

Centre on Armed Groups

Research. Dialogue. Advice.



Armed Groups in a Changing World

2023–2025 Strategy

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Introduction

What we do

The Centre on Armed Groups supports efforts to reduce violence and end armed conflict. We do this through conducting forward-looking research, creating safe spaces for dialogue, and providing practical advice. The Centre strives to be a unique resource for organisations and individuals in the fields of diplomacy, research, development, peacebuilding, humanitarian aid, and in the private sector.

Who we are

The Centre on Armed Groups evolved out of a programme, Centre for the Study on Armed Groups, hosted at ODI, a London-based think tank. During a two-year incubation period (June 2020–June 2022), we built a reputation for generating timely, high-profile research. But we also realized that research alone was not enough. As an independent organization, we have expanded our portfolio of work to include dialogue support and advisory services to ensure our research and analysis have a real-world impact.

The Centre is managed by three co-directors with recognized expertise on armed groups. Our work is guided by an

Advisory Network and overseen by a Committee (see p. 17). Registered as an independent association in Geneva, Switzerland, we marshal extensive experience and insights through our network of experts and practitioners, who cover more than 50 armed groups across over 30 countries.

Objectives

This strategy was developed in consultation with a wide range of experts and organisations. Our objectives are two-fold. First and foremost, the Centre aims to reshape narratives on and ways of engaging armed groups in a changing world. This strategy outlines a research and advisory agenda that will bring new insights and analysis to the table in an increasingly uncertain geopolitical environment.

Our second set of objectives focuses on developing the organisational capacities and securing the resources required to do that. As a newly independent entity, the Centre strives to build a structure and systems that match its ambitions and values.

Context

Armed groups in a changing world

Armed groups – defined as any armed entity not recognised as a State – play an increasingly important role in global security, political and economic issues. Some 175 million people live in territories over which armed groups exercise influence or govern.

The number of non-international armed conflicts has more than doubled since the early 2000s, with international actors often involved (as third parties supporting host states or armed groups, as part of multinational peacekeeping forces, and so on).

And there are now more armed groups to contend with. Between 1950 and 2010, the average number of armed groups involved in a given civil war nearly doubled. Today, there are an estimated 600 armed groups which the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) designates as ‘of humanitarian concern.’ Part of the reason is that, as we’ve seen in Libya and Syria, today’s armed groups are also more prone to fragmentation. That makes them more difficult to understand, and make peace with.

Another element of change is that today’s armed groups are not confined to war zones. Levels of violence in Mexico surpass those at the height of the Iraq war. Banditry in Nigeria is arguably driving more humanitarian needs than Islamist militants like Boko Haram or Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP). During the COVID-19 pandemic, cartels and gangs from South Africa to Haiti capitalised on the crisis to exert control over territory, resources, and people.

At the global level, the rise of a multipolar world order has set the stage for heightened violent competition and another generation of proxy wars. The war in Ukraine has brought great power rivalries back into the open. Meanwhile, China’s growing influence has surfaced new geopolitical and economic tensions.

There are wider, longer-term implications for global security. One is that great power economic and political competition will be increasingly waged through local conflicts. A second is that different kinds of actors are challenging conventional dividing lines and what we traditionally think of as ‘armed groups. In the Central African Republic, for example, the Wagner Group has been responsible for more violent targeting of civilians since 2020 than either the state forces or main opposition forces.

A third effect is that the institutions and norms meant to bind us together in the face of crises are breaking down. Collective security mechanisms are deteriorating and respect for international norms is eroding.

This erosion is mirrored in many Western societies. Armed extremist groups in the US and Europe indicate crumbling societal cohesion and increasingly threaten peace and domestic security. They manipulate information and undermine trust in the state to further their political (and other) objectives. At the same time, rising prices

and climate-induced scarcity are inflaming local tensions.

As the nature of armed groups changes, the way we understand, and deal with them, must also change. The Centre on Armed Groups was created because current approaches are too often ineffective. Overly militarised responses and flawed understandings of armed groups have proved inadequate in context after context – from Islamist insurgencies in the Sahel to cartels and gangs in the Americas.

STRATEGIC GOALS



RESEARCH

Increase and improve the **evidence base** to better inform understandings of armed groups



DIALOGUE

Challenge and change **public and policy narratives** on engagement with armed groups



ADVICE

Support effective, safe and **ethical engagement** with armed groups

Addressing the gaps

Part of the problem lies in the lack of rigorous, on-the-ground research with armed groups. This strategy covers the most pressing gaps, through three core work streams. The first, **understanding armed groups**, addresses core policy and conceptual issues. This entails questioning conventional wisdom, overcoming traditional labels and categories (i.e., ‘terrorists’, ‘criminals’), and breaking down the dividing lines between the global north and south. The second, **civilian-armed group relations**, looks at how armed groups

engage with civilians to get what they want – and how civilians navigate life amidst armed group presence and control. The third and final stream of work, **armed group economies**, seeks to understand armed groups as economic actors and how economic factors shape their behaviour.

A related problem is that relevant expertise on armed groups is often siloed or hard to access. There tends to be a lack of tailored, evidenced-based support for engagement, particularly outside traditional ‘war’ contexts. Some of the blockages are political. Armed groups, especially designated terrorist groups, are often seen as beyond the pale. Many actors fear the legal and reputational consequences of engaging with them.



Many others are ill-equipped to engage with armed groups. They have little understanding of their motives and lack institutional guidance and tools to support staff on the ground.

This is not new, but the ‘war on terror’ created a legal and policy regime that criminalised many engagement forms. This has had a chilling effect on dialogue with armed groups, and distorted our understanding of what these groups want and how to best deal with them. Furthermore, it has made it difficult to end wars or military engagements (such as peacekeeping or stabilisation missions) – even when they no longer serve their intended goals.

The challenges of understanding and dealing with armed groups are manifold. Yet those facing them are often reticent to speak openly about these dilemmas. Creating **safe spaces for dialogue** about engagement with armed groups is integral to the Centre’s approach. We’ve seen first-hand how frank conversations about legal, ethical and operational dilemmas can unlock new thinking and pathways for action.

The Centre uses its convening power in several ways. We provide on-demand

support, drawing on our network of experts, to facilitate better understanding of challenges and solutions. Alongside this, we aim to reshape narratives and strengthen public debate on armed groups.

Our advisory work aims to create **better access to evidence**, best practice and support for those grappling with these challenges. Even established humanitarian and peace actors are looking for ways to address challenges presented by new (or newly prominent) actors and increasingly fractious geopolitical dynamics.

The Centre embeds deep knowledge of armed groups in an understanding of global trends, using nuanced empirics to advance our understanding of the bigger picture. Drawing on our extensive network, the Centre mobilises a **wide range of expertise to provide context-specific analysis and advice**. These include on-demand briefings, strategy design, context analysis, policy development, and on-the-ground support.

The remainder of this strategy outlines the specific initiatives and programmatic aspects we see as critical to understanding and dealing with armed groups today.

Ways of working

The Centre is managed by three co-directors with several decades of experience working on armed groups. Our work is guided by an Advisory Network and overseen by a Committee (see p. 17). Registered as an independent association in Geneva, Switzerland, the Centre has adopted a networked approach which prioritises global reach and flexibility. Our management team, network and partners are located all over the world.

The Centre began as a programme, Centre for the Study on Armed Groups, within ODI, a London-based think tank. During a two-year incubation period (June 2020–June 2022), we generated timely, high-profile research on armed groups. Yet there was a clear demand from practitioners and donors that we go beyond working papers and other traditional outputs, and do more to translate our research into actionable advice and practical support.

We now focus on three interlinked areas of work: research, dialogue and advice. Research remains the foundation of our work. Yet in our collective experience, an approach that integrates research with dialogue and advice is required. This also means that just as much energy and resources are devoted to doing research must go into packaging it

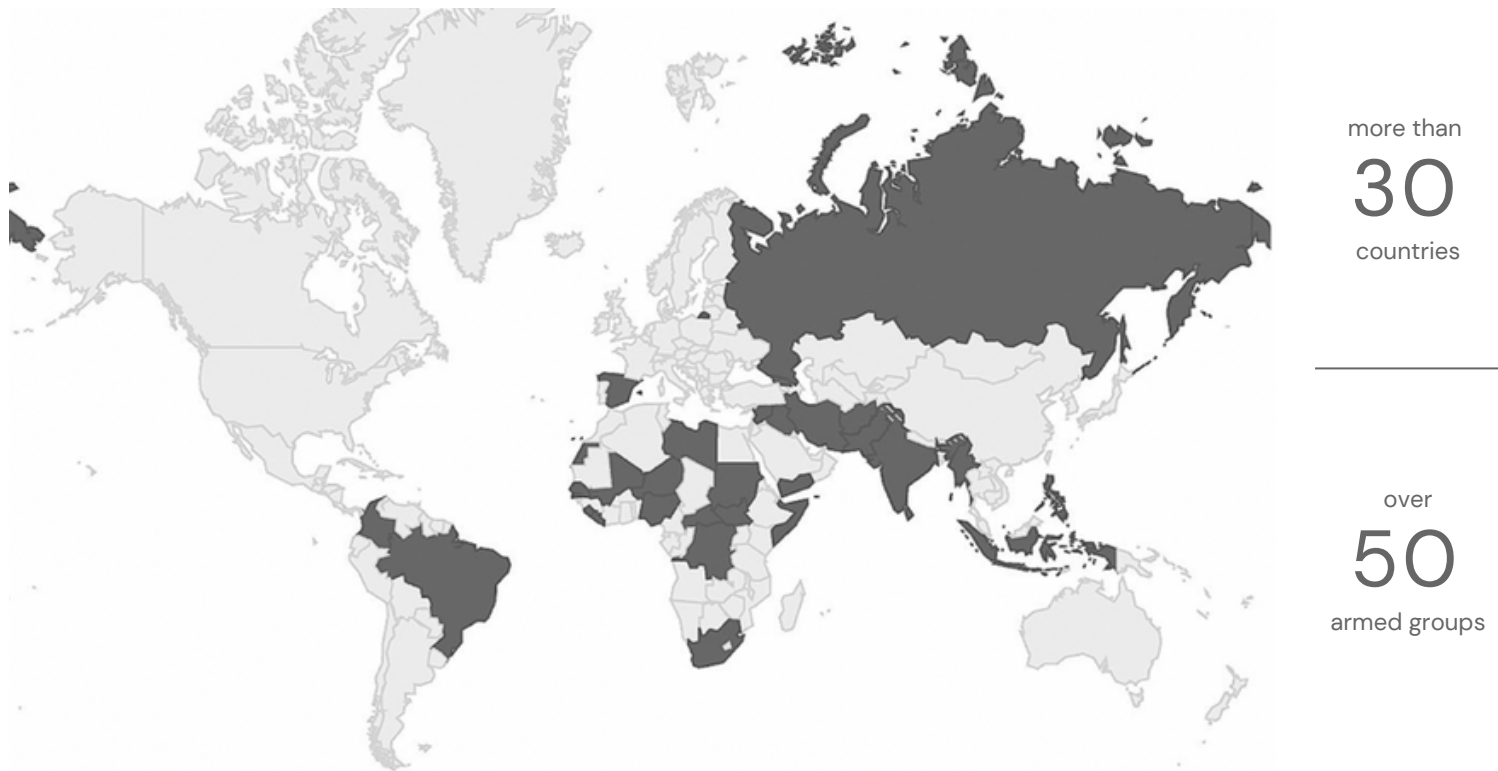
AREAS OF WORK



in practical, accessible ways and getting it to those who can benefit. Similarly, sound advice and support must be backed up by evidence and experience, bridging understandings of local dynamics and global trends.

All three components are connected (i.e., dialogue work shaping our research priorities, research work creating demand for advisory support).

GEOGRAPHIC REACH



To carry out this work, we have created a network of experts from 30 countries with expertise in over 50 armed groups. The network comprises researchers, analysts, practitioners and partner organisations, with extensive experience across the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding spectrum.

To maximise our impact and influence, we often work in partnership with others. Partnerships are essential to accessing funds, implementing our work, increasing name recognition of the Centre, and ensuring it leaves a mark on policy and practice. As we have since our inception as a programme within ODI, we will continue to work hand in

hand with like-minded research and operational organisations as well as to co-brand publications or other services.

Current partners and collaborators include the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Interpeace, ODI, the London School of Economics, the Institute of Development Studies, King's College London, the Hiraal Institute in Mogadishu, the Center for Social Integrity in Myanmar and other local and international actors. In addition, we have an MoU with the Geneva Graduate Institute's Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP), and are developing a framework for collaboration with the ICRC.

Research

Understanding
armed groups

Civilian-armed
group relations

Armed group
economies

Our research seeks to challenge common assumptions and siloed thinking. It covers various armed groups, from Islamists in Mali to cartels and gangs in the Americas. With an eye on the future, we are working to understand how the fragmentation of the international system and the rise of a multipolar world order is shaping armed conflict. Our research is organised around three complementary streams of work, described below.

1

UNDERSTANDING ARMED GROUPS

Armed groups transcend the labels we apply to them (e.g. insurgents, rebels, terrorists, militias, mercenaries, gangs). These categories fail to capture both real-life dynamics and the relationship of armed groups to other actors. Part of the problem is that there is often a failure to see armed groups in an integrated way. Armed groups are typically deeply embedded in communities, and their emergence is a response to political, social or economic issues. They also tend to have more complicated-than-meets-the-eye relationships with state, private sector and other actors.

Another issue with dividing armed groups into traditional categories, whether according to legal classifications or ideological orientation, is that it prevents us from seeing the bigger picture. Surprisingly little comparative work or learning across those, for example, grappling with Al Shabaab and those working on so-called 'criminal' groups (e.g., gangs or, cartels) – even though Shabaab arguably has much in common with the latter. Additionally, from the gangs of Rio to mercenaries in Africa, we see an array of actors emerging (or growing in strength) that challenge conventional dividing lines and what we traditionally think of as armed groups. It is little wonder then humanitarian, development, and peace actors often lack the knowledge they need to engage with armed groups effectively.

Our work goes deeper, identifying the factors that shape the attitude and practices of armed groups, and breaking down the disconnect between academia and practice. Much of this work is conceptual, forming a foundation for the broader work of the Centre.

Building on our previous partnership with the Geneva Graduate Institute's Words to Deeds project, we are planning comparative research on what motivates armed groups to engage on **humanitarian norms** and what influences their behaviour (i.e., values, objectives and ideology, organizational structure, support base, conflict dynamics). In addition, the

Centre is exploring armed groups' perspectives on **peacebuilding**. For instance, with the Principles for Peace initiative at Interpeace, the Centre explores how armed groups view international peacemaking initiatives and investigates the drivers of their participation.

Another important aspect is the **environment**. More norms and policies are being developed around the protection of the environment in wartime. Little of this work, however, focuses on armed groups, even though 15 of the 25 states deemed most vulnerable and least ready to adapt to climate change are conflict-affected. Our work will look at how armed groups deal with environmental issues, how they can be engaged to support climate adaptation, and what might motivate them to act on these issues.

Finally, this stream of work prioritises emerging or less-understood actors. This includes work on **right-wing militias** in places like the US and Germany. We also work on **Ukraine**, where we look at the impact of international efforts to support Ukraine through weapons, and the effect on competing political movements within

the country. In these endeavours, we also prioritise investing in and mentoring early career researchers, especially those from conflict contexts, to shape and develop research initiatives.

2

CIVILIAN-ARMED GROUP RELATIONS

Interactions between civilians and armed groups are thought of primarily in terms of victimisation and violence. Yet these relationships are often more complex. The Centre's work explores two sides of the same coin: how armed groups influence and control civilians, and how civilians negotiate life under their control. Civilians' survival strategies, means of resistance, accommodation or collaboration, and ways of dealing with armed groups are integral to understanding armed groups and de facto authorities as a whole.

Building on our work on civilian protection and insurgent governance, this research



focuses in part on field work with armed groups and civilians living in the areas they control. This includes ongoing research in **Somalia, Myanmar, and Mali**. Already partially resourced, our current funders and partners include the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs, the Hiraal Institute (Somalia), the Center for Social Integrity (Myanmar), and ODI.

While these case studies focus on what might be considered more 'traditional' (or at least well-known armed groups), we also examine how communities deal with groups categorised as **criminal actors** through conceptual studies, think pieces, and case studies. This work began in late 2022 with a review of the evidence, and a roundtable co-hosted with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the Urban Violence Research Network.

The ultimate objectives of this stream are to challenge conventional views of civilians as a category and bring a greater understanding of the techniques that armed groups use to control them. This includes academic engagements and practical dialogue with humanitarian, development, political, and peace actors. Our research and its dissemination are designed to encourage them to reflect on how this evidence might, or should, change policy and programmes.

3

ARMED GROUP ECONOMIES

This stream aims to shed new light on the economic practices of armed groups, and

examines armed groups as economic actors. While armed groups are often associated with illicit activity and crime, we know surprisingly little about how different types of armed groups generate revenue and how their practices and policies shape the broader economy. This is crucial for peacemakers who need to address the effects of war economies, those who engage with organised crime and gangs, and humanitarian and development actors who encounter demands for payment.

One component of this work will look exclusively at **armed group taxation**. Armed groups tax, and they do so successfully – yet there is little macro or comparative understanding of these practices. Already ongoing, the Armed Group Taxation Programme has been developed with the International Centre for Tax & Development (ICTD) at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS). This programme includes several components. The most ambitious is the creation of a database on armed group taxation, which would provide historical and contemporary insights into a little-understood phenomenon.

Another strand of work focuses on **conflict and crime economies**, exploring links between political instability and criminal enterprise. In fragile and violent contexts, armed groups are often major economic actors with links to the state and private sector. Building on our work on smuggling and borderlands, this research situates armed groups within the wider economic environment, interrogating their relations with other actors and investigating the implications for the population. It will also look at the effects of policy interventions, and what alternative approaches might yield better results.

Dialogue

Annual symposium +
working group

Shaping public
dialogue

On-demand
support

The Centre creates safe spaces for discussion and learning about engagement with armed groups. We serve as an independent platform for bringing together government and nongovernment, diplomacy, peace, humanitarian and development actors, across the political and geographic spectrum. Drawing on our network, we bridge the policy/research gap, ensuring that rigorous evidence informs decision-making.

In the past, we have engaged policymakers and armed groups in dialogue around peacemaking practice, as well as convened closed-door seminars on counterterrorism in Central Asia, dealing with the de facto government in Afghanistan, and best practices for promoting accountability for abuses by pro-government militias.

In this strategic cycle, the Centre's work will bring together experts to facilitate cross-contextual comparison and new insights into armed conflict. Previously much of this work has been reactive, linked to specific requests, or organised around research dissemination. Moving forward, we aim to build the capacity to initiate and guide the conversation on armed groups in a changing world.

This includes an annual symposium, organised alongside our advisory network meeting. Modelled on must-attend events like the Oslo Forum, the symposium will bring together a mixture

of academics, scholars, practitioners, donors, former armed group members, civil society activists, and political figures to discuss engagement with and understanding armed groups over the course of two days.

We will also convene a regular **working group on armed groups** with researchers, journalists, practitioners and donors to talk about their engagement in this area. Held online, these dialogues will create space for comparative reflection. They will also showcase the expertise of our network and team.

The third component of this proactive work will be **informing and shaping public debate** on armed groups. Our work has been featured in and our analysis quoted by the New York Times, CNN, Wall Street Journal, Foreign Policy, the Economist, and the Guardian, among others. Our network will engage actively with media across the world and on social media. We will dedicate resources and time to supporting our fellows and collaborators to translate their research into public expertise and actively shape global understandings of conflict and violence.

Our work will continue to respond to the needs and demands of our target audience by convening on-demand spaces for dialogue. We envision this including workshops convened on demand to facilitate peer reflection and sharing of learning among like-minded stakeholders on specific issues.

Advice

Humanitarian
negotiations

Responsive
advice

The Centre supports a diverse range of actors (humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, security, private sector and governance) to address issues related to armed groups. We help teams and organisations develop and operationalise engagement strategies, solve problems, evaluate approaches, and incorporate learning. Past, and anticipated future, clients have included international NGOs, UN agencies and governments, and partners such as Fight for Humanity.

We respond to urgent operational and policy challenges, tailoring our services to current dynamics and dilemmas. To provide rapid and actionable help, we will invest in building out our advisory capacity. That includes expanding our network, dedicating resources to forecasting trends, and cultivating long-term client relationships.

One way in which we will do this is through a **humanitarian negotiations pilot programme**. The training resources on frontline humanitarian negotiations have markedly improved over the past decade, thanks in part to the efforts of UNOCHA, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP), the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN), and others. At the same time, many international organisations and NGOs created new internal units, developed guidelines, or otherwise undertook other efforts to improve humanitarian negotiations.

But gaps persist. Trained humanitarian negotiators tell us that they often face significant challenges in high-intensity, high-stakes negotiations. Part of the reason is that they don't feel they have the right frameworks, tools or strategic support. And things are getting more difficult. Humanitarian actors are more often than not engaging with increasingly assertive actors who do not abide by international norms, and traditional approaches aren't working.

The Centre will offer a menu of services that can be tailored to different clients and contexts (i.e., armed group analysis; negotiation strategy development; mentoring and implementation support; monitoring, evaluation, and learning support). Recognising the unique nature of every negotiation, conflict actor, and organisation, the Centre will provide support based on an initial needs assessment and dialogue with the client. The Centre's pool of multidisciplinary experts will be brought into these processes, to break down barriers between those who research and those who negotiate. The Centre will work with humanitarians, in real-time, to adapt analysis and strategies to operational demands. We will also work with negotiation experts to explore new models and frameworks, accounting for the changing environment.

ADDED VALUE



Amid the growing challenges, there is a gap in the kind of analysis and tailored support that enables safe and ethical engagement with armed groups. That's where the Centre adds value: by working with these actors to better understand armed groups and craft effective strategies for engagement.

Dedicated expertise and capacity

We are not an operational aid, advocacy, or peacebuilding actor. Our mission is solely to understand and support engagement with armed groups.

On-the-ground presence

The Centre's networked structure means we have experts on the ground, and across frontlines, in most of the major conflict-affected contexts.

Bridging the research-policy gap

We bring cutting-edge analysis and new insights to bear on practice. We connect relevant evidence and experts with implementers and decision-makers.

Access

Our team has an unparalleled track record of groundbreaking research and engagement directly with armed groups and civilians living under their control.

Agility

Our light footprint structure and partnership model enable us to be flexible, use resources effectively and mobilise quickly.

Integrity

We have a strong reputation for independent, principled research and engagement. That allows us to act as an impartial third party, able to support confidential dialogue and create safe spaces to talk about difficult dilemmas.

Values

The Centre's work is anchored in the **civilian imperative**, the belief that our work should be guided by the concerns and experiences of civilians living in conflict. Our research aims to understand their perspectives, and our other areas of work strive to contribute to action that will lessen their suffering.

There are several concrete implications for our work. One is that we are obligated to design our work to maximise the chances of it having a **positive real-world impact**. Of course, research will, at best, have an indirect effect on the course of any given conflict or the behaviour of an armed group. But when we embark on or support, research (or any other kind of work), we first ask ourselves how it will inform policy, practice and programming aimed at helping civilians or reducing violence. The next step is to design a clear plan with dedicated resources to ensure we uphold that commitment.

A related principle is **do no harm**. Adapting the do no harm principle to our work means continually asking ourselves what the negative consequences of our actions may, directly or indirectly, be, and what we might do to mitigate them.

What makes this complicated is that, as we know from our own experience, there may be no clear-cut answers or easy

solutions. What mitigation measures work in one instance or place may produce new risks in another. But we also know that the best place to start is by creating a safe space for informed and open discussion.

This should happen at several levels. At the operational level, it means adopting ethics policies and safeguards that ensure we have taken a reasoned and informed evaluation of the risks of any research or other work and thoughtfully addressed them. This should not be a one-off process box-ticking exercise, especially as unforeseen risks or issues nearly always arise later on. Instead, we should seek to create a continual and open dialogue about the real challenges and dilemmas of work on armed groups (and in conflict situations in general).

At the strategic level, it means continually evaluating and re-evaluating our relationships, funders and work to critically assess the prospect of it creating harm to people living in conflict situations, to the people we interview, to the people we seek to support, to the organisation, and to ourselves.

A third aspect is that our work must seek to **democratise access** to the resources required for ethical, effective engagement with armed groups. There is



no one 'right' way of understanding or engaging with an armed group. We believe that the best answers and options lie in generating insights from a **diversity of voices and perspectives**. We prioritise evidence and experience, ensuring that everything we do is grounded in knowledge, and debate. Our access to decision-makers and armed groups members is based on our collective track record of speaking from experience.

Above all, the Centre prioritises safeguarding its **integrity** and **trust**. We believe in independent, principled engagement in our research and policy work. We hold ourselves and experts to high standards of professional rigour and aim to be as transparent as possible in our processes and our work.

The Centre strives to support (calculated) risk-taking, accountability and learning from mistakes. Often we see organisations afraid to acknowledge missteps or wrong assumptions. We believe in owning up to what hasn't worked – especially the most serious ones. It is only by reflecting on our failures, in a supportive environment, that we can learn from them. After all, failures are often how the most successful organisations learn and grow.

Gender and representation

Because the best ideas and insight typically come from the ground, we have an institutional commitment to **working with researchers from conflict areas**. A majority of our publications to date have been, and will continue to be, co-authored with authors from conflict areas or published in partnership with local organizations.

We aim to have at least 50% representation of experts from conflict zones in our network by the completion of this strategy. Dedicated resources are required to strengthen this commitment. We also aim to build tailored components into our work that support this objective (i.e., PhDships, research support grants, project development time and support, travel and learning funds).

The same values apply to gender and other intersectional aspects of identity. While a vibrant younger generation of female researchers and practitioners is emerging, this field of work still tends to be male-dominated. We aim to ensure all of our activities – from the composition

of the expert network and private roundtables to the authorship of publications – maintains a **gender balance**.

More broadly, the Centre will strive for at least 50% female representation among its staff and network. In all of its public events, workshops, trainings and roundtables, we will aim to secure at least 50% female representation among panellists and participants.

Finally, we will reflect this diversity in the substance of our work. What that means in practice will vary. It might mean, for example, investigating civilian-insurgent interactions separately for different groups within each context; this may be women, but it could also be ethnic minorities or youth. We endeavour to highlight how patriarchy, inequalities, homophobia, militarised masculinities, and discriminatory power structures inhibit effective conflict prevention, inclusive peace, and women's participation.

In this way, the Centre will contribute to the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda by highlighting gender issues in its work on armed groups and elevating the work and perspectives of women in its research and public affairs engagement.

Coverage

Geographies

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Brazil
Burundi
Central African Republic
China
Colombia
Democratic Republic of Congo
Georgia
India
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq

Lake Chad Basin
Liberia
Libya
Mali
Myanmar
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Palestine
Philippines
Russia
Senegal
Sierra Leone

Somalia
Somaliland
South Africa
South Sudan
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Syria
Thailand
Ukraine
Western Balkans
Western Sahara
Yemen

Themes

ceasefires
civilian protection
climate adaptation
climate conflict
conflict analysis
criminal governance
disarmament, demobilization
and reintegration (DDR)
engagement strategy
humanitarian access

humanitarian advocacy
humanitarian negotiations
informal economies
IHL
IHL
Islamic law
organised crime
mediation
natural resource conflict
peacebuilding

policy development
peace negotiations
rebel governance
research methods
security sector reform (SSR)
smuggling
taxation
urban violence
war economies

Types of armed groups

armed opposition groups
armed gangs
cartels
community militias

de facto authorities
hybrid armed groups
Islamist armed groups
national liberation movements

paramilitaries
private military contractors
far-right militias
separatist armed groups

Governance

The Committee is the executive body of the Centre, as per Swiss law. It is currently composed of three members elected for a period of two years. Its members are voluntary and not remunerated for their work. The Committee supervises the management of the Centre and ensuring that its Statutes are applied. The Committee comprises:

- Lotti Douglas (Committee Chair), consultant to Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
- Elisabeth Decrey Warner (Committee Member), founder and former Executive Director of Geneva Call
- Thomas Harrison-Prentice (Committee Member), Circular Economy Lead at LC Packaging


The Advisory Network guides the Centre's strategy and advises on the substantive focus of its work. Its members are voluntary and not remunerated for their work. The Advisory Network comprises:

- Aung Kyaw Moe, Advisor at the Ministry of Human Rights, National Unity Government of Myanmar

- Haile Menkerios, Former UN Special Representative to the African Union and Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan
- Ilwad Elman, Chief Operating Officer, Elman Peace
- Marco Sassoli, Professor of International Law at the University of Geneva
- Mark Bowden, Former UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Humanitarian Coordinator in Afghanistan
- Meredith Preston-McGhie, Secretary General, Global Centre for Pluralism – Centre mondial du pluralisme
- Nic Lee, Founder and Executive Director of the International Safety Organisation (INSO)
- Shadia Marhaban, International Mediator
- Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)
- Teresa Whitfield, Former Director of the Policy and Mediation Division at the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs



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