



FOUNDATION FOR INTERCULTURAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE INITIATIVES (FIIDI)

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Culture (ethnic and tribal) and religion are and will continue to underscore the initiation of either violent conflicts or peace around the globe, especially in Africa today. Therefore, it is important to include and engage cultural and religious actors in measures aimed at mitigating violence and creating sustainable peace resolution mechanisms in our communities. Undeniably, intercultural and interreligious dialogue has become a significant response to conflicts involving intercultural violence and religious strife. This current reality fuels the vision of *The Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives (FIIDI)* and resides at the center of our strategic plan. While we intend to respond to intercultural and interreligious issues and conflicts in the form of five-year objectives and strategies, we underscore the importance of community partnership.

This strategic plan places FIIDI in a strong position as its operations and activities are well supported by the *Plan of Action for Religious Leaders from Africa to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes*. The regional (African) *Plan of Action* is born out of the broader consultations/recommendations contained in the *Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes* - launched on 14 July 2017 by António Guterres, Secretary-General of the *United Nations* at a meeting in the *United Nations Headquarters* in New York. The recommendations were developed between April 2015 and December 2016 by groups of religious leaders and actors organized under the leadership of the *United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect* (“the Office”). The *Plan of Action* was developed in response to an alarming spike in recent years in hate speech and incitement to violence against individuals or communities, based on their identity. The consultations known as the *Fez Process* are relevant not only to situations where there is a risk of atrocity crimes, but also to other contexts, including the protection of human rights, the prevention of violent extremism and the prevention of conflict. While the *Plan of Action* is intended primarily for use by religious leaders and actors, it also includes detailed recommendations for others, including States and State institutions, secular civil society organizations (CSOs), and new and traditional media.

FIIDI’s unique approach is grounded in intercultural and interreligious dialogue programs aimed at promoting acceptance and encouraging peaceful coexistence among people from different cultural and religious communities. The Strategic Plan outlined here is intended to be a dynamic road map, defining a clear “destination” – where we want to be in 2024 – while encouraging flexibility and creativity throughout the journey over the coming years.

Our Strategic Plan seeks to be more than a way forward. It is a road map to clarify how intercultural and interreligious dialogue can be leverage to promote, peace, tolerance and acceptance in our communities. It is a means to work with partners to empower affected and vulnerable communities, so that FIIDI remains a relevant and active platform to address as well as prevent conflicts in Africa. Certainly, dialogue is the bridge between cultural diversity and peace.



INTRODUCTION

While we observe a decline in civil conflicts, strife and upheaval, Africa is experiencing growing divisions among communities on lines of ethnicity, tribal ideals, cultural differences, religion etc. This situation is a threat to social-economic development and especially peacebuilding on the continent.

Peaceful and stable countries in Africa are now plunging into religious and ethnic violence and are faced with a lack of major opportunities for the citizens to engage in dialogues. At FIIDI, we believe the best response to this situation is education for citizens about intercultural and interreligious understanding. Citizens will benefit from understanding what roles they could play in relation to the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peacebuilding.

In the coming years, FIIDI envisions itself as a leader and a reference organization in peacebuilding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue engagement with different stakeholders in Africa and Canada. Therefore, FIIDI will continue to foster effective and appropriate networking through building of strategic partnerships, establishing thematic alliances, membership of appropriate platforms and umbrella organizations in human rights, peacebuilding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

The situation described above has shaped our Strategic Plan. Below we outline the operational programs of *The Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives (FIIDI)* for the next five years, along with the organizational and support activities which complement operations.

The main principles that will guide activities in the next five years are as follows:

- ❖ Focusing on strategic planning and refining of operational processes as we progress
- ❖ Ensuring effective and timely implementation of projects and raising funds and mobilizing resources for continuity
- ❖ Developing project proposals and building partnerships in order to allow FIIDI to achieve set goals for the next five years
- ❖ Mainstreaming gender and social equity in FIIDI operations and activities
- ❖ Documenting and disseminating results and knowledge gathered during FIIDI operations and activities
- ❖ Enhancing communications, visibility and outreach
- ❖ Managing resources and institutional concerns
- ❖ Mobilizing human and material resources for FIIDI operations from 2019 to 2024



OUR MISSION

Arising out of a commitment to end religious and ethnic violence, FIIDI has taken an awareness (education) based approach to address and prevent religious and ethnic violence affecting the communities we serve in Canada and Africa. We believe that education, including education for tribal, ethnic, and religious leaders and actors, as well as youth, increases mutual respect; tolerance and understanding while diminishing the risk that individuals could be manipulated for political purposes. We don't give aid; we strive for dialogue and tolerance, empowering communities to stand up for peace.

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013). FIIDI's mandate and promotional activities stem from this quote. Our goal is to give meaning and actuality to Mandela's words.

Vision

To foster a strong community-centered platform grounded in a culture of peaceful coexistence among people from different backgrounds as a pillar for peace, stability, democracy and sustainable development.

Mission

To promote intercultural and interreligious understanding and to empower communities in peacebuilding activities that contributes to living together in dignity and dialogue.

FIIDI IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

FIIDI programs for the next five years encompass the *Building Bridges Program*, *Generals (Focal Points) for Peace Program*, *Children & Youth Arts for Peace Program*, *Capacity Building of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)* on relevant regional and international human rights mechanisms, *Community Outreach*, *Intern and Volunteer Placement Program* and *Fundraising and Resource Mobilization Program*. Through fundraising and resource mobilization efforts, FIIDI implements these programs with local and international partners. This approach enables communities to participate in, and eventually take ownership of our initiatives to sustain programs. FIIDI creates partnerships with local and international institutions, organizations and associations in order to better identify and serve programs' beneficiaries on a complementary basis.



STRATEGIC GOALS

The following strategic goals will serve as the base for programs implementation:

Building Bridges Program

Strategic Objective: *To promote peacebuilding through intercultural and interreligious dialogue initiatives and conflict prevention services in different communities of Africa and Canada.*

The Building Bridges Program strives to promote peace education, strengthen peacebuilding skills, and strengthen intercultural and interreligious dialogue in the communities. The program will work with partners to support active and effective peacebuilding as well as intercultural and interreligious dialogue processes. This program will be implemented at local, national, sub-regional and international level with the aim of contributing to conflict prevention, reconciliation and peacebuilding through various program activities, in particular within the educational area. FIIDI's institutional partnerships will help identify partners and strengthen its capacity to give early warnings when and where violence is eminent. Through this program, FIIDI plans to reach 5,000 community (religious & tribal) leaders and youth across Africa and Canada in the coming five years.

Program interventions will be tailored to appropriate target groups and will include the following projects:

1. Sport for Peace Project
2. Culture and Religion for Peace office Project
3. The International Day for Victims of Religious Violence (22 August)
4. Youth Democracy and Peacebuilding Project
5. The Seed of Unity (The National Anthem) Project

The Generals (Focal Points) for Peace Program

Strategic Objective: *To identify and partner with like-minded entities (individuals and organizations) from around the globe who subscribe to our vision to expand our communications and outreach activities in Africa and Canada.*

The Generals for Peace Program aims to reach 500 committed local Focal Points (people/organizations) with skills and information sharing in the next five (5) years by continuing to build on strong community relationships with cultural and religious leaders and youth groups.



The FIIDI Generals will be responsible for implementation of FIIDI activities at local/national level as per the FIIDI work plan and with guidance from the Office in Calgary, Canada. A Certificate of Commitment will be issued to the FIIDI Generals (Focal Points) for their active participation in peacebuilding activities in their communities.

Children & Youth Arts for Peace Program

Strategic Objective: *To create opportunities for children and youth to engage in the arts and to discover things about themselves and others that will help them better deal with differences and handle conflicts peacefully.*

The Children & Youth Arts for Peace Program is geared toward reaching 5000 children and youth, as they are the world's next leaders, doers, and activists, and the best hope for a new and better future of tolerance, coexistence and dignity. Children and youth from Africa and Canada are invited to submit their art creations to FIIDI Art Exhibition & Awards. FIIDI collaborates with partners (The Generals for Peace) to organize Art Exhibition & Awards at local, national, sub-regional, regional and international level. Every year children and youth are given the opportunity to propose a new theme to stimulate the participants to portray values of peace.

Seminars and Workshops

Strategic Objective: *To build the professional capacity of FIIDI staff (interns & volunteers) and partners as well as individual citizens and organizations through training, research and technical skills acquisition.*

FIIDI wishes to collaborate with interested partners and donors for the organization of *workshops and seminars* in the next five years (2019 – 2024). Scheduled *workshops and seminars* include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Regional and International Human Rights Mechanisms
- ❖ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS)
- ❖ Inspection Panel (World Bank) Mechanism
- ❖ Plan of Action for Religious Leaders from Africa to Prevent Incitement to Violence that could lead to Atrocity Crimes
- ❖ The Universal Declaration on the Human Right to Peace
- ❖ Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment



Fundraising Program

Strategic Objective: *To increase the sustainability and financial viability of The Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives (FIIDI).*

One of the main activities of focus in the next five (5) years will be *fundraising and resource mobilization* to secure sustained funding and resources for the next five years and beyond. Resource requirements for 2025 onwards will be defined in the new Strategic Plan. No funding commitments by donors have yet been made for 2019, either cash or in-kind contributions.

Intern and Volunteer Placement Program

Strategic Objective: *To build skills and experience as well as increase the sustainability and human resource viability of The Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives (FIIDI).*

FIIDI offer intern opportunities for both local and international candidates from various academic and professional backgrounds, to support our work in any of our country programs. This is a particularly good opportunity for those seeking a future career in human rights, peacebuilding or development to gain on the ground experience working for a locally based NGO.

Also, FIIDI offers exciting short-term and long-term volunteer opportunities in our offices in Canada (Calgary). Our volunteer placements are open to people of all ages and backgrounds, regardless of nationality or qualifications. Volunteers gain an amazing life experience as well as work experience from their participation in our volunteer program. We encourage volunteer involvement in all the programs we offer, and we recruit new volunteers all year round.



RESOURCES MOBILIZATION

Staff

The Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives (FIIDI) will recruit more staff as affordable as well as specialist volunteers when and where required. We will ensure continual development of skills, knowledge and technology amongst staff and volunteers and become a learning organization, with supportive, team-based culture. FIIDI will maintain and develop professional and effective leadership and governance.

Our Offices

FIIDI's office in Canada (Calgary) solicits support, through its partners, for the full complement of office space as well as office equipment required to facilitate the development and printing of all its educational materials within its premises. This will considerably reduce the huge costs of office space and printing. Among equipment required are laptops, laser printer, digital cameras and facilities for stitching and binding.

Partnership

FIIDI will continue to build reliable relations with key partners for the purpose of implementing initiatives. We will seek support for the strengthening of our programs and activities. Our goal is to achieve self-sustainability of FIIDI in Africa and Canada by the year 2024.

Close links will also be established with higher educational institutions as well as human rights, peacebuilding and development organizations throughout the globe for the provision of interns and exchange programs.



PROGRAM DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

FIIDI will promote its programs through targeted activities aimed at audiences including, but not limited to, government agencies and institutions at local, national, sub-regional, regional and international levels, academia, civil society, community-based organizations, funding organizations as well as the general public in Africa and Canada. This will be executed by a Communications Specialist through broadcast, print and alternative media, and through direct public outreach and knowledge-sharing events, community forums, and other relevant channels.

The print and electronic media play an important role in educating the public as well as promoting peace. Thus, FIIDI will work with the media for the promotion of its activities and messaging formats will be agreed in advance with relevant partners for effective and professional outreach. Human rights and peacebuilding events (conferences, workshops, forums etc.) in Africa, Canada and around the globe represent unique opportunity for extensive outreach and knowledge-sharing on our programs and activities.

Social media has become an increasingly popular component of our everyday life in today's globalizing society. It provides a context where people across the world can communicate, exchange messages, share knowledge, and interact with each other regardless of the distance that separates them. Therefore, FIIDI will use social media (e.g. Facebook, blogs, twitter etc.) as one of the main communication channels to keep the public abreast of our programs and activities.



CONCLUSIONS

The Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives (FIIDI) will measure the success of these strategic initiatives at the end of each fiscal year, and will consider new initiatives to develop and implement each fiscal year subject to the availability of funds. This strategic work plan will allow us to be true to the vision of FIIDI – to foster a strong community-centered platform grounded in a culture of peaceful coexistence among people from different backgrounds as a pillar for peace, stability, democracy and sustainable development.

This strategic plan places FIIDI in a strong position as its operations and activities are well supported by the *Plan of Action for Religious Leaders from Africa to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes*. The regional (African) *Plan of Action* is born out of the broader consultations/recommendations contained in the *Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes* - launched on 14 July 2017 by António Guterres, Secretary-General of the *United Nations* at a meeting in the *United Nations Headquarters* in New York. The recommendations were developed between April 2015 and December 2016 by groups of religious leaders and actors organized under the leadership of the *United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect* (“the Office”). The *Plan of Action* was developed in response to an alarming spike in recent years in hate speech and incitement to violence against individuals or communities, based on their identity.

A number of organizations, including the *International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)*, the *World Council of Churches* and the *Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers* supported the consultations known as the *Fez Process*. In addition, the Governments of Ethiopia, Morocco, Italy, Jordan, Thailand and the United States also supported the *Fez Process* by hosting the consultations. The consultations are relevant not only to situations where there is a risk of atrocity crimes, but also to other contexts, including the protection of human rights, the prevention of violent extremism and the prevention of conflict. While the *Plan of Action* is intended primarily for use by religious leaders and actors, it also includes detailed recommendations for others, including States and State institutions, secular civil society organizations, and new and traditional media.

Consequently, the *Plan of Action* helps us articulate our case for the fundraising goals we have identified and how they will support our strategic priorities. New opportunities will no doubt emerge during the course of the next five years, offering us additional resources to build on the excellence and distinguishing characteristics that allow us to carry out our mission: to promote intercultural and interreligious understanding and to empower communities in peacebuilding activities that contributes to living together in dignity and dialogue.



“Tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue and respect for diversity are more essential than ever in a world where peoples are becoming more and more closely interconnected.”

— Kofi Annan (1938 – 2018)

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