

PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:7

Few things are as challenging to the success of all of these goals than war and violence. Unstable countries, or regions, that find themselves in conflict, not only experience the terrible direct consequences of that unrest, but the knock on effects to every possible aspect of their development. Such circumstances render them practically helpless too, as support agencies are unable to make any headway. Peacemaking is therefore an absolute development priority.

Similarly, justice is paramount. Without structures to uphold, with integrity, a society's basic framework, and a level of access to justice for all its people, development is severely hampered. Corruption can run rampant and the very best intentions of many run aground as a result of the untrammelled criminality of a few.

Goal 16 therefore is key, not only in promoting peace, with reconciliation, and helping to create sustainable

systems of justice generally, but in countering specific issues of violence, such as domestic abuse, gender based violence and exploitative people trafficking.

If peace and justice are central to the issues of development, it hardly needs saying that they are both equally fundamental to the very heart of Christian faith. The famous verse quoted, from Isaiah, anticipating the coming Messiah, links the two explicitly but, in their own right they are major themes throughout the Bible. That God is a God of justice, or righteousness as it is sometimes put, is basic to His character. If individuals and societies, are to seek in any way to honour or reflect him, then those qualities of fairness, honesty and integrity need to be expressed. At a society level, that means putting in place a system of justice, and enabling access to it, so that such values can always be relied upon in public and private dealings. Consistently in the Bible, whether it be Patriarchs, Judges, or Apostles, those with responsibility are called to be wise, fair and understanding, in essence, just.

Similarly, the basic peace of God, including the title granted to Jesus, alluded to in the verse above, of 'Prince of Peace', was never only intended to refer to some profoundly personal sense of 'peace of mind', but to be a universal offering to a world of conflict. The Christian call to be 'peacemakers' has rung through the ages and is certainly no less required today. For Christians to engage, thoughtfully and practically, with this goal ought to be an instinctive, natural desire.

GOAL 16

Calling for a peaceful world, reducing violence, exploitation, torture, the illicit arms trade. Promoting the rule of law and peace, justice and reconciliation





AS OF 2015, THERE ARE MORE THAN 65 MILLION PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN FORCIBLY DISPLACED FROM THEIR HOMES

GROUP DISCUSSION

- What are the factors in our own society that give rise to conflict? Root causes are sometimes not obvious and may go unaddressed.
- Some claim that religion is a major source of conflict. Is this true?
- There are many references to peace in the Bible. Which ones do you think are particularly relevant today?
- How can Christian ideas of peace and reconciliation help in areas or situations of conflict?

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

Personal – Pray for peace – download CORD's prayer diary

Local – Organise a peace event at your church

International – Connect your church with a partner church in another part of the world struggling in war

GOAL 16 IN ACTION

Cord is motivated by God's love and His call to peace as unbrokenness, fullness of life and freedom. Goal 16 mirrors the Biblical perspective: that peace is only possible when relationships are restored, rights and freedoms upheld and everyone is provided with an opportunity to thrive with dignity, free from fear.

One example, Cord has supported includes the Twa community in central Africa who have historically been excluded. They have experienced loss of land, livelihood and dignity, and suffered some of the highest levels of poverty and discrimination. Being discriminated against has fuelled a reputation for petty crime. But a little change has gone a long way. Given support to diversify their income and develop peace committees with their Hutu and Tutsi neighbours, the Twa have come to be seen as part of the wider community as never before, to the extent they now eat and drink together.

www.cord.org.uk



CORD came about through the actions of a regular, small church prayer meeting. During the Vietnam War this small house group prayed over the plight of children orphaned by the fighting. God moved them to commit to do something practical to help one or two orphan children. After further prayer, a visit to Vietnam was organised and Project Vietnam Orphans, the forerunner to CORD, was born. 50 years later CORD has helped hundreds of thousands of people affected by war in twenty countries across Africa and Asia.

