



**SAFERWORLD**  
PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT. BUILDING SAFER LIVES

Strategic plan  
**2017–2021**

## 1. SECURITY AND JUSTICE



## 2. GENDER



## 3. UPHOLD PEACE NORMS



## 4. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY



## 5. INCLUSIVE PROCESSES



# SAFERWORLD

PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT. BUILDING SAFER LIVES

Saferworld was established in 1989, at a time when cold war politics gave way to a new period of conflict, unrest and the unchecked flow of weapons.

Since then our work has expanded internationally to embrace the diverse factors that drive conflict and insecurity. We work with partners across Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe, and we participate in the major global policy debates on peace and security.

We remain today at the forefront of conflict prevention and peacebuilding thinking and practice. The name Saferworld embodies our mission and the contributions we make to achieving safer, more inclusive and peaceful societies.

# What we do and how we work

## Our vision

We believe in a world where everyone can lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from fear and insecurity.

## Our mission

We work to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We believe there are essential conditions necessary for peace to become the norm. We work to create environments where the following three **'peace conditions'** are in place:

- People play an active role in preventing and transforming conflict and building peace.
- People have access to fair and effective paths to address the grievances and inequalities that drive conflict.
- People with influence exercise their power to promote just and equitable societies.

# SAFERWORLDS CHANGE MODEL

## OUR VISION

WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE CAN LEAD PEACEFUL, FULFILLING LIVES, FREE FROM FEAR AND INSECURITY.

WE WORK TO PREVENT VIOLENT CONFLICT AND BUILD SAFER LIVES



BY INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR

- EXTERNAL ACTORS
- AUTHORITIES
- CIVIL SOCIETY
- COMMUNITIES
- INDIVIDUALS

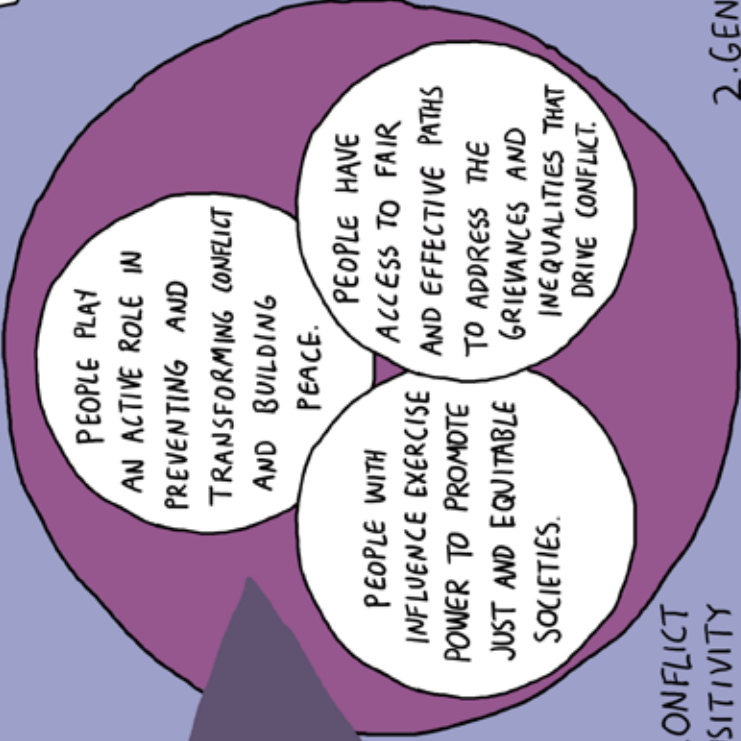


FOSTERING COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- LOCAL
- NATIONAL
- REGIONAL
- INTERNATIONAL

BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

TO CREATE ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR PEACE



IN 5 STRATEGIC AREAS

5. INCLUSIVE PROCESSES



4. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY



3. UPHOLD PEACE NORMS



2. GENDER



1. SECURITY AND JUSTICE



CONDITIONS FOR PEACE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

# Theory of change

Saferworld sets out to be an active participant in creating **the conditions in which peaceful and inclusive societies can flourish**. We work by **brokering and facilitating changes** – largely in the behaviour of and relationships between four categories of actor: **communities**, and key individuals within them; **civil society**, particularly socially-active institutions; **authorities**, both formal and informal, at all levels of society; and **external actors** who have power and influence, both negative and positive, in conflict-affected environments.

We work in a range of contexts where violence, instability, or open conflict is prevalent. We show that it is possible to support the development and implementation of sustainable local-level responses in places that are traumatised by violent conflict – such as South Sudan, Somalia, Pakistan and Yemen – by working with and alongside trusted, credible partners, and adapting our programmes as conflict dynamics shift. Using the evidence from our programming, we advocate for policy changes at national and international levels.

**We research, and advocate for, the practical application of lessons learnt from conflict prevention and peacebuilding programming**, and we broker civil society-governmental debate on global issues relevant to conflict prevention. We are effective at influencing global agreements and standards, and evaluations of our work on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have shown that we consistently achieve success at this level beyond our size and resources. In a world that prefers to sidestep complexity and address conflict in a piecemeal fashion, we promote holistic approaches that link human rights, humanitarianism, development and peace.

The action we take, both in the places where we work, and with regards to the policy agendas we focus on, is guided by **five long-term strategic objectives** (see p. 11). These allow the organisation to prioritise entry points – thematic, structural and societal – relevant to each context.

1. SECURITY AND JUSTICE
2. GENDER
3. UPHOLD PEACE NORMS
4. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY
5. INCLUSIVE PROCESSES

Together with our partners, we use expertise and tested methodologies founded on over 28 years of experience.

## Ways of working

- We use gender-sensitive conflict **analysis** to identify core drivers of violence and conflict, and opportunities for peace in any conflict system.
- We **identify key leaders, partners and networks or platforms**, and we work with and alongside them to facilitate community security and peacebuilding processes.
- We **strengthen the skills, capacity and expertise** of communities, civil society organisations (CSOs), local and national authorities, donor governments and regional institutions in community security, gender and conflict sensitivity, peacebuilding, arms flow control and justice sector reform.
- We operate as **trusted facilitators and brokers** in formal networks that bring diverse actors together to advocate for reform in policy and practice.
- We directly **advocate** for changes in the policies and practices that affect people's security and justice, and we challenge national and international actors to listen to the views and priorities of those living with insecurity and fear.
- We gather **evidence** about what works through our country-level programmes and global research. We **share** that knowledge widely – through roundtables, knowledge-sharing platforms and networks, conflict sensitivity helpdesks, and our website – and we apply the **learning** in our own programming.

Our role in fostering and accelerating positive change is augmented by the **technical expertise** and contextual insights we offer and share as a resource for others – adding value to the combined efforts of all those seeking peaceful and inclusive societies.

Batula Hassan, Chair of Mandeleo ya wanawake, is interviewed during Saferworld's County Peace Conference in Marsabit, Kenya, June 2015.  
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**Despite notable progress toward peace and stability in some contexts, we expect current global patterns of increased violence and population displacement to continue over the next four years, making conventional responses to conflict and insecurity increasingly inadequate.**

## Shifts in global trends

This is particularly true in states or parts of states deeply susceptible to fragmentation or breakdown (the World Bank April 2017 report *Helping Countries Navigate a Volatile Environment* estimates that 2 billion people live in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence). The growing numbers of armed conflicts continue to drive large numbers of people from their homes. The *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2016* shows that a total of 40.3 million people were displaced within their own country as a result of conflict and violence, some displaced for decades. The human cost is evident in the Middle East, Yemen and Syria in particular, as well as in many parts of Africa such as Nigeria, South Sudan and Somalia. In Asia there are tentative steps in Myanmar to achieve peaceful coexistence with armed groups – but peace is proving elusive; and in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh fear and anxiety is spreading due to the increase in the number of violent groups who target civilians.

Meanwhile state responses to conflict and insecurity are becoming unpredictable and increasingly led by domestic security and economic concerns, with the world questioning or rejecting the norms that govern international order. Political change across Europe and the US has potentially far-reaching global consequences, with a rise in populist nationalism shifting domestic and foreign policy towards greater reliance on defensive homeland security-type strategies to manage conflict and migration challenges. This trend is reinforced by a combination of public fear, media sensationalism and political opportunism. Short-term thinking is driving international actors to repeat familiar mistakes in conflict-affected contexts, seen in the adoption of top-down (quick-win) approaches to global human security challenges instead of alternative long-term, locally-led and sustainable solutions.

These approaches to security concerns end up becoming part of a self-reinforcing system, creating and sustaining a pervasive narrative that too often becomes an excuse for political opportunists to profit from society's fears, and governments to repress opposition groups, disregard civil liberties, and close civil society space. Unchecked, it is entrenching divisive, state-centric approaches and the pursuit of political alliances that ingrain exclusive, corrupt or abusive governance.

At the same time, the appetite for upholding global peacebuilding norms, including human rights principles, also appears to be diminishing. Russia's policies to recover its lost status, the unpredictability of US intentions, China's ambition as a world power, and unforeseen changes in European alliances and integration (the UK leaving the European Union is an example) show how quickly consensus can break down. The ongoing atrocities witnessed in Yemen, Syria and South Sudan illustrate both the routine flouting of international law and the international community's inability to tackle conflict and build genuine peace. This is evident in the increasing number of conflicts and violent attacks, and in the rise in asylum claims in western countries (1.3 million in Europe in 2015, twice the total of the previous year). Ominously, global military spending in 2016 was close to its all-time peak and is likely to rise further in 2017, while the irresponsible and negative flow of arms from producing and transit states is set to spread violence and human insecurity further.

What we are experiencing is an incremental shift away from long-term peacebuilding. Legitimate pathways to achieve stability and peace are being closed off when the need for greater inclusion, and more just societies, could not be greater.

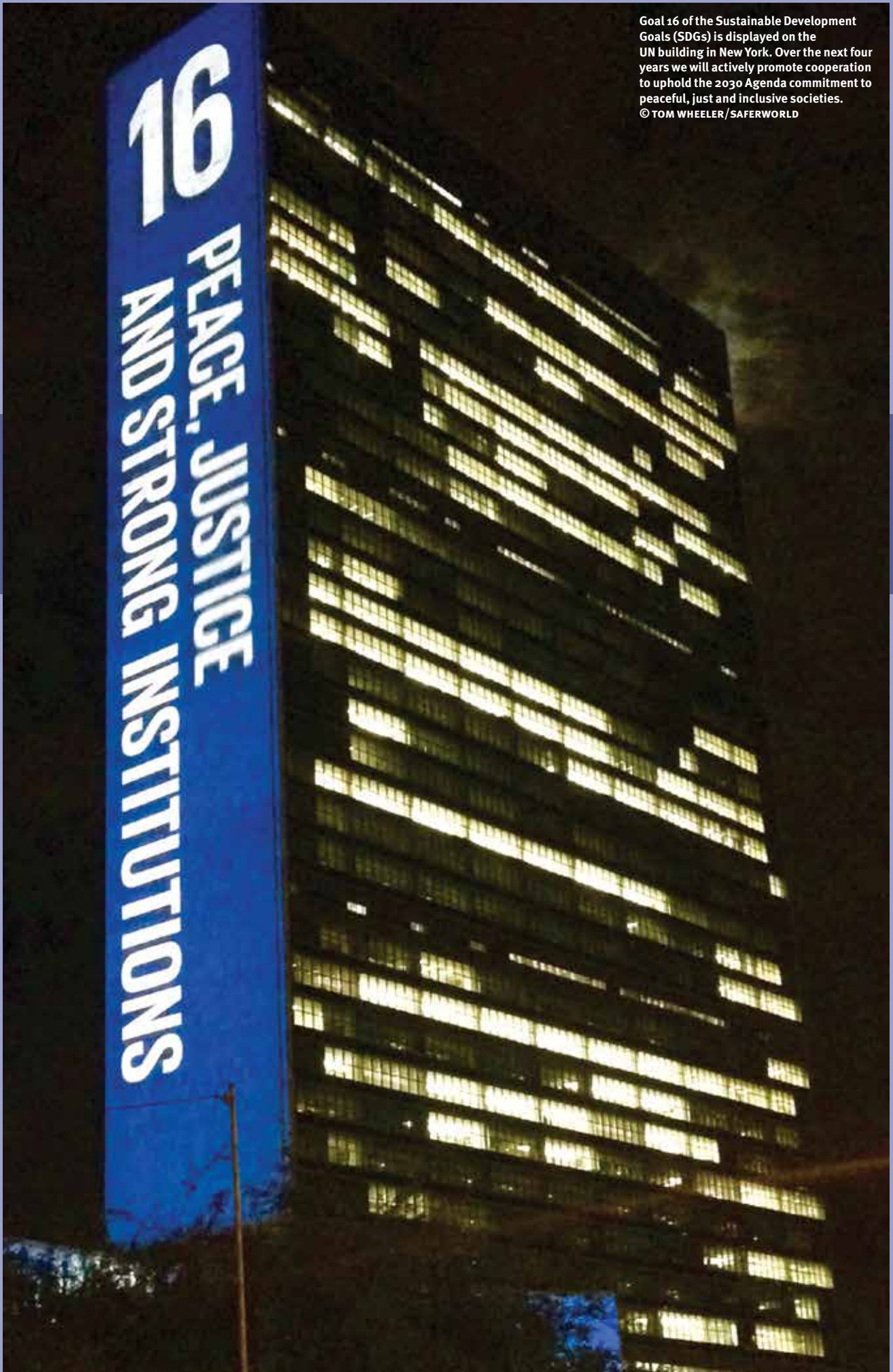
WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD  
WHERE EVERYONE CAN LEAD  
PEACEFUL, FULFILLING LIVES,  
FREE FROM FEAR AND  
INSECURITY.

## 2011–21 Realising a ten-year vision

**In 2011 Saferworld set out a ten-year vision for the organisation, in which we identified several priorities to enhance the impact and effectiveness of our work.**

- We challenged ourselves to work at a **greater level of intensity and scale** in order to make more of a difference: we identified three contexts and approaches to pilot this work.
  - We aspired to develop a **more global perspective** – both in our advocacy (by extending our reach and evidence-base, and influencing more actors) and in our country-based programming (by engaging in a greater number of conflict situations).
  - We recognised we needed to be **more responsive** to emerging crises and conflicts by being resilient and better able to realign or adapt to sudden changes in context.
- Between 2011–17, the first six years of this vision, Saferworld made progress in all three of these areas:
- Working at a **greater level of intensity and scale**: we formed 130 community groups across 8 countries, reaching at least 600,000 people in conflict-affected communities; we expanded our network of formal partners to 61 across 12 countries; and we scaled up programming in South Sudan from 2 state locations in 2012 to 10 in 2016, forming 38 police-community relations committees.
  - Adopting a **more global perspective**: we celebrated the culmination of 20 years of uninterrupted work on arms control, with the adoption into force of the Global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT); we published a Community Security Handbook – used widely by others, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and the Netherlands Foreign Ministry; we advocated successfully for the inclusion of Goal 16 into the Sustainable Development Goals to address the root causes of violence and armed conflict; we produced 80 government-focused briefings and an operational guidance handbook for conflict-sensitive EU programming; and we introduced innovative outcome-focused monitoring across the organisation to gather and share evidence of influence.
  - Being **more responsive**: we invested in organisational change and development, putting in place policies, procedures and approaches to operate in crisis environments; we invested in relevant standard operating procedures, security plans and security advisers in our most volatile environments; and we adapted our programming in Yemen and South Sudan to continue responding to changing dynamics.





Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is displayed on the UN building in New York. Over the next four years we will actively promote cooperation to uphold the 2030 Agenda commitment to peaceful, just and inclusive societies.  
© TOM WHEELER/SAFERWORLD



# Saferworld's 2017–21 plan

## The next stage

The forthcoming four years will be the final stage in this ten year vision for change. This strategic plan identifies the following cross-cutting areas that will support the achievement of our strategic objectives in the various contexts where we work.

### Systemic change

We know that the high-level outcomes we strive for require significant effort to tackle the systemic factors that generate violent conflict. In our last strategic plan we prioritised expanding our work with communities and leaders, and making a greater difference at the international policy level – work that will continue. We will now also focus attention on **greater systemic change at a national level in the places where we work** – influencing national policies and practices (or those that make a difference nationwide) and gathering evidence of what works. The task of conflict prevention and creating conditions for sustainable peace is a complex, multifaceted endeavour, requiring the involvement of many people and organisations working together at different levels over time, and the 2030 Agenda demonstrates what the global community working together can achieve. It has created a framework for action for the next 13 years, a vision that is firmly reflected in Saferworld's 'Change Model' (see p. 2). The Agenda articulates the importance of public safety, access to justice, political inclusion and equal rights, in order to realise peaceful and inclusive societies. For Saferworld, it is this systemic change that is a key focus of our work over the next four years, and our achievements to date encourage us to maintain this high level of ambition.

WE WORK TO  
PREVENT VIOLENT CONFLICT  
AND BUILD SAFER LIVES

### Challenging the rhetoric that spreads division

The global trends and environment show just how much we need to work with others and pool strategies and resources if we are to **resist and transform the divisive narratives that are on the rise in many contexts**. These narratives have the power to set people against each other, play on the disaffection of those excluded and marginalised from resources and influence, and open the way for greater state oppression of dissent. Changing this is beyond any one institution, and we need to combine our peacebuilding responses with the initiatives of others. As such we know we need to invest in communication and more persuasive positioning. We need to strengthen and defend important international norms and standards, and we need to work in broad and effective partnerships for advocacy across all levels of our work.



A Madhesi woman speaks up about community problems during a public hearing in Laukahi, Sunsari District, Nepal, 2015.  
© RAMESH BHATTRAI/SAFERWORLD

## Partnership, country-level leadership and expertise

It is evident that sustained change will only be possible if power and resources are invested in the people and places most affected. We know the future lies with those who are most committed to working for systemic change in their own contexts. As such we need to redouble our efforts and channel more resources into the partners we work with in our country programmes, and commit to country-led leadership teams in all our programmes.

**Partnership** This is at the heart of the way we work. Our legitimacy and ability to engage in conflict-affected states depends upon working with, and learning from, local organisations and influential actors. In the current environment support for partners – political as well as financial – is more important than ever. In many contexts governments are systematically closing down the space in which civil society organisations can operate, and it is often the case that funding for these organisations is short-term. We believe in our **local partners as advocates, problem-solvers and committed long-term peace-builders**. Over the next four years, we will ensure our local partners have a greater say in everything we do, through a new partnership strategy, a partner forum, and processes for them to have greater influence in decision-making.

**Country-level leadership and expertise** We believe that to achieve the above, we need to build up our **country-based staff teams, developing diverse staff groups with the research, policy, advocacy and communications skills to ensure a strong reinforcing base to the global agenda**. Strengthening this facet of the organisation means putting in place leadership and mentoring support, and appropriate recruitment strategies.

## Communications

In the unfolding political climate, where established norms underpinning conflict prevention and peacebuilding are being questioned, Saferworld needs to communicate its values, analysis and recommendations more than ever. **Communications will be central to our programming, our public positioning, and our organisational change agenda** over the next four years. We will invest in updating our communications platforms (print, audio-visual, online and in person), and strengthen our standing as a source of expertise on peace, gender and security issues. To amplify the voices of those affected by conflict or violence, we will increase the prominence of community and partner voices in our external communications, and we will highlight more evidence and stories from our partners and the communities we work with around the world.

## Strategic funding

For all this to be possible, we will seek **longer-term strategic funding** – to support partners, national-level leadership, and to enable the flexible, agile responses needed to create systemic change.

# Saferworld's programme plans for 2017–21

## A multifaceted approach

**We currently work in East Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Europe and Asia.**

We have secured multi-year programming in Somalia and Pakistan, enabling us to expand our security and justice work into new areas, and we are confident our programmes in South Sudan, Myanmar and Yemen will continue to grow. We will explore opportunities to widen our MENA engagement, reframe our engagement in Europe, adapt our programmes in Nepal and Bangladesh, and consider new regional opportunities, such as between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Our strategic presence in Kenya and Uganda will continue, as will our Arms Trade Treaty work in West Africa, and we will scope creative ways of adding value in new contexts.

We will build on our existing networks in China, to reach deeper into the policy-making architecture to influence the role China plays in relation to peace and development in its near neighbourhood and more broadly in Africa. We will also invest in regional advocacy – in particular to influence the African Union (AU) – in recognition of its growing importance and relevance to our Africa country programmes. We will maintain a focus on the EU and US as influential actors and donors in international peace and security policy processes and in conflict-affected and fragile contexts, and we will deepen our engagement with other influential governments.

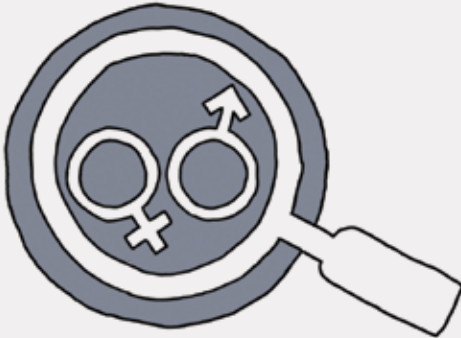
A delegate casts her vote during the electoral process to choose members of the Lower House of the Somali federal Parliament in Garowe, Somalia on 23 November 2016. © UNSOM SOMALIA



1. SECURITY AND JUSTICE



2. GENDER



3. UPHOLD PEACE NORMS



4. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY



5. INCLUSIVE PROCESSES



## Our strategic objectives

# Where we work and what we do

Responding to the complexities and challenges that social inequality, insecurity or conflicts generate, under our five strategic objectives we develop and implement an inter-connected mix of community-level action, research and analysis, and policy, advocacy and communications.

**This objective focuses on the development of responsive, accountable and locally-appropriate security and justice provision – a basic human right and integral to the transformation of conflict dynamics. We listen to the needs and concerns of people affected by conflict, and work with them to change the relationships within their communities, with neighbouring communities, and with the institutions that serve them. We advocate for the changes necessary to put people at the heart of security and justice policy and practice – nationally, regionally and internationally – and to help create safer and more just societies.**

## 1. SECURITY AND JUSTICE



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

## Strengthen people's security and access to justice

### Contributing to inclusive and effective security and justice provision

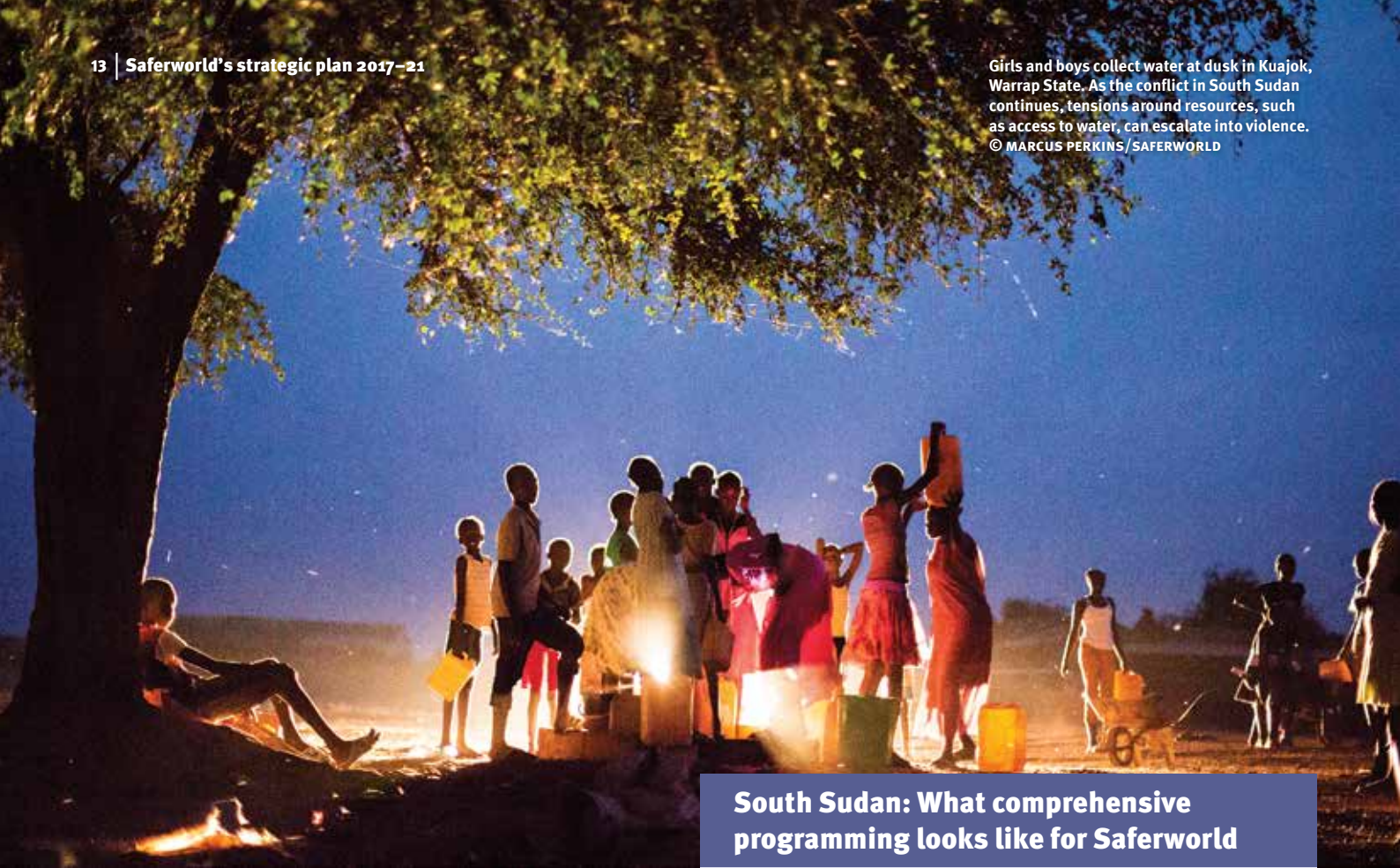
Gathering and sharing new evidence from current programmes is central to our work. Drawing on many years of experience implementing community security programmes in different contexts, over the next four years we will:

- research and explore how inclusive processes can build momentum for change in contexts where formal security and justice institutions are very weak and/or lack reform incentives
- assess community security programmes in conflict-affected and/or fragile states (both those implemented by Saferworld and by others), to build a greater evidence base to help determine which approaches make people safer and more secure. We will produce guidance for institutions and people who design, support and implement such programmes
- use this evidence to promote and advocate for security and justice institutions that are sensitive to conflict and gender and that involve marginalised or historically under-represented groups in their development
- encourage policymakers to focus on interventions that are context-specific and aimed at inducing more transformational change.

We will further develop our 'justice and peace' work strand, with its emphasis on the link between injustice and conflict. To do this we will:

- conduct research and advocacy beyond narrow definitions of 'justice' and think more critically about tackling the social and economic injustices driving conflict
- use the learning from our new programmes in Somalia and Pakistan, among others, to enrich our work on gender and inclusion, and to develop joined-up programming responses
- engage with and build coalitions of like-minded people and organisations that view injustice as a social and political barrier to sustainable peace.

We plan to disseminate this knowledge through the Knowledge Platform on Security and Rule of Law, our helpdesk facilities and through the learning spaces created in our programming.



## South Sudan: What comprehensive programming looks like for Saferworld

### PROGRAMMING

#### Safer communities

In many of our country programmes we work through our tried and tested community security approach. This is tailored to each environment but it has at its heart the principle of working with communities to identify, analyse and prioritise their security needs and then advocate for action with relevant authorities (formal and informal).

In **Somalia/Somaliland**, together with our local partners, we foster collaborative relations between communities and authorities and build trust across clans and other divides. Our objective for the next four years is to work in five sub-regions, mainly on police-community relations, and maintain our support for Somali-led networks and platforms across the country. In **Kyrgyzstan**, we foster greater cooperation between communities, authorities and law enforcement agencies. Here our objective is to promote people-centred security and justice provision, and lead collaborative initiatives that challenge the use of violent and nationalist narratives and hard security agendas. In **Tajikistan** we establish local-level police-public partnerships that bring together communities, authorities and law enforcement agencies to find solutions to local conflict and insecurity, focusing on the effectiveness of community policing structures and gender-sensitive police reform.

The Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) has collapsed, with ethnic polarisation dramatically increasing; conflict issues are intersecting with sub-national and local-level tensions, thus precipitating a spread of violence and insecurity to regions that were relatively peaceful and stable. High inflation and the unprecedented rise in the cost of living are also exacerbating conflict and insecurity for all communities; gender-based violence is widespread.

**Saferworld in South Sudan:** Our programme in South Sudan connects local, sub-national and international levels of change. We advocate for national and international actors to address community-level peace and security priorities through their policies, practices, investments and intervention strategies. In this way we contribute to improved security, greater conflict-sensitive investment, and a reduction in polarisation (strategic objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

Our programme empowers **local partners and communities** in eight of the ten original administrative states to resolve chronic insecurity issues, including gender-based violence and the use and availability of small arms and light weapons. These partners and communities identify and collectively prioritise and advocate for solutions at **local and sub-national levels, through joint planning**, and by building collaborative links with wider civil society and authorities. We create space and strengthen capacity for others to facilitate intra and inter-communal dialogue, working at state level to demonstrate what can work, and linking that to national-level processes focused on sustainable peace. **Internationally** we lead a consortium on **conflict sensitivity**, specifically designed to provide **technical input** – including guidelines, research and analysis, training, capacity-building, and lesson-learning – to participating donors and their implementing partners. Our **China** programme enables us to work with Chinese companies in South Sudan on conflict-sensitive investment, and to undertake bespoke pieces of work.

Village community police office, Anwar Hossain Khan talks with a local community member in Kachua, Bangladesh. Saferworld has been working in Bangladesh since 2006 to improve the safety and security of communities.  
© THOMAS MARTIN/SAFERWORLD

## 2.GENDER





**This objective comes from a recognition that deeply embedded social norms about gender roles contribute to repeating cycles of violence and conflict. We develop research, guidelines and programming tools in order to reveal, understand and challenge these gender norms, and transform related attitudes, behaviours, and relationships that perpetuate insecurity and the use of violence.**

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

# Challenge gender norms that cause and perpetuate insecurity and violent conflict

## PROGRAMMING

Over the next four years we will work to ensure communities, civil society organisations (CSOs), authorities and external actors recognise the need to challenge the gender norms driving conflict and insecurity, and develop and use evidence-based approaches for their programming and policy to challenge these norms.

This change will be targeted at three levels: capacity change in communities, community-based networks and CSOs; behaviour and relationship change demonstrated by communities/community groups and CSOs; and systemic change wherein external actors acknowledge and address gender norms in their strategic planning and priorities.

We will focus particularly on developing and promoting programming approaches for security and justice that challenge **gender norms**, are gender sensitive and transformative, and contribute to reducing gender-based violence. Using our Gender Analysis of Conflict Toolkit we will develop an approach that is implemented in at least three of our programmes by 2021. We will share this learning and evidence widely and use it in our advocacy.

We will also examine how gender norms fuel violence in the context of a **'counterterrorism' agenda** and how **existing policy responses to 'countering violent extremism'** in turn reinforce those norms and restrict the space for actors working for peace, particularly women and women's rights groups. At the same time we will analyse and respond to regional strategies in the context of population movements, including forced migration, looking at how gender norms feed into cycles of conflict and displacement.

We will continue to mainstream **gender sensitivity** throughout our work and use the experience to develop and promote peace strategies that recognise and address gender norms effectively at different points within conflict cycles. The programmes that will emerge from this work cover a range of approaches, ranging from gender-sensitive programming (i.e. revising an existing programme to take into account the impacts of gender norms in addressing conflict and security challenges) through to gender-transformative programmes (i.e. initiatives with the aim of transforming negative gender norms towards peaceful co-existence). Where possible we will look beyond the gender binary of females and males to examine specific security concerns of sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) when conducting conflict and security assessments.

We will also develop strategic partnerships with women's networks/coalitions and peacebuilding organisations at the international level and in the countries we work in as a means to convene a constituency of peacebuilding and gender-focused practitioners who can learn from each other's work and test programming approaches together. This means both building upon existing partnerships and scoping new opportunities to influence high-level policy debates at the AU, the EU and the UN, through gender and peace and security networks.

These partnerships will generate lessons and evidence that we will use to influence systemic change, strengthen international policies, and promote gender equality and peace through Agenda 2030, particularly through SDGs 5 (gender equality) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

## Uphold and advance international norms and practices that support conflict prevention, arms transfer control and global peace and security

Through this objective Saferworld advocates for positive international collaboration in the arena of global peace and security. We encourage national governments and the international community to recognise the value of finding alternatives to the use of force, and commit at the highest level to address conflict and create an enabling environment for just and lasting peace. Our focus includes transnational factors such as weapons flows, the importance of peacebuilding responses to crises and threats, and the interaction between violence, conflict, forced displacement and migration.

### PROGRAMMING

#### Systemic change through advocacy

Saferworld believes strongly that targeted advocacy at local, national, regional and international levels is key to achieving lasting positive change in people's lives. However, we are working in environments that are increasingly hostile towards advocacy and public discourse on peace and security issues. Many states are enforcing punitive legislation aimed at curbing domestic dissent and international criticism, making national advocacy on sensitive issues extremely challenging. Nevertheless, engaging at all these levels, and making links between them, is crucial to achieve the systemic changes necessary for people to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives. As such we will invest in our capacity to design and deliver effective and coherent national, regional and international advocacy strategies.

Over the next four years we will actively **promote cooperation by global actors to uphold the 2030 Agenda commitment to peaceful, just and inclusive societies**, and continue to influence other major conflict policy processes, such as the implementation of the **Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**, wider arms transfer controls and compliance with human rights and international humanitarian law. We will:

- use our established advocacy platforms (in the UK, EU, US and China) to influence decision makers responsible for policies, tools and programming in the mainstream areas of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and gender, and to open up a new platform on the AU
- critique counterproductive approaches to stabilisation, migration, and the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. We will continue to promote peacebuilding responses to crises and threats, e.g. in Kenya, Tunisia, Syria and Egypt
- promote the take-up of peacebuilding approaches, principles and tools in EU external action and advance a peacebuilding response to trends in the EU security environment
- create civil society partnerships and relationships with key influencers in the UK to help raise the profile of the peacebuilding sector and the issues that Saferworld works on
- continue research (already conducted in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey) on how refugee flows across borders and/or into new host communities can exacerbate or create conflict, and on the risks of current international responses to security and migration (including European cooperation with Egypt, Turkey, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea)



- mobilise 'SDG16 Champions' at the national level to contribute to more peaceful, just and inclusive societies (in Somaliland, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda) and work for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in specific countries
- push for accountability on SDG commitments by promoting the use of better data on conflict issues
- help to ensure a robust and enduring ATT regime by promoting and supporting strong treaty institutions, mechanisms, practices and synergies with other international instruments and agreements. We are committed to working with lower-income/lower-capacity ATT States Parties to find practical implementation models, and to support their capacity to create the relevant legislation
- research and address challenges around new and developing technologies and transfer-control issues, such as the proliferation and use (or mis-use) of remotely-piloted military devices, surveillance equipment and technology
- facilitate technical dialogue on conventional arms and dual-use transfer controls between China and members of the main international proliferation control regimes
- identify opportunities to engage senior officials from China, the US, the EU and the UK informally through problem-solving consultations on peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

### 3. UPHOLD PEACE NORMS



Through this objective we highlight both the harmful effects external actors and their policies and approaches can create in conflict-affected contexts and the peacebuilding potential they hold. The concept of conflict sensitivity is now more widely understood in the commercial, development and humanitarian sectors, yet structural barriers and a lack of clear incentives still hinder its systematic and effective uptake.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

## Ensure international engagement in conflict-affected contexts is sensitive to conflict dynamics and contributes to sustainable peace

### PROGRAMMING

We have a strong track record of working on conflict sensitivity at both policy and programming levels. Working with government departments, UN agencies, donors, companies and civil society organisations, we develop the capacity and commitment to taking a conflict-sensitive approach in all interventions and investments. We encourage external actors from all sectors to see sustainable peace as part of their goal. During 2017–21 we will:

- work with a range of organisations, including humanitarian and development agencies, to implement conflict-sensitive approaches to their engagement overseas
- develop courses to train officials, policymakers and CSOs in conflict sensitivity
- conduct conflict sensitivity assessments of donor strategies, policies, and programmes through commissioned evaluations and via our helpdesk services and resource facilities
- work directly with Chinese state-owned enterprises on conflict-sensitive project design and delivery in Asia and Africa and support the development and implementation of policy initiatives and guidelines in Beijing
- work with international and local businesses and associations through 'Business for Peace' programmes to raise their awareness of their potential impact on conflict dynamics – so they can take steps towards adopting conflict-sensitive practices
- identify potential conflict sensitivity risks associated with our programmes to ensure we avoid doing harm and maximise potential positive benefits.

Our expertise in conflict sensitivity also enables us to build strong relationships with government authorities, the private sector and communities in selected areas. In **Uganda** we work to strengthen land and mining law, regulations and related policies, and ensure practices reflect local communities' views. We use what is known locally as the 'talking circles' approach, through which we foster community participation in decision-making on the conflict-sensitive governance of land and mineral resources. In **Nepal** our programme strengthens conflict-sensitive planning, design and implementation of programmes and policies in the context of a new constitution, decentralisation and new elections. We support communities, civil society, government and external stakeholders to better understand and integrate conflict sensitivity, especially in relation to gender, identity, and federal state restructuring.



## Helpdesks on human security and humanitarian action

Saferworld has been a part of a helpdesk service on human security and humanitarian action for the Swedish international development agency (Sida) since 2012, and more recently for the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). The helpdesk allows Sida and the Swedish embassies to request strategic advice on the conflict sensitivity of country and sector strategies, to commission analysis on specific conflict and humanitarian-related topics, to design training courses and to review monitoring and evaluation strategies.

Over the last year, the helpdesk has been used to support the integration of conflict sensitivity into Sida programmes in over 20 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. It has also informed the development of a toolbox for integrating conflict sensitivity across Sida, and input into thematic programmes and strategies on arms control, gender, resilience and conflict-sensitive humanitarian action. In addition, it has helped to build the skills and expertise of a broad range of Sida staff on conflict issues, and to develop appropriate responses for its programmes and policies.



A mother holds her child in Myanmar. Saferworld has operated in Myanmar since 2012. © MARK GARTEN/UN PHOTO

To meet this objective we work with partners to ensure processes and transitions to peace are accountable, inclusive and holistic, and sensitive to the risks of recurring conflict. At the same time, we encourage power structures and institutions to prevent conflict and actively pursue peacebuilding objectives through their spheres of influence. We amplify the voices of those who are historically discriminated against or marginalised from political power, and we work with local actors to ensure that those aggrieved and excluded are part of solutions that are fair, accountable, and transformative.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

## Promote inclusive and just transitions to peace that address the drivers of violent conflict

### PROGRAMMING

Our expertise on conflict transformation adds value in various contexts – where we work on selective mechanisms or institutional arrangements that have the potential to create systemic change, and build positive, accountable relationships among all citizens. Over the next four years we will focus on formal or informal (local and/or national) peace initiatives or longer-term statebuilding processes that are locally-led, and support social empowerment, dialogue and conflict resolution. These will include constitutional or other relevant governance reforms – such as free and fair elections, tackling corruption, promoting an independent media or decentralisation – or interventions that promote greater citizens' participation or enable civic activism, such as national consultation processes.



### Peacebuilding responses in country contexts – some examples of our work

**Kenya** We operate at different levels across the country fostering cooperative engagement between national and county officials, citizens and civil society. We work with a broad range of communities and groups to reduce the risk of violence relating to electoral processes, and to ensure that the local government devolution process is accountable.

**Somalia and Somaliland** Our longstanding partnerships with cross-clan civil society actor platforms – made up of credible, representative groups and individuals across the major Somali regions – enable Somali-led advocacy on peacebuilding and state-building. We will continue supporting civil society-led public oversight of security reform and election processes.

**Myanmar** To amplify the voices of those who are currently marginalised from the political process, we support communities, civil society and in particular women to transcend barriers and build trust across conflict lines, and to engage in the evolving political dialogue framework.

**Bangladesh** We work with businesses and trade organisations to use their potential as advocates for peace. Their influence at local and national level helps build resilience against political conflict.

**South Caucasus** Our track record of using community-based approaches to security, protection and early warning allows us to support civil society organisations that work alongside conflict-affected communities across the region – with a focus on border communities in Armenia and Azerbaijan.



## Yemen – what agile and responsive programming in active conflict contexts looks like for Saferworld

### Research into how societies shape more inclusive, fair and accountable institutions

We acknowledge there is limited evidence about how multiple initiatives 'add up' to achieve lasting peace and stability, so we will conduct further research to explore this in real-life contexts.

Over the next four years Saferworld will identify ways to address the challenges in divided communities, and we will examine how interventions can support the emergence of inclusive, fair and accountable processes and institutions. In particular, we will focus on mechanisms that enable divided communities and excluded constituencies – including women, young people, and other vulnerable/marginalised groups, as well as a range of non-state actors – to participate in key political/transitional processes. We will produce evidence, learning and guidance from different conflict contexts (provisionally Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sudan, and Yemen) on how to support institutional change processes effectively and sensitively so that they help, rather than hinder, conflict prevention and peacebuilding work. We will complement this by seeking strategic partnerships in-country, for example with the Open Government Partnership (OGP), to harness and widen citizen participation, build transparency and accountability, and address the drivers of conflict.

After the collapse of a fragile political transition in March 2015, Yemen has suffered a devastating civil conflict in which thousands of civilians have been killed. The conflict has been worsened by military intervention from a coalition of Gulf states. Central government control across the country has broken down, leading to the fragmentation of political and military power. In pursuit of victory the warring parties have destroyed the economy and caused widespread food insecurity: the country is now on the brink of famine. Despite the resilience and bravery of Yemeni civil society groups who have mobilised to respond to the crisis, many activists have become marginalised, demotivated and isolated.

**Saferworld in Yemen:** Saferworld has continued to work in Yemen throughout this period. Our programme promoting cooperative and inclusive community peacebuilding action at the local level, in particular supporting youth and women's civil society groups, is key to supporting community cohesion and rebuilding the social fabric. Faced with the evolving needs of our partners, communities and peace activists, we have adapted our programming, and we will continue to strengthen dialogue and collaboration between communities and local authorities, so that they integrate community-level peace and security priorities into their policies and practices. We seek to bridge regional and political divides worsened by the war, through coordinated peacebuilding activities at national level by civil society (strategic objectives 1, 2 and 5).

28 April 2015. A guard walks past what remains of Ibn Sina School, in Sana'a, the capital. The school was heavily damaged during an air strike that hit the building next to the school.

© MOHAMMED MAHMOUD/UNICEF

**The strategic priorities for 2017–21 build on the progress the organisation has made since 2011. They reinforce Saferworld's position internationally as a trusted broker and valued resource, with specialist expertise in responding to and transforming conflict. Our next stage of development occurs in a context with a number of challenges around to how international development cooperation is conceived, resourced and managed.**

## Organisational development in a changing environment

Trends with the potential to reshape how and with what degree of flexibility we operate, are evident. These include a reduction in strategic funding for civil society and development organisations, the linking of aid more explicitly to trade, the increasing privatisation of aid delivery, and a general questioning of civil society's legitimacy to act as agents for change. To maintain our value, independence and effectiveness in this context, we will need to manage future change carefully.

### Expertise and professionalism

The expertise, professionalism and commitment of Saferworld staff are at the heart of our work and our value for money. At a time when technical specialism is disappearing from some government departments dealing with international cooperation, retaining and developing our technical expertise and contextual knowledge is a priority. Saferworld professionals include: country-based teams, with predominantly national staff, who are experts in their field; dedicated conflict, security and gender advisers; specialists in advocacy and communications; and monitoring, evaluation and learning experts.

We sustain our level of expertise and our value for money through:

- a supportive, cross-organisational learning environment for critical reflection and active learning
- strategic development and the systematic use of our new Programming, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Guide
- the promotion of leadership skills and behaviours across programme teams
- our partnerships.

Over the next four years, priority will be given to staff performance-management systems and associated staff learning and development plans. Strengthening this facet of the organisation means putting in place leadership and mentoring support, with appropriate recruitment strategies aligned to the strategic direction reflected in this plan, and a strengthened network of country programme representatives.

### Institutional effectiveness

In the changing external environment, we will consider adaptations to our internal culture and ways of operating, to ensure we continue to be an organisation fit for purpose. These will include:

- reviewing and adjusting our teams so that we can sustain our core policy and advocacy expertise and retain capacity for cross-organisational engagement between programmes, streamline and strengthen senior management functions, and establish a more effective devolved structure
- preparing for the impact of BREXIT, by focusing on Saferworld's international credentials, strengthening our presence on the European continent, and consolidating our engagement with the European Union.





Young players in Batken, Kyrgyzstan, shake hands before taking place in a football event organised by Saferworld-supported community groups and local authorities.  
© MARAT TURDUBEKOV/SAFERWORLD

## A balanced mix of funding with resources for strategic investment

Over the last five years the organisation has benefited from a healthy balance of strategic unrestricted funding and project funding. This arrangement has proved to be effective and good value for money, enabling the organisation to grow in a measured way: both to undertake community-based programming and at the same time influence policy. This is achieved by being able to deploy expert thematic and specialist country staff, and using resources flexibly in complex conflict environments. However, current funding trends see donors moving away from unrestricted funding and towards more restricted contracts with higher transaction costs to deliver similar outcomes. This shift is shaping Saferworld's fundraising priorities for 2017–21.

Despite this change, Saferworld has continued to attract new funding and we anticipate a modest growth rate over the coming four years. This assumption is based on continued success in attracting both a core of larger, longer-term funding, and increased unrestricted funding so that we can prioritise our partners, retain expertise that works systemically, and deploy our staff in agile ways.

## Promoting learning and adaptive management

Underpinning our effectiveness and sustainability as an organisation is a commitment to critical reflection, together with a structured approach to regularly adapt our programmes and contribution. In spite of a growing preoccupation with quantitative measurement – stemming from a culture that prefers interventions where results are easy to quantify – we have learnt that an adaptive management approach is more effective in the contexts where we work. This is achieved using our outcome-focused approach to monitoring and learning ('outcome harvesting' implemented biannually), and our community-level assessments, enabling programmes to gather and review evidence of outcomes, and use them to steer the direction of our work. We have an organisation-wide 'results framework' configured under the five strategic objectives, allowing Saferworld to track and communicate progress under the strategic plan. We also have well-established and important learning spaces – including 'learning and practice groups', staff participation in joint reviews or programme evaluations, and cross-organisational mentoring.



Saferworld's governance is supervised by an established international board of trustees who meet formally four times a year. The board approves the organisation's planning and reviews progress against strategic objectives – ensuring the principles and values underpinning the organisation are upheld. In 2017 Saferworld will welcome a new chair of the board, and continue to diversify the board's membership to reflect our complex and varied programming.

Organisationally, we will continue to work through effective control and management systems while maintaining a positive culture of cross-organisational collaboration, learning and accountability. We will focus on the areas outlined below.

## Organisational governance and oversight

### Achieving value for money (VfM)

Our work prioritises sustained, locally-driven processes without high volumes of output. As such, our VfM offer is based around the quality and expertise of our staff, our partnerships, and our capacity to work at many different levels of change simultaneously, linking policy, practice and learning. We use various processes to ensure that our work is appropriate to the context, and that it focuses on outcomes:

- biannual outcome harvesting per country and policy area to assess our impact and effectiveness
- conducting regular reviews and evaluations of larger programmes that assess our contribution to change and VfM
- building flexibility into staff time through unrestricted income to enable us to respond quickly to an unexpected conflict situation, scope or guide new or sensitive start-up work, or provide quality-control for programme development
- clearly defining and identifying key costs and high-value procurements in the contexts where we work and developing tools to track them. We review these annually.

### Financial oversight and transparency

Saferworld's internal financial systems and procedures are based on professional operating standards of good governance and transparency. All financial operations are regulated by a Finance Procedures Manual to reflect best practice. External audits are conducted annually. Over the next four years, emphasis will be placed on:

- maximising use of the central finance database system and making current processes and financial reporting systems more accessible to staff
- updating and refining relevant policies to back this up
- supporting regional financial staff to take on more responsibility
- enhancing finance management capacity generally, including joint management account reviews and expanding the budgeting skills of staff.

We will ensure regular reporting, share financial performance data with the board and staff, and publish project data quarterly for all projects where spending is above £50,000 (in compliance with International Aid Transparency Initiatives [IATA] standards).



A marble miner from Moroto district, Karamoja. In Uganda we are working to strengthen land and mining laws and regulations to ensure practices reflect the views of local communities.  
© RAMON SANCHEZ ORENSE/SAFERWORLD

## Conducting regular risk assessments

A register of risks is compiled annually (and updated quarterly) to enable actions to be put in place to mitigate potential negative effects. Risk is further controlled by ensuring adherence to Saferworld's anti-fraud and anti-bribery policies, safeguarding compliance with statutory requirements, and by making sure internal financial controls and systems remain sufficiently robust while accessible to staff and our partners. We conduct our business according to the UK Bribery Act which holds institutions responsible for preventing bribery carried out on their behalf. Our policy sets out the responsibilities of staff and those working for us, and provides information and guidance on how to recognise and deal with related issues.

Managing risks associated with the safety of staff and partners working in conflict-affected environments will remain a high priority. Our policy sets out the priorities, values and commitments to safeguarding staff and developing mitigation strategies. Country security plans based on in-country security assessments are periodically reviewed and informed by mandatory risk and threat assessments to ensure they remain relevant and up-to-date. Programme teams have designated focal point persons and established regional/country risk management teams, with oversight from a London-based risk management team. We will increase security expertise based in-country or regionally, and offer relevant training to staff when they join the organisation.

## Our structure

Saferworld's headquarters is in London with 13 additional offices in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East and the United States. Our work is managed in three divisional units:

- Policy Advocacy and Communications – oversees international programming commitments including in Brussels, Beijing, London, Washington and Vienna.
- Regional Programmes – covers East Africa, South and South East Asia, Middle East and North Africa, Europe and Central Asia.
- Core Functions Group – includes Human Resource Management, Finance and Procurement, Fundraising, Operations (Administration and Utility Management), Internal Communications and Organisational Learning and Development.

In each country context, we register as a branch of Saferworld and comply with local laws which include employment, financial and reporting requirements.

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Saferworld has staff based in:

Bangladesh, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan,  
South Sudan, Tajikistan, Uganda and Yemen – as well as  
Brussels, London, Vienna, and Washington.

## Our values and principles

**Our integrity as an organisation  
comes from the values and  
principles that guide our work.**

### Values

- We believe in the worth, equality and dignity of every person, and we respect the richness of social and cultural diversity.
- We believe that inclusivity and accountability are essential in society for people to enjoy security, justice and peaceful co-existence.
- Our actions must show honesty and transparency, and consistency with our principles and mission.

### Principles

- We put people at the centre of our work, particularly those affected by conflict and insecurity.
- We promote and support inclusive and cooperative approaches to decision-making.
- We understand that everything we do can have positive or negative effects on conflict dynamics and gender relationships, and being sensitive to this is central to our work.
- We are a learning organisation, striving to learn from each other – staff, partners and communities.
- We are accountable to the communities and partners we work with, and to the donors and public who support our work.

**FRONT COVER: A portrait of a local woman at a cattle camp, Tonj East. Saferworld has been working with partners in South Sudan since 2002 to address safety and peace-building needs in communities across eight states.**

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