

CATALYSING CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

KAICIID'S TRANSFORMATIVE DIALOGUE APPROACH



KAICIID DIALOGUE CENTRE



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



COUNCIL OF PARTIES

The Council of Parties is composed of the Republic of Austria, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kingdom of Spain, with the Holy See as a Founding Observer.



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.

5 MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Buddhism – Christianity – Hinduism – Islam – Judaism

KEY PLATFORMS AND NETWORKS SUPPORTED BY KAICIID GLOBALLY



- Arab Region
- Europe
- South and Southeast Asia
- Africa
- Latin America (*Coming soon*)

PARTNERSHIPS

13 ACTIVE MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING



with educational institutions, national authorities and international governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

7,000+ dialogue practitioners trained

INTRODUCTION

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 sustainable development.

Global development agendas call 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 communities, we unlock solutions to global challenges that transcend borders and differences.



WHY RELIGION MATTERS

No other force is rooted deeper in the human collective consciousness than religion and spirituality. Religion informs the individual preferences and identities of eighty-five percent of the world's population, which in turn impacts institutional and social norms around the world. By ignoring or underestimating the profound influence and role of religion, global leaders diminish its tremendous potential to contribute to positive economic, geopolitical, cultural and social change.

Although religion is rarely the primary cause of conflict, religious identity is often used to incite violence, increase division and fuel distrust. However, after opponents engage in genuine dialogue through carefully designed facilitation, they seldom return to their previous attitudes or levels of understanding. Instead, they gain a deeper understanding of each other's fears, concerns and aspirations.

Leveraging the peacemaking traditions found in many religions, interreligious and intercultural dialogue facilitates a profound transformation. It explores how individuals define their values and



engage with their communities. Such intense connections foster recognition of common human dignity, fueling collective efforts for social change, peace and equality.

THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF DIALOGUE



ESTABLISH A SAFE SPACE.



AGREE THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF DIALOGUE IS LEARNING.



USE APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION SKILLS.



SET GROUND RULES.



TAKE RISKS, ARTICULATE FEELINGS AND CONFRONT PERCEPTIONS WITH HONESTY.



PLACE THE HUMAN RELATIONSHIP FIRST.



GRADUALLY ADDRESS DIFFICULT QUESTIONS AND ESTABLISH DISTANCE FROM THEM.



DO NOT TRY TO SKIRT AROUND DIFFICULT ISSUES.



EXPECT TO BE TRANSFORMED.



BRING TRANSFORMATION TO OTHERS.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF DIALOGUE



Today, hard-won alliances intended to support peace are under significant pressure, as both secular and religious stakeholders struggle to keep global leaders aligned with their commitment to agreed principles. Nearly half of all peace accords fail within five years of being signed. Traditionally, conflict resolution techniques such as negotiation and mediation rest on a win-lose logic. Conversely, interreligious and intercultural dialogue contribute to a paradigm shift away from winning arguments and controlling outcomes, towards collective and inclusive decision-making for a sustainable common good.

Dialogue can mitigate many of the threats to sustainable peace, including the feeling that grievances are unmet and unresolved, the continued perpetration of human rights violations, particularly against minority groups, and the lack of psychological support in post-conflict recovery.

However, dialogue extends beyond conflict mediation and resolution. It also supports communities affected by mistrust and polarisation in finding solutions to global challenges: for example, the climate crisis, food insecurity, marginalisation and societal inequalities, and addressing

"Dialogue is transformative when it is capable of, over time, reshaping attitudes, behaviours and relationships, thereby enabling the structural and systemic changes necessary for sustainable peace"

Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, Secretary General
International Dialogue Centre - KAICIID

the needs of refugees, including integration into host communities.

Interreligious and intercultural dialogue does not exclude identities but rather expands trust and relationship building. In this way, transformative dialogue encompasses universal human rights principles ensuring the inclusion of frequently marginalised voices, such as those of women, youth and minorities. Even if issues remain unresolved among the dialogue participants, the objective remains to build sustainable relationships between them.

WHAT WE DO

KAICIID's work cuts across the full 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. However, we stand distinct from conventional humanitarian and development organizations through our mandate of using inter-religious and intercultural dialogue as a strategic approach to global challenges.

Our focus on the spiritual and ethical implications of sustainable development brings a unique depth to the discourse, often missing in secular agencies. By engaging religious leaders and communities, we aim to facilitate a broader, more inclusive dialogue that leverages moral and ethical leadership to drive change. This ensures that sustainability is not just a technical target but a deeply embedded social commitment. Our approach not only complements the existing efforts of global development organizations, but seeks to elevate these interventions by adding a cultural and spiritual dimension, thereby promoting outcomes which are more comprehensive, localised and sustainable.

THROUGH OUR ADHERENCE TO GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS, WE CONTRIBUTE TO:



CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND SUSTAINABLE PEACEBUILDING



QUALITY EDUCATION



EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH



PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS, WITH A FOCUS ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF



PREVENTING HATE SPEECH AND VIOLENCE IN THE NAME OF RELIGION



PROTECTING SACRED SITES



CLIMATE ACTION



SOCIAL INCLUSION

HOW WE WORK

CONVENING

KAICIID fosters dialogue between people and communities who would not otherwise come into contact, but whose cooperation is essential to contributing to peaceful, just societies. Our global conferences and fora convene religious leaders and policymakers to confront global challenges such as combating hate speech, using dialogue to support global development, and tackling violent extremism and the misuse of religion to justify violence.

Our networks foster the exchange of best practices and provide stakeholders with access to resources and opportunities for continuing education and professional development. Our regional platforms in Africa, the Arab Region, Asia and Europe, purposely bring opposing parties to the table in order to help them find common ground. In addition to providing capacity building for grassroots organizations, we convene high-ranking religious leaders, harnessing their authority and influence to address the drivers of conflict in their respective communities.



Dialogue in Action: Promoting Election Security in Nigeria

As Nigeria grappled with rising insecurity ahead of its 2023 general elections, the KAICIID-supported Interfaith Dialogue Forum for Peace (IDFP) immediately convened policymakers, religious leaders and civil society representatives to diffuse the mounting political tensions. Backed by KAICIID, the local platform launched a series of community-based projects and advocacy visits, championing a campaign for peaceful elections across the country.

"We went to churches, marketplaces and beyond. We met with village heads and youth leaders. Our core mandate is to build bridges across religious groups so that Nigerians will live peacefully"

Enwere Belusochukwu, president of the Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria.

Additionally, the IDFP's annual Peace Conference, themed "Religion and Ethnicity: Safeguarding the 2023 General Elections," drew hundreds of participants from Christian and Muslim communities across Nigeria, and issued a resounding call for unity.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Combining offline and online training, theory, and practice, KAICIID encourages and supports leaders in implementing dialogue initiatives within their institutions and societies. We also equip stakeholders with skills in monitoring and assessment, ensuring improved interventions and more tangible results and benefits for constituencies.

KAICIID's E-learning programme offers online courses which train religious leaders and dialogue practitioners to prevent hate speech prevention, use interreligious dialogue to strengthen peace and reconciliation and implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); for example, engaging with the Paris Climate Agreement and Nationally Determined Contributions. Our global networking and knowledge sharing platform, Connect2Dialogue,

provides opportunities to identify partners, share best practices, and find funding and resources for community projects.

Furthermore, our flagship International Fellows programme has reached over 500 extraordinary leaders and educators from 92 countries and 9 religions, who have proven their ability to advance interreligious dialogue in their institutions and communities. Many participants report that the programme introduced them to individuals from other religions and cultures for the first time.

Each of the Centre's programmes, training and initiatives is designed to either directly engage women and youth or support projects led by KAICIID trainees that aim to enhance their participation and empowerment.



Dialogue in Action: Building A Vibrant Network of Global Changemakers

The KAICIID International Fellows Programme (KIFP) is a one-year training programme, designed to cultivate a network of leaders who are committed to fostering peace and sustainable development in their communities. Since its inception in 2015, the programme has trained over 500 participants from 92 countries and 16 religions, focusing on the transformative power of interreligious and intercultural dialogue. Approximately 30 per cent of participants are under 35 or younger at the time of their fellowship.

Training modules target the precise skills the Fellows say they need most: education in peacebuilding and sustainable development, project design, and best practices for mobilising partners and resources.

"[KIFP] helped me to develop a more global approach and a deeper appreciation to some of the larger problems affecting us as human beings: climate and ecological issues, poverty and hunger eradication, and promoting universal education and gender equality"

Rabbi Jeff Berger, Rambam Sephardi Synagogue, UK



The success of the KIFP is evident in the substantial number of initiatives led by Fellows. To date, 224 initiatives (36 per cent) have been targeted at youth, reflecting the programme's emphasis on empowering the next generation. Additionally, the programme has spurred 143 initiatives (23 per cent) focused on driving policy change and 221 (36%) have been implemented in the education sector to enhance the use of dialogue in academic institutions.

POLICY AND PRACTICE

KAICIID builds robust partnerships between policymakers, who have the legislative power to shape inclusive policies, and religious leaders, who have an unparalleled ability to reach people in the most challenging corners of the world. We also support organizations and institutions to infuse dialogue into their policies and practices in alignment with their unique missions and mandates.

Furthermore, KAICIID organizes and supports global policy

events including the European Policy Dialogue Forum, the African Union Interfaith Forum and the Arab Media Forum. KAICIID's collaborations with international and regional bodies, such as the African Union and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), focus on ensuring that policies reflect the needs and contributions of diverse religious and cultural leaders and communities, including women and youth.



Dialogue in Action: Helping ASEAN Tackle Peace and Stability through Dialogue

KAICIID supports the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with the implementation of their Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, which emphasises promoting tolerance and understanding of diverse faiths, religions, and cultures. To this end, KAICIID has crafted a training program for junior to mid-level officials from ASEAN Member States, designed to enhance their abilities to manage the complex religious and cultural dynamics of Southeast Asia. This training positions dialogue as a central element in addressing the challenges to peace and stability that the region faces due to its diversity.

While primarily targeting Member State representatives, the programme also holds the potential to impact a wider array of stakeholders, including think tanks and civil society organizations. This broader engagement aims to foster a widespread culture of dialogue and understanding throughout the region.



OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Whether through local dialogue platforms or our work with intergovernmental organizations, KAICIID is dedicated to creating space at the table for representatives from every religion, tradition, culture, identity and background. Thanks to KAICIID's unique governance structure, we convene and facilitate followers of diverse religious traditions, religious leaders, policymakers, academics, journalists and civil society representatives, so that they can find solutions to global challenges.

RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND INSTITUTIONS

KAICIID recognizes that religious and traditional leaders wield significant influence over the social and political attitudes of their communities. In many cultures, religious leaders are deeply trusted, more so than other institutions or international organizations, which are often viewed as “outsiders”. This trust can facilitate critical advocacy for sustainable development agendas and the mobilisation of community resources towards achieving these goals.

Additionally, many faith leaders and religious institutions are on the frontlines of global crises, keeping the peace, advocating mutual

respect and distributing critical humanitarian aid. Many need additional resources and are eager for further training in interreligious dialogue. Our platforms and networks provide religious actors and institutions with opportunities for collaboration, knowledge-sharing and resources, as well as training in dialogue facilitation and peacebuilding.



Dialogue in Action: Uniting Europe's Muslim and Jewish Communities

Founded in 2018, the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) brings together Muslim and Jewish religious leaders from across Europe, united in their commitment to defend human rights and freedom of religion for religious minorities. In October 2023, amid a devastating escalation of conflict in the Middle East, Europe witnessed a corresponding increase in incidents of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Despite these divisive conditions, the Rabbis and Imams of the MJLC leaned on their foundation of dialogue and mutual respect to overcome their differences. Together, they issued a joint statement advocating for Muslim-Jewish solidarity in Europe, as well as a call for peace.





POLICYMAKERS

Policymakers have the authority to enact laws and policies that can profoundly affect how societies manage religious and cultural diversity. Their decisions influence the success of integration and peace-building initiatives.

KAICIID helps institutionalise dialogue in the highest governmental bodies, by sharing policy recommendations, and inviting policymakers and representatives of intergovernmental organizations to learn about dialogue through our trainings and online courses. We also help secular government bodies better understand how to engage with their constituents on issues which are often deeply tied to spiritual values and religious beliefs.

MEDIA

The need for reliable sources of news is critical for sustainable peace and social cohesion. Poor journalism can fan the flames of interethnic hostility and provide a platform for hate speech, which in turn can pave the way for atrocity crimes.

KAICIID supports trainings and capacity building initiatives which equip journalists to engage in constructive dialogue and fair reporting, particularly along ethnic and religious lines. We believe that when reported with ethical integrity and factual rigor, journalism has the potential to empower citizens, enabling them to hold their leaders to account and make judicious decisions about their own lives, as well as their communities.

Dialogue in Action: Promoting Ethical Journalism in the Central African Republic

In the Central African Republic (CAR), KAICIID supports a network of 400 journalists to promote sensitive and peaceful reporting in a country marked by sectarian violence and hate speech. This initiative trains journalists to recognise and ethically report on religious and ethnic divisions and conflict-related trauma, without fueling further hostility. This is particularly critical given the country's recent history of devastating war and ongoing attacks by armed groups, which continue to traumatise the civilian population. The Network of Journalists has also worked closely with the Ministry of Communication and the High Council for Communication to implement a National Action Plan Against Hate Speech.



EDUCATORS

Since its inception, KAICIID has actively engaged with educators and educational institutions, focusing on embedding dialogue best practices and competencies in both formal and informal educational settings. This includes a holistic approach that encompasses not just teacher training but also curriculum development, community engagement and institutional support.

In addition to training educators, KAICIID extends its support to religious leaders and educational institutions, especially in conflict-affected areas, through training and microgrants. KAICIID also fosters higher-level partnerships with ministries of education and intergovernmental organizations like UNAOC, UNDP and UNESCO. These collaborations aim to mainstream dialogue into broader educational policies and practices.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are crucial partners for KAICIID, particularly in the context of localising projects which is vital for the effectiveness and sustainability of development initiatives. Research shows that when civil society representatives are blocked from participation in peace processes, the majority of agreements fail.

However, many civil society organizations report being poorly resourced and insufficiently equipped to engage in policy processes and decisionmaking at the international level. In addition to providing civil society representatives with a seat at the policymaking table, KAICIID also works to ensure that they have the dialogue skills and necessary resources - including both in-person trainings and e-learning courses - to meaningfully participate in decisionmaking processes.

WOMEN AND YOUTH

We empower women and young leaders by ensuring their meaningful and inclusive participation in our training programmes. We also provide them with the skills to participate in peace processes and serve as agents of positive change in their communities. Testimonials from women and youth leaders in these programmes often cite increased confidence, enhanced leadership skills and greater influence in their communities.

Dialogue in Action: Integrating Youth Voices in Migration and Integration Policies

The European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF), one of KAICIID's annual flagship events, continues to provide a critical platform for integrating inclusive voices into the broader discourse on migration and integration. The fifth EPDF focused on urgent challenges facing young refugees in Europe, including youth unemployment, access to quality education and disengagement from political and cultural life. At least 30% of attendees and speakers were under the age of 30.

"A key issue is that young people from my generation often do not know who they need to speak to, in order to be heard. Additionally, we often lack knowledge about how politics work"

Marwa Achimrar, European Peer Training Organization, 18-years old

Building on the theme of improving refugee integration from previous forums, the discussions at the EPDF form the basis for policy recommendations and dedicated workshops throughout the coming year. Youth delegates actively contributed to the EPDF's policy briefs, also shedding light on how gender, ethnicity and religious affiliation play roles in societal exclusion.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DIALOGUE?

KAICIID actively partners with organizations around the world, helping them mainstream dialogue into their own institutions and programmes. In addition, we work with global partners on using dialogue to further global development agendas from tackling climate change and food insecurity, to upholding gender equality and promoting peace and security.

Contact us to learn more about how you can partner with KAICIID or mainstream dialogue in your organization.







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