

KOFF

Die Schweizer Plattform für Friedensförderung
La plateforme suisse de promotion de la paix
La piattaforma svizzera per la promozione della pace
The Swiss platform for peacebuilding

KOFF 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

swiss
peace

Schweizerische Friedensstiftung
Fondation suisse pour la paix
Fondazione svizzera per la pace
Swiss Peace Foundation



EDITO



Sudan, Ukraine, Israel-Palestine - the year 2023 was marked by new crises and numerous ongoing conflicts, which once again confronted civil society organizations with major challenges in their work. In the current geopolitically tense environment, the social discourse primarily revolves around a military view of security, which increasingly raises the question of the scope for action for peace work and conflict prevention efforts.

In this same year and for the first time in history, Switzerland took a seat on the highest body for peace and security - an opportunity to put stronger emphasis on humanitarian values and peace policy considerations in the UN Security Council, especially amidst major global tensions.

In times like these, it remains crucial to highlight and strengthen the political relevance of civil society peace work. The Swiss platform for peacebuilding KOFF has contributed to this over the past year through various formats of exchange and joint learning, showcasing the diverse knowledge and experiences of its members and identifying collaborative approaches to address challenges. As such, the KOFF Platform accompanied Switzerland's first year on the UN Security Council by participating in a structured dialog with the FDFA, by hosting a panel discussion with Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl and by publishing a podcast series. In 2023, the KOFF Platform also pursued its work on the topic of "Peace, Women and Security", by organizing a roundtable on feminist peace work in conflict zones and civil society consultations to incorporate the experiences and broad expertise of civil society into the formulation of the fifth Swiss National Action Plan 1325. Furthermore, KOFF published key findings from its collaborative learning processes, which proved effective in leveraging best practices and finding solutions to peacebuilding challenges. The annual review (p.4) and the eight selected highlights (p.2/3) provide an overview of the KOFF Platform's wide-ranging activities in 2023.

On behalf of KOFF, I extend sincere gratitude to all who actively contributed to the numerous projects and activities of the Swiss platform for peacebuilding, dedicating their time, resources, and commitment. Special thanks to the KOFF team of the previous year, and in particular to Anna Leissing, whose longstanding dedication significantly shaped the platform's evolution. As I was entrusted the responsibility of the platform's coordination as of 2024, I am looking forward to collaborating with more than 40 member organizations to further enhance the relevance of the KOFF platform. Following a restructuring of the KOFF team, the platform will from now on be managed by a core team of three people, allowing us to concentrate more effectively on the core activities of the platform. This will enable us to develop the most pertinent and engaging formats and exchanges in collaboration with the member organizations. I look forward to an inspiring collaboration in the new year!

Cornelia Tobler

Coordinator of the KOFF Platform

HIGHLIGHTS



CIVIL SOCIETY INPUT TO THE NEW SWISS NAP 1325

The [“Women, Peace and Security Alliance \(WPS Alliance\)”](#) project carried out on behalf of the FDFA aims to incorporate the experiences and expertise of civil society into the formulation and implementation of the fifth Swiss National Action Plan 1325. To this end, the WPS Alliance team from KOFF/swisspeace, Frieda and PeaceWomen Across the Globe organized civil society consultations in Bern in September and November. Together with 35 participants from more than 20 organizations, priorities for the new NAP and measures to implement them were identified. Emphasis was placed on violence prevention, enhanced political engagement, and the intersectional approach to addressing global issues such as digitalization, climate change, and migration.

NEW ESSENTIAL PUBLICATION: THE KOFF JOINT LEARNING PROCESSES

The publication of the [“Essential” on joint learning processes](#) was released at the beginning of the year 2023. The aim of the KOFF learning processes is to drive innovation, connect programmatic approaches and best practices across organizational, thematic and geographical boundaries, pinpoint knowledge deficiencies, and leverage accumulated experiences. Authored by Andrea Grossenbacher and Dorothea Schiewer, the Essential summarizes the key findings of KOFF learning processes in recent years, covering topics such as migration and peacebuilding, women, peace, and security, and shrinking space for civil society. Furthermore, the publication outlines the fundamental prerequisites, success factors, and methodological complexities inherent in such learning processes.

SUPPORT FOR SWITZERLAND’S SEAT ON THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC)

Switzerland’s election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the years 2023/2024 marked a historic first and garnered support from the KOFF Platform through the prism of civil society. For instance, the KOFF team regularly engaged in the Structured Dialogue with the FDFA, organized a discussion with Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl on the first year of the seat in autumn 2023. Additionally, KOFF launched a [podcast series](#) comprising four episodes to inform civil society about Switzerland’s position and priorities within the UNSC. Alongside the FDFA, various KOFF member organizations contributed with their civil society insights, expectations, and expertise on topics such as climate security, the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, and digital peacebuilding in the UNSC.

ROUNDTABLE: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING

Youth frequently bear the brunt of crises and conflicts, yet they often find themselves marginalized from active engagement in peacebuilding efforts, despite being key to fostering sustainable peace. The [KOFF roundtable on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding](#) was an interactive event, enabling 35 participants to collectively explore this issue and delve into the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. The event highlighted three different perspectives from KOFF members who are strengthening youth involvement through their work, including the challenges they encounter. Notably, the roundtable addressed the disparities between international agendas and youth participation at the local level, while also exploring potential strategies to bridge this gap.

HIGHLIGHTS



ROUNDTABLE: FEMINIST PEACE WORK IN CONFLICT ZONES

With the aim of addressing peace and security from a feminist perspective, KOFF collaborated with PeaceWomen Across the Globe (PWAG) to host a roundtable discussion on feminist peace work in conflict zones, providing an alternative viewpoint to the prevailing discourse centered around militarization. Outstanding women from conflict-affected regions such as Ukraine and Belarus shared their perspectives and diverse experiences in peacebuilding with over 50 participants. The discussion emphasized, among other, the importance of feminist networking and solidarity through collaborative projects and exchanges.

KOFF FILM SCREENINGS AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Throughout 2023, KOFF organized in cooperation with different member organizations and other partners such as Stadtkino Basel several [film screenings](#) followed by panel discussions. These included protests in Iran, the effects of cartel violence in Mexico, and the consequences of climate change. Additionally, KOFF again organized jointly with [Forum für Friedenskultur](#) a film series at the Illanz Summer. Experts from [Mission 21](#) and [Helvetas](#) took part as discussion guests on site. KOFF also awarded the “Prix de l’Aube” at the [Aube Film Festival](#) to the film “The Winter Within” on the Kashmir conflict.

KOFF MASTERCLASS: DIGITAL PEACEBUILDING

The Masterclass on Digital Peacebuilding offered the KOFF members the opportunity to explore the relationship between digital technology and peacebuilding. It used [swisspeace’s Digital Peacebuilding Toolkit](#) as a resource to review strategies and tools used in different contexts, encouraging participants to consider their applicability to their own work settings. The discussions and activities emphasized the two-sided nature of digital peacebuilding that includes both learning how to leverage digital tools, and the importance of understanding how digital technology impacts information environments and conflict dynamics.

MONTHLY PEER SUPPORT EXCHANGES

In 2023, the KOFF platform continued to regularly provide its members with a trusted space for mutual support, reflection on professional experiences and shared learning. At the monthly KOFF intervention group meetings, participants engaged in discussions about specific challenges and inquiries pertinent to peacebuilding efforts. They received support and learned from the expertise and experiences of peers. From conflict-sensitive approaches to humanitarian crises such as the earthquake in Morocco, effective evaluation of a youth inclusion project, or navigating a project impacted by unresolved conflict situations in the DR Congo, a wide variety of topics were brought up and discussed.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

FEBRUARY

à propos magazine – [Ukraine - One Year Post Invasion](#)

MARCH

2 WPS Alliance Meetings on the topics of:

- Memory & Transformation
- Demilitarization & prevention of GBV

Essential publication: [KOFF Joint Learning Processes](#)
Structured dialogue on Switzerland's seat on the UNSC

APRIL

[Master Class](#): Digital Peacebuilding

[Film screening](#) with Stadtkino Basel: Iran Solidarity Night

à propos magazine – [Natural Resources, Peace & Conflict](#)

MAY

[Film screening](#) with the Stadtkino Basel and PBI: Noche de fuego

[Film Screening](#) of "Backlash: Misogyny in the Digital Age" in cooperation with the Embassy of Canada in Switzerland & Lichtenstein

JUNE

[Roundtable](#): "Youth Participation in Peacebuilding"

JULY

à propos magazine – [Financing Peace – What are the Priorities?](#)

AUGUST

[Ilanzer Sommer](#): Film screenings with Cinema Sil Platz, Forum für Friedenskultur & KOFF organizations
Switzerland in Guatemala & Honduras - Exchange with the Swiss Ambassador

SEPTEMBER

KOFF as cooperating partner at the Aube Filmfestival
à propos magazine – [Peacebuilding in Times of Gender Backlash](#)

[Roundtable](#) with PWAG: Feminist Peace Work in Conflict Zones

[1st civil society hearing for the 5th National Action Plan \(NAP\) 1325](#)

OCTOBER

Exchange with Ambassador Baeriswyl on the Swiss seat on the UNSC

[Roundtable](#) with PBI: Militarization and Human Rights in West Papua, Indonesia

NOVEMBER

[Roundtable](#): Current Situation in Israel/Gaza

[2nd civil society hearing for the 5th National Action Plan \(NAP\) 1325](#)

à propos magazine – [New Peace and Security Landscape in the Sahel](#)

DECEMBER

[Film screening](#) with the Stadtkino Basel: Persepolis

[Podcast series](#) on Switzerland's seat on the UNSC

Regular internal events for KOFF members:

Online intervision group exchanges monthly
Advisory board meetings in March & October 2023
KOFF annual assembly in May 2023

KOFF PLATFORM IN 2023



ADVISORY BOARD

(as of December 2023)

Daniel Hostettler, Fastenaktion*

Christophe Barbey, APRED

Matthias Boss, swisspeace

Sidonia Gabriel/Inés Tijera von Holzen, FDFA, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Ignacio Packer, CAUX – Initiatives of Change

Deborah Schibler, PeaceWomen Across the Globe

Sibylle Ganz-Köchlin, Peace Brigades International Schweiz

Regula Gattiker/Owen Frazer, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

Una Hombrecher, HEKS/EPER

Matthias Hui/Dieter von Blarer, humanrights.ch

Sacha Meuter, Fondation Hirondelle

Andrea Nagel, Frieda – the feminist peace organisation

Diana Schenkel/Ruedi Tobler, Swiss Peace Council

Dorina Waldmeyer, Mission 21

Andreas Hugentobler/Andrea Zellhuber, terre des hommes schweiz

* President of the KOFF Advisory Board

ANNUAL FIGURES 2023

	BUDGET	ACCOUNTS
Income		
swisspeace's contribution*	239,310.56	244,230.33
Membership fees	20,000.00	19,400.00
TOTAL	259,310.56	263,630.33
Expenses		
Staff costs	170,610.56	187,543.53
Activities	22,000.00	23,388.50
Organization & members	7,000.00	6,839.79
Direct costs (ZEWO)	47,700.00	43,087.33
Indirect costs	12,000.00	2,771.17
TOTAL	259,310.56	263,630.33

* Origin of funds from core contribution of FDFA (PHRD)

KOFF 2023 TEAM

Dr. Anna Antonakis: Senior Advisor Gender and Peacebuilding

Emma Baumhofer: Digital Peacebuilding Expert

Dr. Claske Dijkema: Senior Researcher

Yasmine Janah: Associate Gender and Peacebuilding Advisor

Sanjally Jobarteh: Communication Officer

Anna Leissing: Head of the KOFF Platform

Dorothea Schiewer: Intern / Program Assistant

ABOUT THE KOFF PLATFORM

The Swiss platform for peacebuilding KOFF was founded in 2001 and is today an established platform for exchange, networking and joint learning. It brings together more than 40 civil society and two governmental organizations from Switzerland that are active in the areas of peace and security policy, human rights, gender equality and sustainable development.

The strength of the KOFF platform lies in the diversity of perspectives, experiences and expertise of its members based in Switzerland and their partner organizations abroad. These competencies form the basis for the platform's peace policy work and enable the development of strategies and approaches for peacebuilding.

The platform is jointly financed by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (Peace and Human Rights Division) and the KOFF member organizations. It is coordinated by a team at swisspeace, which is in regular contact with the members of the platform. The KOFF Advisory Board currently consists of 15 representatives who advise and support the KOFF team in the strategic orientation of the platform. The members of the Advisory Board are elected every two years by the Annual Assembly.

KOFF PLATFORM MEMBERS

(in 2023)

ae-centre	Frieda- the feminist Peace organization	PeaceWomen Across the Globe
Alliance Sud	Graines de Paix	Quaker United Nations Office
APRED	GSoA	Swiss Peace Council
artasfoundation	HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation	Swiss Red Cross
Baha'i	HEKS/EPER	Solidar Suisse
Basel Peace Office *	IAMANEH Switzerland	SOS-Children's Village Switzerland
Brücke · Le pont	IFOR/MIR	Stiftung für Integrale Friedensförderung
Caux – Initiatives of Change	Interpeace	SWISSAID
Cuisine sans Frontières	IRAS COTIS	swisspeace
Coexistences	Lucerne Initiative for Peace and Security	terre des hommes schweiz
DCAF	medico international Switzerland	United Nations University – Center for Policy Research *
Eirene suisse	Mission 21	Women In International Security (WIIS) Switzerland
Fastenaktion	MIVA	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom *
FDFA, Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD)	Nonviolent Peaceforce	World Vision – Schweiz & Liechtenstein *
FDFA, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)	Peace Brigades International Schweiz	
Fondation Hirondelle	Peace Watch Switzerland	

* Members who joined the platform in 2023

