



# COFP

# Strategic Plan

2026-2030



*Lead Peace  
Inspire Change  
Transform Africa*

**Five-Year  
Strategic Plan  
2026-2030**



# Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP)

*“Whenever I see Truth, I follow it  
Wherever I see Peace, I pursue it  
Wherever I see Justice, I insist on it”  
Onaiyekan*

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# ACRONYMS

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<b>AfCFTA</b>	African Continental Free Trade Area
<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AMAC</b>	Abuja Municipal Area Council
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>COFP</b>	Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IPOB</b>	Indigenous People of Biafra
<b>ISWAP</b>	Islamic State West Africa Province
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MEAL</b>	Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning
<b>MEL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
<b>MEND</b>	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
<b>MASSOB</b>	Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
<b>NCDs</b>	Non-Communicable Diseases
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OPC</b>	Oodua People's Congress
<b>PCVE</b>	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
<b>SWOT</b>	Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNSCR</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

# ENCYCLOPEDIA

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1. **Agenda 2063** - A strategic framework adopted by the African Union outlining Africa's long-term vision for inclusive growth, sustainable development, peace, and unity.
2. **Climate Justice** - An approach to climate action that recognizes the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable communities and emphasizes fairness, equity, and responsibility.
3. **Conflict Transformation** - A holistic approach to addressing conflict that goes beyond resolution to change underlying social relationships, structures, and attitudes that fuel violence.
4. **Digital Literacy** - The ability to responsibly access, evaluate, create, and share information using digital platforms, particularly to counter misinformation, hate speech, and extremist narratives.
5. **Do-No-Harm** – or non-maleficence is a fundamental ethical principle, requiring not intentionally causing harm, including not killing, not causing pain or suffering, not incapacitating and not causing offense.
6. **Early Warning Early Response (EWER)** - Community-based mechanisms that identify signs of potential conflict early and activate timely interventions to prevent escalation.
7. **Ethical Leadership** - Leadership grounded in integrity, accountability, justice, and service to the common good rather than personal or political gain.
8. **Faith-Based Organization (FBO)** - An organization whose mission and activities are inspired or guided by religious values and principles.
9. **Good Governance** - The transparent, accountable, inclusive, and effective management of public affairs and resources in the interest of society.
10. **Human Security** - A people-centered approach to security that prioritizes freedom from fear, want, and indignity rather than reliance on military solutions alone.

11. **Interfaith Dialogue** - Structured engagement among people of different religious traditions aimed at fostering mutual understanding, trust, and peaceful coexistence.
12. **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)** - Individuals or groups forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, or disasters but who remain within their country's borders.
13. **Militarized Response** - Security strategies that rely primarily on armed force and coercion, often without addressing the root causes of conflict.
14. **Nonviolence** - The use of peaceful means such as dialogue, advocacy, and collective action to resist injustice and transform conflict.
15. **Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)** – Just as the name suggests, an organization that is not controlled by governmental or statutory authorities. NGOs can be organizations, charities, associations, foundations, clubs, institutions and other types of groups, made up of people with a common interest to address social or political matters.
16. **Peacebuilding** - Long-term processes and activities aimed at addressing root causes of conflict, strengthening social cohesion, and preventing the recurrence of violence.
17. **Political Governance** - The systems, institutions, and processes through which political authority is exercised and public decisions are made.
18. **Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE)** - Non-coercive strategies focused on addressing the drivers of radicalization and reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies.
19. **Resilience** - The capacity of individuals and communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from conflict, shocks, and crises.
20. **Social Cohesion** - The strength of relationships, trust, and solidarity among members of a society, enabling peaceful coexistence.
21. **Sustainable Development** - Development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
22. **Zero-Sum Politics**- A political mindset in which gains by one group are perceived as losses to another, often fueling exclusion and conflict.

# FOREWORD

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Today, our world is being reshaped by forces that test the very foundations of our shared humanity and existence. From senseless wars and humanitarian crises to the rise of violent extremism, shrinking civic spaces and the erosion of trust in public institutions, the global community is navigating a period of deep uncertainty. Across continents, we witness protracted wars, the resurgence of nationalism and identity politics, violent extremism, mass displacement and the growing weaponization of religion, ethnicity and politics. Climate change now amplifies conflict by intensifying competition over land, water and livelihoods, while digital spaces, once heralded as tools for unity are increasingly exploited to spread hate, misinformation and fear. Humanity stands at a defining moment, confronted daily with choices between solidarity and selfishness, dialogue and violence, hope and despair.

Africa is not insulated from these global realities. Africa, with all its promise and potential, mirrors these global tensions in acute ways. Persistent poverty, fragile institutions, youth unemployment, inequality, insecurity, injustice and governance deficits continue to undermine social cohesion and development. Yet Africa also remains a continent of resilience, innovation and youthful energy, a place where peace is not merely an abstract ideal but a daily struggle and a shared aspiration.

Nigeria embodies both the pain and the promise of our times and stands at the very heart of this paradox. We are confronted by terrorism, banditry, communal conflicts, political mistrust, environmental disaster, economic hardship and widening social inequalities. Ethno-religious fault lines are too often manipulated for short-term gains, leaving communities fractured and citizens disillusioned. And yet, even in these dark moments, Nigeria continues to produce courageous men and women, community leaders, faith actors and young people who refuse to surrender the future to violence or cynicism. They remind us that peace is possible, and that it must be intentionally built. Nigerians' resilience affirms a simple truth; despair is not an option.

It is within this context that the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) renews its commitment to building sustainable peace rooted in human dignity and inclusive citizenship. We are convinced that lasting peace emerges when local actors are empowered, when faith becomes a bridge rather than a barrier and when governance is anchored in justice, accountability and service to the common good. Peacebuilding, therefore, must be holistic, addressing structural and systemic injustice, healing broken relationships and creating

opportunities, especially for young people to become agents of positive change. Sustainable peace requires inclusive governance, respect for human dignity, religious freedom, justice, accountable leadership and opportunities that leave no one behind especially the youth and the marginalized. It also requires moving beyond well-intentioned conversations to concrete, coordinated and measurable action.

Our Five-Year Strategic Plan is therefore both a response to the urgency of our times and a roadmap for hope. It is an invitation to confront injustice, dismantle stereotypes, heal distrust and transform conflict through locally grounded, faith-sensitive and people-centered peacebuilding approaches. At its core, this plan seeks to drive community-led social change, strengthen partnerships and bridge the gap between dialogue and impact, between vision and reality.

This moment demands courage, collaboration and commitment. The challenges before us are complex, but they are not insurmountable. Now more than ever, we must choose to stand together, to invest in peace as a moral duty and a strategic necessity and be convinced that a more just, inclusive, resilient and peaceful Nigeria, Africa and world is possible.

We invite you to journey with us, to partner with us and to share in this collective responsibility over the next five years. Together, let us move from despair to hope, from division to solidarity and from wars to lasting peace.

**His Eminence, JOHN CARDINAL ONAIYEKAN (CON)**

Catholic Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja

President & Founder COFP

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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**T**he development of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) Strategic Plan (2026–2030) marks a critical period in our collective journey of faith-inspired peacebuilding. This document is the product of a common vision, careful reflection, and the generous contributions of a tight-knit team who believe deeply in the possibility of a more peaceful and just Africa.

At the very foundation of our work is our Founder, His Eminence, John Cardinal Onaiyekan, whose compelling vision continues to guide and inspire us. His commitment to dialogue, justice and peace laid the groundwork for a movement that cuts across borders, tribes, and religious differences. We remain profoundly grateful for a vision we can run with - one that speaks to the heart of our continent and the conscience of the world.

Our sincere appreciation to the COFP Board of Trustees and Council for their strategic guidance, oversight and relentless support. Your wisdom and leadership have ensured that our mission remains focused, credible and responsive to the realities of our time. We are equally grateful to the many organizations, institutions, groups, communities and individuals who have partnered with us over the years to translate ideals of interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence into lived realities within communities. Because of your dedication, a growing network of peace ambassadors and advocates has been nurtured and deployed across Africa, carrying forward the values of peace, justice and development. We look forward to deepening these collaborations and achieving even greater impact together in the next 5 years and beyond.

Finally, we acknowledge with gratitude the COFP staff, consultants and volunteers. Your heart for service, professionalism and willingness to give your time and energy make our work possible. This Strategic Plan is as much a reflection of your sacrifice as it is of our collective vision for the future.

We hope that this Strategic Plan serves as a perfect guide and blueprint to strengthen collaboration, amplify our impact and advance our shared commitment to promoting a peaceful, cohesive and inclusive society.

**Rev. Fr. Boniface NEIBO**

Deputy Director

Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**T**he prevalence of war and conflict around the world today, despite decades of interventions, continues to be a puzzle. What elements continuously drive conflict and war? What factors undermine good governance and erode public trust in leadership, especially in the African continent? Why is religion vulnerable to manipulation and how can faith instead become a force for good? In what ways can religion influence politics positively without being politicized? How do we move communities from cycles of fear, violence and insecurity to cultures of dialogue, peace and shared responsibility?

How can the growing frustrations of young people be addressed so their energy is channeled toward shaping their own future peacefully rather than extremism, violence or despair? How can the perspectives of women and youth be meaningfully included in peacebuilding and decision-making? How can communities play a more intentional role in climate change, community resilience, peacebuilding and human development? And in what ways can interfaith and intercultural actions strengthen freedom of religion, promote ethical governance, rebuild trust and sustain a culture of peace and development? These and many more questions guide the vision, mission and goal of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) and reside at the very heart of this Strategic Plan.

This document is COFP's response to the complex and evolving realities in Nigeria and Africa, where insecurity, poor governance, deepening social divisions, climate change, economic and gender inequality increasingly intersect. While this plan articulates clear goal, objectives, strategies and expected outcomes for a five-year period, COFP recognizes that peacebuilding is neither linear nor static. Contexts shift, lessons emerge and new challenges arise. For this reason, this Strategic Plan is designed as a dynamic roadmap that defines a clear destination where COFP seeks to be by 2030, while allowing for adaptability, learning and innovation along the journey.

At the core of this plan are seven compelling strategic objectives informed by COFP's commitment to transforming conflict through dialogue, building common ground across divides and advancing social change by promoting ethical leadership and good governance. The five-year timeframe reflects our belief that the deeply rooted socio-economic, political, religious, environmental challenges and inequality facing Nigeria and Africa cannot be resolved through short-term interventions. Sustainable peace requires patience, consistency and long-term engagement with communities, institutions, leaders and actors at all levels while remaining attentive and responsive to emerging risks, opportunities and lessons, ensuring that its strategies stay relevant and impactful.

This Strategic Plan therefore, sharpens COFP's focus on building locally driven solutions by translating dialogue into concrete actions for peace and development. It challenges the Foundation to rethink how it manages its time, talent, energy and resources in ways that deliver tangible community impact. Central to this approach is a shift toward resilient, participatory and inclusive peacebuilding, which empowers local actors, amplifies the voices of women and youth and strengthens community ownership of peace processes. By combining interfaith engagement, capacity building, advocacy, humanitarian support, climate action and ethical governance initiatives, COFP seeks to address both the symptoms and root causes of conflict.

Hence, implementation will prioritize community ownership, conflict sensitivity, gender and youth inclusion, accountability and learning. The Foundation will work closely with communities, local authorities, civil society and development partners to deliver integrated, evidence-based interventions. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) systems will ensure adaptive management, transparency and results-driven implementation. Peacebuilding is a collective endeavor and so, this Strategic Plan recognizes donors, partners, faith leaders, civil society actors and local communities as essential collaborators in achieving lasting change. It reflects a joint responsibility to build societies where justice and human dignity is upheld, differences are respected and violence is rejected as a means of resolving disputes.

This Strategic Plan is the product of a deliberate and consultative process led by the COFP team, drawing on research, reflection, practical experiences /engagements, monitoring and evaluation with diverse stakeholders. It outlines the strategies, methodologies and resource considerations required to achieve the five year objectives, while remaining grounded in COFP's core values. Through this Strategic Plan, COFP commits to building resilient communities, strengthening inclusive leadership and governance, addressing climate and socio-economic vulnerabilities and enhancing institutional effectiveness.

The ultimate goal is to contribute to sustainable peace, inclusive development and empowered communities capable of shaping their own future. As you engage with this Strategic Plan, we invites you and your organization to walk and work alongside us in advancing the primary objectives of this five-year plan. Together, let us continue to shape a peaceful world, one community at a time.

**Agatha O. CHIKELUE Sr., DMMM,**  
Executive Director,  
Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP)

# CHAPTER ONE



## INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

*Lead Peace. Inspire Change. Transform Africa*

## 1.1 Background and Mandate of COFP

The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) is a non-governmental organization established in 2010 to provide a dynamic platform for inspiring, equipping and mobilizing grassroots actors to work collaboratively on shared concerns, values and aspirations. COFP is rooted in the conviction that sustainable peace emerges when communities are empowered to identify common challenges and develop locally driven solutions anchored in trust, dialogue, mutual respect and social change. COFP adopts a strategic horizontal (grassroots) peacebuilding approach, which strengthens communication and cooperation among actors across social, religious and cultural divides. Through this approach, communities are supported to identify key drivers of conflict, establish inclusive channels for addressing grievances through dialogue and mediation, support good governance, advance integral human development and promote environmental protection. These core competencies define COFP's mandate and form the foundation of its work over the coming years as articulated in this Strategic Plan.

## 1.2 Vision Mission and Core Values

### Vision

We envision a peaceful, cohesive and inclusive society that upholds dignity of the human person, sustain good governance and rejects all forms of violence.

### Mission

We are committed to foster lasting peace, harmony and transformative development through social justice, dialogue and resilience building.

### Our Core Values

**Nonviolence:** We believe that nonviolence is not only the most effective tool and the best means of addressing issues of violence but force for engaging in a successful conflict transformation. Nonviolence rejects harm as a pathway to peace. Through dialogue, mediation, and restorative approaches, we promote solutions that heal relationships and address root causes of conflicts rather than deepen wounds.

**Participatory & Inclusiveness:** We inspire and facilitate the creation of safe spaces for local actors to work out their own solutions to their problems. We honour diverse strengths, needs, voices, and backgrounds. By actively involving communities in decision-making and leadership, we ensure that peacebuilding processes are locally owned, culturally sensitive, and sustainable. No voice is too small, and no group is left behind.

**Common Good:** Understanding that we all share in one common humanity; we must work for the good of all since what affects one directly or indirectly affects all. We promote solidarity across religious, social, and ethnic lines. Our actions are guided by the belief that peace is only meaningful when it improves the well-being of the entire community, especially the most vulnerable.

**Unity in diversity:** We aspire to build common ground and oneness rooted in shared values and concerns. Diversity is not a weakness but a strength that enriches collective life. By fostering mutual understanding and respect across differences, we nurture coexistence and strengthen social cohesion.

**Accountability:** We serve as responsible stewards of the trust placed in us by our communities and partners. We respect the intentions of our donors and are committed to transparency, prudent resource management, and ethical practice. Accountability strengthens credibility and ensures that our work delivers real and measurable impact.

**Dignity & Mutual Respect:** We strive for equity for all, with special focus on the vulnerable. Our work is guided by compassion, empathy, and fairness. We promote relationships and systems that protect human rights and uphold justice in all circumstances.

**Integrity:** Integrity is our watchword in values, ethics, service, and responsibility. We act with honesty and consistency, even when it is difficult or costly. Our commitment to integrity ensures that our words align with our actions and that trust remains central to our work.

**Partnership:** For impactful results, we seek multi-stakeholder partnerships, alliances, and networks with like-minded individuals and organizations. We recognize that peacebuilding is a shared responsibility that requires collaboration across sectors. By working together, we amplify impact, share knowledge, and strengthen collective responses to conflict and injustice.

**Transparency:** This enables us to promote accountability by remaining open and clear in all our positions and actions. We commit to honest communication, responsible decision-making, and openness in how we use resources and exercise authority. Transparency strengthens trust with communities, partners, and stakeholders, and ensures our work can be understood, questioned, and improved.

**Dialogue:** In communication, we apply dialogue in order to create a space for civility and equity. We value respectful listening, mutual understanding, and the

exchange of diverse perspectives, especially in contexts of tension or disagreement. Through dialogue, we foster inclusion, reduce polarization, and build pathways toward peaceful coexistence.

**Non-Discriminatory:** We shun, refuse and reject unfair, unjust or prejudicial treatment for whatsoever reason. Our work is grounded in respect for the inherent dignity and worth of every person, regardless of identity, belief, or background. We actively promote fairness, inclusion and equal opportunity in all our engagements and interventions.

### **1.3 COFP Thematic Program Areas**

Rather than focusing solely on barriers and divisions, COFP concentrates on unlocking community potential and building sustainable pathways for peace and development. This is implemented through three interrelated thematic program areas.

#### **1.3.a Building Common Ground for Peace**

Interfaith cooperation is a critical pillar for building sustainable peace in the twenty-first century. COFP recognizes that religious leaders and faith-based institutions play an indispensable role in fostering peace, harmony and social cohesion within communities. Building common ground for peace is not solely the responsibility of government; it is a collective duty of individuals, communities and especially religious leaders. The Foundation prioritizes equipping religious and community actors with practical peacebuilding skills to counter violent extremism, address polarization and promote peaceful coexistence. By transforming narratives that fuel division and empowering communities with values of tolerance, dialogue, resilience and mutual respect, COFP supports peaceful and inclusive human development. The Foundation encourages faith leaders and key stakeholders to rise above extremist ideologies and divisive sentiments and work collaboratively to advance peace in Nigeria's complex and diverse religious landscape.

#### **1.3.b Integrating Social Change through Ethical Leadership**

Ethical leadership lies at the heart of effective governance and sustainable social change. COFP believes that leadership rooted in service, accountability, integrity and innovation is essential for advancing peace, development, and economic progress. Through inclusive forums and dialogue platforms, COFP creates spaces for addressing governance challenges, building consensus and promoting community-based responses to conflict. These platforms enable civil society actors to explore opportunities for collaboration, strengthen citizen-to-citizen engagement and ensure that community voices are heard in decision-making processes. COFP upholds the principle that good governance is founded on transparency, justice and fairness, participation and inclusion, which together create a secure, stable and peaceful societies for all.

**1.3.c Sustaining Peace for Development**

Peace is the foundation upon which prosperous, inclusive and resilient societies are built. Sustainable peace not only enables development but also fosters social harmony and shared progress. COFP has advanced a range of initiatives aimed at consolidating peace gains and linking peacebuilding with long-term development outcomes. By integrating peacebuilding with human development, social justice and environmental sustainability, we contribute to stability. The Foundation remains committed to ensuring that peace is not only achieved but sustained as a catalyst for inclusive growth, social cohesion and lasting development.



# CHAPTER TWO



## SITUATIONAL AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS

*Lead Peace. Inspire Change. Transform Africa*

## 2.1 General Overview

### Introduction

Nigeria and indeed much of Africa, has witnessed a deepening web of security and governance crises in recent years, which have steadily eroded peace, stability and development. What began as an isolated insurgency in the North-East region of Nigeria has transformed into a vast network of extremist movements, with Boko Haram giving rise to offshoots like the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). These groups have entrenched cycles of violence, displacing millions and fracturing once-thriving communities. Meanwhile, the age-old herder-farmer tensions have taken on new and perilous dimensions, fueled by climate change, desertification, and the fierce struggle over scarce resources, spreading insecurity far beyond the North Central region into the Southern belt. Across the nation, banditry, mass abductions, oil theft, cybercrime and secessionist unrest are steadily corroding national unity. In the most volatile regions, an entire generation has known nothing of peace, growing up amid conflict, fear and uncertainty.

In Nigeria, the lines between insurgency, ethnic conflict, and criminal violence blur into a single, volatile reality. The International Crisis Group warns that these overlapping threats form one of the world's most confounding security puzzles, too tangled for traditional solutions alone. Yet Nigeria's struggle is not isolated. These dynamics mirror broader African trends, where violent extremism in the Sahel, protracted conflicts in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and electoral-related violence in countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia underscore the fragility of governance structures and the urgent need for robust peace infrastructures.

Globally, the challenge is no less daunting. The 2024 Global Peace Index reports that the world is at its least peaceful point in 15 years, with Sub-Saharan Africa ranking as one of the regions most affected by violent conflict and state fragility. According to the UNHCR, more than 117 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide by mid-2023, the highest figure ever recorded. In Africa, Nigeria ranks among the top five countries generating displacement, alongside Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and the DRC. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria now number above 3.6 million, with host communities overstretched and humanitarian support unable to keep pace.

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<sup>1</sup> International Crisis Group (2024). *Nigeria's Multiple Security Challenges: Beyond Military Responses*. Crisis Group Africa Report. Retrieved from [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)

<sup>2</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (2024). *Global Peace Index 2024: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*. Sydney: IEP

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR (2023). *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2023*. Geneva: UN Refugee Agency. Retrieved from [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

<sup>4</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2024). *Nigeria Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Report: Round 45*. Abuja: IOM

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & African Union (2023). *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Pathways to Recruitment and Disengagement (Second Edition)*. New York: UNDP.

The underlying drivers of violent conflict in Nigeria and the African continent remain disturbingly consistent; entrenched inequality, governance deficits, youth unemployment, Gender Based Violence (GBV), corruption, poverty, resource competition, environmental concerns, misuse of religion and ethnicity and proliferation of radical ideologies. The frustrations and grievances arising from these realities generate cycles of distrust, resentment and violent contestations. Increasingly, digital platforms amplify extremist narratives and disinformation, while fragile state institutions struggle to respond effectively.

Nigeria's predominant reliance on militarized responses has yielded mixed results, often displacing violence rather than eliminating it. As multiple studies affirm, military force alone cannot address grievances, heal divisions or dismantle extremist ideologies embedded in identity and social realities. What is urgently required is a human security approach, one that prioritizes justice, social equity, dialogue, and inclusive governance, while addressing structural causes of violence.

Across much of Africa and strikingly so in Nigeria, the twin forces of ethnicity and religion shape not just personal identity, but the very rhythm of politics, power and social life. These identities, in their pure form, hold the promise of moral strength, communal solidarity and mutual respect. Yet, when exploited by selfish actors, they transform into volatile instruments of exclusion, turning neighbours into rivals and difference into a justification for hostility. In Nigeria's experience, this distortion has birthed an enduring cycle of suspicion and strife, where the “other” is too often seen as a threat rather than a partner in nation-building. For decades, the state's default response to these eruptions of violence has been military forces, swift, reactive, and often superficial. Guns may silence the battlefield, but they cannot pacify the mind. Lasting peace cannot be decreed at gunpoint; it must be cultivated through dialogue, justice and a shared sense of belonging.

A human security approach offers this alternative path. It recognizes that the roots of Nigeria's conflicts lie not merely in the terrain of arms but in the hearts and frustrations of people who feel unseen, unheard and unprotected. By addressing these deeper grievances through inclusive governance, equitable development and cultural empathy, the nation can move from managing crises to nurturing resilience, transforming diversity from a fault line into a source of collective strength.

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<sup>6</sup> Nathan, L. (2018). *The Risk of Violence and Electoral Politics in Nigeria*. United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, *UN Preventive Diplomacy Briefing Series*, April 2018.

<sup>7</sup> European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM). (2023). *Final Report: Nigeria General Elections 2023*. Abuja: EU EOM.

It is within this context that the role of civil society, grassroots actors faith-based, government and non-governmental organizations such as the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) becomes indispensable. Positioned at the intersection of religion, governance and community peacebuilding, COFP is uniquely placed to engage with conflict parties, foster interreligious dialogue, amplify youth and women's participation in peace processes, and promote ethical governance. As Nigeria and Africa navigate the next five years marked by climate-induced fragility, digital disruption and rising inequality, COFP's mission to build bridges of peace, resilience and social justice is not only relevant but urgent. This Strategic Plan (2026–2030) is therefore framed around reimagining peacebuilding in Africa by leading peace, inspiring change and transforming Africa through dialogue, inclusivity and resilience, anchored on the belief that sustainable peace must be community-owned, ethically grounded and globally connected.

## **2.2 Political, Social, Security, Economic, Health and Environmental Context**

### **2.2.1 Political Governance**

Nigeria's journey since independence reads like a tale of promise betrayed. More than six decades after independence, Nigeria's dream of unity and shared prosperity remains caught in a web of contradictions. The nation's immense human and natural wealth stands in stark contrast to its chronic governance failures. Corruption has become institutionalized, public institutions weakened, and the pursuit of national interest too often sacrificed on the altar of ethnic, religious and political loyalty. Rather than serving as instruments of cohesion, religion and ethnicity have been weaponized by the political elite, fragmenting the social fabric and deepening mistrust among communities. This toxic blend of greed and identity politics has left many Nigerians alienated and disillusioned. As Laurie Nathan aptly noted, “The risk of violence also derived from the nature of governance and electoral politics in Nigeria. Elections suffer from a do-or-die pathology with too much political power, economic opportunity, and ethnic patronage accruing to the winners.”

Nigeria's democracy continues to bear the scars of a deeply entrenched “zero-sum” political mindset, one that equates governance with conquest rather than service. Since the return to civilian rule in 1999, elections have been treated less as instruments of accountability and more as battles for control over state resources and influence. This dangerous winner-takes-all mentality has eroded

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<sup>8</sup> Amnesty International. (2020). *Nigeria: Killing of #EndSARS Protesters by Military Must Be Investigated*. London: Amnesty International.

<sup>9</sup> National Population Commission of Nigeria (2023). *Nigeria Demographic Statistics Report*. Abuja: NPC.

<sup>10</sup> International Crisis Group (2024). *Mitigating Ethno-Religious Violence in Nigeria's Middle Belt*. Brussels: ICG.

civic trust, discouraged meaningful participation and weakened institutional legitimacy. The 2023 general elections laid this bare, as disputes over result transmission, allegations of voter suppression, and the rampant spread of misinformation and vote-buying underscored the fragility of Nigeria's democratic culture. The erosion of democratic norms reflects not only Nigeria's challenges but resonates across Africa, where fragile democracies, from Sudan to Mali, have been rocked by coups, disputed elections and shrinking civic space.

Countries such as Sudan and Mali have been disrupted by coups and protracted political instability, while electoral tensions in places like Kenya and Zimbabwe have exposed deep institutional and societal fractures. In several contexts, shrinking civic space, constitutional manipulations, and the personalization of power continue to test democratic resilience, revealing a broader struggle across the continent to consolidate accountable and inclusive governance.

The digital age has added a new layer of complexity to political governance. While technology has improved access to information and offered platforms for citizen engagement, it has also amplified polarization through the spread of disinformation and online hate speech. In Nigeria, social media platforms became battlegrounds during the #EndSARS movement in 2020, where youth mobilized for accountability but were met with state repression. Across Africa, governments have responded to online dissent with internet shutdowns, surveillance and restrictive cyber laws, raising questions about the balance between security and civil liberties. These dynamics illustrate the urgent need to safeguard democratic spaces and prevent the misuse of digital tools as instruments of exclusion and control.

In response to these challenges, the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) is committed to advancing a vision of political governance rooted in inclusivity, justice, and peace. Over the 2026–2030 strategic period, COFP will strengthen partnerships with civil society actors, faith leaders, and international development partners to advocate for reforms that uphold the sanctity of elections, transparency in public office, and accountability in governance. The Foundation will champion civic education programs that empower citizens, especially women and youth, to participate meaningfully in political life. It will also engage electoral bodies and policymakers to promote credible electoral processes and reduce violence before, during, and after elections. This is rooted in COFP's conviction that sustainable democracy in Nigeria and Africa cannot be built on procedural elections alone but must rest on institutions that guarantee

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<sup>11</sup> Boone, C. (2019). *Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2023). *Digital Conflict and Peacebuilding in Africa*. New York: UNDP

<sup>13</sup> African Union (2022). *Youth, Peace and Security in Africa: Progress Report on the Continental Framework*. Addis Ababa: AU Commission.

equity, protect minorities and foster trust between leaders and citizens. This strategic plan therefore seeks to transform politics from a zero-sum contest into a shared pursuit of the common good.

### 2.2.2 Social

Nigeria stands as a living mosaic of humanity, vibrant, complex, and profoundly diverse. Home to over 225 million people, more than 250 ethnic groups and upwards of 520 languages, it embodies the very essence of Africa's cultural richness. What ought to be its greatest strength, diversity, has long posed both a challenge and an opportunity for unity. Even in the colonial era, British administrators wrestled with how to shape a single nation out of so many distinct peoples. At independence in 1960, this delicate balance found poetic expression in the national anthem: “Though tribe and tongue may differ, in brotherhood we stand.” Yet, decades later, Nigeria and indeed much of Africa still face the test of transforming ethnic plurality into cohesive governance and shared national purpose.

More than half a century after the civil war of 1967–1970, Nigeria continues to wrestle with the ghosts of division. The uneasy calm imposed by years of military rule only masked deep-seated grievances that re-emerged with the return to democracy in 1999. Since then, separatist movements like Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the Southeast, Odua People's Congress (OPC) in the Southwest and Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Niger Delta Avengers in the South-South have rekindled old tensions. At the same time, Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP's) insurgencies in the North, coupled with the deadly farmer–herder clashes across the Middle Belt, have exposed the fragile threads holding the Federation together, deepening mistrust, displacing millions, and testing the resilience of Nigeria's unity.

At the heart of Nigeria's recurring conflicts lies a profound crisis of belonging. Decades after independence, too many citizens still find identity in tribe or faith rather than in the shared promise of nationhood. The “indigene versus settler” divide, and Muslim north versus Christian claim south captures this tragedy vividly; Nigerians born and raised outside their ancestral homes are often treated as strangers in their own country, denied jobs, political voice and even access to land. Each act of exclusion plants seeds of bitterness and mistrust, kindling the fires of violence. The same painful story echoes across the continent in Kenya's

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<sup>14</sup> International Crisis Group. (2023). *Facing the Challenge of the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP)*. Brussels: ICG.

<sup>15</sup> Adebajo, A. (2022). *West Africa's Terrorism Challenge and Regional Stability*. *African Affairs*, 121(484), 561–583.

<sup>16</sup> Morier-Genoud, E. (2023). *The Jihadi Insurgency in Mozambique: Origins and Trajectories*. *African Security Review*, 32(1), 23–44.

Rift Valley and Côte d'Ivoire's politics of *ivoirité*, where questions of who truly belongs continue to haunt the dream of African unity. Unaddressed injustice does not disappear, it mutates. Across Africa, the silence of successive governments in confronting social and political inequities has allowed anger to evolve into conflict, and conflict to evolve into digital warfare.

In the age of smartphones and hashtags, battles are no longer fought only with guns but also with words, images, and algorithms. Nigeria's 2023 elections demonstrated this vividly: social media became a storm of ethnic bias, fake news, and divisive rhetoric that preyed on the frustrations of jobless youth. The digital contagion spread far beyond Nigeria, Ethiopia's Tigray war and Sudan's conflict both found new life online, where narratives sharpened hostilities and blurred the lines between truth and propaganda. The internet, once celebrated as a bridge, now too often becomes a battlefield.

Nigeria's greatest resource, its youthful population, with nearly 70% under 30 years old, is also its greatest risk if left unengaged. High levels of poverty, unemployment, and educational inequality create fertile ground for radicalization, organized crime and mass migration. Yet, this demographic also offers unparalleled potential for peacebuilding, innovation and cultural renewal.

Young peacebuilders have shown resilience in conflict-prone areas of Africa, whether through local mediation networks in Burkina Faso, youth-led reconciliation initiatives in South Sudan, or Nigeria's own “Not Too Young to Run” movement that has re-energized democratic participation. Harnessing this energy will be decisive for the future of Nigeria and Africa at large. Understands that peace cannot thrive amid exclusion, ethnic suspicion, or intergenerational disconnection, at the heart of this plan lies the urge to transform Nigeria's social diversity into a force for unity.

### 2.2.3 Terrorism

Over the past twenty years, the face of terror in Africa has changed dramatically. From the humble beginnings of Boko Haram's rebellion in Nigeria's Borno State, a sprawling network of violence has emerged, its flames now licking the borders of Chad, Niger and Cameroon. With ISWAP leading a new wave of extremism, what was once Nigeria's internal crisis has become a regional contagion, threatening peace, destabilizing governments, and suffocating development

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<sup>17</sup> UNDP. (2021). *Assessing the Impact of Conflict on Development in North-East Nigeria*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

<sup>18</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). (2023). *Military Coups and Terrorism in the Sahel: Understanding the Nexus*. London: IISS.

<sup>19</sup> National Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Crime Experience and Security Perception Survey*

<sup>20</sup> Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC). (2025). *Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act (Amendment) Bill 2025 (SB. 969)*. Abuja.

<sup>21</sup> UNICEF. (2025). *Nigeria Humanitarian Situation Report – Farmer-Herder Conflict* (June 2025).

across the continent. Today, terrorism is no longer defined solely by conventional insurgency; it is interwoven with banditry, kidnapping for ransom, cyber-enabled radicalization, and transnational criminal networks that finance and sustain extremist groups.

Terrorism in Africa is not born in a vacuum it grows in the fertile soil of poverty, unemployment, frustration, fanaticism, injustice and weak government. The experience in sub-Saharan countries like Nigeria demonstrates how easily extremist actors can hijack religion and digital platforms to radicalize vulnerable youth. The pattern is repeating in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado, where militants exploit feelings of exclusion and economic neglect to sustain violence. Unless these structural roots are addressed, the continent will continue to fight symptoms rather than the disease itself. These developments demonstrate that terrorism in Africa is increasingly hybrid of ideological, criminal and political at once, feeding on the failures of state institutions and deepening mistrust among communities.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), more than 350,000 deaths in Nigeria's North-East are directly or indirectly linked to Boko Haram and ISWAP activities since 2009, with over 3 million people displaced. Women and children remain the most vulnerable, subjected to sexual slavery, indoctrination, and child soldier recruitment. Beyond the human cost, terrorism cripples local economies, farmers abandon farmlands, trade routes are disrupted, families live in camps and schools are closed, perpetuating cycles of poverty and illiteracy that fuel further radicalization. This destructive feedback loop threatens not only Nigeria's stability but also regional integration and Africa's Agenda 2063 aspirations.

Terrorism has evolved beyond mere violence; it has become a calculated weapon of political disruption. Across Nigeria and the Sahel, the ballot box is now shadowed by the gun, as fear silences the will of the people. Communities once vibrant with civic participation now retreat behind barricades of uncertainty. Recent coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger reveal a deeper crisis, where terrorism erodes state authority, dismantles fragile democracies, and leaves behind disillusioned citizens and broken institutions.

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<sup>22</sup> The Global Economy. (2025). Nigeria: Poverty rating

<sup>23</sup> African Health Report. (2025, January 24). Nigeria ranks 20th poorest country in global rating.

<sup>24</sup> Ecofin Agency. (2025). Ghana cuts poverty rate to 21.9% in Q3 2025.

<sup>25</sup> Citi Newsroom. (2026, January). Ghana's growing inequality: A nation split between haves and have-nots.

<sup>26</sup> African Exponent. (2025). Top 10 African countries with the highest income inequality in 2025.

<sup>27</sup> World Economics. (2025). Population living in poverty: Kenya.

Beyond ideological insurgency, terrorism in Nigeria increasingly manifests as kidnapping for ransom, turning schools, highways, farmlands and places of worship into zones of fear. Over the past five years, abductions have evolved from sporadic criminal acts into a highly organized and lucrative enterprise. Families are often forced to sell land, businesses, and life savings to secure the release of loved ones, while many victims tragically never return home.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), an estimated 2.2 million kidnapping incidents occurred in Nigeria between May 2023 and April 2024, with rural areas bearing the heaviest burden. The North-West and North-Central regions recorded the highest number of incidents, exposing deep governance and security gaps. Beyond the immediate trauma, these kidnappings have disrupted education, weakened local economies, depopulated rural communities and further eroded public trust in the state's capacity to protect its citizens.

In response to the escalating crisis, the Nigerian Senate in December 2025 advanced an amendment to the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act 2022, formally designating kidnapping and hostage-taking as acts of terrorism. The proposed amendment expands the definition of terrorist acts to include abduction for ransom, financial gain, coercion, or unlawful advantage, whether or not linked to an ideological group and prescribes the death penalty without option of fine for perpetrators, financiers, collaborators and logistical supporters. This legislative move reflects growing recognition that kidnapping in Nigeria has evolved beyond conventional criminality into a national security emergency with terrorist characteristics.

The human cost of such violence is painfully visible in tragic episodes like the June 2025 attack on Yelwata community in Guma Local Government Area, Benue State. Armed attackers reportedly killed over 200 people and displaced more than 3,000 residents, destroying homes and food stores in the process. Incidents like these emphasize the urgent need for people-centered approaches that prioritize prevention, community trust and justice, rather than relying solely on reactive force. In the face of these complex and evolving threats, strategic and community-focused interventions are urgently needed and this is what COFP strategic plan stand for.

#### **2.2.4 Economy**

Nigeria is a nation of vast promise, endowed with abundant natural resources and a resilient, energetic population. Yet over 56% of Nigerians live below the national poverty line, with nearly 42% classified as extremely poor. Despite being Africa's largest economy, Nigeria remains low in global poverty and

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<sup>28</sup> Institute for Security Studies (ISS Africa). (2025). Nigeria scenario comparisons: Multidimensional poverty.

human development rankings, illustrating the challenge of translating economic size into widespread prosperity.

The Nigerian economy still relies heavily on oil and gas, which account for over four-fifths of export earnings and nearly half of national revenue. This overreliance exposes the country to global energy shifts, volatile oil prices, and climate pressures. The effects are most visible in the Niger Delta, where environmental degradation and economic exclusion have fueled local grievances, social unrest and recurring tensions between communities and the state.

These challenges are reflected across Africa. In Ghana, poverty affects 21.9% of the population, with rural and northern regions experiencing rates above 50%. The mining and resource sector has generated revenue, but environmental harm and uneven wealth distribution have left communities vulnerable and discontented. In South Africa, inequality remains extreme: a Gini coefficient above 62 and unemployment rates near 30%, or 43% when including discouraged workers, have entrenched socio-economic frustrations and limited access to formal opportunities. Kenya, despite dynamic economic growth driven by agriculture, services and technology, struggles with unequal access to resources and opportunities, especially in rural areas, contributing to localized social tension and political instability.

Economic diversification, digitalization and regional integration are emerging as critical pathways for transformation. In Nigeria, sectors such as agriculture, fintech, telecommunications, and creative industries are increasingly contributing to GDP, while Kenya is building a robust digital economy and Rwanda and Senegal are investing in service-led growth and renewable energy. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), launched in 2021, is reducing trade barriers and expanding intra-African trade, positioning Nigeria as a key player in continental integration.

Despite these positive trends, inequality and multidimensional poverty remain deeply entrenched. In Nigeria, lack of access to healthcare, education, clean water and secure housing affects a substantial share of the population, a situation mirrored across much of Africa. Economic growth without equity has proven insufficient to reduce poverty or foster lasting peace. COFP's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan emphasizes grassroots economic development as a cornerstone for

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<sup>29</sup> Eckstein, D., Künzel, V., & Schäfer, L. (2024). *Global Climate Risk Index 2024: Who Suffers Most from Extreme Weather Events?* Germanwatch.

<sup>30</sup> African Climate Summit. (2023). *The Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action*. Nairobi: Government of Kenya & African Union.

<sup>31</sup> Federal Government of Nigeria. (2022). *Nigeria Energy Transition Plan*. Abuja: Office of the Vice President.

<sup>32</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). *Public Health Situation Analysis: Greater Horn of Africa*.

<sup>33</sup> WHO Regional Office for Africa, 2023.

stability, recognizing that sustainable peace requires systems that uphold human dignity and promote equity.

### 2.2.5 Environmental Context

True development in the 21st century must go beyond economic growth; it must protect the planet that sustains it. In Africa, the reckless exploitation of natural resources is fast becoming a silent crisis, draining livelihoods, deepening inequality and fueling instability. Nigeria illustrates this paradox vividly; forests are vanishing, farmlands are depleting and carbon emissions are rising, even as millions depend on these same ecosystems for survival. Despite the environmental safeguards enshrined in the 1999 Constitution, the nation continues to operate within outdated frameworks that ignore modern imperatives such as carbon trading, clean energy transition and climate-resilient local governance.

Nigeria stands at a perilous crossroads where population pressure and climate instability collide. With more than 220 million people and an annual growth rate of 2.4%, the demand for land, water and energy is straining the nation's ecosystems to breaking point. Climate change has deepened this crisis. Scorching heat and erratic rainfall have turned once-fertile Sahelian lands into advancing deserts, pushing herders southward and igniting violent clashes with farmers in the Middle Belt. Along the coastlines of Bayelsa and Lagos, swelling seas and unrelenting floods are swallowing communities, forcing families into uncertain urban migration. The 2024 Global Climate Risk Index places Nigeria among the 20 nations most exposed to climate-related disasters, a stark warning that only bold, adaptive governance and resilience strategies can avert deeper environmental collapse.

Around the world, nations are redefining progress, seeking growth that sustains rather than depletes the planet. The global conversation now centers on climate justice, fair compensation for loss and damage and bold commitments like the African Climate Summit's Nairobi Declaration of 2023. These efforts mark a shift from policy rhetoric to shared responsibility among governments, civil society, and communities. Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan (2022) stands as a landmark of this vision, charting a path to net-zero emissions by 2060 while promising renewable energy access for millions in rural areas. Yet, ambition alone is not enough. Weak institutions, corruption and funding shortfalls continue to slow momentum. To overcome these hurdles, Nigeria must weave

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<sup>34</sup> UNICEF. *Nigeria: Child Survival and Mortality Data*. UNICEF, 2024.

<sup>35</sup> The Guardian. "Women's Health Central to Economic Growth: Sustainable Reforms in Nigeria." *The Guardian Nigeria*, 2023.

<sup>36</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). *World Malaria Report 2024*. WHO, Geneva, 2024.

<sup>37</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). *HIV/AIDS in the African Region: 2024 Epidemiological Update*. WHO Regional Office for Africa, 2024.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

together sound environmental governance, conflict-sensitive development and inclusive community participation, the true pillars of sustainable transformation, leveraging them with contemporary global commitments like the Paris Agreement (2015) and the African Union's Agenda 2063. Only then can development become both meaningful and enduring.

### **2.2.6 Health**

Health remains a critical yet unevenly addressed dimension of peace and development in Nigeria and across Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed long-standing weaknesses in health systems across the continent, including fragile primary healthcare infrastructure, chronic underfunding, workforce shortages and deep inequalities in access to essential services. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), many African countries continue to spend below recommended levels on health, leaving large segments of their populations vulnerable to preventable disease, public health emergencies and avoidable loss of life.

Despite recorded progress in maternal health, the overall public health system remains fragile and unequal. Infant mortality stands at roughly 52.6 deaths per 1,000 live births, while under-five mortality remains among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa at about 105 deaths per 1,000 live births. Malaria, diarrhoea, pneumonia, and vaccine-preventable diseases continue to claim young lives, especially in rural and conflict-affected areas where access to quality care is limited.

Nigeria's health financing reveals another layer of vulnerability; public health expenditure remains constantly low, at approximately 4.08% of GDP, while the system is stretched by a double disease burden, both infectious and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Rising cases of hypertension, diabetes, and cancer compete for scarce resources alongside malaria, tuberculosis, and maternal mortality. In 2023 alone, Nigeria recorded an estimated 75,000 maternal deaths, one of the highest national totals globally. The country also faces recurrent Lassa fever outbreaks, and in 2025 over 1,100 confirmed cases and 215 deaths were reported across more than 20 states, including Ondo, Bauchi, Taraba, and Edo, with cases continuing into early 2026. These pressures place additional strain on already fragile health systems.

Across Africa, the scale of health challenges remains significant. In 2023, the WHO African Region recorded an estimated 246 million malaria cases and 569,000 malaria-related deaths, accounting for about 94% of global cases and 95% of global deaths, with children under five representing roughly three-quarters of fatalities. HIV/AIDS also continues to affect millions; an estimated 25.9 million people were living with HIV in the region in 2023, with around

380,000 AIDS-related deaths recorded that year. Although immunization coverage has improved in parts of the continent, preventable child deaths from pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, and undernutrition remain high.

Country experiences show both progress and ongoing gaps. In Ethiopia, expanded immunization and essential health services have improved access, yet rural and pastoralist communities still face barriers. In Tanzania, efforts toward universal health coverage have produced modest gains, though disparities in maternal and child health services persist in remote areas. In Senegal, outbreaks of climate-sensitive and zoonotic diseases, such as Rift Valley fever, reflect the growing link between environmental change and public health risks.

Rapid population growth, urbanization, climate change and displacement continue to increase pressure on already fragile systems. The WHO African Region carries a disproportionately high (share of the global disease burden relative to its health workforce and financing, limiting its ability to respond effectively to emergencies. Weak health systems threaten lives, deepen inequality, and erode public trust in institutions.

Obviously, the Foundation cannot achieve the goal of this strategic plan with sick population. Fragile and unequal health systems can fuel grievances and weaken confidence in governance, while inclusive and resilient systems can strengthen social cohesion and community stability. These realities demand that COFP's Health Agenda be bold, integrated and rooted in systems strengthening by shoring up primary care, championing equitable vaccine coverage, innovating with digital and AI tools, and mobilizing community trust. The health of Nigeria (and Africa) cannot advance through piecemeal interventions alone; it must be transformed through a holistic and resilient approach on care, prevention, and equity.

### **2.3 Women and Youth**

Prioritizing women and youth is essential to achieving the overall goal of this five-year strategic plan in Nigeria and Africa. Women and young people constitute the majority of the population and are disproportionately affected by conflict, poor governance, decay health system, economic exclusion, and climate-related shocks, yet they remain underrepresented in decision-making and peace processes. This is the reason why this Strategic Plan aligns with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda 2250 and relevant African Union peace, governance, and development frameworks, which collectively recognize women and youth as central actors in peacebuilding, governance, and sustainable development. Evidence across the African context shows that peace agreements, governance reforms, and community initiatives are more effective, legitimate,

and durable when women and youth are meaningfully involved. Women play critical roles as community stabilizers, caregivers and peacebuilders, while youth are powerful agents of innovation, social change, and long-term development. Investing in their leadership, participation and economic empowerment addresses structural inequalities, reduces vulnerability to violence and extremism, strengthens social cohesion and ensures that development outcomes are inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. This strategic plan therefore places women and youth at the center of its interventions as both beneficiaries and drivers of transformative change.

#### **2.4 Impact Assessment of the COFP 2020-2025 Strategic Plan**

The 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan marked a period of consolidation and growth for the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP). During this period, the Foundation expanded the scope and depth of its peacebuilding work across dialogue, conflict prevention, ethical leadership, civic engagement, humanitarian response, youth and women's empowerment, and climate awareness. Through partnerships with faith institutions, civil society organizations, community leaders and development actors, COFP strengthened its institutional credibility and deepened its engagement with communities affected by conflict, governance challenges, and social divisions.

Within this broader body of work, several projects stand out as major milestones, among many others implemented during the 2020–2025 period. In 2023, for example, COFP played an active role in Nigeria's presidential and gubernatorial elections through election monitoring, peace advocacy, and post-election engagement, contributing to peaceful electoral processes and generating observations and recommendations that continue to support dialogue on electoral integrity and democratic accountability. Over the five-year period, COFP also trained more than 360 peace actors drawn across 17 Africa states through its annual Peace Fellowship Program. These Fellows, drawn from across Africa, have since deployed diverse peacebuilding strategies in their respective communities across the continent, extending COFP's impact through community engagement, mediation, advocacy, research, and policy-related work. COFP further advanced climate awareness through initiatives such as its annual tree-planting exercises in schools across the Federal Capital Territory, reaching at least 300 children and promoting environmental responsibility and early climate consciousness, alongside other dialogue, capacity-building, humanitarian, and advocacy interventions delivered under the Strategic Plan.

Experience from the implementation of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan also revealed clear lessons. While COFP's interventions delivered tangible results, many of its projects were implemented within limited timeframes and geographic scope, constraining continuity and sustainability. Engagement with

women and youth increased during this period, but they were not always included in leadership or decision-making roles. Meanwhile, the growing challenges of insecurity, governance gaps, climate change, economic pressures and social divisions highlighted the need for approaches that are more integrated, lasting and adaptable to changing contexts.

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan is designed to address these lessons. It builds on past achievements by prioritizing sustained peacebuilding over short-term interventions, strengthening engagement on leadership and governance, including women and youth more firmly in leadership and decision-making spaces, and scaling climate-related action. The Plan also places stronger emphasis on translating dialogue into coordinated action and measurable outcomes. Through this strategic direction, COFP aims to enhance its institutional impact and contribute more effectively to long-term peace, stability, and development in Nigeria and all over Africa.



# CHAPTER THREE



## MISSION, VISION, STRATEGIC GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

*Lead Peace. Inspire Change. Transform Africa*

Our strategic plan reaffirmed the vision, mission, and core values of the Foundation. Our vision describes our aspiration and the future we seek to bring. Our mission describes why we exist. Our core values articulate the enduring principles that guide our decisions and actions at every step. Thus, both our vision, mission, and core values translate our ideas into tangible strategies and outcomes for nonviolent social change.

### **3.1 Strategic Vision Statement**

Inclusive, resilient and peaceful communities shaping their own sustainable future.

### **3.2 Strategic Mission Statement**

To strengthen local capacities and partnerships that enable communities to promote good governance, build resilience, prevent conflict and achieve lasting peace and sustainable development.

### **3.3 Overall Strategic Goal (2026-2030)**

To drive community-led social change by advancing good governance, strengthening resilience, and building sustainable peace and development in Africa.

### **3.4 Strategic Objectives and Priority Areas**

The six Strategic Objectives and Priority Areas of this Five-Year Strategic Plan outline below the key thematic focus areas through which the organization will advance its vision of peaceful, inclusive and resilient communities. These objectives respond to the root causes of conflict, exclusion, weak governance, socio-economic vulnerability, and environmental risks, while strengthening local capacities and institutional effectiveness. Together, they provide a coherent framework for delivering integrated, community-led interventions that promote peacebuilding, good governance, ethical leadership, social inclusion, climate resilience, and sustainable development, with a strong emphasis on women, youth and vulnerable populations.

#### **3.4.1 Strengthening Local Peacebuilding Capacities and Resilience**

This objective focuses on strengthening the ability of communities, local institutions, faith/community leaders and civil society actors to prevent, manage, and recover from conflict in sustainable ways. COFP will support community-led peace initiatives, dialogue platforms, early warning and response mechanisms and conflict resolution skills at grassroots level. Emphasis will be placed on building local ownership, social cohesion and resilience to shocks such as insecurity, displacement and resource-based conflicts, ensuring that peacebuilding efforts are context-specific, inclusive and long-term.

### **3.4.2 Increasing Women and Youth Participation in Peace Processes**

This objective aims to enhance the meaningful participation and leadership of women and young people in peacebuilding, mediation and decision-making processes at community and institutional levels. Interventions will focus on capacity building, mentorship, advocacy and the removal of structural and cultural barriers that limit inclusion. By amplifying the voices of women and youth, the Foundation seeks to promote more representative, legitimate and sustainable peace outcomes in line with national and global commitments such as Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas.

### **3.4.3 Supporting Inclusive and Effective Governance for Social Change**

This objective seeks to promote accountable, transparent and participatory governance systems that respond to the needs of all citizens, particularly marginalized groups. To this end, we will support civic engagement, social accountability mechanisms, policy dialogue, and citizen-state relations at local and sub-national levels. Priority will be given to strengthening community participation in governance processes, promoting human rights and enabling constructive engagement between duty bearers and communities to drive inclusive social change.

### **3.4.4 Promoting Ethical Leadership and Responsible Lifestyles Among Young People**

This objective focuses on nurturing a new generation of ethical, values-driven and socially responsible young leaders. Through leadership development programs, civic education, mentorship and behavior-change initiatives, the Foundation will promote integrity, non-violence, active citizenship, responsible lifestyles among young people and bridge gap between Young and old through intergenerational dialogue. The aim is to empower youth to act as positive change agents in their communities, contributing to peace, good governance and sustainable development.

### **3.4.5 Empowering Vulnerable Women and Youth for Self-Reliance**

This objective addresses the economic and social vulnerabilities of women and youth by promoting livelihoods, skills development, entrepreneurship and access to opportunities. Programs will integrate economic empowerment with psychosocial support, protection and life-skills development to enhance resilience and dignity. The organization will prioritize inclusive approaches that enable vulnerable populations to achieve self-reliance, reduce dependency and actively contribute to community development and peace.

### **3.4.6 Expanding Climate Change and Environmental Programs**

This objective seeks to strengthen community resilience to climate change and environmental degradation, particularly where these issues intersect with conflict, livelihoods and displacement. The Foundation will promote climate

adaptation, environmental protection, sustainable natural resource management and climate awareness at community level. Priority will be given to youth - and community-led initiatives that address climate risks, support green livelihoods and reduce environmental drivers of conflict.

### **3.4.7 Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Operations**


This objective focuses on building a strong, accountable and sustainable organization capable of effectively delivering its mission. Key priorities include strengthening governance structures, financial management, safeguarding, human resources, monitoring and evaluation, and partnerships. By investing in systems, policies and staff capacity, COFP will enhance efficiency, accountability, donor compliance and long-term sustainability, ensuring effective implementation of the strategic plan.

### **3.5 Strategic plan period**

Our strategic plan period refers to the defined timeframe during which this strategic plan is implemented and evaluated. It sets the start date from 2026 and end dates in 2030 being a period of five years for this strategic plan. Within this five-year period, COFP is expected to pursue its vision, goals and strategic objectives, allocates resources, measures results and makes adjustments based on learning.



# CHAPTER FOUR



## STRATEGIC PROCESS, METHODOLOGY AND DIRECTION

*Lead Peace. Inspire Change. Transform Africa*

## 4.1 Theory of Change

Communities face persistent conflict, weak local peace infrastructures, exclusion of women and youth from decision-making, governance deficits, youth ethical and leadership gaps, economic vulnerability, climate-related risks and limited institutional capacity to respond sustainably. Therefore, If local peacebuilding capacities are strengthened, and if women and youth are meaningfully included in peace and governance processes, and if communities are supported to practice inclusive governance and ethical leadership, and if vulnerable women and youth are economically empowered, and if climate resilience and environmental stewardship are expanded, and if the organization's institutional systems are strengthened, then communities will become more resilient, cohesive and capable of preventing conflict, responding to shocks and driving inclusive development.

### 4.1.a Pathway of Change

- Inputs & Activities: capacity building, dialogue and mediation, civic engagement, leadership development, livelihoods support, climate adaptation initiatives and institutional strengthening.
- Outputs: skilled peace actors, empowered women and youth leaders, improved governance engagement, ethical women and youth leadership, resilient livelihoods, climate-aware communities and strong organizational systems.
- Outcomes: increased social cohesion, inclusive peace processes, enhanced governance system, reduced vulnerability, improved resilience to climate and conflict risks and effective program delivery.
- Impact: peaceful, inclusive, resilient communities that drive sustainable development and good governance.

### 4.1.b Key Assumptions

- Communities are willing to engage in inclusive dialogue
- Local institutions are open to collaboration
- Women and youth can participate meaningfully when barriers are addressed
- Climate and conflict risks can be mitigated through local action
- Strong institutions enable sustained impact

## 4.2 Strategic Approach

The execution of this five-year strategic plan will be guided by the following approaches.

**4.2.1 Core Values:** nonviolence, participation and inclusion, transparency, the common good, mutual respect and dignity, integrity, unity in diversity,

accountability, and partnership, dialogue. These values will animate our programs partnerships and dialogue, ensuring that our interventions remain people-centered and transformational.

**4.2.2 Key Methodologies:** Human relationship and community-building, capacity development, dialogue and negotiation, training/enlightenment, empowerment, art and media, proactive engagement, partnerships, joint action, and systematic monitoring and evaluation. The above methodologies will ensure that our initiatives are evidence-driven, participatory and sustainable.

**4.2.3 Main Sources of Guideline:** Finally, our work is grounded in international, continental and domestic frameworks that affirm nonviolence, human rights and dignity, environmental consciousness peace and development. These include, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the African Union's Agenda 2063; the spirit of Nostra Aetate and Laudato Si'; international human rights law; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security; and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence, among others. These global and regional commitments provide COFP with guiding compasses to align our mission with broader aspirations for peace and social change in Africa and the world.

**4.2.4 Key Activities:** As shown in the Strategic Results Chain (See Objectives, Outcomes and Activities)

**4.2.5 Major Skills:** Empathy, Resilience, Capacity to engage in dialogue, Respect for diversity, Inclusion, collaboration, Self-reliance, Ability to Analyze conflict & context, Nonviolent Social Change, Do-No-Harm, locally driven solutions, Passion for good governance, citizen participation & Commitment Peace and development.

### 4.3 COFP Swot Analysis

The SWOT analysis enables the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) to build on its strengths while addressing internal limitations and responding strategically to external opportunities and threats. It informs priority-setting and decision-making for the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, with the aim of strengthening impact, resilience, and sustainability.

#### 4.3.1 Strengths

- Skilled, committed and professional staff with strong expertise in interreligious dialogue, mediation and community peacebuilding
- Strong institutional credibility, ethical leadership and a positive public reputation

- Established interfaith and intercultural networks across communities and institutions
- Proven ability to design and implement impactful community-based peace initiatives
- Capacity to mobilize communities, volunteers, partners and resources
- Strong governance structures and organizational values grounded in integrity, inclusivity, accountability and excellence

#### **4.3.2 Weakness**

- Heavy reliance on external and project-based funding
- Limited internal capacity for policy engagement, advocacy and systems-level influence
- Gaps in research, data management, monitoring, evaluation and learning systems
- Limited digital and communications capacity to counter misinformation and amplify impact

#### **4.3.3 Opportunities**

- Growing recognition of faith-based organizations as trusted actor in peacebuilding and ethical governance
- Increased availability of funding for peace, governance, youth, gender and climate-related initiatives
- Willingness of governments, civil society and development partners to collaborate on peace, climate actions and social cohesion
- Rising demand for interfaith dialogue, mediation, climate justice and conflict prevention in divided societies of Africa
- Expanding scope and use of digital tools and platforms for peace education, advocacy and community engagement
- Emerging policy spaces to influence peace and governance reforms

#### **4.3.4 Threats**

- Persistent insecurity, violent extremism, climate change disaster and political instability
- Deepening social, ethnic and religious divisions undermining trust and cohesion
- Climate change impacts increasing displacement, resource scarcity and communal conflict
- Youth/Women unemployment and economic hardship heightening vulnerability to violence
- Spread of misinformation and hate speech fueling polarization
- Shrinking civic space, unfavorable policies and funding uncertainty

Following this SWOT analysis, COFP would focus on consolidating its institutional strengths, deepening partnerships, diversify funding and

strengthening systems for learning, advocacy and innovation in the next 5 years, 2026 - 2030. By leveraging opportunities while proactively addressing risks or potential challenges, COFP would be well positioned to advance sustainable peace, ethical governance and social cohesion in Nigeria and across Africa in the coming years.

#### **4.4 Five-Year Strategic Direction (2026–2030)**

The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) enters this new strategic cycle with renewed clarity of vision and a deepened commitment to impacting and changing Nigeria and Africa into regions where peace, justice, and human dignity are fully realized. Rooted in our mission and inspired by our vision, this Strategic Plan aligns with both the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063, anchoring our peacebuilding journey in global and continental frameworks. Our objectives are not abstract ideals; they form a concrete roadmap that translates aspirations into measurable actions, moving us steadily towards a more inclusive, resilient, and prosperous society.

Findings from our latest research and policy analyses reveal sobering realities: Nigeria and many parts of Africa remain besieged by insecurity, entrenched corruption, social polarization, and a culture of impunity. The spread of hate speech, stereotyping and misinformation continues to erode trust among communities, while religious extremism and the lack of dialogue skills exacerbate divisions. Issues of injustice, marginalization, inequality, exclusion and poor governance persist as barriers to inclusive development. These interwoven challenges threaten peace and stability, demanding a strategic response that is both multi-dimensional and context-sensitive.

#### **4.5 Core Strategic Pathways**

To address these pressing issues, the 2026–2030 Strategic Direction positions COFP as a catalyst for transformation through six core pathways:

1. Strengthening Dialogue, Interfaith Engagement and Peace Education to bridge divides, dismantle stereotypes and equip communities with the skills for constructive conflict resolution.
2. Empowering Youth, Women, Children and Marginalized Groups as agents of peace and development, through targeted capacity-building that enables meaningful participation and leadership.
3. Promoting Ethical Leadership and Good Governance to challenge corruption and foster accountability.
4. Deepening Research, Policy Advocacy, Partnerships and Community Health to influence systemic change and scale impact.
5. Advancing Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship
6. Enhancing Institutional Capacity and Operational Excellence

The COFP Strategic Plan (2026–2030), therefore, stands as both a declaration of intent and a call to action. It affirms our unwavering belief that peace is possible, but only when justice is upheld, governance is ethical and communities are empowered to own their future. In this journey, we invite governments, civil society, faith communities and international partners to walk and work with us, because the task of peacebuilding is far too great to be borne by one institution alone.



# CHAPTER FIVE



## STRATEGIC RESULTS CHAIN (OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES, ACTIVITIES)

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## **5.1 Objective 1.0: Strengthening local peacebuilding capacities and resilience**

### **1.1 Expected Outcomes**

- 1.1a.** Community and religious actors are recognized and supported as key peacebuilders
- 1.1b.** Increased acceptance of faith/community actors in peace processes

### **1.2 Key Activities**

- 1.2a.** Build the capacity of peace actors in interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation and peace
  - 1.2b.** Deploy religious and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to educate the public on the importance of peaceful coexistence.
  - 1.2c.** Leverage social media platforms, media organizations and strategic stakeholders to promote freedom of religion.
- 

## **5.2 Objective 2.0: Increase women and youth participation in local peace processes**

### **2.1 Expected Outcomes**

- 2.1a.** Mechanisms for women and youth participation in peace processes are strengthened.
- 2.1b.** Increased engagement of women and youth in intergenerational peacebuilding dialogue
- 2.1c.** Functional intergenerational dialogue platforms established

### **2.2 Key Activities**

- 2.2a:** Promote intergenerational dialogue by equipping women and youth with skills in peacebuilding
  - 2.2b:** Partner with local and international organizations engaged in peace processes
- 

## **5.3 Objective 3.0: Support inclusive and effective governance for social change**

### **3.1 Expected outcomes**

- 3.1a.** Citizens understand and exercise their civic rights and responsibilities peacefully during and after elections.
- 3.1b.** Increased awareness of good governance, accountability and social justice.

### **3.2 Key Activities**

- 3.2a:** Provide conflict sensitivity and Early Warning/Early Response

(EWER) training in various areas of governance

- 3.2b: Support communities to identify drivers of conflicts and establish grievance-handling mechanisms through reconciliation/mediation
  - 3.2c: Develop nonviolent interventions to promote good governance and de-escalate tensions
- 

#### 5.4 **Objective 4.0:** Promote ethical leadership and responsible lifestyle among young people

##### 4.1 **Expected outcomes**

- 4.1a. Increased youth interest and participation in good governance.
- 4.1b. Growth in the number of youths adopting drug-free, healthy and responsible lifestyles.

##### 4.2 **Key Activities**

- 4.2a: Conduct training on ethical leadership and responsible citizenship.
  - 4.2b: Foster partnerships to combat drug & substance abuse among young people
  - 4.2c: Facilitate youth-centered cultural, creative and recreational initiatives that promote unity and responsible engagement
- 

#### 5.5 **Objective 5.0:** Empower destitute and vulnerable women and youth to become self-reliant and build a safer world for themselves

##### 5.1 **Expected Outcomes**

- 5.1a. Increased participation of women and youth in income-generating activities.
- 5.1b. Improved access to education and healthcare for vulnerable children.

##### 5.2 **Key Activities**

- 5.2a: Conduct empowerment and entrepreneurial trainings for the less privileged women and youth
  - 5.2b: Provide free healthcare services and educational scholarship for the vulnerable members of the society
  - 5.2c: Equip stakeholders with skills to eliminate gender-based violence and child abuse
- 

#### 5.6 **Objective 6.0:** Expand Climate Change and Environmental Programs

##### 6.1 **Expected Outcomes:**

- 6.1a. Local actors actively participate in climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability initiatives.

**6.1b.** Increased community engagement in climate action

**6.2 Key Activities**

**6.2a:** Conduct community sensitization on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**6.2b:** Collaborate with organizations to design and implement environmentally friendly programs.

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**5.7 Objective 7.0: Strengthen institutional capacity and operations**

**7.1 Expected Outcome**

Improved operations and members performance for efficiency

**7.2 Key Activities**

**7.2a:** Carry out capacity building programs for members

**7.2b:** Prioritize staff welfare and performance appraisals

**7.2c:** Provide continuous orientation on COFP and other relevant policies

**7.2d:** Organize resource mobilization and fundraising events

# CHAPTER SIX



## FIVE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

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### 6.1 Roadmap Framework

An implementation plan is the practical engine of this 5-year strategic plan, translating strategic goals into concrete actions, timelines, responsibilities and measurable outcomes. In advancing the goal of driving community-led social change by strengthening good governance, building resilience and promoting sustainable peace and development, the implementation plan provides a clear roadmap that guides programs and partnerships, ensures efficient use of resources, and promotes accountability and local ownership. By breaking long-term goal into phased objectives and community-focused interventions, it enables inclusive participation, supports adaptive responses to emerging challenges and integrates monitoring and learning for continuous improvement. Ultimately, a strong implementation plan like this ensures that strategic intentions are systematically executed and transformed into lasting, community-driven impact.

### 6.2 Five Year Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan

#### 2026-2030 Intervention Logic

**Overall Strategic Goal**

**To drive community-led social change by advancing good governance, strengthening resilience and building sustainable peace and development in Africa.**

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	Means of Verification (MoV)	Timeline	Assumption
<p><b>Objective 1.0:</b> Strengthening local peacebuilding capacities and resilience</p>				
<p><b>1.1 Expected Outcomes</b></p>				
<p>1.1a. Community and religious actors are recognized and supported as key peacebuilders</p>				
<p>1.1b. Increased acceptance of faith/community actors in peace processes</p>				
<p><b>1.2 Key Activities</b></p>				
<p><b>1.2a:</b> Build the capacity of peace actors in interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation and peace</p> <p><b>1.2b:</b> Deploy religious and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to educate the public on the importance of peaceful coexistence.</p> <p><b>1.2c:</b> Leverage social media platforms, media organizations and strategic stakeholders to promote freedom of religion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of peace actors trained</li> <li>• Numbers of workshops and seminars held</li> <li>• Quantity of IEC materials produced and distributed</li> <li>• Number of traditional and social media organizations partnered with.</li> <li>• Number of media organizations and digital platforms engaged</li> <li>• Number of advocacy and awareness activities conducted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Surveys/Interviews, evaluation notes</li> <li>• Photograph</li> <li>• Workshop reports</li> <li>• IEC materials (Fellowship Yearbook)</li> <li>• Video clips, Media links,</li> <li>• Jingles, Posts</li> <li>• Campaign records</li> <li>• Podcasts, program database</li> <li>• Recorded Webinars/zoom</li> <li>• News report</li> <li>• News report</li> <li>• Weblinks</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellows and other participants equipped as agents of peace</li> <li>• Relevant documents produced for educating and broadening the knowledge of participants in peacebuilding</li> <li>• More people reached and sensitized on peace through various social media outlets</li> <li>• Fellowships and other peace programs conducted effectively</li> <li>• Communities empowered to live more peacefully</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective 2.0:</b> Increase women and youth participation in local peace processes</p> <p><b>2.1 Expected Outcomes</b>                  2.1a. Mechanisms for women and youth participation in peace processes are strengthened.                  2.1b. Increased engagement of women and youth in intergenerational peacebuilding dialogue                  2.1c. Functional intergenerational dialogue platforms established</p>				
<p><b>2.2 Key Activities</b></p> <p><b>2.2a:</b> Promote intergenerational dialogue by equipping women and youth with skills in peacebuilding</p> <p><b>2.2b:</b> Partner with local and international organizations engaged in peace processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women and youth trained</li> <li>• Number of training workshops conducted</li> <li>• Increased participation rates</li> <li>• Numbers of local and international partnerships formed</li> <li>• Numbers of joint peace activities implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Participants feedback</li> <li>• Video/photo evidence</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• News report</li> <li>• Dialogue reports</li> <li>• MOU/contract agreements signed</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More women and youth trained and actively participating in intergenerational dialogue</li> <li>• More organizations willing to engage in partnership</li> <li>• Altitude of some youth and elderly people portrayed rigidity towards intergenerational actions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3.0:</b> Support inclusive and effective governance for social change</p> <p><b>3.1: Expected Outcomes</b>                  3.1a. Citizens understand and exercise their civic rights and responsibilities peacefully during and after elections.                  3.1b. Increased awareness of good governance, accountability and social justice.</p>				
<p><b>3.2 Key Activities</b></p> <p><b>3.2a:</b> Provide conflict sensitivity and Early Warning/Early Response (EWER) training in various areas of governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of individuals trained</li> <li>• Number of EWER training provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys, Attendance</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• News/training reports</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants become more knowledgeable on EWER mechanism</li> <li>• Citizens become more aware of their fundamental human</li> </ul>

<p><b>3.2b:</b> Support communities to identify drivers of conflicts and establish grievance-handling mechanisms through reconciliation/mediation</p> <p><b>3.2c:</b> Develop nonviolent interventions to promote good governance and de-escalate tensions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of communities supported</li> <li>• Number of mediation channels created</li>   <li>• Numbers of interventions implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peacebuilding networks created</li> <li>• IEC materials</li> <li>• Testimonies from communities</li> </ul>		<p>rights and willing to exercise them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in election violence</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4.0:</b> Promote ethical leadership and responsible lifestyle among young people</p> <p><b>4.1 Expected Outcomes</b></p> <p>4.1a. Increased youth interest and participation in good governance.</p> <p>4.1b. Growth in the number of youths adopting drug-free, healthy, and responsible lifestyles.</p>				
<p><b>4.2 Key Activities</b></p> <p><b>4.2a:</b> Conduct training on ethical leadership and responsible citizenship.</p> <p><b>4.2b:</b> Foster partnerships to combat drug &amp; substance abuse among young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of trainings conducted</li> <li>• Number of youths trained and benefitting</li>   <li>• Number of partnerships formed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Community feedback</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• Videos coverage</li> <li>• Program reports</li>   <li>• List of IEC materials used</li> <li>• List of supporting</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities acquired necessary skills to engage in peacebuilding</li> <li>• Increased youth civic engagement</li>   <li>• Many young people ready to live drug free life while some continued with the struggle</li> </ul>

<p><b>4.2c:</b> Facilitate youth-centered cultural, creative, and recreational initiatives that promote unity and responsible engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of youth centered programs conducted</li> </ul>	<p>materials provided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOU/Contract agreement signed</li> <li>• Communique produced</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networks for peace and community development established</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5.0:</b> Empower destitute and vulnerable women and youth to become self-reliant and build a safer world for themselves</p> <p><b>5.1 Expected Outcomes</b>                      5.1a. Increased participation of women and youth in income-generating activities.                      5.1b. Improved access to education and healthcare for vulnerable children.</p>				
<p><b>5.2 Key Activities</b></p> <p><b>5.2a:</b> Conduct empowerment and entrepreneurial trainings for the less privileged women and youth</p> <p><b>5.2b:</b> Provide free healthcare services and educational scholarship for the vulnerable members of the society</p> <p><b>5.2c:</b> Equip stakeholders with skills to eliminate gender-based violence and child abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women and youth trained</li> <li>• Number of trainings and services delivered</li> <li>• Number of beneficiaries supported</li> <li>• Number of outreach/scholarships programs conducted</li> <li>• Number of actors equipped</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of starter kits provided</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Media posts</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Events/news Reports</li> <li>• Testimonies from beneficiaries</li> <li>• Interviews/surveys</li> <li>• School/health records</li> <li>• Program/evaluation Data base</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and youth become self-reliant</li> <li>• Improved access to health and education</li> <li>• Improved income-generating activities</li> <li>• Actors empowered in dealing with GBV and abuses</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective 6.0:</b> Expand Climate Change and Environmental Programs</p> <p><b>6.1 Expected Outcomes</b>                  6.1a. Local actors actively participate in climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability initiatives.                  6.1b. Increased community engagement in climate action</p>				
<p><b>6.2 Key Activities</b></p>				
<p><b>6.2a:</b> Conduct community sensitization on climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p><b>6.2b:</b> Collaborate with organizations to design and implement environmentally friendly programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of sensitization programs conducted</li> <li>• Numbers of participants reached</li> <li>• Number of local actors participating</li> <li>• Number of partner organizations engaged</li> <li>• Number of environmental programs implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Pictures</li> <li>• Videos coverages</li> <li>• Campaign Reports</li> <li>• News/media reports</li> <li>• Advocacy materials used</li> <li>• MOU/Contract agreements signed</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities become aware of their responsibilities in mitigating climate change</li> <li>• More young people showed interest in climate change actions</li> <li>• More environmentally friendly programs initiated</li> <li>• Organizations interested and willing to collaborate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 7.0:</b> Strengthen institutional capacity and operations</p> <p><b>7.1 Expected Outcome</b>                  Improved operations and members performance for efficiency</p>				
<p><b>7.2 Key Activities</b></p>				
<p><b>7.2a:</b> Carry out capacity building programs for members</p> <p><b>7.2b:</b> Prioritize staff welfare and performance appraisals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of trainings conducted and members trained</li> <li>• Number of incentives and appraisals carried out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building trainings attended</li> <li>• Training certificates received</li> <li>• Policy documents used</li> </ul>	<p>5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacities of members improved</li> <li>• Members showed more commitment</li> <li>• Members become more motivated with welfare</li> </ul>

<p><b>7.2c:</b> Provide continuous orientation on COFP and other relevant policies</p> <p><b>7.2d:</b> Organize resource mobilization and fundraising events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of orientation sessions held</li> <li>• Number of resource mobilization/fundraising events organized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building reports</li> <li>• Appraisal reports</li> <li>• Awards/bonuses received</li> <li>• Feedbacks from management and members</li> <li>• Fundraising records</li> </ul>		<p>packages and feedbacks provided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with COFP and other relevant policies</li> <li>• Funds raised during resource mobilization events</li> </ul>
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# CHAPTER SEVEN



## STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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## Overview

To translate our vision into measurable impact, the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) will adopt an integrated approach that builds on internal strengths, harnesses external opportunities and drives systemic change across Nigeria and Africa. We recognize that transformation does not come through isolated actions, but through deliberate, collaborative, and sustained engagement. Our strategy rests on four interlinked pillars: partnerships, capacity building, financial sustainability and innovation/AI.

### 7.1 Strategic Partnerships with other Organizations

No organization achieves transformative peace in isolation. Experience has shown that collective impact thrives where alliances are intentional and strategic. COFP will therefore deepen and expand partnerships with organizations that share our vision of ethical leadership, interreligious dialogue, peacebuilding and social justice. We will prioritize networks that promote inclusivity, amplify marginalized voices and align with locally-driven solutions to conflict. Through shared resources, co-created programs and joint advocacy, we will strengthen the infrastructure of peace across communities in Nigeria and the wider African continent. Partnerships will not only multiply our reach but also create durable ecosystems of peace that outlast individual projects.

#### 7.1.1 Build and Strengthen Capacities of the COFP Team and her Local Partners

Sustainable peace requires more than financial grants; it demands the empowerment of people, institutions, and communities. COFP will invest in the professional growth of its internal team while simultaneously enhancing the skills of local partners, especially grassroots actors who live closest to the realities of conflict. Through training in mediation, dialogue facilitation, nonviolent communication and governance, we will nurture leaders who embody resilience and integrity. This two-tiered capacity-building model, internal and external, ensures that COFP becomes not only a convener of peace but also a catalyst for equipping African communities with the tools to resolve conflicts from within.

#### 7.1.2 Expanding Financial Mobilization and Sustainability

The ambition of this strategic plan will only be realized with robust and diversified financial resources. COFP will develop an innovative resource mobilization strategy that blends philanthropy, institutional grants and sustainable social enterprises. We will strengthen donor engagement through transparency, impact-driven reporting and cultivating long-term relationships anchored in shared values. At the same time, we will explore creative financing models, including endowment funds and ventures, to ensure our independence and sustainability. By linking financial stewardship to mission-driven outcomes,

COFP will secure the means to drive systemic change for peace in Nigeria and Africa.

### **7.1.3 Structure and Process Alignment**

To strengthen our pursuit of excellence and accountability in achieving this strategic vision, we commit to aligning our structures and processes in the following ways:

- a. **Cultivate Dynamic Internal Systems:** We will build an organizational culture rooted in collaboration, adaptability and operational excellence, ensuring every effort drives collective impact.
- b. **Empower Our People:** We will continuously enhance the capacity, knowledge and skills of our team, providing them with the right tools and resources to effectively deliver on the strategic plan.
- c. **Unify Governance and Action:** Through seamless integration of staff, board/council, committees and volunteers, we will create a governance ecosystem that harmonizes roles and responsibilities in pursuit of shared objectives.
- d. **Commit to Strategic Discipline:** Every initiative will follow the established strategic process, ensuring focus, consistency and measurable progress toward our defined goals.

### **7.1.4 Advance M&E Learning (MEL)**

We will design a dynamic and results-driven SMART monitoring, evaluation and learning plan, anchored on clear performance indicators, to track the real impact of this strategic plan. This framework will not only measure progress but also generate timely insights through responsive feedback loops, empowering us to adapt, refine and act decisively. Every lesson learned will serve as a stepping stone, shaping and strengthening our future initiatives for greater effectiveness and sustainability.

### **7.1.5 Leveraging Innovation and Knowledge for Peace**

The rapidly changing dynamics of conflict shaped by digital technologies, misinformation, climate pressures and shifting political horizons require adaptive solutions. COFP will invest in research, data-driven programming and innovative technologies (Artificial Intelligence etc.) where necessary in order to stay ahead of emerging challenges. By integrating early warning systems, digital peace platforms and evidence-based policy recommendations, we will contribute to building resilient communities that can anticipate and mitigate violence before it escalates. Moreover, our role as a thought leader will be strengthened through the publication of knowledge products, engagement in policy dialogues and the dissemination of African-inspired frameworks for sustainable peace.

## 7.2 Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Human-Centered Peacebuilding

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly shaping how people communicate, organize, and respond to crises. In Nigeria and across Africa, digital tools influence political life, social relationships and the spread of ideas, sometimes strengthening civic engagement, but often deepening divisions through misinformation, hate speech and manipulation of identity. These realities make technology an unavoidable part of today's conflict and peace dynamics. For the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP), any engagement with AI must be guided by ethics, human dignity and respect for community ownership. Peace cannot be imposed by technology, nor sustained without trust, dialogue and moral responsibility. Technology must therefore remain a servant of humanity, supporting peacebuilders rather than replacing them.

### 7.2.1 Strategic Use of AI

When ethically deployed, AI can support COFP's strategic plan in multiple ways, including:

1. Early Warning and Conflict Prevention - AI strengthens COFP's preventive approach by enhancing early warning and response mechanisms. Through analysis of community-level data, media trends and digital narratives, it helps identify emerging tensions and conflict triggers, enabling timely interventions and engagement before violence escalates.
2. Countering Hate Speech and Misinformation - AI enhances COFP's efforts to address hate speech, misinformation and divisive narratives, particularly during elections or periods of social tension. By supporting monitoring and peace-focused messaging, it contributes to social cohesion and promotes narratives grounded in dignity, mutual respect and unity in diversity.
3. Strengthening Dialogue, Mediation, and Interfaith Engagement - AI supports COFP's dialogue and mediation initiatives by improving access to information, documentation and language support. This strengthens inclusive participation in interfaith and community dialogue while allowing COFP to focus on relationship-building and trust.
4. Empowering Youth and Women as Peace Actors - AI expands access to peace education, leadership development and digital literacy for youth and women. It equips them with skills to engage constructively, counter harmful narratives, and contribute meaningfully to peace and social transformation.
5. Enhancing Research, Learning and Policy Advocacy - AI strengthens COFP's research, monitoring, evaluation and learning systems through

data analysis and evidence generation. This supports policy advocacy, informed programming and strategic decision-making, ensuring that COFP's interventions remain responsive, context-sensitive and impact-driven.

While AI applications are valuable tools, COFP recognizes that peace is fundamentally a human process. Algorithms cannot replace empathy, reconciliation, or the work of rebuilding relationships. Used responsibly, AI can support community-owned peacebuilding by freeing human actors to listen more carefully, engage more meaningfully and respond more wisely, thereby amplifying peace narratives, strengthening resilience and advancing COFP's goal of community-led social change.

### **7.2.2 Strategic Guiding Principles for Ethical Use of AI**

1. **Human-Centered Peacebuilding** - AI shall support, not replace, human judgment, empathy, dialogue and relationship-building at the heart of COFP's strategic plan.
2. **Ethical Use and Accountability**- AI applications shall uphold human dignity, justice, transparency and responsibility, with clear oversight to prevent bias, harm, or misuse.
3. **Community Ownership and Inclusion**- AI applications shall actively involve communities, peace actors, faith leaders, youth and women in shaping how AI is used. This means listening to their perspectives, respecting local knowledge, incorporating their feedback into decisions and ensuring they have a sense of shared control and benefit from AI tools. Engagement should foster trust, equitable participation and transparency in all AI-related processes.
4. **Conflict Sensitivity and Do-No-Harm** - AI shall be applied with deep awareness of local contexts and conflict dynamics, avoiding practices that could escalate tensions, reinforce stereotypes or marginalize groups.
5. **Data Protection and Privacy**- COFP shall protect personal and community data by collecting only what is necessary, obtaining informed consent, anonymizing and using of Chatham house rules on sensitive information, securing data with restricted access, retaining it only as required and sharing it responsibly in line with human rights standards, local laws and ethical review.

### **7.3 Conflict Sensitivity and Do-No-Harm Strategy**

The implementation of this Strategic Plan will be guided by a strong commitment to conflict sensitivity and the Do-No-Harm principle across all thematic areas, including peacebuilding, governance, youth and women empowerment, humanitarian action and climate programming. The Foundation recognizes that

interventions operate within complex social, political, and cultural contexts and may unintentionally exacerbate tensions if not carefully designed and managed. As such, conflict sensitivity is mainstreamed throughout planning, implementation, monitoring and learning processes.

All programs will be informed by participatory conflict and stakeholder analyses conducted at inception and updated periodically to identify conflict drivers, dividers, connectors, power relations and context-specific risks. These analyses will guide targeting, activity design, partner selection and resource allocation, particularly during sensitive periods such as elections, communal disputes, humanitarian emergencies or climate-induced shocks. Early warning and early response mechanisms will be integrated to enable timely adaptation of interventions.

Implementation will prioritize inclusive, equitable and transparent approaches to avoid perceptions of bias or exclusion. Special attention will be given to gender, youth, religious, ethnic and socio-economic dynamics to ensure that interventions promote social cohesion rather than reinforce existing inequalities. Women, youth, marginalized groups and minority communities will be meaningfully engaged in decision-making, implementation and monitoring processes. COFP will apply the Do-No-Harm framework to ensure that program resources, partnerships, messaging and incentives do not fuel grievances or competition.

Staff and partners will be trained on conflict sensitivity, ethical engagement, safeguarding and impartiality. Communication strategies will be culturally appropriate and non-inflammatory, and mechanisms will be in place to prevent political manipulation, elite capture or misuse of resources. Community engagement and local ownership will be central to implementation. Peace actors, Traditional, faith-based and community leaders will be engaged as peace connectors, mediators and agents of change while ensuring accountability and inclusiveness. Feedback, complaints and accountability mechanisms will enable communities to report concerns, unintended negative effects or emerging tensions, allowing for responsive and adaptive management.

Conflict sensitivity and Do-No-Harm principles will be institutionalized through organizational policies, MEAL systems, risk management frameworks and staff performance standards. Monitoring tools will track both intended results and unintended effects on conflict dynamics, social cohesion and trust. Lessons learned will be documented and used to continuously improve programming.

Through this integrated approach, COFP ensures that implementation of this strategic plan not only avoids harm but actively contributes to reducing tensions, strengthening resilience, promoting peaceful coexistence and advancing sustainable peace, good governance and inclusive development throughout the five-year period.



# CHAPTER EIGHT



## FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FRAMEWORK

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## **8.1 Five-Year Strategic Plan Budget**

This budget presents the projected financial requirements for implementing the 5-year COFP strategic plan, organized by strategic objective and major cost categories. It outlines planned investments in peacebuilding and resilience programs, women and youth participation, inclusive governance, ethical leadership development, climate change and environmental initiatives and empowerment of vulnerable groups, alongside institutional strengthening and operational costs. The budget reflects phased annual allocations aligned with strategic priorities, implementation timelines and expected outcomes, ensuring efficient use of resources and value for money. Provisions for monitoring and evaluation, risk management, partnerships and administrative support are integrated to enhance accountability, transparency and sustainability. Overall, the budget provides a clear financial summary and snapshot of how resources will be allocated to achieve the strategic goals along with strategies for mobilizing resources over the five-year period.

### 8.2 5 - Year Budget Summary 2026-2030

Strategic Objectives	2026 USD (\$)	2027 USD (\$)	2028 USD (\$)	2029 USD (\$)	2030 USD (\$)	Total USD (\$)
<b>Objective 1.0:</b> Strengthening local peacebuilding capacities and resilience	300,000	330,000	363,000	399,300	439,230	1,831,530
<b>Objective 2.0:</b> Increase women and youth participation in local peace processes	93,000	102,300	112,530	123,783	136,161	567,774
<b>Objective 3.0:</b> Support inclusive and effective governance for social change	110,000	121,000	133,100	146,410	161,051	671,561
<b>Objective 4.0:</b> Promote ethical leadership and responsible lifestyle among young people	68,000	74,800	82,280	90,508	99,559	415,147
<b>Objective 5.0:</b> Empower destitute and vulnerable women and youth to become self-reliant and build a safer world for themselves	86,000	94,600	104,060	114,466	125,913	525,039
<b>Objective 6.0:</b> Expand Climate Change and Environmental Programs	120,000	132,000	145,200	159,720	175,692	732,612
<b>Objective 7.0:</b> Strengthen institutional capacity and operations	50,000	55,000	60,500	66,550	73,205	305,255
<b>Total for each Year</b>	<b>827,000</b>	<b>909,700</b>	<b>1,000,670</b>	<b>1,100,737</b>	<b>1,210,811</b>	
<b>Grand Total for Five Years</b>						<b>5,048,918</b>

### 8.3 Resource Mobilization and Donor Engagement

Our strategic goals intersect peacebuilding, governance, social inclusion, resilience, youth engagement, women's empowerment, climate and community development all of which are priority areas for many global and regional donors, Foundations and development agencies.

Below is a breakdown of relevant funding categories that COFP will explore to secure resources needed for achieving its strategic outcomes.

#### 8.3.1 Funding Landscape and Opportunities

- I. Multilateral and International Development Agencies
- II. Bilateral Donors / Government Agencies
- III. Global & International Foundations/Organizations
- IV. Regional Funding organizations
- V. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) & Private Sector

#### 8.3.2 Strategic Positioning: Matching Funding to Our Strategic Plan

Since our strategic objectives naturally align with global development priorities, we will approach both the organizations listed here and those not listed here for collaboration. Here are the practical ways to position our plan for funding success:

##### Peace & Governance

- We will align with USAID DRG, EU Democracy & Human Rights, UN Peacebuilding windows, World Bank, SIDA, DFID, AU bodies, other Government and Intergovernmental organizations, International NGOs, private Foundations and Institutions, etc.
- Emphasize conflict transformation, peacebuilding, governance, social change, human rights, community development, etc

##### Women & Youth Participation

- We will target Conrad Hilton Foundation, Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, GHR Foundation, Bill Gate Foundation, Global Fund for Women, Mastercard Foundation, other Government and Intergovernmental organizations, International NGOs, private Foundations and Institutions, CSR, etc.
- Emphasize leadership pipelines and economic inclusion

##### Climate & Environment

- Target Government and Intergovernmental organizations, International NGOs, private Foundations and Institutions, CSR, GCF/Adaptation

Fund/GEF Small Grants, etc

- Link climate adaptation with community resilience and livelihoods

Institutional Strengthening

- Many donors support capacity building and organizational governance
- Pitch as essential for achieving sustainability and impact

### **8.3.3 COFP Best Practices for Securing Funding**

1. Develop a Strong Donor Engagement Strategy
2. Strengthen Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting
3. Leverage Strategic Partnerships
4. Diversify Funding Streams
5. Ensure Compliance and Accreditation



# CHAPTER NINE



## MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

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## 9.1 MEAL Framework

The essence of this Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) plan is to ensure that we effectively deliver on the goals and objectives of this Strategic Plan, as it ensures that implementation remains results-focused, transparent and adaptive. Monitoring tracks progress against planned objectives, indicators, timelines and budgets, allowing us to identify gaps early and make timely adjustments. Evaluation assesses the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency and impact of our interventions, generating evidence on what works and informing strategic decision-making. Accountability enable us to strengthen trust with project communities, donors and partners by ensuring transparency, ethical practice and responsiveness through feedback and complaints mechanisms. Learning promotes continuous improvement giving us the opportunity to use data, evaluations and community feedback to refine strategies, scale successful approaches and address emerging risks. In all, MEAL enable us to provide evidence-based planning, adaptive management and sustained impact, ensuring that the Strategic Plan delivers meaningful, measurable and accountable results over the five-year period. Thus, this MEAL serves as a strategic tool that strengthens our institutional effectiveness.

## 9.2 2026-2030 M&E Framework

Strategic Objectives	Outcome	Key Activities	Output	KPI (Key Performance Indicators)	Responsible	Frequency	MOV (Means of Verification)
<b>Objective 1.0</b> Strengthening local peacebuilding capacities and resilience	<b>1.1a.</b> Community and religious actors are recognized and supported as key peacebuilders	<b>Activity 1.2a</b> Build the capacity of peace actors in interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation and peace	<b>Output 1.2a</b> Peace actors trained Capacity of actors built	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of peace actors trained</li> <li>• Numbers of workshops and seminars held</li> <li>• Quantity of IEC materials produced and distributed</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Surveys/Interviews, evaluation notes</li> <li>• Photograph</li> <li>• Workshop reports</li> <li>• IEC materials (Fellowship Yearbook)</li> </ul>

**Chapter Nine:** Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability And Learning (meal)

	<p><b>1.1b.</b> Increased acceptance of faith/community actors in peace processes</p>	<p><b>Activity 1.2b</b> Deploy religious and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to educate the public on the importance of peaceful coexistence</p> <p><b>Activity 1.2c</b> Leverage social media platforms, media organizations and strategic stakeholders to promote freedom of religion.</p>	<p><b>Output 1.2b</b> Religious texts and IEC materials deployed in educating the public</p> <p><b>Output 1.2c</b> Social media platforms, media organizations and other relevant stakeholders leveraged</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of traditional and social media organizations partnered with.</li> <li>• Number of media organizations and digital platforms engagements</li> <li>• Number of advocacy and awareness activities conducted</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video clips, Media links,</li> <li>• Jingles, Posts</li> <li>• Campaign records</li> <li>• Podcasts, program database</li> <li>• Recorded Webinars/zoom</li> <li>• News report</li> <li>• Weblinks</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2.0</b> Increase women and youth participation in local peace processes</p>	<p><b>2.1a.</b> Mechanisms for women and youth participation in peace processes are strengthened.</p> <p><b>2.1b.</b> Increased engagement of</p>	<p><b>Activity 2.2a</b> Promote intergenerational dialogue by equipping women and youth with skills in peacebuilding</p> <p><b>Activity 2.2b</b> Partner with local and international</p>	<p><b>Output 2.2a</b> Intergenerational dialogue promoted by equipping women and youth with the needed skills</p> <p><b>Output 2.2b</b> Partnerships developed with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women and youth trained</li> <li>• Number of training workshops conducted</li> <li>• Increased participation rates</li> <li>• Numbers of local and international partnerships formed</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Participants feedback</li> <li>• Video/photo evidence</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Media coverage</li> <li>• News report</li> <li>• Events reports</li> <li>• MOU/contract agreements signed</li> </ul>

**Chapter Nine:** Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability And Learning (meal)

	women and youth in intergenerational peacebuilding dialogue  <b>2.1c.</b> Functional intergenerational dialogue platforms established	organizations engaged in peace processes	local and international organizations in peace processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of joint peace activities implemented</li> </ul>			
<b>Objective 3.0</b> Support inclusive and effective governance for social change	<p><b>3.1a Citizens</b> understand and exercise their civic rights and responsibilities peacefully during and after elections.</p> <p><b>3.1b.</b> Increased awareness of good governance, accountability, and social justice</p>	<p><b>Activity 3.2a</b> Provide conflict sensitivity and Early Warning/Early Response (EWER) training in various areas of governance</p> <p><b>Activity 3.2b</b> Support communities to identify drivers of conflicts and establish grievance-handling mechanisms</p>	<p><b>Output 3.2a</b> Conflict sensitivity and Early warning/Early response trainings provided in various areas of governance</p> <p><b>Output 3.2b</b> communities supported to identify drivers of conflicts and channels of addressing grievances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of individuals trained</li> <li>• Number of EWER trainings provided</li> <li>• Number of communities supported</li> <li>• Number of mediation channels created</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Biennially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys, Attendance</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• Videos coverage</li> <li>• News/training reports</li> <li>• Peacebuilding networks created</li> <li>• IEC materials</li> <li>• Testimonies from communities</li> </ul>

		through reconciliation/mediation	through reconciliation/mediation established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of interventions implemented</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Objective 4.0</b> Promote ethical leadership and responsible lifestyle among young people</p>	<p><b>4.1a.</b> Increased youth interest and participation in good governance.</p> <p><b>4.1b.</b> Growth in the number of youths adopting drug-free, healthy, and responsible lifestyles.</p>	<p><b>Activity 4.2a</b> Conduct training on ethical leadership and responsible citizenship.</p> <p><b>Activity 4.2b</b> Foster partnerships to combat drug &amp; substance abuse among young people</p>	<p><b>Output 4.2a</b> Training on responsible citizenry and ethical leadership conducted</p> <p><b>Output 4.2b</b> Partnerships to combat Drug &amp; Substance Abuse/Addiction among the young people formed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of trainings conducted</li> <li>• Number of youths trained and benefitting</li> <li>• Number of partnerships formed</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Community feedback</li> <li>• Video coverage</li> <li>• program reports</li> <li>• List of IEC materials used</li> <li>• List of supporting materials provided</li> <li>• MOU/Contract agreement signed</li> <li>• Communique produced</li> </ul>

		<b>Activity 4.2c</b> Facilitate youth-centered cultural, creative, and recreational initiatives that promote unity and responsible engagement	<b>Output 4.2c</b> Youth-focused cultural, creative, and recreational programs implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of youth centered programs conducted</li> </ul>			
<b>Objective 5.0:</b> Empower destitute and vulnerable women and youth to become self-reliant and build a safer world for themselves	<b>5.1a</b> Increased participation of women and youth in income-generating activities.	<b>Activity 5.2a</b> Conduct empowerment and entrepreneurial trainings for the less privileged women and youth	<b>Output 5.2a</b> Empowerment & entrepreneurial trainings for the less privileged women and youth conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women and youth trained</li> <li>• Number of trainings and services delivered</li> <li>• Number of beneficiaries supported</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of starter kits provided</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Media posts</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• IEC materials</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Programs Reports</li> <li>• Testimonies from beneficiaries</li> <li>• Interviews/surveys</li> <li>• Health/school records</li> <li>• COFP Data base</li> </ul>
	<b>5.1b.</b> Improved access to education and healthcare for vulnerable children	<b>Activity 5.2b:</b> Provide free healthcare services and educational scholarship for the vulnerable members of the society	<b>Output 5.2b</b> Free healthcare services and educational scholarship for the vulnerable members of the society provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of outreach/scholarships programs conducted</li> </ul>			

**Chapter Nine:** Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability And Learning (meal)

		<b>Activity 5.2c</b> Equip stakeholders with skills to eliminate gender-based violence and child abuse	<b>Output 5.2c</b> Actors equipped on eliminating gender-based violence and child abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of actors equipped</li> </ul>			
<b>Objective 6.0</b> Expand Climate Change and Environmental Programs	<b>6.1a</b> Local actors actively participate in climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability initiatives	<b>Activity 6.2a</b> Conduct community sensitization on climate change adaptation and mitigation.	<b>Output 6.2a</b> Community sensitization programs on adapting and mitigating climate change conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of sensitization programs conducted</li> <li>• Numbers of participants reached</li> <li>• Number of local actors participating</li> <li>• Numbers of partner organizations engaged</li> <li>• Number of environmental programs implemented</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• Videos coverages</li> <li>• Campaign Reports</li> <li>• News/media reports</li> <li>• Advocacy materials used</li> <li>• MOU/Contract agreements signed</li> </ul>
	<b>6.1b</b> Increased community engagement in climate action	<b>Activity 6.2b</b> Collaborate with organizations to design and implement environmentally friendly programs.	<b>Output 6.2b</b> Collaborated with other organizations in designing and implementing environmentally friendly programs				
<b>Objective 7.0</b> Strengthen institutional capacity and operations	Improved operations and members performance for efficiency	<b>Activity 7.2a</b> Carry out capacity building programs for members	<b>Output 7.2a</b> capacity building trainings/programs for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of trainings conducted and members trained</li> </ul>	COFP and Partners	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building trainings attended</li> <li>• Training certificates received</li> </ul>

		<p><b>Activity 7.2b</b> Prioritize staff welfare and performance appraisals</p> <p><b>Activity 7.2c</b> Provide continuous orientation on COFP and other relevant policies</p> <p><b>Activity 7.2d</b> Organize resource mobilization and fundraising events</p>	<p>members carried out</p> <p><b>Output 7.2b</b> Members welfare and periodic appraisal of staff performances prioritized</p> <p><b>Output 7.2c</b> Policies reinforced through continuous reorientation</p> <p><b>Output 7.2d</b> Resource mobilization events organized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of incentives and appraisals carried out</li> <li>• Number of orientation sessions held</li> <li>• Number of resource mobilization/fundraising events organized</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy documents used</li> <li>• Capacity building reports</li> <li>• Appraisal reports</li> <li>• Awards/bonuses received</li> <li>• Feedbacks from management and members</li> <li>• Financial records</li> <li>• Fundraising records</li> </ul>
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# CHAPTER TEN



## RISK ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

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## 10.1 Overview of Strategic and Operational Risk

The risk matrix table below is an important component of our strategic plan as it demonstrates our ability to anticipate, manage and mitigate internal and external risks that may affect the achievement of our planned results. It supports informed decision-making, realistic planning and efficient allocation of resources while enhancing accountability, transparency and good governance. The importance of having this risk analysis or matrix is to provide assurance that potential threats have been systematically assessed and that practical mitigation measures are in place to ensure effective implementation, adaptability to changing contexts and sustainability of program outcomes.

## 10.2 Strategic Plan Risk Matrix

Strategic Objectives/Expected Outcomes	Key Risks	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
<b>1.1 Expected Outcomes</b> 1.1a. Community and religious actors are recognized and supported as key peacebuilders 1.1b. Increased acceptance of faith/community actors in peace processes				
1.0: Strengthen local peacebuilding capacities and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Resistance from local power holders or traditional actors</li> <li>● insecurity and ongoing conflict disrupting activities</li> <li>● Low trust in peacebuilding institutions/initiatives</li> </ul>	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage community gatekeepers and traditional leaders early</li> <li>● Apply conflict-sensitive and flexible programming</li> <li>● Build trust through inclusive dialogue, transparency, and local ownership</li> </ul>
<b>2.1 Expected Outcomes</b> 2.1a. Mechanisms for women and youth participation in peace processes are strengthened. 2.1b. Increased engagement of women and youth in intergenerational peacebuilding dialogue 2.1c. Functional intergenerational dialogue platforms established				
2.0: Increase women and youth participation in local peace processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deep-rooted cultural and gender norms limiting participation</li> <li>● Tokenistic inclusion without real influence</li> </ul>	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work with community leaders to promote social norm change</li> <li>● Ensure meaningful participation through clear roles and decision-making power</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limited capacity and confidence among women and youth</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide targeted leadership, advocacy, and peacebuilding skills training</li> </ul>
<b>3.1: Expected Outcomes</b> 3.1a. Citizens understand and exercise their civic rights and responsibilities peacefully during and after elections. 3.1b. Increased awareness of good governance, accountability and social justice.				
3.0: Support inclusive and effective governance for social change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Political interference or lack of political will</li> <li>● Low civic awareness and public distrust in governance systems</li> <li>● Electoral violence or governance-related tensions</li> </ul>	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain neutrality and non-partisan engagement</li> <li>● Strengthen civic education and rights awareness</li> <li>● Integrate early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms</li> </ul>
<b>4.1 Expected Outcomes</b> 4.1a. Increased youth interest and participation in good governance. 4.1b. Growth in the number of youths adopting drug-free, healthy, and responsible lifestyles.				
4.0: Promote ethical leadership and responsible lifestyles among young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peer pressure, unemployment, and exposure to drugs and crime</li> <li>● Limited positive role models</li> <li>● Weak collaboration with relevant institutions</li> </ul>	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pair leadership training with mentorship and life-skills programs</li> <li>● Partner with schools, faith institutions, and youth networks</li> <li>● Link ethical leadership initiatives to livelihood and empowerment programs</li> </ul>
<b>5.1 Expected Outcomes</b> 5.1a. Increased participation of women and youth in income-generating activities. 5.1b. Improved access to education and healthcare for vulnerable children.				
5.0: Empower destitute and vulnerable women and youth to help themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insufficient funding to sustain empowerment programs</li> <li>● Dependency syndrome among beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diversify funding and strengthen resource mobilization</li> <li>● Emphasize skills acquisition, entrepreneurship, and market linkages</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insecurity affecting outreach and service delivery</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement safeguarding, protection, and security protocols</li> </ul>
<b>6.1 Expected Outcomes</b> 6.1a. Local actors actively participate in climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability initiatives. 6.1b. Increased community engagement in climate action				
6.0: Expand climate change and environmental programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Low community awareness or prioritization of climate issues</li> <li>● Limited technical expertise and resources</li> <li>● Climate shocks undermining planned activities</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Integrate climate education into community development programs</li> <li>● Partner with technical and environmental organizations</li> <li>● Promote locally appropriate, adaptive, and nature-based solutions</li> </ul>
<b>7.1 Expected Outcome</b> Improved operations and members performance for efficiency				
7.0: Strengthen institutional capacity and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff turnover and limited technical capacity</li> <li>● Weak internal systems</li> <li>● Over-reliance on donor funding</li> </ul>	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continuous capacity building and staff welfare</li> <li>● Strengthen governance, financial, and M&amp;E systems</li> <li>● Diversify funding sources and strengthen partnerships</li> </ul>

# CHAPTER ELEVEN



## MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

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## 11.1 Governance Framework

COFP operates a lean, accountable and results-oriented governance and management structure designed to ensure effective implementation of its 5-year Strategic plan. Strategic oversight and fiduciary responsibility are provided by an independent Governing Board and Council which ensures alignment with the organization's vision, mission, values and donor requirements. Day-to-day leadership and strategic execution of this plan are led by the Executive Director who is responsible for program delivery, partnerships, resource mobilization and organizational performance.

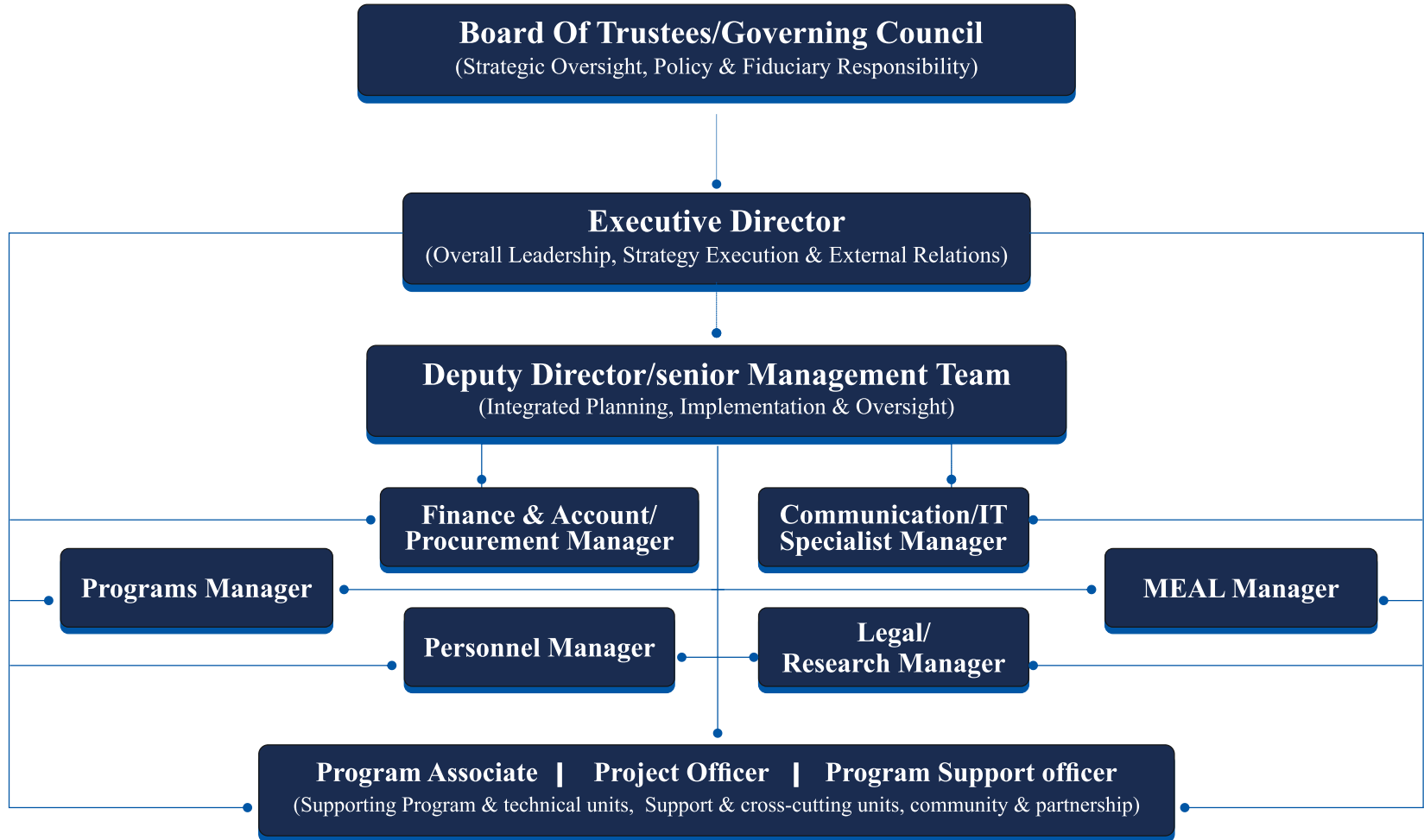
Program implementation is carried out by a small but competent Core Management and Program Team led by the Deputy Director, combining program officers, finance and administration, and a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) focal person. This integrated structure ensures strong coordination between program delivery, financial management and results tracking, while maintaining clear checks and balances. Community and partnership structures including community peace committees, women and youth groups, faith and traditional leaders and local partners are actively engaged to promote local ownership, sustainability and accountability.

This governance and management arrangement demonstrates COFP's commitment to transparency, prudent financial management, safeguarding, adaptive learning and effective risk management, providing donors with assurance of institutional capacity and readiness to deliver sustainable, community-led peace and development outcomes.

## 11.2 COFP Organogram

The functional map of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace below reflects a lean, functionally aligned structure designed to support the effective delivery of the Strategic Plan. It prioritizes decentralized strategic program implementation, led by Executive Director and supported by Deputy Director and a small Senior Management team that oversees core functions including programs, finance and administration, ensuring accountability, coordination and results-driven implementation across all activities.

# COFP Organogram



# CHAPTER TWELVE



## SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT STRATEGY

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## **12.1 Overview**

Sustainability is a core principle of this 5-Year Strategic Plan and is embedded across all thematic areas, partnerships and operational systems. The organization adopts a community-led and systems-strengthening approach to ensure that program outcomes are sustained beyond the life of external funding. All interventions are designed to build local capacity, strengthen institutions and promote ownership by communities and partners.

## **12.2 Programmatic Sustainability**

Programs will prioritize capacity strengthening of local peace actors, women, youth, faith and community leaders through skills transfer, mentorship and training-of-trainers models. Community peace structures, dialogue platforms, mediation mechanisms and environmental action groups will be established or strengthened and linked to existing traditional and formal governance systems to ensure continuity and local leadership.

## **12.3 Institutional and Partnership Sustainability**

Strategic partnerships with government institutions, civil society, faith-based organizations, NGOs and the private sector will be strengthened to embed interventions within existing policies and systems. Clear collaboration frameworks and MoUs will support shared ownership. Internally, investments in governance, human resources, financial management and Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) systems will enhance institutional resilience and credibility.

## **12.4 Financial Sustainability**

The organization will pursue a diversified resource mobilization strategy to reduce reliance on single funding sources. This includes engaging multiple donors, consortium partnerships, local fundraising, in-kind contributions and exploring cost-sharing or social enterprise opportunities where appropriate. Strong financial controls and donor compliance systems will underpin long-term funding relationships.

## **12.5 Environmental and Social Sustainability**

All programs will mainstream gender equality, youth inclusion, conflict sensitivity and environmental responsibility. Climate-smart and environmentally sustainable practices will be integrated to protect livelihoods and community assets.

## **12.6 Exit Strategy**

Exit strategies will be planned from project inception and implemented progressively. Responsibilities will be systematically transferred to trained community structures and partner institutions based on clear benchmarks, including functional local leadership, sustained initiatives and established coordination or referral mechanisms. Final evaluations and learning reviews will document lessons and support knowledge transfer to ensure lasting impact.

Through this approach, the organization ensures that the outcomes of the Strategic Plan are locally owned, resilient and capable of sustaining peace, good and inclusive development beyond the five-year period.





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**Five-Year  
Strategic Plan  
2026-2030**



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