding globally.

In this framework, this year AP has strengthened its cooperation with several national NGO platforms and liaised with several members of the Italian Parliament (MPs) working on foreign politics. In particular, interactions took place around the Decree authorising and Financing Italy's Missions Abroad, which was discussed in Parliament in July 2021.



*An Italian soldier part of Italy's contingent involved in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (Credit: Italian Ministry of Defense).*

Thanks to the fruitful exchange with MPs, AP and its partners were able to lead to the integration, in the decree's text, of references to the relevance of working with civil society organisations in the countries of operation; to the need to engage NGOs in conflict resolution processes; to a commitment, by the Italian Parliament, to invest in a future fund on peacebuilding; and, lastly, to the role of youth and women on peace and security. These references are significant in a long-term perspective, representing the basis on which future advocacy efforts, around the Decree's review and approval in 2022 and other key dates, can become more impactful.

## Efforts with the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office

In 2020 we joined the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), the largest and most important European network of non-governmental organisations working on peacebuilding and conflict resolution. EPLO has 45 member organisations from 17 European countries. Its secretariat is based in Brussels and serves as the hub to monitor European policies on peace and security, and coordinate joint advocacy efforts.

Within EPLO, AP is actively involved in the following working groups: EU Institutions and Policies; Funding for Peace; Gender, Peace and Security; and Peacebuilding, Development and Security. Over the year, AP's representatives have thus taken part in these groups' activities, including monthly meetings. AP's President also took part in EPLO's annual General Assemblies; and to policy meetings organised under the auspices of the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN), a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on peace and conflict resolution.

In 2021, EPLO also produced a [notable statement on the European Peace Facility \(EPF\)](#), a new funding instrument created to finance "EU external action having military or defence implications". The EPF promises to allocate around EUR 5 billion for the period from 2021 to 2027, to a variety of different interventions to promote stabilisation and crisis response. In the statement EPLO, on behalf of its members, expressed its strong reservations for how the instrument has been set up, which could potentially render it a vehicle for the EU to support arms purchases and training for military actors, even in contexts where such actors are known to be responsible for human rights violations. AP considers this to be a significant and negative departure from the previous position of the EU, which did not allow any direct support to military actors, and has actively engaged on EPLO's policy efforts.

## **Contribution to the EU's Community of Practice on Peace Mediation**

AP actively contributed to the EU's Community of Practice on Peace Mediation 2021, an online meeting organized by European External Action Service (EEAS) and aimed at building a community of peace mediation practitioners who engage with and for the EU around the Globe. On April 27, Bernardo Venturi, AP's Director, took part in the panel "Response to the High-Level Plenary from the Members of the EU Mediation Community of Practice's Steering Committee". The three-day event brought together active mediation practitioners and partners to share experiences, learn lessons and drive forward key issues in peace-making.

## **Technical Support to the Council of Europe on Youth Engagement**

In 2021, AP won a framework contract to support selected activities of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe on women and youth empowerment. The signing of the contract represented a recognition of AP's unique expertise on these issues, and of its record of successful work up until that point. As part of this support, AP was then invited to facilitate the meeting of international stakeholders in the field of youth, which the North-South Centre has been convening regularly for years. The meeting represents an opportunity to bring together leading actors (international entities, inter-governmental institutions and youth-led umbrella organisations) working on youth participation and empowerment, including under the aegis of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda created by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 in 2015. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 meeting was held online, just as it had the previous year, on October 22, 2021. It had two objectives: first, to connect participants and have them become acquainted with each others' work, challenges and priorities; and, secondly, to explore opportunities for cooperation in the short and medium-term. AP was responsible for developing the event's agenda and for facilitating group discussions. In the end, and despite the limits of the online format, the meeting offered participants a chance to brainstorm, reflect and have discussions that they normally did not have in their day-to-day work. And these discussions were seen as extremely relevant.

## **Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda**

AP continued its engagement on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. In particular, we sought to build on the positive outcomes of the project "Enhancing Women's Participation in Peace and Security" (WEPPS), which was completed in 2020 in partnership with the Sant'Anna School for

Advanced Studies and thanks to funding from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Throughout the year, AP continued to develop ties to several of partners who had been involved in WEPPS, in particular with the Sant'Anna School, and developed a number of projects aimed at filling critical gaps in the WPS agenda. Efforts to launch these projects are ongoing.

As part of AP's continued contributions to networking and monitoring efforts linked to the implementation of the WPS Agenda, especially in Italy, AP's President, Bernardo Monzani, took part and intervened in a national seminar on developing, experimenting and communicating the WPS Agenda and dialoguing with institutions. The event, which took place in Rome in July 2021 and was organised by the Human Rights Centre "Antonio Papisca" of the University of Padua, served as an opportunity for Italian and European organisations working on the Agenda to come together and share experiences and best practices on how to increase institutional engagement.

## **Advancing the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda**

During the year, AP has continued to engage in the advancement of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, as this has been created by the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 in December 2015. Primarily, AP's experts on this topic – Celina Del Felice, Mikhail Sustersic and Bernardo Monzani – worked closely with the secretariat of the United Nations Youth Envoy, to develop guidelines that could help national governments to implement the YPS Agenda in their own countries. Under the leadership of Celina Del Felice, this assignment included the completion of a comprehensive mapping of past and existing youth-focused peacebuilding projects, with more than 300 entries, and the facilitation of a participatory process that included representatives from different UN agencies, governments and civil society organisations. The end result, completed towards the end of the year, is currently still under review by the United Nations, and will be published in early 2022.

Towards the end of the year, AP then joined the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security (GCYPS). GCYPS is the leading platform for shaping global policy and practice on youth, peace, and security, and it facilitates exchange, coordination, and collaboration between more than 70 organisations from civil society, including youth-led and youth-focused organisations, UN entities, donors, academia and inter-governmental bodies. The GCYPS is co-chaired by the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY Peacebuilders), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

# SUPPORTING PEACEBUILDING PROCESSES

## Supporting Women Empowerment in South Sudan and Western Sahara

This year, AP sought to leverage its prior experience of working in South Sudan and its unique expertise to contribute to ongoing peacebuilding efforts in the country. In particular, AP found a need and an opportunity to work on strengthening the empowerment of South Sudanese women in peacebuilding processes. As an issue, this has received considerable attention, with donors having provided some support to women; but significant gaps exist, both in research and in practice, as young women continue to be excluded from decision-making processes.

In this context, AP has developed a partnership with Eve Organisation for Women Development. Eve is one of the leading South Sudanese civil society organisations active on women, peace and security issues, and it works with many different women groups, government institutions and developmental partners. Importantly, Eve hosts and coordinates the secretariat of the South Sudan Women's Coalition for Peace, which is a signatory to the country's current peace accord. Together, AP and Eve have developed project ideas to explore the relations between women of different generations, and the specific contributions of young women to peacebuilding initiatives. Efforts to launch these projects are ongoing.

In relation to Western Sahara, AP has no prior record of work. However, in 2021 we received a request for support from a Saharawi organisation, the National Union of Saharawi Women (NUSW), which we found to match our expertise, and also respond to a critical blind spot in the way that the WPS Agenda has been implemented globally and in the specific context of entities that are not formally recognised. Saharawi women and women's groups are, in fact, very disconnected from the spaces and fora that the WPS Agenda created, and where governmental and non-governmental actors regularly discuss women's participation and empowerment. This contributes to their continued lack of visibility and marginalisation, both in the context of the formal peace process - between the Polisario Front and the Kingdom of Morocco, and where women are a minority voice - and within their own society. Together, AP and NUSW have developed project ideas to build the capacity of Saharawi women and women's organisation for using the WPS Agenda to advocate for a stronger role on peace and security. Efforts to launch these projects are ongoing.





*Ms. Rita Lopidia, Executive Director and Co-founder of Eve Organization, delivering a statement at the UN Security Council (Credit: NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security).*

## Supporting Youth Empowerment in Zanzibar

This year, AP sought to leverage its prior experience of working in Tanzania and its unique expertise to contribute to ongoing reconciliation and conflict resolution efforts, in particular in Zanzibar. Based on the research it conducted over several assignments, AP has identified a need, as well as an opportunity, to support the engagement and empowerment of young people in the archipelago. In Zanzibar, youth represent, in fact, the most vulnerable segment of the population, as they are systematically excluded from economic and political opportunities. This makes them the prime targets of manipulation by those actors engaged in the decades-long political struggle around the archipelago's autonomy – a struggle that has also regularly led to violence, in particular around national elections.

In this context, AP has developed a partnership with the Centre for Youth and Development (CYD), a well known civil society organisation working in Zanzibar to empower communities, and in particular youth and women, to promote peace and counter violent extremism. CYD is a youth-led and youth-focused organisation, which has extensive experience in working with communities and implementing social cohesion and peacebuilding initiatives. Together, AP and CYD have developed project ideas to build the capacity of young Zanzibaris for advocating changes at the level of policies and for using the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda to advocate for a stronger role of young people on peace and security. Efforts to launch these projects are ongoing.

# PROMOTING MIGRANTS' PARTICIPATION IN BOLOGNA

## Developing an Advocacy and Digital Toolkit for Migrant Associations

From April to June 2021, AP implemented the “Mainstreaming Migration” project in collaboration with the Italian non-governmental organisation CeSPI, the Italian office of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Municipality of Bologna’s Office for New Citizenship, Cooperation, and Human Rights. The project was funded by the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

As part of the project, AP conducted a training workshop on advocacy, which took place at the Intercultural Centre Massimo Zonarelli and was targeted to members and representatives of migrant and intercultural associations in Bologna. The training focused on advocacy skills to engage local authorities, and it included sessions that used a participatory method. In particular, in addition to the AP’s trainers, a representative from each participating association also had the chance to present their activities and good practices in terms of advocacy. This made for a very dynamic and diverse workshop, as participants came from a number of smaller organisations, all representing different migrant communities living in Italy, including, for example, Next Generation Italy, Universo Interculturale, Sonrisas Andinas, Sopra i Ponti, Mondo Donna, CoNNGi, Unire, One World, Aprimondo, Raggi di sole - Associazione Donne Filippine.

At the end of the training, AP developed [a digital toolkit to support similar advocacy actions in](#) the future. The toolkit contains a presentation of the concept of advocacy, a list of tools, best practices to adopt initiatives, and lessons learned from the workshop.

## Lessons Learned from IOM’s A.MI.CO. Programme

This year, AP conducted the evaluation of the “Associazioni Migranti per il Co-sviluppo” (Migrants’ Associations for Co-development, or A.MI.CO.), which is a programme of the Office for the Southern Mediterranean of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The A.MI.CO. Programme has been implemented by IOM since 2011 thanks to the financial support of the Government of Italy. The



programme aims to support migrants' associations in Italy to acquire and consolidate the capacities necessary to design and implement development initiatives, both in Italy and in their countries of origin. This was the first time that the A.MI.CO. Programme had been evaluated, and it thus represented an opportunity to capture lessons learned that could inform improvements to how the programme has been delivered.

The evaluation consisted of a review of project documents, interviews with twenty informants, an online questionnaire with 63 respondents, and two focus group discussions with programme partners - which, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, had to be organised online.

Focusing on the activities between 2017 and 2021, the evaluation found the A.MI.CO. Programme to be relevant, effective, efficient, generally impactful and also sustainable. Findings were overall positive, yet under specific criteria, some challenges were also identified, which, if addressed, could improve the programme in the future.



Cover for the A.MI.CO. Programme training manual (Credit: International Organization for Migration).

# MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

## Evaluation of a Women Empowerment Project in Afghanistan

The first evaluation completed during the year assessed a project on women empowerment and civil society strengthening in Afghanistan. The project, entitled “Strengthening Afghanistan’s Future through Empowerment” (SAFE), was launched in 2017 by War Child Canada, an international NGO, and funded by the Canadian government.

The SAFE project’s main goal was to enhance the protection of women’s rights and increase their participation in social and economic life, at both the household and community levels. The project used an integrated approach that sought to address multiple challenges concomitantly, in particular by strengthening mechanisms to respond to gender-based violence, by providing economic opportunities for women, and by creating community-based protection mechanisms. The project took place in the city of Kabul and in Kandahar and Nangarhar provinces. The evaluation found the project to have been extremely relevant, to have achieved all its expected outcomes, and to have had significant positive impact in all the communities where activities took place. In particular, the project was clearly characterised by committed and principled professionals who worked diligently and persistently with communities and local stakeholders through a variety of locally appropriate mechanisms that produced positive results and opened the space for women’s participation. War Child Canada’s efforts, and those of its partners, led to a high level of trust at all levels, particularly at the community level and involving men as well. This was found to be a critical positive factor for the project’s ability to make progress.

## Evaluation of a Women Empowerment Project in South Sudan

An AP’s team led by Bernardo Venturi and Kuyang Logo has conducted the evaluation of Search for Common Ground’s project “Strengthening Young Women’s Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan” from July to October 2021. The project aimed to equip and empower young South Sudanese women with knowledge, skills and opportunities to contribute to the peace process at the local and national level, reinforce their collective power, and challenge the social stereotypes and barriers that hinder their equal participation.

The evaluation found that the project fully responded to young women's needs and priorities in terms of their role in peace and security matters in the country, and successfully engaged young women from different contexts and areas, also from remote ones and among IDPs. The project was effective in strengthening the ability of young women leaders and groups to collaboratively lead local and national-level peace efforts and young women-led mediation and peace-building initiatives, and helped them gain increased self-confidence, knowledge and skills. Young women-led mediation and peacebuilding initiatives had a significant impact because brave young women were able to implement initiatives rapidly in different locations, also involving men in their communities.

Significant examples of collaboration between young and older women were also observed, in Bor and Aweil. Yet, the collaboration between young and older women will continue to require more nuanced and specific attention in the future. Similarly, changing perceptions has emerged from this evaluation as a slow process that deserves specific programming and close attention to cultural dynamics and constraints.

## **Evaluation of the Policy-Influencing Efforts of the International Centre for Transitional Justice**

At the end of 2021, AP started a collaboration with the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) to evaluate their efforts to influence policies at both national and international levels. ICTJ is one of the most important and well-known organisations working on transitional justice globally. Headquartered in New York and Brussels, ICTJ supports governments and civil society organisations in over 20 countries, and leads advocacy efforts also at the international level, vis-à-vis institutions like the EU and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In this context, the organisation wants to review its efforts to inform policy discussions in the international arena from 2018 to the present. As a consequence, the evaluation has three specific objectives: first, to assess specific components of ICTJ's efforts in terms of their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, impact and sustainability; second, to draw lessons learned relating to the organisation's efforts to influence policies at different levels; and, lastly, to provide key input for ICTJ's new strategic plan and its future policy efforts. The evaluation was launched at the end of 2021 and will be completed in early 2022.

## Evaluation of Youth Empowerment Project in East and Southeast Asia

At the end of 2021, AP also started a new collaboration with the Kofi Annan Foundation, to evaluate a project entitled “Leading the way to Peace – Youth Together for Social Cohesion”, which the Foundation implemented, together with national partners, in urban areas of Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines. The project’s overall aim has been to enhance civil society organisations and youth capacities for leading efforts to prevent violent extremism in selected urban areas of each country, through the identification and comparison of different approaches and good practices to be shared and replicated in South and Southeast Asia regions, and also beyond.

In this context, the goal of the evaluation is to create an opportunity for an assessment of the progress, achievements and challenges of the project. AP considers this to be an opportunity for a general reflection of the project’s achievements, which will include not just staff and partners, but also beneficiaries and stakeholders. The evaluation has therefore been designed using a participatory approach, with data collection activities expected to take place in Pakistan and the Philippines. The evaluation was launched at the end of 2021 and will be completed in early 2022.



*A young Afghan woman taking part to vocational training course as part of the SAFE project (Credit: War Child Canada).*

# AWARENESS-RAISING AND COMMUNICATION

Awareness-raising, through communication, is at the heart of AP's mission, and it has two objectives.

The first is to help raise the visibility of peacebuilding among public opinion, as well as relevant stakeholders; and the second is to foster greater understanding of peacebuilding processes and their importance. Lastly, through communication we provide information on our activities in a spirit of transparency and accountability.

In 2021, AP's communication efforts included the following types of publications: a monthly newsletter; our "Insights", analytical articles on topical issues (through our website); opinion editorials (through HuffPost Italia); project and research reports; articles on external journals; and press releases. Members and advisors of AP also took part in various events during the year. Lastly, we continue to invest in our social media presence.

## Insights

In 2021 we published 18 analytical articles on our website, several of which were collected, edited and published as part of a general call for articles aimed at gathering and disseminating new and original perspectives of peacebuilding issues from all over the world and related to several different themes.

- ["Time to listen to youth"](#)  
Author: *Celina Del Felice*
- ["Climate change and the colombian peacebuilding process"](#)  
Authors: *Natalia Urzola Gutiérrez and María Paula González Espinel*
- ["Climate variability as a fuel to conflicts: the case of Syria"](#)  
Author: *Sofia Badari*
- ["Papua New Guinea's hybrid judicial system and gender bias"](#)  
Author: *Chiara Zardoni*
- ["Unpacking the challenges of making women's participation count in peace processes"](#)  
Author: *Ayat Mohamed*
- ["Youth ownership in preventing violent extremism in central Asia"](#)  
Author: *Victor Lachenait*
- ["Women's participation and protection during the Colombian peace negotiations 2012-2016"](#)  
Author: *Amadee Mudie Mantz*

- ["EU mediation in Yemen: addressing the impact of arms export on a sustainable peace in the future of Yemen"](#)  
*Authors: Dafne Carletti and Federica Tronci*
- ["The multi-nodal strategy of european peacebuilding"](#)  
*Author: Vicky Kapogianni*
- ["Women, peace and security agenda in Mali: birthday blues or renewed hope?"](#)  
*Author: Maelle Salzinger*
- ["The state of European peacebuilding: the Sahel case"](#)  
*Author: Igor Milić*
- ["International peacebuilding turned 'local'"](#)  
*Author: Roxanne van der Bliek*
- ["Lesson from the pandemic: how NATO can help Europe deal with climate change"](#)  
*Author: Alice Vielmi*
- ["Turkey and its challenge for the respect of the WPS agenda pillars: any possibility of improvement?"](#)  
*Author: Jessica Serva*
- ["If you want peace, prepare for war... really?"](#)  
*Authors: Sonya Reines-Djivanides and Lorenzo Conti*
- ["Women, youth and hashtag activism: the 'Endasars movement' in Nigeria"](#)  
*Author: Eke-okocha Nnaemeka Phil*
- ["Revitalising the EU's non-recognition and engagement policy towards Abkhazia"](#)  
*Author: Marco Cardinali*
- ["Libya, in the midst of ordeals"](#)  
*Author: Libya Peacemakers Network*

## Op-eds

In 2021 we continued our fruitful rapport with the editorial board of Huffington Post Italia, and we were able to publish 11 op-eds (all in Italian only):

- ["Perché ascoltare i giovani"](#) ("Why we should listen to young people")  
*Author: Celina Del Felice (AP)*
- ["Governo Draghi, serve una politica estera rinnovata"](#) ("Draghi government, a renewed foreign policy is needed")  
*Author: Bernardo Venturi (AP)*
- ["Conflitti per l'acqua: tecnologia e mercati al servizio della pace"](#) ("Conflicts over water: technology and markets in the service of peace")  
*Author: Silvia Meiattini (AP)*
- ["Cooperazione e clima, capire bene per agire meglio"](#) ("Cooperation and climate, understanding well to act better")  
*Author: Alessandro Totoro (AP)*

- [“La relazione tra cambiamento climatico e conflitti armati”](#) ("The relationship between climate change and armed conflict")  
*Author: Stefano Marinelli (AP)*
- [“Un nuovo strumento europeo per la pace?”](#) ("A new European instrument for peace?")  
*Author: Bernardo Venturi (AP)*
- [“La necessità di ripensare come costruire la pace in Afghanistan”](#) ("The need to rethink how to build peace in Afghanistan")  
*Author: Bernardo Monzani (AP)*
- [“Se vuoi la pace, prepara la guerra... Davvero?”](#) ("If you want peace, prepare for war... Really?")  
*Author: Sonya Reines-Djivanides (EPLO) and Lorenzo Conti (EPLO)*
- [“Afghanistan, l'impunità è legge”](#) ("Afghanistan, impunity is law")  
*Author: Huma Saeed, (AP)*
- [“Diritto di cittadinanza come strumento di giustizia e pace sociale”](#) ("The right of citizenship as an instrument for justice and social peace")  
*Author: Caterina Francesca Guidi (AP)*
- [“Elezioni rinviate, la data da destinarsi sulla pacificazione in Libia”](#) ("Elections postponed, date for peacemaking in Libya yet to be set")  
*Author: Libya Peacemakers Network*

## Reports

This year, we published two reports.

- [“Learning Catalogue: Documenting Strategic Lessons Learned from DIPD Activities 2011-2020”](#) is the report that resulted from our work with the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy.
- [“Bologna Peacebuilding Forum 2021: Event report”](#) includes a summary of what was presented during the Forum’s sessions. The report also includes two papers, one from Yara Asi and the other from Jürgen Scheffran, which were presented and discussed during the event’s second day.

Two additional reports were published by our partner Search for Common Ground (Search).

- [“Conflict Snapshot and Baseline Assessment: Dumisha Amani Zanzibar”](#) is the report resulting from our partnership in the context of the "Dumisha Amani Zanzibar – Strengthening Community Peace Mechanisms in Zanzibar" project, which Search is implementing in Tanzania.
- [“Final Evaluation Report: Strengthening Young Women’s Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan”](#) is the report that presents and discusses the findings from the final evaluation conducted by AP of the “Strengthening Young Women’s Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan” project).

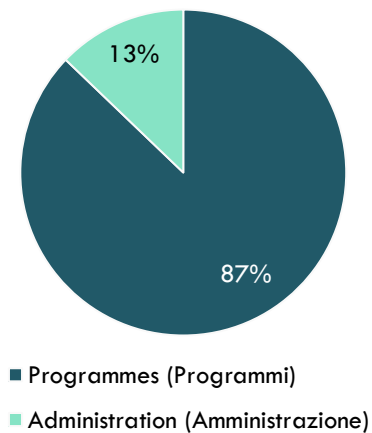
# FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

AP's total income for fiscal year 2021 was €148.641. The total expenditure was €143.109.

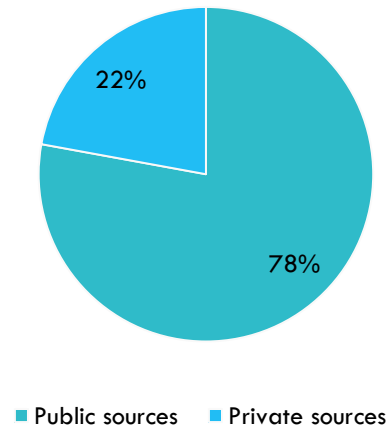
The following graphs provide a snapshot of the finances for this year. Public sources of funding included the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Municipality of Bologna.

Further information can be found in AP's annual financial statements, available upon request.

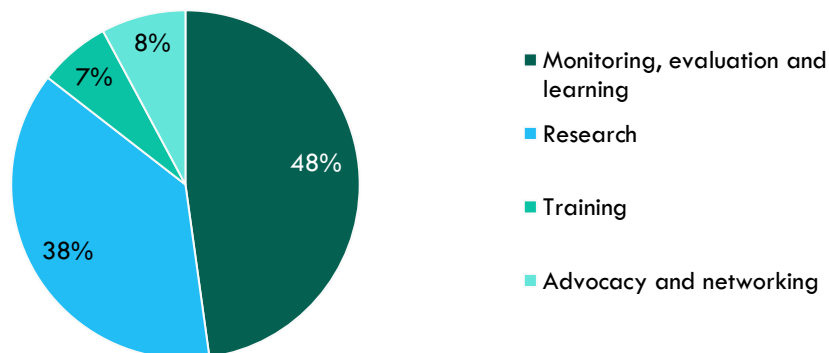
**Figure 1: Expenditure by type**



**Figure 2: Income by source**



**Figure 3: Expenditure by area of work**





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Looking ahead to 2022, AP will be looking to expand its engagement. Naturally, ongoing projects – including the evaluations being conducted in partnership with the International Centre for Transitional Justice and the Kofi Annan Foundation – will be completed, with a view to making relevant findings available to other actors involved in peacebuilding efforts. At the same time, we intend to give strategic priority to two specific areas of work.

The first is our engagement in consolidating the peacebuilding sector in Italy. At the end of 2021 we received confirmation of a grant award by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, to conduct original research on Italy and peacebuilding. This will be the first time a dedicated report of this nature will be completed, and the fact that funding for it will come from the Ministry gives us reason to hope that this research will be attentively received and reviewed by relevant government representatives.

The second area of priority engagement will be the consolidation of our partnerships with organisations at the frontline of peacebuilding. In particular, we will invest time, energy and resources to mobilise the resources to support planned interventions in South Sudan with EVE Organisation, in Tanzania with the Centre for Youth Dialogue, and in Western Sahara with the National Union of Saharawi Women. We will also seek to establish new partnerships with additional like-minded organisations, for example in Libya and Africa's Sahel region.

## PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

For all the activities completed in 2021, AP wants to acknowledge and thank all of its partners and supporters:

- Agenzia italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (AICS)
- American University of Rome
- CEFA Onlus
- Centro Studi di Difesa Civile (CSDC)
- Council of Europe
- Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD)
- Emilia-Romagna Region
- Federazione Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale Volontario (FOCSIV)
- HuffPost Italia
- IBO Italia
- Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)
- Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)
- International Nuremberg Principles Academy
- Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS Europe)
- The Kofi Annan Foundation
- Municipality of Bologna
- Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Peaceful Change Initiative (PCI)
- Prometeia
- Rotary Club Bologna Ovest
- Search for Common Ground (SFCG)
- Scuola Superiore di Sant'Anna
- Torino World Affairs Institute
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
- University of Bologna
- University of Padua
- War Child Canada
- WeWorld-GVC Italy Onlus



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