

à propos

The KOFF
Peacebuilding
Magazine



Peacebuilding between
Professionalization and
Voluntary Engagement

1

reports

Voluntary work should remain a luxury

Interview with Anabella Sibrián: creating points of access for grassroots organizations

Peace Brigades International – a voluntary organization with a future

Different but complementary

Peace and security are fundamental rights

Portraits of people: Building peace with hard work and a bit of luck

2

in depth

Motivation for paid peace?

3

news

KOFF member organizations

swisspeace / KOFF

4

calender

Upcoming events

editorial

Volunteers often put their heart and soul into promoting peace. Their dedication isn't just a job, it's their life's mission. This often involves a mix of professional and volunteer dedication. Sometimes even to the point where it is difficult for people to set their own boundaries. This intrinsic drive is, however, also coupled with expectations. Volunteers want to do meaningful work in which they can get involved.

Their contributions also show that voluntary work continues to play an important role at many organizations. At the same time, NGOs also feel that the increasing trend towards professionalization is a consequence of complex challenges and a higher demand for efficiency and quality. The trend manifests itself in two ways: On the one hand, there is a proportionately increasing number of paid workers in the voluntary sector. And on the other hand, voluntary work itself is becoming professionalized. Preparations are becoming more extensive and the demands are becoming greater. It poses the question of whether the ever-increasing entry threshold is not an issue as the appeal of voluntary work is decreasing. Then again, it is of course also important that volunteers are well trained so that they are well prepared for their work.

Furthermore, despite the trend towards the professionalization of the organizations, the importance of grassroots contact is being emphasized again and again. Those at this level are closer to the action and have a better level of contact with society. Adopting various methods, peacebuilding organizations therefore endeavor to involve grassroots organizations in discussions.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Amélie Lustenberger, Editor of KOFF Magazine

Voluntary work should remain a luxury



FREIWILLIGEN- MONITOR SCHWEIZ 2016

The Swiss Volunteering Survey provides information on voluntary work both within and outside organizations. Picture: SGG

I'd like to begin by congratulating KOFF on addressing this fascinating topic. Voluntary work is seen quite simply as an expression of community spirit and solidarity. That is why many people do not dare to challenge voluntary work as a civic virtue, the quality of the services actually provided and any tensions that may arise for the employees of NPOs and NGOs. The relationship between paid and unpaid workers is complex.

The fact that volunteers work for free does not mean to say that they do not have any expectations of or demands on the NPOs and NGOs that they work for. It is precisely because they waive financial compensation in a world that revolves around money that they place even more value on immaterial assets that others often dispense with if they work for a wage. Volunteers want their work to mean something and look forward to experiencing joy and a sense of community from what they do. Many volunteers are deliberately not looking for responsibility and leadership roles from unpaid work, but rather human contact, for example, when caring for others. Nonetheless, they also want to play an active role by having a say and making decisions on projects and in organizations. In this day and age, voluntary work need no longer conflict with the demands of your family, your career and your hobbies. The value congruence of institutions is also a decisive factor in motivating volunteers.

These days, volunteers expect to be professionally supported in their voluntary commitment, in a similar way to the HR management they experience in their working life.

From recruitment and induction to further education opportunities and marks of recognition through to their final certificate – more and more volunteers are expecting a professional form of volunteer management.

In order to prevent tensions from arising between volunteers and paid workers, especially in the care sector, it makes sense to employ volunteers in positions for which professional requirements are not necessary. Nevertheless, professionalization is continuing to grow in voluntary work. Professional skills are required, not only on association and foundation boards, but also in seemingly simple volunteer positions, where more and more state or internal regulations exist.

Voluntary work is moving closer to logic and the paradigm of gainful employment. It is no wonder that the call for effectiveness, efficiency and quality criteria in volunteer work is getting louder too. It is also becoming more and more common for volunteers to be given service contracts by the state which are checked accordingly. The question as to whether and to what extent voluntary commitment represents a contractual relationship that falls under labor law is therefore not absurd. Volunteering is increasingly losing its character as a counter model to the instrumental rationality of gainful employment. Volunteering should continue to give you the opportunity to try something new and develop new skills without having to overcome the obstacles of formal training. Voluntary work should continue to be an invaluable individual and social luxury.

[Schweizerische Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft \(SGG\)](#)

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Geschäftsleiter SGG

links

- [Schweizerische Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft \(SGG\) \(in German\)](#)
- [Freiwilligen Monitor Schweiz \(Swiss Volunteering Survey\), published by SGG](#)

reports

Interview with Anabella Sibrián: creating points of access for grassroots organizations



Anabella Sibrián. Picture: PWS

Anabella Sibrián is the Director of the International Platform against Impunity in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador (Pi). Pi is an association based in Switzerland, with offices in Guatemala City and Tegucigalpa. Peace Watch Switzerland (PWS) is a member of Pi. The human rights organization looks for volunteers, trains them, and sends them to Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Palestine/Israel as human rights observers. In the following interview with PWS, Anabella Sibrián talks about Pi's work in the areas of conflict between perpetually professionalizing NGOs and grassroots human rights and peace organizations.

Anabella, please could you give us a brief overview of the work Pi is doing?

Pi is an initiative set up for human rights activists in (predominantly indigenous) communities in the Southern Hemisphere, to help them carry out international advocacy work independently. Right now, we are focusing our efforts on Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. We are trying to develop methodologies for active learning, as people understand

more about advocacy work by carrying it out than by learning about it in theory.

Pi works both in the conflicting situations of human rights activists and grassroots organizations and with NGOs that are becoming increasingly professionalized. What impact does this have on your work?

Grassroots organizations, social movements, and human rights activists in the affected communities are our priority, as historically, they have had poor access to spaces for international advocacy. Up to now, they were more like information sources for the specialized organizations in the Northern Hemisphere. Even if they were invited to participate in these spaces every now and then, they were rarely able to travel there personally and contribute independently. This is where our work comes in. At the same time, we are trying to leverage synergies with specialized organizations and forge alliances that will help grassroots organizations to continue getting stronger.

How does the professionalization of peacebuilding affect Pi's work?

The dialectics between theory and practice is fundamental; but what is often understood to be professionalization tends to stop things happening at a technical level and replace political action. As a rule, people working in communities with less access to technical working methods provide more political clarity in their actions. Organizations that are members of Pi want to maintain close contact with the reality of rural areas and indigenous communities from a peacebuilding perspective so that they are able to focus their advocacy work on them.

How does the dynamic between professional NGOs and peace and human rights organizations work on the ground?

Ideally, it should exist in the form of horizontal alliances and – wherever possible – leave the role of the protagonist to the people active in the social movements. This isn't always easy as many spaces for international advocacy work require participants to have a good command of the English language, which generally isn't the case for community leaders. We must continue to lobby from within Pi for advocacy spaces in the north to improve access for people from the south to make it easier for them to participate. If we are successful, both regions of the world will benefit.

What do you consider to be the role of volunteers in peacebuilding?

Volunteers use their specialized knowledge to contribute to the grassroots organizations' technical skills and they also raise awareness and spread information in their home country after their return. Volunteers can therefore contribute to promoting understanding between different cultures and to building equal and respectful relationships for peaceful coexistence.

PWS sends volunteers to areas of conflict, for example Guatemala and Honduras, to accompany human rights activists. How do you think this volunteer work benefits the peacebuilding efforts by professionalized NGOs and what challenges does it present?

One of the most important advantages I can see is that volunteers live and work closely with

both employees from professional NGOs and people in the communities. The challenge for the organizations with which volunteers work is that they need to fulfill a few minimum requirements before they can benefit from this support. After all, volunteers are generally sent into contexts in which emergencies need to be responded to on a daily basis and planning proves to be very difficult. If volunteers are expecting a carefully compiled itinerary and detailed “terms of reference” ready for their arrival, they may find the lack of planning frustrating. If they come over with an open mind and an awareness that they are to adapt to the dynamics of the organization and not the other way round, they will be able to experience exceptional cooperative work and, most importantly, very human encounters with the people they live and work with.

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links

- [Peace Watch Switzerland \(PWS\)](#)

reports

Peace Brigades International – a voluntary organization with a future



PBI volunteer offering support in the peace community of San José de Apartadó in Columbia. Picture: PBI

“We’re establishing an organization that dispatches trained volunteers to fragile environments with the aim of preventing violence.” This is according to the founding protocol of Peace Brigades International (PBI) in 1981. Almost forty years have passed, but the mission hasn’t changed and, in addition to the principles of nonviolence, non-partisanship, non-interference, independence and horizontality, PBI’s voluntary dedication to human rights is its most important cornerstone. The organization’s main concern was, and still is, showing solidarity without at the same time pursuing pecuniary interests.

Strong volunteer character

PBI’s highest decision-making body, the General Assembly, meets every three years. The Articles of Association provide that at least 60% of the delegates are volunteers – this means that every entity must delegate at least one volunteer.

But it’s not just the “field volunteers” who work in unpaid positions at PBI. The project and

training committees – also dedicated volunteers – are crucial pillars of the work happening on the ground. They support the operation of projects locally, for example by helping review assistance requests from new organizations. In 2017, a total of 400 volunteers worked for PBI worldwide, 110 of whom were field volunteers. In contrast, there were 83 paid workers in 20 entities. Each year in Switzerland, 55 volunteers get involved with 5 paid employees, currently with 280 percent by position.

“Professionalization” presents limitations

Contrasting voluntary commitment with “professional” work does, however, leave a stale aftertaste. This is because volunteers are the ones who contribute most to providing services at PBI. Despite the fact that field volunteers are employed for a minimum of a year, spend several months preparing and take on a great deal of responsibility, “voluntary work” is given too little value in the professional world.

This is where the challenges of voluntary work in international cooperation come into play. Specialized knowledge and the relevant experience are in increasing demand. On the one hand, this raises the entry thresholds for voluntary commitment, but on the other hand also reduces the appeal if they are not given the appropriate recognition.

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Sensibilisation & Volunteer Care

[links](#)

- [Peace Brigades International \(PBI\)](#)

reports

Different but complementary



Project for the pedagogical strengthening of teachers in Artibonite, Haiti. Picture: Eirene Suisse

As an organization for cooperation and the promotion of peace that was set up in 1963 by individuals from Protestant and pacifist movements, Eirene Suisse has gradually undergone a process of professionalization. From being a volunteer-led movement, it has developed into a charitable structure, with an office of paid employees united by a common mission and common values. As global challenges become increasingly complex, the pace of life is constantly accelerating, and society is becoming more individualistic. Professionalization is an attempt to protect the continuity of activities while trying to meet the increasingly sophisticated efficiency- and quality-requirements of backers.

In Switzerland, this change creates a tension between our paid staff and our volunteers, with everyone singing from the same hymn sheet, but at different speeds. At times, this tension can cause irritation or frustration for some, and a feeling of incomprehension or uselessness for others. To meet this constant challenge and preserve the bond between these two different but complementary contributors, dialog and the exchange of information are essential.

In the South, Eirene Suisse collaborates with local organizations that are working to promote peace in one way or another. These entities and the work that they do rely partly on the commitment of volunteers, citizens who act as links with (and relay information to) their beneficiaries, as well as barometers of civil society. Within their communities, these

volunteers play a key role on a daily basis through the creation of a domino effect of peace promotion, whether through prevention or reconciliation – like, for example, in Rwanda. We should give them the time and space they need to play their role. We should also recognize the value of their presence and their work despite the fact that they are unpaid.

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[links](#)

- [Eirene Suisse](#)

reports

Peace and security are fundamental rights



APRED Conference in Alternatiba-Geneva, 18.9.18. Picture: APRED

Everyone has the right to participate in the construction of peace, to learn how to live in peace and to bring others to live in peace. Peace is a fundamental method, prevention and non-violence if peace is at stake.

A cultural and educational vector, peace is lived by most people without having its value or quest, without a commitment for it being always expressed. Yet the entire population is concerned.

Peace is the subject of numerous political debates: on means and ends of security, on the use of armed force or of non-violence, on prevention and reconstruction, through fundamental rights, democracy and development for sustainable or resilient societies. All human activities are concerned.

Professionalization of peace is essential. Through fundamental research and interactions with society, professionals introduce peace and its methods in our cultures and into the political agenda and in the social and legal long term infrastructures.

Professionalization also has its flaws. It must be inclusive and include citizen engagement. It should not focus on conflict only and fail to work for peace itself: a value and a vector of happiness necessary for personal and global balance. And resources for peace are still

scarce, professionalization is expensive and some of these resources will also have to go to grassroots organizations.

Apred practices a global vision of peace: From fundamental research (long-term peace infrastructures: peace and constitution, the human right to peace, non-militarization), UN activism (right to life, presence of peace in universal periodic reviews), coordination of grassroots organizations (Collectif Romand Peace and Non-Violence) and individual support for soldiers and conscientious objectors.

Apred teaches peace and benefits from the inputs of professionals, trainees and volunteers.

Be it through personal or professional engagement, peace is universal.

APRED

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links

- [APRED](#)
- [Collectif Romand Paix et Non-violence \(in French\)](#)

reports

Portraits of people: Building peace with hard work and a bit of luck



Daniel Langmeier on the television show “Top Secret” on 19 October 2016

Daniel Langmeier has been actively involved in the social sector for over ten years. Globalization, social justice, and north-south relations are prominent issues in every aspect of his life. He has just completed a Master’s degree in development studies. His great passion for human rights and peacebuilding in Honduras started six years ago, when he happened across a notice by Peace Watch Switzerland calling for “human rights accompaniment volunteers”. He doesn’t hesitate to sign up for an information event, which persuades him straight away. In 2013, he travels to Honduras as an accompaniment volunteer, not by plane but rather by ship, a journey that takes three weeks. Why? Simply to show that it was possible to get there without a plane. This healthy dose of spirit is what the Zurich local needs to go to Honduras at all, as it’s a tough place: the country has one of the highest murder rates in the world and the government does its utmost to suppress civil society.

Daniel’s work doesn’t stop when he returns to Switzerland. In fact, that’s when it really takes off! He joins the “Honduras Forum Schweiz”, which supports civil society in Honduras and works together with swisspeace on several projects. Those involved have a lot of ideas, but unfortunately most of them do not have the financial means to implement them. So

Daniel has the idea of appearing on a television quiz show. Why not? He discovers the show “Top Secret” while visiting his grandparents, as he doesn’t have his own television. Once again, he seizes the opportunity and signs up. He has to wait a long time for an answer, but about one year later, contrary to all of his own expectations, Daniel finds himself sitting in the contestant’s chair on “Top Secret”.

Daniel gets through the first few questions without much difficulty. He is well-informed about politics and uses his general knowledge to make some good guesses. Then he is asked this question: “What is the latest development in Rivella’s story?” The options are: “Introduced a screw cap for liter bottles”, “Became a sponsor of the Swiss Alpine Ski Team”, “Broadcast first television commercial” or “Launched Rivella Blue”. Who on earth knows? Daniel taps “Launched Rivella Blue”. He guesses wrong and loses his chance to win the top prize of CHF 100,000. Now the pressure is really on, as he now only stands to win either the CHF 50,000 prize or the comparatively meager CHF 100 prize. The question is: “who was younger when they scored their first victory?” Was it Lara Gut or Martina Hingis? He has to guess and he guesses right. He therefore wins CHF 50,000 and donates all of it to the project in Honduras. To do anything else would be “too undemocratic”, according to Daniel.

He asks Anna Leissing, Head of KOFF at swisspeace, for advice on how the money could be spent most effectively. Other people – including some from the region in question – are consulted and the matter is discussed over several cups of tea. After all, it’s not every day that such a large donation is made without any administrative terms and conditions attached. What do the people of Honduras need that major NGOs cannot or will not provide? In March 2016, human rights activist Berta Cáceres is murdered. The shock affects everybody deeply. There is widespread grief, frustration, and a kind of paralysis among the activists. The incident also shows them the limitations of their current work and puts the concept of “safety” into perspective. Daniel and his fellow campaigners realize that psychosocial issues are not given enough consideration. In Honduras, a great need has emerged for a protected community, where people could come to terms with their daily experiences of violence, death, and impunity. The campaigners hope to help meet this need by providing a psychosocial learning community for human rights activists in Honduras. The CHF 50,000 project idea is born!

The detailed vision is as follows: in conflict zones, having to contend with daily violence and destruction, as well as constant threat to life and limb can push people to breaking point. There will be workshops designed to help people learn how to cope with the situation. This involves an almost unlimited range of methods: meditation, role-play exercises, yoga, dance, group discussions, etc. It’s important to help people acknowledge their feelings and to provide a space where they regain control.

The people involved in the project organize this learning community in their free time. After all, the prize money is not intended to pay Swiss wages, but to make a difference in the local area. “It was difficult not to take on too much,” says Daniel, “On the one hand, you want to accelerate a project, but on the other, you need to make sure you have room to breathe.” Eventually, he can go to Honduras for the final preparations, making it easier for him to coordinate the project. However, there is a severe setback: Daniel’s many years of work to promote human rights and peace in Honduras have put him in danger. Just before the learning community starts, he had to leave the country urgently for his own safety.

But in the spirit of his untiring efforts, the learning community goes ahead anyway. Over several days, the participants exchange experiences, dance, paint, and gather new strength and motivation. A sanctuary has been created, where people can talk openly. Even now, a year later, Daniel says that the workshop is mentioned in nearly every conversation and meeting with partner organizations. The idea has already been reused several times. This demonstrates the important role that creative and unrestricted projects can play in peacebuilding. These projects do not have quantifiable results, but everybody involved knows how essential they are. “Maybe sometimes safety isn’t found in a tank, but in a dance,” says Daniel as a closing remark.

Portrait of:

Daniel Langmeier

Interviewer:

Amélie Lustenberger

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links

- [Honduras Forum Schweiz \(in German\)](#)
- [Videos about the psychosocial approach \(in Spanish\)](#)
- [Essential: Civil Society Space for Action in Honduras](#)
- [Top Secret \(in German\)](#)

in depth

Motivation for paid peace?



Peace work of "Solidarity in Action", 2011. Picture: Creative Commons

Would you stay motivated in your work if you weren't getting paid? Most people would probably answer "no" to this question. Work ultimately serves the purpose of building up capital which finances a great life of leisure time, family and consumption. The question, however, becomes much more complex if we distinguish between different types of work and different sectors: Would you stay motivated in peacebuilding if you weren't getting paid? It could certainly be argued that peacebuilding work has value, even without financial incentives. Peace promotes community. Peace allows our children to live a life without worries. Peace is ultimately crucial for our survival. But we also need to live, that is to say, we need to finance our (essential) consumption.

How has peacebuilding changed over the course of the professionalization process? Specifically, we assume that as soon as we engage in work with a financial incentive (extrinsic motivation), it replaces our intrinsic motivation, namely, working for the sake of working (and its outcomes).

Psychology and behavioral research have been exploring this phenomenon for some time now. Judy Cameron and W. David Pierce analyzed 96 different studies and concluded that financial reward does not diminish intrinsic motivation. It only diminishes when a reward is expected for simple work but suddenly does not materialize. Mark Lepper and David Greene were also able to prove this effect in children. What conclusions can now be drawn when it

comes to our area of work – peacebuilding? Since relevant scientific research results are lacking in our profession, so far we can only speculate. Peacebuilding is likely characterized by a highly intrinsically motivated workforce. We don't serve mammon – career and consumption come second. Corresponding losses will probably be accepted, whether you like it or not.

swisspeace

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Communications

links

- [Reinforcement, Reward, and Intrinsic Motivation: A Meta-Analysis](#)
- [Undermining children's intrinsic interest with extrinsic reward: A test of the "overjustification" hypothesis](#)

news

KOFF member organizations



Palestine: we have no other country

The event “Palästina: Wir haben kein anderes Land” (Palestine: we have no other country) took place in Zurich on September 10 as part of the the “Kosmopolitics” series of events. After the showing of Dror Dayan’s film “Even though my land is burning”, a discussion was held.

Despite being in Zurich, the film’s protagonist, Palestinian Manal Tamimi, did not attend the panel discussion on the resistance of her village, Nabih Saleh, against the Israeli occupation. In the run-up to the event, pro-Israeli platform “audiatur” unearthed anti-Semitic comments made by Manal Tamimi and put many organizers – including the Karl der Grosse Center, led by the city of Zurich – under pressure to refuse Tamimi her chance to speak. Israeli filmmaker, Dror Dayan, showed his solidarity with her and also stayed away from the discussion held at the Kosmos cultural center.

This position was made clear and the remaining panelists – Margrith Nagel from Café Palestine Zurich and Reto Rufer, country expert from Amnesty International Switzerland – based their explanations around aspects of the Israel-Palestine conflict relating to international law and human rights. In the ensuing, active public debate, Jewish voices

were well represented too. It is regretted that criticism of certain circles related to Israel is instinctively equated with anti-Semitism. A purposeful dialog which would lead to the termination of the Israeli occupation is thus constantly being torpedoed.

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Daniel Hitzig, Media Officer at Alliance Sud, moderated the event.

[links](#)

- [Kosmopolitics event information \(in German\)](#)

news

swisspeace / KOFF



Sport and peace? Event on the International Day of Peace. Picture: swisspeace

Sport and peace: conflict in sport originates in the real world

On September 21, swisspeace organized a public discussion with some illustrious guests. In addition to Bernhard Heusler, the former President of FC Basel, and Marc-André Buchwalder, CEO of the Scott Foundation, Erik Petry, Professor of Jewish Studies at the

University of Basel also took a seat on the panel. The discussion was opened by President of the Executive Council of the Canton of Basel-Stadt, Elisabeth Ackermann. A lively and respectful debate about the role of sport in peace efforts unfolded in front of the listeners from the very beginning. All the speakers made their differing views clear from the start. For example, Heusler spoke of his term at FC Basel, both a sports club and a large enterprise. Across from him sat Buchwalder, founder of a grassroots foundation that celebrates sport as a way of bringing people together. Petry brought some historical depth to the discussion, pointing out that (competitive) sport was frequently used as a strengthening exercise before the war. Petry argued that only a careful differentiation of sport, competition, athletes and fans could lead to a serious debate.

The discussion spent a long time focusing on football, which can likely be put down to the biographies of each of the participants. However, the approaches brought to the discussion were from the perspective of sport in general. For example, the panel extensively discussed gender issues in sport. Buchwalder talked about a positive example in Sri Lanka, in which a Tottenham Hotspurs football coach helped a scheme to allow girls to play football at school too. The panelists also answered questions on hot topics. Petry appreciated the issue of the double headed eagle concerning Albanian-born Swiss footballers that erupted after the World Cup, which marked the first step in touching on the long-overdue discussion about nationality, ethnicity and sport.

So, does sport really offer a chance for peace? A concluding plea for or against this was not offered by any of the participants, nor by moderator Laurent Goetschel. They did, however, all agree that sport is a reflection of society. Conflict in sport often originates in the “real world.” A peaceful resolution of conflicts is a possibility in the world of sport, but expectations should not be set too high. We can only hope that we kick more and shoot less in the future.

The event took place on September 21, 2018, from 5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. at the University of Basel, Aula, Kollegienhaus, Petersplatz 1, CH-4051 Basel and was open to the public. swisspeace would like to thank Elisabeth Ackermann, Bernhard Heusler, Marc-André Buchwalder and Erik Petry for their active participation and all listeners for the lively discussion and crucial questions.

[swisspeace](#)

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Communications

[links](#)

- [Sport and peace? Event on the International Day of Peace \(in German\)](#)

Theories of Change in Fragile Contexts Course

Despite the widespread emergence of theories of change in strategy and project documents, they are rarely used to their full potential. Organized by swisspeace, the Course “Theories of Change in Fragile Contexts” focuses on how ‘good’ theories of change can be created that will help practitioners gain an in-depth understanding of their programs and

their impacts.

Participants will understand the concepts of theories of change and the basics to work with them, build theories of change on different levels with practical exercises, and get insights on different uses of theories of change for design, monitoring and evaluation. They will also develop ideas on using theories of change as a tool to foster organizational learning and grapple with complexity.

The course will take place from 30 January -1 February 2019 in Basel. It can be taken as a module of the Certificate, Diploma and Master of Advanced Studies in Civilian Peacebuilding programs offered by swisspeace and the University of Basel.

[swisspeace](#)

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[links](#)

- [Further information](#)
- [Registration until 30 November 2018](#)

Opportunities and risks IT presents for peacebuilding – KOFF Intervision Group

The KOFF Intervision Group is made up of experts from twenty different KOFF member organizations. The group meets three times a year to discuss certain issues relating to peace policy as well as the challenges and experiences of daily peacebuilding work. This year, the group met for the second time on September 13.

During the meeting, members tackled the subject “Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in peacebuilding”. On the basis of a swisspeace publication drafted on the subject, members discussed the opportunities and risks IT presents for peacebuilding. This meeting revealed that critical examination of the subject is required, as well as more specific recommendations for peacebuilding practitioners and organizations. IT enables new forms of dialog and exchange, but requires everybody to be familiar with the tools used and well-informed about the possible impact on all parties involved.

The corresponding final publication will be published on the [swisspeace website](#) at the end of 2018.

[swisspeace](#)

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Associate Program Officer Policy and Platform Program KOFF

Upcoming Events

15. October 2018

Lucerne, Switzerland

[Human Rights Responsibility of Corporates](#)

The University of Lucerne organizes a public panel discussion on the growing debate on companies' responsibilities towards human rights.

[Further Information](#)

16. October 2018

Geneva, Switzerland

[Brazilian 2018 elections: dilemmas of an unequal democracy](#)

This Lunch Briefing will explore the relationship between this disappointment with democracy and persistent Brazilian high socioeconomic inequalities. How has inequality shaped the dynamics of the 8th Brazilian presidential election?

[Further Information](#)

16. October 2018

Geneva, Switzerland

[Does Totalitarianism Exist? The Czechoslovak Experience](#)

Muriel Blaive will reflect on the missing epistemological reflection on totalitarianism after 1989 in Czech memory politics, as well as on how to deal with the communist past.

[Further Information](#)

18. October – 21. December 2018

Berne, Switzerland

[Digital Exhibition: Across Borders: Migration and Diversity](#)

Students of the school of arts in Valais (ECAV) present their work, complemented by photos of Alberto Campi and texts by Amina Abdulkadir – All on the topic migration.

[Further Information](#)

18. October 2018

Basel, Switzerland

[Korea: On the Cold War's last border](#)

Public lecture by Urs Gerber, former Divisional General and leader of the Swiss delegation of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) talks about his personal experiences and the current geopolitical situation.

[Further Information](#)

19. – 21. October 2018

Berne, Switzerland

[Forum against Water Grabbing](#)

In large parts of the world, drinking water is difficult to come by. One reason are privatization schemes, which leave the thirsty population bereft of the essential commodity.

[Further Information](#)

25. October 2018

Berne, Switzerland

[City tour – Places of Participation](#)

Where do migrants in Bern have a voice? Which social changes did they influence? In which social and political questions should they be implicated in the future?

[Further Information](#)

01. November 2018

Berne, Switzerland

[Islam and the composition of human rights. Derivation, Law Process and Justification](#)

Can we speak of “Islamic human rights”? What derives from Islamic debates on religion and human rights? Do declaration of human rights need a religious justification to address mankind?

[Further Information](#)

13. November 2018

Berne, Switzerland

[Implementation on the Istanbul Convention in Switzerland](#)

The Federal Office for Gender Equality organizes a national conference for implementing the Istanbul convention in Switzerland

[Further Information](#)

22. November 2018 – 11. April 2019

Berne, Switzerland

[Film Series: Agriculture – Soil, Farmers, Bread](#)

The series deals with the future of our food. What impact does globalization and industrialization of agriculture have on our food, and the providers of it, our farmers? How is the food process from the soil to the plate in the future?

[Further Information](#)

30. January – 01. February 2019

Basel, Switzerland

[Theories of Change in Fragile Contexts Course](#)

Participants of this swisspeace course will get to know and apply theoretical concepts in order to resolve conflicts in fragile contexts peacefully and most effectively.

[Further Information](#)

11. - 15. February 2019

Basel, Switzerland

[National Dialogue & Peace Mediation Course](#)

swisspeace merges the two concepts of national dialogue and peace mediation, offering a course aiming at transferring traditional mediation processes to a wider party of society.

[Further Information](#)

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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

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