

*Progress Report:*

# INVESTING IN EQUITY: CREATING EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR LOCAL WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS



## WITH THE START OF THIS NEW DECADE,

we recognize the powerful gains made in the field of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) due to the United Nations Beijing Declaration and the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325, both of which are celebrating key anniversaries this year.<sup>1</sup> While we acknowledge the international community's success, it is also vital that we continue to push the WPS agenda forward and develop methods that respond more effectively to the peacebuilding realities women are navigating in 2020 and beyond. As we step into this next era of WPS at the University of San Diego Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice (Kroc IPJ), we remain steadfast to bring greater equity, inclusion and protection to women peacebuilders.

As part of our commitment, the Kroc IPJ hosted a global retreat entitled:

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## "INVESTING IN EQUITY: CREATING EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR LOCAL WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS"

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, "The Beijing Platform for Action" Article 35, 1995, reaffirms determination to "to ensure women's equal access to economic resources...by means of international cooperation": <https://tinyurl.com/ygm4x2x9>

**This retreat laid the foundational blocks for a 12-month long initiative in response to the following needs emerging in today's field of women and peacebuilding:**



**1. Addressing the Rise in Violence** - Despite global commitments to reduce rates of violence, there remains an upward trend in conflict-related deaths. In the past decade (2009-2018), rates of global deaths due to conflict nearly doubled compared to the previous ten year period.<sup>2</sup>



**2. Strengthening Funding Partnerships with Local Women Peacebuilders** - Addressing this rise in violence and building durable peace cannot be solely top-down or bottom-up. Instead, funding partnerships need to be structured in a way that equally values and utilizes the skills, expertise, networks and knowledge both parties bring to peacebuilding projects.<sup>3</sup> However, we are still seeing peacebuilding partnerships unable to reach their full potential in ending cycles of violence.<sup>4</sup> Despite increasing recognition in the value of investing in women, historically this group has received a small fraction of a percentage of overall funding.<sup>5</sup>



**3. Ensuring Women's Inclusion in Peacebuilding** - With the rise of muscular diplomacy in many areas of the world, the peacebuilding gains previously made in the past decade, especially related to women's inclusion, are currently being rolled back. This comes despite research showing that women's meaningful engagement in peacebuilding results in longer-lasting peace.<sup>6</sup>

**This initiative will focus on addressing the above needs through building a learning community of leading local-global peace experts and driving forward research targeted at strengthening peacebuilding funding practices. As part of the first phase, the retreat supported the establishment of this learning community of our 2019 Women PeaceMaker Fellows and international Peace Funding Partners. This group further launched our research initiative by playing a critical role in building out its design and providing the foundational data to move this work forward.**

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<sup>2</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "Number of Deaths", 2019. <https://ucdp.uu.se/exploratory>

<sup>3</sup> Séverine Autesserre, "Going Micro: Emerging and Future Peacekeeping Research", 2014. See also Ole Jacob Sending, "Why Peacebuilders Fail to Secure Ownership and be Sensitive to Context", 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Autesserre 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Angelika Arutyunova and Cindy Clark, "Watering the leaves starving the roots: The status of financing for women's rights organizing and gender equality", 2013. [https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/WTL\\_Starving\\_Roots.pdf](https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/WTL_Starving_Roots.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Interview testimonial from 35 Kroc IPJ Women PeaceMaker alumna. See also O'Reilly et al. 2015, UN Women 2012, and Our Secure Future 2018, <https://oursecurefuture.org/publications/women-peace-security-by-the-numbers>.

In the following document, a summary of outcomes, insights and next steps from the retreat are mapped out in greater detail. The document is organized into these sections:

# **1 ABOUT THE RETREAT**

# **2 RETREAT OUTCOMES**

## **3 RESEARCH INITIATIVE**

## **4 INITIAL QUICK LEARNING AND INSIGHTS**

## **5 PROTOTYPES TO IMPROVE CURRENT FUNDING SYSTEMS**

# **6 NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK**

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## About the Retreat

**NOVEMBER 5-8, 2019 • SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**

This retreat was unique in the people it convened, the topics covered, data gathered and that it was co-designed with the participants.

People convened: Participants of this retreat included a leading group of expert local women peacebuilders, participants from the WPS donor community and Kroc IPJ research team.

### WOMEN PEACEMAKER FELLOWS WHO ATTENDED INCLUDED:

- Ruth Buffalo (USA)
- Lilian Riziq (South Sudan)
- Rina Kedem (Israel)
- Mossarat Qadeem (Pakistan)

### PEACE FUNDING PARTNERS WHO ATTENDED INCLUDED:

- Dr. Paulina Chiwangu - Deputy Country Representative, OIC, UN Women
- Elin Miller - WPS Senior Policy Analyst, Global Affairs Canada
- Nia Jones - Gender & Conflict Policy Team, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Jennifer Hawkins - WPS Advisor, USAID
- Rebecca Besant - Regional Director, East Africa, Search for Common Ground

### KROC IPJ RESEARCH TEAM WHO ATTENDED INCLUDED:

- Jennifer Bradshaw - Program Officer for Kroc IPJ Women, Peace and Security Programs
- Christiana Lang - Peace Researcher
- Necla Tschirgi - Distinguished Professor, Human Security and Peacebuilding



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of Canada



The Women PeaceMakers and Kroc IPJ strategically selected these Peace Funding Partners based on their experience, commitment to the WPS agenda, spheres of influence and history working with the Women PeaceMakers.

## THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE COVERED DURING THE FOUR-DAY RETREAT.



**Mapped the funding systems** that Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners have and are currently navigating to implement local WPS projects;



**Highlighted openers and barriers** that both groups are facing in granting and receiving funds to do their peacebuilding work;



**Identified changes that need to occur** within the various WPS funding processes to improve funding to and implementation of local WPS projects;



**Co-developed the purpose of the research,** its research question, sub questions and methodologies;



**Identified how both groups are/are not consuming research** and information to inform their peacebuilding practices. This knowledge is shaping how we structure and present the final research outputs from this initiative.



# Topics Covered

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## » Data Gathered

Through participant observations, focus groups, and written surveys, we collected data during the retreat relevant to our core research questions. This data laid the foundational blocks for our future work and research outputs.

## » Co-designed the Retreat with the Participants

Too often, vital peacebuilding retreats and conferences are structured in a manner that are prescriptive, top down and do not aptly align with the needs of attendees. Therefore, to ensure the attendees and the research being conducted could reach its full potential, the Kroc IPJ implemented a different approach to designing its retreat.

Through methodologies based in human-centered design, co-facilitators Jennifer Bradshaw (Women PeaceMaker Program Officer) and Christiana Lang (Peace Researcher) co-developed the retreat agenda and format directly with the Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners through a multi-week and iterative process. The final outcome was a retreat, research design process and collection of data that enabled these two groups to more effectively learn from and with each other. Additionally, the retreat's focus and agenda closely aligned with the current peacebuilding realities and needs facing the Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers.

## 2 *Outcomes from the Retreat: Launched the Research Initiative*

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The Kroc IPJ team, Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers, also launched a 12-month long research initiative as a group. The group went through six iterations of development, testing, reflection and refinement to arrive at the following core research question:

**How do funders and local women peacebuilders create equitable, sustainable and gender-responsive partnerships to end cycles of violence?**

The group developed methodologies for data collection and the timeline for research outputs, which includes:

### » Methodologies for Data Collection and Analysis

Building upon the data captured during this retreat, we will gather further data from additional Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners who did not participate in the retreat. These methodologies will include participant observation, written surveys, in-depth interviews and focus groups. A team of University of San Diego faculty, Kroc IPJ staff researchers and leading experts in the field will analyze the data.

### » Timeline for Final Outputs

The final research output will feature findings that capture what is and what is not working in the current funding systems for local women peacebuilders and recommendations for improvements. This document will be the main output of the research initiative. In addition to the final research output, there will be accompanying outputs, such as, context-specific white papers, one-pagers and/or policy-briefs. These outputs will be released in Fall 2020, with quarterly updates and quick findings shared along the 12-month period.





# 3 Outcomes from the Retreat: Developed Initial Quick Learnings and Insights

During the retreat, rich insights emerged, which will be shared throughout our 12-month initiative and in the final publications. Below are highlights of some initial key questions and areas of pressing interest that developed and were explored by Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers during this phase of our initiative.

## » QUESTIONS DEVELOPED AND EXPLORED

The Kroc IPJ, Women PeaceMakers, and Peace Funding Partners worked side-by-side to develop questions they believed were vital for the research to explore. Through this process, they shared perspectives, asked tough questions about funding dynamics and boldly imagined creative solutions to current funding systems (e.g., government, INGO and UN). Some key issues explored by both Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners included:

What are the current barriers and choke points that Peace Funding Partners face when granting out funds, and Women PeaceMakers face when accessing funding within their respective contexts?

Which mechanisms within their funding systems can be worked on or changed to provide more adequate funding to local women peacebuilders?

Where can Women PeaceMakers look to find Peace Funding Partners, and how can long-term relationships be built?

Which evidence and research outputs would be most helpful for Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers to improve their current funding systems?

## » UNDERSTANDING BOTH GROUPS' FUNDING SYSTEMS:

There was a knowledge delta in understanding how both Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners navigated their respective funding systems to receive and grant out funds. Therefore, learning about the realities of each other's systems was a critical need during this retreat. Through this exploration, we found that within the group, funding systems differed widely based on the Peace Funding Partner's sector, thematic focus-area, geography and political realities. Similarly, Women PeaceMakers experienced unique realities based on their thematic work, geographic region, organization type, relationships with funders and security/safety conditions. The following section shares some of the realities both groups' are navigating within their funding systems, in particular barriers and bright spots.

### From the Peace Funding Partner's perspective, some current obstacles included:

1. Lack of knowledge-exchange regarding “on the ground” realities local women peacebuilders are facing and their real-time needs
2. Shrinking support and funding for peacebuilding
3. Navigating the ever-shifting politics of government mandates or policies
4. Finding and/or vetting local Women PeaceMakers partners and their organizations

### From the Women PeaceMakers' perspective, some current barriers included:

1. Lack of transparency around the organization's funding allocation processes
2. External programming heavily influencing local programming, referred to as “mission drift” for local organizations
3. Short timeframes of funding allocations did not align with timeframes needed to address the cycles of violence on the ground
4. Unable to ensure their physical safety and protection while implementing local peacebuilding work

### Mutually agreed upon bright spots between Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners in funding processes included:

1. The strong relationships they have built and maintained
2. Feedback loops between Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers improving in all phases of funding cycles
3. In some cases, long-term rather than short-term projects are being funded





## 4 Outcomes from the Retreat: Prototyped Solutions to Improving Funding Systems

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The dynamic retreat sessions allowed Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners to begin prototyping solutions to addressing the barriers to creating more effective and equitable funding partnerships. This was important, as participants expressed a desire to develop concrete solutions to the struggles they are facing. From a list of 25 potential “change-mechanisms” the group identified to break down these barriers, the top three most pressing were selected and then solutions to address these barriers were prototyped.

### These prototypes included:

- *An evergreen database to find Women, Peace, and Security funding sources*
- *A dialogue system and process for exchange between Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners*
- *A pilot urgent action security fund for Women PeaceMakers supported by Peace Funding Partners*

This group will continue to iterate and refine these prototypes in the coming months, with the intention to release the final solutions as part of our research publications.



# 5 *Next Steps and Future Outlook*

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Through this retreat, the Kroc IPJ, Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners established a learning community that has agreed to work collaboratively over 12-months to ensure further knowledge is exchanged and the research is driven forward. In addition to this retreat, we will implement the following phases to ensure our learning community and research objectives are met:

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## *Phases II-III - Inform Research*

Kroc IPJ, Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers will:

- **Virtually provide input and feedback** to the research as it evolves by:



Informing the various iterations of the research documents that are shared online with learning community members drive forward.



Joining once-a-month calls with our learning community of Peace Funding Partners and between Women PeaceMakers. These calls create space to further exchange knowledge and inform the ongoing research process.

- **Host dialogue sessions** in various contexts. These sessions will focus on growing the learning community of Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers, creating space for wider knowledge exchange and gather additional insights to inform the research.
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## *Final Phase - Build Awareness*

Kroc IPJ, Peace Funding Partners and Women PeaceMakers will:

- **Host round tables to share output findings.** Kroc IPJ, Peace Funding Partners, Women PeaceMakers and other leading peacebuilding organizations will host round tables in their spheres of influence (e.g., organizations, local community convenings, etc.) to present the results of the final research output. This phase will build greater awareness around how to effectively provide funding to and build partnerships with local women peacebuilders.
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Participants brought the knowledge, experiences, concrete solutions and readiness to ensure the outcomes from this research advances the WPS funding agenda and move us into the next era of women and peacebuilding. In the fall of 2020, the Kroc IPJ, Women PeaceMakers and Peace Funding Partners will co-release a series of these research outputs, including sample prototypes, one-pagers, policy briefs, context-specific articles and a final report.



# HELP US GROW THIS INITIATIVE:

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To impact institutional change, we aim to reach people at all levels and sectors within the WPS funding field. This includes local women peacebuilders, local and external funders, INGOs, IGOs, foundations, corporate philanthropy and governments.

» **FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO JOIN THIS INITIATIVE  
AND/OR OUR EMAIL LIST, CONTACT:**

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## Follow along

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