



**Annual Report on World Humanitarian  
Summit Commitments - American Friends Service  
Committee (AFSC)  
2016**



## Stakeholder Information

**Organisation Name**

American Friends Service Committee  
(AFSC)

**Organisational Type**

Faith-based Organisation

**City and Country where Headquartered**

Philadelphia, United States of America

**Focal Point Name**

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**Region**

Global

**Twitter ID**

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## 1C Remain engaged and invest in stability

### Where did your organization stand on these issues prior to making these commitments

While data shows violence is down globally, the rise of and visibility of violence committed by both state and non-state armed groups have affected our collective psyche. We aim to reshape the narrative around peace and security by reducing violence in select countries through work with youth, community-based organizations and other members of civil society, schools, religious institutions, state actors, and hard-to-reach actors. By influencing state actors, engaging the economic sector, activating youth-led networks, linking with coalitions to advocate against militarization and violence, we are addressing roots of conflict across the globe.

### Achievements at a glance

In Burundi, AFSC supported the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to officially start operating in March 2016 after being dormant for more than a decade. Placed pressure on companies in places like Cambodia, where investments have been a source of local conflicts. Trained enterprise groups in Africa to manage conflict and build vocational capacity; despite the dire economic climate the groups are saving, adapting practices to the macro-economic situation, and advocating together on community issues. Somali youth participating in livelihood activities increased their income emboldening them to reject criminal and violent activities such as piracy or militia involvement as a source of livelihood. The Latin America Local Peace Network programs built leadership capacities of urban youth in violent and excluded neighborhoods. In Guatemala, a recent evaluation found 75% of youth are considered legitimate leaders in their communities. Assisted 1,300 Jewish and Druze youth through the process of avoiding and resisting military service.

### How is your organization assessing progress

Programs report progress and lessons learned every quarter. At the end of three-year cycles, an evaluation is carried out to determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of our peacebuilding approaches. After the evaluation, program teams respond to the evaluation by reviewing recommendations and findings and develop an implementation plan to address them.

### Challenges faced in implementation

The year 2016 was particularly difficult for those working towards peace and social justice. Increased gun violence plaguing cities around the world continues to be a tremendous obstacle. Fear, racism, discrimination and hate propaganda has crippled the ability for human beings to find light in each other. The U.S. presidential campaign clearly posed a significant challenge for program staff and their ability to remain steadfast and committed to changing the narrative around hate, exclusion and militarism. Safety of our staff and partners while working in places such as Somalia, Burundi or Guatemala is never guaranteed but mitigating risks is prioritized.

### Next step to advance implementation in 2017

AFSC continues to find evidence that investing in youth-focused work in conflict zones (youth-led income-generating activities, youth leadership, youth-led local peace networks) is a key strategy in drawing them away from recruitment into violent militias and gangs. Engagement with community influencers such as clan elders and religious leaders helps to build acceptance and local ownership of the peace initiatives. The clan elders and religious leaders are highly respected and their opinion energizes and strengthens youths' initiatives in peacebuilding.

### Tag with other relevant transformations, keywords, initiatives

#### Keywords

- People-centred approach  Social protection

#### Specific Initiatives

- The Peace Promise

#### Agenda for Humanity

- 1A - Demonstrate timely, coherent and decisive political leadership  1D - Develop solutions with and for people



## 1D Develop solutions with and for people

### Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
Using a concept of shared security, AFSC will influence key decision-makers and non-traditional allies globally to choose peaceful transformation of conflict in the areas of migration, political and organized violence, business and peace, and election violence prevention. Using our learning from program work and policy analyses, AFSC will mobilize a global consortium, engaging communities with international policy platforms, developing and amplifying shared security messages through strategic media campaigns, evidence-based advocacy, network building to change dominant narratives, practice and policy multilateral levels.	Advocacy	Political Leadership to Prevent and End Conflicts

### Where did your organization stand on these issues prior to making these commitments

We aim to reshape the narrative around peace and security by reducing violence in select countries through work in areas of electoral and organized violence, including extremism, migration, and business and peace. At a global level, we implement evidence-based advocacy and network strategically to engage influential leaders (allies and non-traditional partners) and policy makers at the national and multi-lateral levels to engage with a new "shared security" paradigm. Building on established programming, policy analysis, and research, we aim to influence global media narratives on security to disrupt self-perpetuating systems of fear, violence, and militarism.

### Achievements at a glance

Led the creation of a network of Kenyan community-based organizations called Peacenet that advocates for a national peace platform including harmonization of early warning response for elections. Influenced investment policy and practice in Cambodia, where an \$8 billion Chinese development project made adjustments to its strategy after doing a conflict-sensitive pre-assessment. Pushed for mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity tools in China with examples of positive regulatory and enforcement actions. Media tracking showed AFSC's pro-engagement message began to penetrate the mostly negative and stereotyped coverage of North Korea in American media. Advocacy work in Israel challenging militarism resulted in introduction of the first bill at the Knesset to add human rights restrictions to arms exports. To address the migration and displacement crisis in the Latin American and Caribbean region, AFSC is bridging CSO networks with state actors to ensure harmonized rights-based policies for migrants.

### How is your organization assessing progress

An indicator mapping baseline is being developed to help us make inferences as to the effectiveness and "writ large" contributions of the approaches we are taking. We use a results framework to describe the narrative change that we want to occur (strategic objective), why this change is important (goal), and what needs to happen (intended results) in order to achieve change. To show a shift in the dominant narrative, indicators measure change in the public discourse or in the resource allocation of peacebuilding approaches. An evaluation is scheduled in 2018 to inform future direction and sustainability of the narrative change work.

### Challenges faced in implementation

The year 2016 was particularly difficult for those working towards peace and social justice. Increased gun violence plaguing cities around the world continues to be a tremendous obstacle. Fear, racism, discrimination and hate propaganda has crippled the ability for human beings to find light in each other. The U.S. presidential campaign clearly posed a significant challenge for program staff and their ability to remain steadfast and committed to changing the narrative around hate, exclusion and militarism. Safety of our staff and partners while working in places such as Somalia, Burundi or Guatemala is always of paramount concern.

### Next step to advance implementation in 2017

Focus on media research to shape more effective messaging in campaigns and coalitions. Will continue to strategically link on-the-ground efforts to the broader narrative change frame, enabling programs to focus on larger policy issues which is a key concept of the initiative. The addition of Quaker International Affairs Representatives in Africa and the Middle East will increase AFSC's ability to act on this. The business and peace program based in China is exchanging information and exploring linkages with other parts of the organization AFSC to maximize strategies to shift the responsible investment narrative in Israel/Palestine and Africa.



**If you had one message for the annual report on what is most needed to advance the transformation Develop solutions with and for people , what would it be**

If key people affected by and involved in conflict propose nonviolent solutions and build political will through policy recommendations, media, advocacy, and coalition-building, then decision-makers will promote policies and practices that build peaceful communities because they will recognize that violence is more costly and there is an incentive to pursue alternatives.

**Tag with other relevant transformations, keywords, initiatives**

**Agenda for Humanity**

1A - Demonstrate timely, coherent and decisive political leadership  1B - Act early