A 'Peace Market' set up with support from Centre Résolution Conflicts in the village of Kilya, DR Congo.
The last twelve months have been challenging for our team and our partners. A global pandemic, calls for racial justice, and rising levels of violence and unrest in Mali, Lebanon, Ethiopia and elsewhere, all combined to make 2020 a year like no other. Peace was threatened around the world, and the work of local peacebuilders was needed more than ever.
I’m proud our partnership with the People’s Postcode Lottery has continued into its third year. In 2020, we focussed on responding to the global health crisis; supporting our partners to adapt their work, bringing communities together virtually, and shining a spotlight on grassroots peacebuilders.

In this report we share what we achieved in 2020. Thanks to the continued support from People’s Postcode Lottery, we worked with partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. We were also able to boost the organisational capacity of both Peace Direct and our African partners. Your support meant we were able to support 2,056 people directly, and our extended impact reached even more.

Highlights I’m particularly proud of are:

- Our partner: Envision Zimbabwe Women’s Trust training 90 police officers on non-violence and COVID-19 protection (see more on page 5).
- In DR Congo, 140 children affected by conflict went back to school (page 11).
- We worked with partners in Nigeria to bring together 180 young people from diverse backgrounds through sports, and deliver vocational training to 145 young people (page 9).

Crises exacerbate inequalities and violence. But our work shows us that even through the most challenging of circumstances, local people and communities kown how to capitalise on opportunities for change and rebuilding to deliver renewed hope.

The global pandemic underscored the importance of bringing people together for peace, and supporting communities affected by war and violence to build back better. And build back stronger.

Despite the impact COVID-19 poses to civil society and our collective ability to respond to conflict, we are resolute in continuing support for those communities around the world who are most affected. Your support, and that of thousands of People’s Postcode Lottery players, gives us the strength and hope to continue our important mission towards peace.

With gratitude,

Dylan Mathews
Chief Executive, Peace Direct
2020 Highlights

How People’s Postcode Lottery supported our work

58 children in DR Congo helped with mental health and counselling

2,056 people directly supported by our partners

140 child mine workers returned to school

120 young people in Nigeria took part in Peace Clubs.

180 young people in Nigeria took part in ‘Sports for Peace’

6 committees set up in Zimbabwe to resolve conflict at water points

420 people in DR Congo received training on child rights and education
Transforming community life in Zimbabwe
In Zimbabwe, our partners have continued their work in spite of the challenging environment for civil society organisations. Working with the police, they have been helping to reduce violence and increase awareness about COVID-19, as well as developing ways to resolve conflict over resources.

Training on non-violence
> Envision Zimbabwe Women's Trust

During the pandemic, the use of violence by security forces was widespread. In response, Envision Zimbabwe trained police officers in conflict and violence transformation. The training aimed at changing attitudes towards violence use in enforcing lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions. Participants learned about conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation.

“\[quote\]
I am a 29-year-old male police officer. The course in Conflict Management came at the right time when the country was under lockdown and restriction of movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic...I have been able to address public transport drivers and their conductors to adhere to COVID-19 regulations. Previously we would just approach these drivers and arrest them or they would speed away, dangerously risking the lives of passengers. There has always been tensions between these public drivers and us the police, the conflict transformation skills are helping us to exercise nonviolent approaches to deal with such situations.\[quote\]

Raising awareness of COVID-19

Despite the challenges of social distancing and isolation, Envision Zimbabwe provided training on COVID-19 for 90 police officers across three provinces. Before the training, most officers’ understanding of the virus was poor and rumours spreading false information were rampant. Envision’s training busted myths about the virus and increased understanding on the importance of sharing the correct information on COVID-19 with members of the public in a non-violent way.

When asked before and after the training, 100% of the participants interviewed demonstrated that they had increased their knowledge of COVID-19. One female police officer, who has been in the service for 10 years, shared her experience:

“\[quote\]
I have learnt to encourage people politely to adhere to regulations that prevent the spread of the disease by sharing the information I received. As an officer I was ready to use force on people being reckless, but I have noticed that generally people have wrong beliefs that it is just like the normal flu and when we take our time as police to explain what it is people will listen.\[quote\]
Resolving water disputes

> Centre for Conflict Management and Transformation

Recent droughts and water shortages mean that wells and other water points have become hubs of violence, political arguments and corruption.

In 2020, the Centre for Conflict Management and Transformation (CCMT) worked with the authorities to prevent conflict over water. They set-up six platforms, where elected community representatives came together to work closely with communities in diffusing tensions around water points.

‘Controlling’ water barons were replaced with six new Water Point Committees. These committees include a rich diversity of people from all political parties, women, youth and disabled people. The committees focus on equal access to water for different groups and CCMT have been successful in creating greater community cohesion, improving relationships and reducing violence over resources.

“My name is Panashe Mukahadira. I am 24 years old and I am a member of the Matombo 10 Water Point Committee in Epworth. There were several incidents of violent clashes at these water points as different political groups tried to access and control the water points. Water points had become hubs for violence and political contestations. We knew we were in trouble... We approached CCMT for help. CCMT asked us what we needed and we told them that we wanted peace, order and equal access to water by everyone at our water point.

Now, we have sanity at our water points. Political party representatives, women, youths and persons with disabilities all work together in our Committee. In fact, our Committee has become an epitome of community social cohesion, political tolerance, inclusion and respect. We are excited to see people that never used to see eye to eye now working together in the Committee. People from different political parties now work together in the water point committees and their relationships have become very, very strong, thanks to CCMT for bringing sanity to our water points.”
Bringing communities together in Nigeria

A football training session in Minjibir, Kano, organised as part of Peace Initiative Network’s ‘Sport for Peace’ programme.
Since 1991, clashes between Christians and Muslims in Kano, north-west Nigeria have been ongoing and have left a legacy of divided communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the #EndSARS protests - calling for an end to police brutality - have made efforts to build peace even more important. Our partners, Peace Initiative Network (PIN), continued to bridge divides between groups, bringing people together and working with young people and community groups in the Kano area. This year they supported 505 people.

**Peace Clubs**

*Peace Initiative Network*

“Peace Clubs” continued this year – bringing together 120 young Christians and Muslims for leadership training, peacebuilding, and community development. They met every month to discuss local peacebuilding initiatives and to build a mutual understanding with one another. As a result, PIN shared that they have witnessed changes in behaviour among participants. Friendships have been established and acceptance of cultural and religious differences among participants has increased. PIN adapted their work quickly during the pandemic; producing and distributing over 2,000 face masks to various communities in Kano and Minjibir following the monthly “Peace Club” meetings.

**Sports for peace**

PIN also continued their “Sport for Peace” work in 2020. In three towns, 10 local football, para-football and handball clubs met monthly, supporting 180 young people and bringing over 350 spectators and supporters together. At the start of each sports event, the PIN team share messages on peaceful coexistence, leadership, dialogue, religious tolerance, and other community issues. As well as giving young people an alternative to joining violent groups, PIN’s clubs are creating a space for tolerance, unity and peace. The organisation is helping young people to become agents of social change, with sport as the starting point.
Rebuilding lives and communities in DR Congo
In DR Congo, violence increased in the east of the country in 2020, where more than 1.2 million people have been displaced during two years of conflict.

Rising ethnic tensions, deep community mistrust and violent attacks has meant that containing the spread of COVID-19 has been really tough. This year, our partner Centre Résolution Conflits (CRC) helped 722 people in DRC by providing educational and economic opportunities for communities affected by violent conflict.

**Supporting child soldiers > Centre Résolution Conflits**

Our partners continued to provide support to former child soldiers. 42 young people received vocational training in trades such as tailoring, hairdressing, mechanics and farming. 83% (35) are now experiencing increased income and are able to provide for their families. CRC’s work has also reduced the rate of return to armed groups for children at risk. Of those who were supported in 2020, 96% said they no longer feel stigmatised, wouldn’t return to armed groups, and would actively discourage their friends from doing so.

"I am proud to sell chairs, it makes people respect me because I set the price as I want. At the moment I support my family by providing daily meals," a carpentry trainee.

22 former child soldiers who had witnessed or participated in armed violence received phycological support. Of those, 86% said they feel better; and all the children who were interviewed reported no longer feeling stigmatised in their community.

To bring the wider community into efforts to support child soldiers to reintegrate, CRC provided training to 120 adults in 2020 on child protection and conflict prevention. This work was part of their RECOPE committee, a group set up for the protection of children.

The committee now includes 40 members, and in 2020 they supported 45 families of children recently escaped from armed groups. The group was successful in bringing about the release of 11 children from an armed group. The network’s efforts are becoming increasingly recognised - the Baswanga authorities are asking for calling for other projects to support children leaving armed groups, and by community leaders and members of RECOPE.
Protecting child's rights
> Centre Résolution Conflits

CRC sought to combat child labour in gold mines, promote respect for children’s rights, and provide women with opportunities to earn their own livelihoods through mining cooperatives. This year, the project helped 140 former child mine workers, including 86 girls, to go back to school and receive an education. The organisation provided the children with school uniforms and paid their school fees. One child in Lubero said:

“Ever since I went back to school, everyone is interested in me and asks me for advice when they have problems. The situation has changed completely because all the other young people in our community look up to me and invite me to youth decision-making meetings.”

Distress, anxiety, sleep problems and physical symptoms including rapid breathing, shaking and palpitations are common among children who have witnessed killings and sexual violence in conflict.

CRC has provided 58 children with psychological support and counselling in 2020. Although the recovery for the children who are affected can take many years, after 10 months of psychological care, CRC reported that 46 children are already showing improvements.

Improving women's livelihoods

In many mines, women traditionally take on roles that involve working with mercury, meaning their health and the environment are put at risk.

As part of their efforts to remove mercury from the mining process, CRC hosted a consultation with 200 women to discuss its harmful effects. The women then participated in training on different ways to earn a living. Through this, they set up their own restaurants, money transfer shops and sewing workshops. They also had training on financial management and received a business start-up kit. 189 (95%) of these women are already using their skills to earn an income independently.
War and violence rage on everyday in countries across the world. Thousands of innocent lives are lost, and entire communities are torn apart. The hopes and aspirations of generations of people are lost in an instant.

With your support, and the support of People’s Postcode Lottery players, we work everyday to change this.

In partnership with a dynamic network of local peacebuilding organisations around the world, we build towards a future where everyone is free from war, to live and prosper in peace.