In 2018, we saw levels of violence and political instability continue to rise across the globe. We observed civic spaces closing and human rights threatened as illiberal politics and policies gained momentum.

In a year where fractures and divisions seemed to widen, PartnersGlobal and the Partners Network stepped up to bring diverse groups together, safeguard the space for dialogue that is so pivotal to democracy and work toward a positive peace and development that is inclusive, rights-respecting and just.

When the world fragments, PartnersGlobal recommits to being an integrator of citizens, activists, organizations, private businesses, governments and funders to achieve these aims.

In the pages of this report, you'll find snapshots of what the hard work of transforming conflict, strengthening democratic institutions and achieving sustainable development looks like on the ground. From creating a comprehensive framework to assess and build the resiliency of civil society organizations in high-risk environments to convening a powerful coalition of human rights defenders in El Salvador, the work of PartnersGlobal and the Partners Network is as complex as it is critical.

This year, we also launched an important initiative to understand and improve upon the ways that our field defines and communicates the work of peacebuilding to key audiences. In short, we recognize that peace has a branding problem, and we are working to address it. As part of our ongoing Narrative Change for Peace Initiative, we are finding more salient ways to talk about peace with the public in order to raise support for the work we do and raise awareness of the role everyone plays in making this work happen.

This year also brought some exciting new developments. At the close of 2018, the Partners Network was two members stronger with the addition of Partners Iraq and PartnersLebanon. The Network now totals 20 local autonomous organizations working for peaceful and democratic change around the globe.

As we head into 2019, the year PartnersGlobal will mark its 30th anniversary, we recommit to serving as an integrator for conflict transformation, democracy and sustainable development. And as we have been for nearly 30 years to date, we are prepared to adapt to serve a pressing need in a rapidly changing world.
2018 PROGRAMMATIC AREAS OF FOCUS

- **Civil Society Strengthening**
- **Accountable Governance**
- **Women's Empowerment**
- **Rule of Law**
- **Protecting Human Rights**
- **Security Sector Reform**

18 countries with active PartnersGlobal programming

50+ partnerships with local change leaders around the world

2 new members of the Partners Network
$6,602,512.96 TOTAL
PartnersGlobal continues our long tradition of investing in sustainable local organizations to provide needed democracy and peacebuilding programming. Two new Partners’ Centers in the Middle East joined the Partners Network in 2018:

**Partners Lebanon**

Partners Lebanon infuses arts programming with mediation tools to bridge cultural divides and cultivate a sense of unity and belonging in Lebanese communities. By using the arts as tools for grassroots conflict management, Partners Lebanon promotes sustainable peace, especially among youth, to advance social cohesion and resiliency of future generations.

Partners Lebanon was founded by May Nasr. She is an award-winning musician and conflict transformation professional with 20 years of development experience. May brings new expertise on arts for peace and reconciliation through music to the Partners Network.

**Partners Iraq**

Partners Iraq empowers citizens to build inclusive and sustainable peace in Iraq. Partners Iraq envisions a future in which Iraqis work together with government institutions and civil society to uphold resilient communities. Partners Iraq aims to achieve this by promoting respect for tolerance and diversity, creating a strong foundation for the rule of law, working to ensure citizen security, and encouraging productive civic engagement.

From its office in Baghdad, Partners Iraq operates across Iraq’s 19 provinces to support local leaders through capacity building and community-led small grant initiatives. As a member of the Partners Network, Partners Iraq draws on local and international expertise and uses a multi-sectoral approach to support peace and stability in Iraqi communities.
Cross-Sector Collaboration

With support from the United States Institute of Peace, PartnersGlobal hosted a series of Creative Braintrust events bringing together individuals from a variety of fields to jointly develop plans of action to understand and promote peace narratives. These structured gatherings sparked exchange, strengthened partnerships, and created opportunities for ongoing collective action.

Through 15 events in 2018, we reached over 915 people, of which 33% worked outside of the professional NGO sector. We amplified impact by collaborating with private sector organizations like Participant Media and TOMS, and private philanthropies like Humanity United. Partnerships with creative advertising agencies strengthened our outreach to the creative sector. Bringing unlikely peacebuilders into our orbit not only makes our professional sector stronger, it helps peace penetrate the mainstream conversation.

We also strengthened our bonds to the academic community of narrative experts. Together with George Mason University and a specially curated Academic Advisory board, we produced a guide Guide for Narrative Engagement that calls on the peacebuilding community to conscientiously analyze our own narratives and reflect on how we can better incorporate different world views into a jointly constructed narrative of peace.
Narrative Change for Peace

Young Ones Competition

The One Show Young Ones Competition is recognized as one of the premier advertising, interactive, and design student competitions in the world. It offers students the opportunity to showcase their creative skills and compete for a coveted One Show PENCIL, a marker of professional excellence in the creative field.

In 2018, we partnered with the One Club for Creativity and the United Nations TOGETHER Campaign to counter the rise of misplaced xenophobia and discrimination of refugees and migrants. Partners sponsored a special student poster competition to unleash the creative power of the world’s youngest designers to craft a fresh, inspiring message of hope for a shared future.

In a stiff competition with submissions from around the world, we were proud to announce Fondazione Accademia di Comunicazione, based in Milan, Italy as the winner.

Rigorous Social Science Research

With support from Humanity United, we are investing in social science research that will uncover a more effective “frame” for the concepts of peace and peacebuilding. Together with the Alliance for Peacebuilding and the Frameworks Institute, we are utilizing cutting edge research methods to test frames; and, we are forging a path to increase the impact of peacebuilders’ campaigns, messaging, and public outreach. The initial research entails an investigation of our collective “expert story,” or the creation of a coherent narrative summarizing the ways that experts within our field think and talk about peacebuilding.

For this initial phase of research, we have adopted a case study approach focusing primarily on a United States based audience. We are working with many renowned peacebuilders to uncover the most effective way to convey the concepts of peace and peacebuilding, explain how peacebuilding works, and build public support within our foreign policy. We aim to build upon this research throughout 2019-2020, expanding our inquiry to test specific frames for peace that will resonate for a U.S. audience, and beyond.
Civic space is the cornerstone of a healthy society that champions democratic principles and ideals. Civic space drives the ability of civil society organizations (CSOs) to function freely and without threats to their operations or security.

In recent years however, civic space has been shrinking at a rapid pace, with its restriction becoming the norm rather than the exception in many parts of the world. As operating space shrinks globally, the civil society sector is forced to rethink traditional organizational development models geared towards sustainability and focus not only on the idyllic end state of stability, but on what is necessary to navigate through challenging short-term twists in their local context.

Different from traditional models of sustainability, resiliency gives CSOs the capacity to adapt swiftly and purposefully to shocks or impacts to not only survive, but also to thrive in an uncertain environment. Organizational resiliency enables civil society to adapt to the impacts of quickly changing external conditions in order to prepare and respond effectively. PartnersGlobal and CIVICUS are spearheading the new Resiliency+ Framework that was born out of the need for an updated organizational model. The first of its kind, the framework provides a nuanced approach to how civil society organizations and actors operate, adapt, and thrive in response to the challenges around them.

How do we know when an organization is resilient? We identified seven core factors that contribute to organizational resiliency in the face of closing space. Then, we developed a process that guides CSOs through a series of phases to ultimately improve their adaptive capacities across these factors, increasing their level of resiliency in the face of closing civic space.

**PHASE ONE: UNDERSTAND THE ECOSYSTEM**
CSOs utilize a self-diagnostic tool devised specifically for this process called the Resilient Organization in Closing Civic Space Assessment, which analyzes the presence of closing space threat and capacities of the organization, and integrates the results into a civic space systems mapping process.

**PHASE TWO: DEVELOP A RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP**
Using the analysis, CSOs are guided through a process to devise a customized intervention using the Resiliency+ Matrix, comprised of strategies, tools, tactics and approaches that correlate to different threat and resiliency areas.

**PHASE THREE: LEARN AND ADAPT TO EXPLORE NEW ROUTES ALONG THE WAY**
Throughout implementation of the customized intervention, organizations will pause and reflect at various “Pit Stops” to determine if the road ahead is still the most suitable option, and if not, change direction.

PartnersGlobal has convened a global pool of peer mentors to accompany CSOs throughout the Resiliency+ Process, serving as coaches and connecting organizations to other key partners related to threats or resiliency factors.
Building Coalitions for Human Rights

Since the conclusion of the civil war in 1992, El Salvador has struggled to strike a balance between maintaining domestic peace and protecting the human rights of its citizens. Despite these challenges, the government and civil society have demonstrated their commitment to improving the situation. Together with Counterpart International, Due Process of Law Foundation, and Partners El Salvador, we are working to strengthen Salvadorian civil society's human rights advocacy.

With a focus on women, youth, people living with disabilities, and LGBTI populations, we are increasing coordination among human rights advocates and leaders throughout the country. Using our Cooperative Advocacy approach, we are accompanying these groups as they develop common advocacy agendas and build stronger relationships across sectoral, political, and social divides. With greater cooperation and shared priorities, these diverse activists are increasing their impact by advocating for needed human rights protections with a united voice.

Partners El Salvador spearheads this work by leading dialogue and consensus building processes across the country. First, they brought each of the groups together to identify their main human rights concerns amidst competing priorities. Then, Partners El Salvador facilitated cross-group dialogues to further narrow priorities for a national agenda. The human rights advocates then developed a collaborative roadmap that carves a joint path forward. Each affected population continues to push for their specific policy goals, but the sector as a whole is now able to unify around a coherent agenda.

The private sector can be immensely influential in the human rights space. For that reason, PartnersGlobal trained private sector leaders on human rights principles, and the synergy between business goals and human rights protections. Equipped with this information, private sector actors can better ally with civil society advocates for human rights protections that are not only just, but also good for business.
In collaboration with Rotary International and the Institute for Economics and Peace, PartnersGlobal is designing and piloting new Positive Peace workshops that impart the basics of youth-led collective action for positive peace.

Positive peace refers to the concept that peace is comprised of more than the absence of violence – it consists of the attitudes, institutions, and structures that allow societies to sustain a peaceful condition. This broad understanding of peace opens a multitude of avenues to build peace together, be it in education, policy, or relations among neighbors.

The workshops help participants master the concept of positive peace, and learn how to take concrete action to promote collaboration around the pillars of positive peace in their own communities. Our trainers equip participants with methodologies, practical tools, and frameworks to devise concrete peacebuilding actions and build alliances within their specific spheres of influence.

The initial pilot workshops were launched in Colombia and Mexico in early 2019. Working in partnership with the YMCA, Outward Bound Peacebuilding, Partners Colombia, Centro de Colaboración Cívica and many others, we focused on the role of youth as leaders and connectors.

Both countries continue to transition out of conflict in their own ways. Building an understanding of positive peace and increasing familiarity with these strategies among youth leaders allows more citizens to actively participate in the process of building a sustainable peace.

We are striving to reach a diverse group of interested individuals and practitioners from varying backgrounds – including those already engaged with Rotary International, university students, and community activists and leaders working within civil society in formal and informal settings. Over 450 people participated in the sessions held during the initial rollout.
Founded in 1991, Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia (PDCS) is a member of the Partners Network based in Bratislava, Slovakia. PDCS provides professional training and facilitation services, consultancy and advisory services in conflict resolution, societal dialogue support, citizen participation and civil society development in Slovakia and abroad.

One of PDCS’ flagship programs; they established the European Network for Nonviolence and Dialogue to respond to rising levels of polarization in Europe. The ENND Network aims to encourage and create conflict intervention approaches based on the values of non-violence, dialogue, and protection of minority rights. ENND’s intense focus on Europe’s most controversial conflicts drives public conversation, pushing citizens to grapple with differing points of view. In 2018, the ENND Network sought to publicize and share their collectively developed manifesto throughout 7 countries in CEE and Germany.

ENND achieved this goal through the “Peace Sofas” campaign, an art installation and online video series designed to inspire people to engage in dialogue across difference, and sign on to the manifesto. Developed in partnership with BUENA, a social cause advertising agency, the project pairs individuals with opposing views and has them discuss a controversial issue. Along with their opinions, dialogue participants contribute their sofas. The furniture is cut in half and merged together to symbolize the union of two strikingly different people through dialogue. Following its start in June 2018, the project has been featured by Vienna’s MuseumsQuartier and garnered significant media and public interest.
Empowering Kuwaiti Women in Politics

Despite decades of success in education, leading social programs, and advancements in the private sector, Kuwaiti women still face numerous obstacles in achieving political leadership positions. Women received the right to vote in 2005, yet just one woman holds a seat in the current assembly. Tribal and familial networks drive the political system. Women candidates often lack access to these networks, reinforcing a “boy’s club” for political ambition. Without an established base of organizational support, women leaders face a steep uphill climb.

Partners Global has been working in Kuwait to push forward the conversation around women’s rights, and to actively address the persistent barriers that prevent women from accessing political processes. We teamed up with two Kuwaiti organizations – en.v and Ibtkar Strategic Consultancy – to strengthen gender equality in two important ways: sharpening the political skills of Kuwaiti women leaders and also collaborating with civil society to build a women-centered advocacy network. The women leaders and organizations in the program are supported by an international network of political experts and trainers to offer on-going accompaniment and mentoring, bridging local leaders with global expertise to sustain connections and bring about long-term change.

In April 2018, Kuwaiti women leaders traveled to the United States for a study tour centered on the experiences of women in politics. Fifteen women representing a diverse cross-section of society split their time between Washington, DC and Dearborn, MI. The group, comprised of doctors, lawyers, students, business leaders, and more spent two weeks attending a mix of informal exchanges and structured training sessions. After returning to Kuwait, the participants attended additional informational sessions that were tailored to their specific political context. Building upon the training from the study tour, the topics ranged from analyzing voter trends in each of Kuwait’s districts to learning persuasive messaging techniques.

Study Tour: By The Numbers

- 14 Days spent in the United States
- 22 Workshops and panels with civil society organizations
- 15 Meetings with government officials
- 2 Partnerships with academic institutions

Kuwaiti women leaders discuss electoral strategies at a Partners Global training
Empowering Kuwaiti Women in Political Competitions

In parallel to direct work with potential candidates, PartnersGlobal collaborated with Kuwaiti organizations to establish a women-focused civil society coalition. The Manara Coalition advocates for legal reform with policymakers and leaders, develops educational events that spread the coalition's message to the wider community, and utilizes social media to raise awareness of women's rights through online platforms. With unified action, members are able to magnify the effectiveness of their advocacy efforts.

From the beginning, coalition members sought to unify around an issue important to them – domestic abuse. Kuwait has no laws prohibiting domestic violence. Discussions about the topic are considered outside the norm, and often frowned upon. This legal and social context prevents survivors of domestic violence from coming forward to talk about their experiences, leaving many believing that they are alone in facing domestic abuse.

Manara wanted to bring the conversation into the open, allowing survivors to find community with one another. They also sought to raise awareness and and mobilize support for Kuwait's recently opened first domestic violence shelter.

Using various advocacy tactics, Manara spearheaded dialogues with government decision-makers to address the lack of legal protections, led a public media campaign sharing the personal stories of female survivors of domestic abuse, and created a petition demanding proper funding and staffing of the shelter. As a capstone to their first campaign, they planned an interactive forum open to any member of the public.

At the forum, Manara sought to spark action around the issue, and create a safe environment for survivors to strategize for future political action.

They were blown away when over 300 members of the public arrived, eager to participate despite the controversial nature of the issue. The coalition led a rich discussion of potential policy solutions in addition to avenues for cultural change. A member of Kuwait's National Assembly attended the event, applauding the coalition for addressing such an important topic head on. While some attendees broke out into facilitated discussion circles, others wandered the room, reading powerful experiences submitted by Kuwaiti survivors of gender-based violence.

Manara's first advocacy push managed to bring attention to a critical yet taboo topic. They also secured a seat on the shelter's government oversight body, ensuring that passionate advocates will be at the forefront of establishing such a critical resource for survivors.
Established in 2009, Partners Yemen is a local champion for stabilization and peacebuilding, working to rebuild the social fabric of Yemeni society amidst a devastating prolonged conflict. An office of sixteen committed peacebuilders, the Partners Yemen team is comprised of passionate Yemeni experts in tribal and local conflicts, civil society development, and community engagement.

Working in tandem with community-based organizations, they have built strong connections across both North and South Yemen, including tribal areas with complex political contexts. With a deep understanding of national level politics and great sensitivity to the local reality, the team regularly adapts their activities in response to Yemen’s challenging and unpredictable environment, striving to meet the needs of communities despite the current conflict.

Partners Yemen’s close engagement of more than 100 local community-based organizations has made it among the most trusted local peacebuilding organizations on the ground. Their track record has earned them access to tribal leaders and communities, local and national government, and international organizations such as the United Nations.

With over 75% of the population living in rural areas, Partners Yemen strives to address the shortage of resources and lack of basic services available to Yemeni communities. In 2018, Partners Yemen implemented over 30 small grant projects and trained 132 local mediators in rural communities. Each project was developed and proposed by the communities themselves to address their most urgent needs. These initiatives ranged from repairing damaged water networks and sewage infrastructure to expanding girls’ schools. Altogether, the projects improved the day-to-day lives of over 65,000 Yemenis who live among the remote front lines of the ongoing conflict to offer hope, maintain important social ties, and address pressing human needs.
Located in the North-West of Nigeria, Kano State serves as the economic hub of Northern Nigeria with a population of 13 million people. With high poverty rates, few public defense lawyers, expensive legal fees, and a lack of knowledge of available resources, citizens are often unable to access fair legal representation.

Working closely with Partners West Africa-Nigeria (PWAN) and our strategic partner New-Rule LLC, PartnersGlobal is increasing citizens’ access to justice by providing legal aid through the establishment of a Public Defender's Office in Kano State. Together with stakeholders at the community, local, state, national, and international levels we engage with multiple judicial actors to increase coordination and collaboration within Kano’s justice system, attempt wider criminal justice reform, and work for sustainability of Kano’s first ever Public Defender’s Office.

A source of reliable and fair public defense can change lives. Increasing the availability of quality representation alleviates many of the challenges associated with the justice system in Nigeria. Pretrial detention rates decrease, as do unfair sentencing practices; and citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to justice. The Public Defender’s Office in Kano State employs

12 lawyers who handle criminal, civil, sharia, and mediation cases for marginalized persons in need of legal aid. Since its launch in June 2017, the office has assisted hundreds of accused persons in Kano and recorded several high-profile successes.

In addition to quality legal representation, the office conducts community outreach with PWAN’s support to ensure that citizens are familiar with their rights, and understand how to access the services of the legal aid office. The team regularly hosts community awareness raising events and attorneys from the office visit two prisons in Kano on a monthly basis to meet with pretrial detainees to take on new cases.
Empowering Kuwaiti Women in Poli Young Ones Competition

“Everyone knew Idris was innocent, even the prison staff,” said Rashida Bashir, a Senior Paralegal and lawyer at the Public Defender’s Office in Kano State, Nigeria. Rashida was assigned the case of Idris Nuhu, a 35-year old male detainee in Kurmawa prison. Idris was in pretrial detention for seven years because he was accused of being involved in an armed robbery. Within those seven years, he had never had a formal court arraignment or appearance. Unfortunately, this set of circumstances is not uncommon in Kano. Nearly 80% of Nigerians detained in Kano State prisons face extremely prolonged periods of pretrial detention.

The Impact of Legal Representation

At their founding, the Kano Public Defender’s Office established a goal of reducing pretrial detention rates. Idris Nuhu’s case was one of their first. They discovered that during his detention, Idris was forbidden from speaking with his family members or informing them of his status, preventing any opportunity to receive legal advice.

The lawyers took immediate action and submitted a formal cause of action in the form of a fundamental rights enforcement to the Kano State High Court. The complaint characterized Idris’ detention as a violation of his right to personal liberty, fair trial, and freedom of movement under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Once the claim was submitted, the Honorable Chief Judge of the high court agreed to hear Idris’ case. The judge found that Idris was arrested merely on suspicion, with no straightforward evidence to justify his sentencing. Just three and a half months after the PDO filed the complaint, Idris was released from prison and reunited with his family.

“It was very emotional watching him leave prison seeing him take his first breath of fresh air and steps as a free man,” Rashida recalled, a smile spreading across her face. The office’s involvement in this case changed Idris’ life. Bigger than any one single case, the office continues to change the way the justice system in Kano functions, showing the profound positive impact of a strong public defense.
Partners West Africa—Senegal (PWA-S), a local NGO based in Dakar, promotes dialogue, transparency, good governance, and inclusive participation of women and youth in national and local development processes. PWA-S works throughout the Francophone West Africa, with active initiatives in Mali, Senegal, and Niger, and networks spanning the sub-region. PWA-S focuses on citizen security, countering and preventing violent extremism, gender, and inclusive security sector governance. With a unique ability to bring together unlikely partnerships, PWA-S strives to promote an participatory approach to security reform in West Africa.

In the Casamance region of Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, and The Gambia, PWA-S and PartnersGlobal are collaborating with international, regional, national, and local leaders to transform diverse conflicts and address security challenges in cross-border communities by expanding connections among the various actors working for peace and development. Through workshops and roundtables, we are bringing people together to develop common agendas that unite civil society’s and government’s shared interests for peace and security. As a result, these actors are building partnerships for peace both at the grassroots level and with stronger voices in front of national governments.

Additionally, PWA-S is facilitating dialogue sessions between women from across Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, and The Gambia, in order to strengthen regional networks of women activists and advocates for peace. Women play a crucial role in peace processes and conflict resolution. PWA-S works with women leaders to ensure their seat at the table in peacebuilding endeavors.
A close-knit network made up of 22 local autonomous organizations working for peaceful and democratic change, The Partners Network has been jointly investing in local leaders, local organizations, and local solutions since 1989. Beginning with our first member in Partners Poland, to one of our newest members in Partners Iraq and Partners Lebanon, we represent a rich and diverse group of local initiatives and perspectives.

**Partners Albania**
Fundación Cambió Democrático
Argentina

**Partners Bulgaria**
Foundation

**Partners Colombia**

**Partners El Salvador**
Iris Foundation

**Partners Georgia**

**Partners Hungary**
Foundation

**Partners Iraq**

**Partners Jordan**

**Partners Kosovo**
Center for Conflict Management

**Partners Lebanon**
Centro De Colaboración Civica
Mexico

**Partners Lebanon**

**Partners West Africa**
Nigeria

**Partners West Africa**
Senegal

**Partners Serbia**

**PDCS Slovakia**

**Partners Yemen**