It’s been 30 years since PartnersGlobal launched when we initially arrived in Poland to spur participatory decision-making and peaceful change, then under the name Partners for Democratic Change.

When the Berlin Wall fell, it brought about a remarkably fast transformation: the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe and the end of the Cold War. In the months and years after, engaged citizens began building a civil society from scratch, and Partners for Democratic Change was an important part of that process.

Our founder Raymond Shonholtz had a vision for creating local organizations that had staying power and that would help give people a voice. As Partners, we understood our critical role was to help individuals and institutions in these emerging democracies to be able to manage conflicts that emerge in any open society.

An ever-critical mission today

Today, levels of violence and political instability reach all corners of the world. We are collectively alarmed by the vitriol and deepening polarization in our societies. Our original commitment to create safe spaces where true discussion and differences of opinions emerge remains critical now more than ever.

PartnersGlobal has been carving out these spaces across generations and across partisan differences with people around the world, not on their behalf, but with them. The skills we began teaching in 1989: How to resolve conflicts peacefully; how to facilitate coalitions; how to create partnerships with unlikely bedfellows; and collaborative leadership are just as needed now.

In the dynamic environments where we work, readiness to adapt is the key to an organization’s resiliency, and Partners has had to adapt in ways we never would have imagined. As our network has grown, we now find ourselves working in conflict-affected environments where the work is not only about democratic change, but about stabilization, safety of communities, addressing violence, guiding reconciliation and transitional justice efforts; and working on hard security and the rule of law, always with an unwavering commitment to human rights.

Renewed focus on resiliency

After 30 years working with our network and civil society in 50+ countries, we know how hard it is to sustain this type of work. The important role of civil society as a vehicle for citizen participation and oversight of government is being subtly and aggressively repressed in many places.

This is why we recently launched the Resiliency+ Framework to help civil society continue to thrive in some of the most difficult environments. Our Resiliency+ Framework takes a different approach than traditional organizational development and helps equip civil society to prepare for and adapt to change, crisis and uncertainty.

PartnersGlobal and our network members are here today after 30 years because we have learned hard-earned lessons and lived these resiliency factors. In our next decades, we are committed to working with civil society around the world to accompany them on their own resiliency journeys, and we remain dedicated to serving as an integrator for the local, global, technocratic and activist work we are all doing to have a bigger collective impact.

In the pages that follow, you will find snapshots of some of this hard work and collaboration. We look forward to continuing to play a vital role in building peace and resiliency in the years and decades ahead.

Sincerely,

Julia Roig
President & CEO, PartnersGlobal
Areas of Focus

**Accountable Governance**
- Access to Justice
- Citizen Participation
- Protecting Human Rights
- Transparency & Accountability

**Civil Society Strengthening**
- Advocacy
- Inclusive Leadership Development
- Organizational Development
- Resiliency in Transitions

**Security Sector**
- Community Policing
- Security Sector Reform
- Women, Peace & Security

**Peace & Conflict**
- Engaging Narratives for Peace
- Environmental Conflict
- Peacebuilding
- Social Cohesion

20+ countries with active Partners Global programming

22 Partners Network Members  $8,525,246 2019 Annual Budget
Civil Society Resiliency

In times of change and uncertainty, civil society organizations need to be able to adapt quickly and prepare for the unknown.

This become increasingly clear in 2019 as governments around the globe increased their restrictions on and surveillance of civil society organizations. Freedoms of speech, assembly and association have come under threat and many organizations find themselves operating in increasingly polarized environments.

To answer this need and help civil society organizations withstand change, uncertainty, and crisis, PartnersGlobal developed the “Resiliency+ Framework: A Practical Guide for Civil Society to Thrive in Uncertainty.” The Framework helps civil society organizations identify external threats and internal vulnerabilities and provides a path forward to build resiliency in seven key factors.

Illuminating New Solutions and Programmatic Innovations for Resilient Spaces (INSPIRES)

This year, the USAID-funded Illuminating New Solutions and Programmatic Innovations for Resilient (INSPIRES) program debuted the Resiliency+ Framework to civil society organizations around the globe.

INSPIRES is a five-year initiative to increase understanding of the drivers of closing civic space and support the global community to strategically respond to the growing trend of closing civic and political space. Made up of a consortium of PartnersGlobal, Internews, Results for Development, DevLab@Duke, and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, the INSPIRES program focuses on three objectives:

- developing a machine-learning analysis to understand drivers of closing civic space
- empowering local partners to address civic space threats effectively, and
- delivering the PartnersGlobal Resiliency+ Framework.

In April, the team traveled to the CIVICUS International Civil Society Week in Belgrade, Serbia to formally introduce the Resiliency+ Framework to Partners Network members and various international organizations. Partners Albania, Serbia, Slovakia, Nigeria and Senegal attended the conference. These sessions helped us identify organizations interested in either moving through the Resiliency+ support process or participating in the mentoring and coaching side of the process. The conference also provided opportunities for Partners Network members and other resiliency experts to provide nuanced feedback on the various documents and tools within the Framework.

Throughout the year, Partners Network members have provided ongoing feedback on the framework, self-assessment tool, application process, and roles of peer mentors and coaches.

Moving into 2020, the Resiliency+ Framework is being implemented with eighteen organizations in five countries: Serbia, Georgia, Senegal, Nigeria, and Kenya.
Engaging Narratives for Peace

To effectively connect with those who think differently to create social change, we have to first acknowledge our own cognitive biases or narratives.

The right narrative framing can make the difference between building connections and creating change on the one hand and isolating potential allies on the other.

Together with the Alliance for Peacebuilding and the Frameworks Institute, PartnersGlobal is investing in social science research that will uncover a more effective “frame” for the concepts of peace and peacebuilding.

Utilizing cutting edge social science research methods, we seek to uncover a more salient narrative frame that will increase the impact of campaigns, messaging, and public outreach of peacebuilders and civic activists. Increasing the success of our field’s outreach will allow us to put peacebuilding on the political agenda, help people understand how peacebuilding works, why it matters, and that peace is indeed possible.

In 2019, we completed expert interviews with academics, practitioners, and policy leaders in the peacebuilding field to understand “the expert story” of how we talk about peacebuilding. The team then conducted a series of interviews with the public to better understand common frames the public uses when talking and thinking about peace and peacebuilding in foreign policy.

In 2020, our team will begin a gap analysis, comparing the expert story to the public story to identify gaps between the two and test new narrative frames to bridge those gap and increase the public’s understanding and support for peacebuilding.

The second phase of the research kicked off in late 2019 thanks to ongoing financial support from Humanity United and now with a grant from the Open Society Foundation.
Local Partners

PartnersGlobal has two anchor Affiliate Centers: Partners West Africa – Senegal and Partners West Africa- Nigeria that work closely together to provide regional and country-based programming throughout Anglophile and Francophile West Africa. PartnersGlobal works closely with our Affiliates and has historic partnerships with many other local partners in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire, and Liberia.
In 2019, PartnersGlobal continued to play a key role in promoting inclusive security sector reform across West Africa.

Success: Share Fair Highlights Five Years of Inclusive Security Sector Reform in Guinea

Following decades of neglect and serious abuse of human rights, Guinea is reforming its security sector, particularly the police. This reform, as Guinea’s Minister of Security and Civilian Protection Mr. Damantang Camara said, “seeks to professionalize the police, to improve governance of the security sector so that each citizen is a subject and actor of her/his own security, and to restore trust between the police and populations.”

Minister Camara was addressing more than 400 participants at a December 2019 Share Fair highlighting Guinea’s progress in this area with assistance from the PartnersGlobal-led, five-year Partners for Security in Guinea project, funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. The project and Share Fair were supported by PartnersGlobal and its partners Centre du Commerce International pour le Développement and COGINTA.

U.S. Ambassador Simon Henshaw noted the transformation he saw when he visited the central police station in Labé, Northern Guinea.

“It was clear, on the part of the officers but also of the members of the community present, that there was a big difference when the barriers between law enforcement and the community were removed,” he said in opening remarks at the Share Fair.

At the event, senior government officials, elected leaders, members of the diplomatic community, security forces at national and sub-national levels, nongovernmental organizations, and civil society, including women and youth, from Guinea’s six regions where the project operated, exchanged perspectives on the achievements of the previous five years and formulated recommendations to sustain gains made in improving collaboration between local communities and the security sector.

The project prioritized improving the relationship between police and communities. It complemented Guinea’s adoption of community policing as a policy that restores confidence between police and citizen.
Taking prevention to the local level
Minister Camara lauded the project’s initiation of crime prevention councils; training of neighborhood leaders in conflict resolution and crime prevention; and the police in schools initiative, which promoted police-youth dialogue and civic education in 27 schools reaching nearly 11,000 students.

Local leaders praised Community Safety and Crime Prevention Councils and Local Safety and Crime Prevention Forums that helped build the capacity of police and neighborhood leadership to implement inclusive problem-solving processes on safety and security issues.

Women and youth as key stakeholders
The project’s success hinged in large part on its inclusion of women and youth, especially at the local level. The project fostered dialogue on women’s community safety and crime prevention issues and facilitated women’s participation in community safety action planning. It also bolstered the capacity of the Ministry of Security’s specialized office (OPROGEM) that deals with the protection of women and minors and linked this office to women and youth in local communities. According to several women at the Share Fair, this collaboration destigmatized reporting gender-based violence and child marriage.

Looking ahead
While the project has been largely successful, challenges remain, including disparate presence of police across regions of Guinea and inadequate financial and material resource allocation, which affects police officers’ readiness and remuneration. With limited resources, the project was unable to cover the whole of Guinea.

Minister Camara ended his speech calling for additional international assistance to expand community policing throughout Guinea.
Success: Engaging women and civil society for peace in Casamance, Senegal

Since 1982, Senegal has struggled quietly with one of the most protracted low-level conflicts in Africa in its Casamance region, located in the southern part of the country. Despite a ceasefire and ongoing negotiations, peace remains extremely precarious as internal strife continues around issues of trafficking children, timber, and the random roaming of livestock on farmers' crops. With sporadic violence linked to a web of interconnected drivers, the conflict continues to not only negatively impact populations in the Casamance region but also in cross-border communities in neighboring Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia.

In 2018, PartnersGlobal and the regional Partners Network Centers joined efforts to facilitate cross-sectoral cooperation and improve communities’ resilience to conflict-related shocks in collaboration with fellow community-based organizations and community members.

We launched the two-year USAID-funded program Engaging Civil Society and Women for Peace in the Casamance, also known as Unaam Kayraay or “together for peace” in the Diola language. The project was a partnership with a consortium comprised of Partners West Africa-Senegal (PWAS), Tostan, and La Plateforme des Femmes pour la Paix en Casamance (PFPC).

The introduction of Unaam Kayraay in communities in the Casamance region and border areas in Guinea Bissau and The Gambia helped engage key actors from civil society, local authorities, and community leaders in addressing grievances, sharing common concerns, and enhancing conflict resolution and advocacy skills.

Women’s voices for peace
An African proverb states that a woman’s strength is in her words. This was showcased multiple times over throughout Unaam Kayraay, which was not only led by women but also ensured that women’s perspectives and concerns were elevated and heard through various community activities.

Women formed community management committees to facilitate micro-loan disbursements to enhance livelihoods, resilience, and social cohesion, benefiting more than 1,300 individuals—1,179 of whom were women.

The largest and most public display of women’s tenacity and investment in securing peace was during the National Women’s March for Peace that turned out around 2,500 participants from various sectors to support peace. The event was led by women and turned out women, youth and their allies for peace from all three countries.
Expanding Access to Justice

In 2019, PartnersGlobal worked to strengthen access to justice with local partners in Guinea and Nigeria, a key to accountable governance.

Success: Bringing Justice Closer to Guineans

To date, Guinea has fewer than 300 lawyers, most of whom practice in Conakry, the capital. This leaves legal assistance for those in the country’s interior to either unqualified legal specialists, former law students without degrees, or paralegals with no formal legal education. A survey by PartnersGlobal’s partner GOGINTA found that 78.95 percent of Guineans do not have access to justice. Worse, for women, the figure jumps to 90 percent.

In response, the Government of Guinea and its international partners are reforming the justice sector to benefit remote, rural areas and marginalized populations. In 2015, Guinea adopted its Justice Reform Strategy to begin addressing the systemic causes of dysfunctions in this sector, a central part of which focuses on human rights and justice sector reform using the concept of Justice de Proximité or Local Access to Justice.

In support of the Guinean Ministry of Justice, a PartnersGlobal-led consortium, with funding from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, established Justice Houses in three regions—Kankan, Kindia, and Labé.

The consortium, which includes COGINTA and the Centre du Commerce International pour le Développement (CECIDE) has strengthened these Houses’ sustainability through training and institutional support while also building citizens’ awareness of services offered and their legal rights.

Justice Houses help to mitigate conflict and resolve disputes at the community level. They contribute to more inclusive systems, both by making justice more accessible to groups that traditionally face barriers to formal institutions and by empowering local populations to participate in more collaborative conflict resolution processes.

Justice Houses are required by law to file record records of their resolved and unsuccessful cases with the Ministry of Justice. In just their first two months of operation, the three Justice Houses received 125 cases and satisfactorily resolved all but one, which they referred to a court. The cases included domestic abuse, land and inheritance issues, conflicts between neighbors, and debt settlements.
Expanding Access to Justice

Success: Reforming Pretrial Detention in Kuje Prison in Nigeria

Funded by U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, the two-year Reforming Pretrial Detention in Kuje Prison (Reform Kuje) project supports the Government of Nigeria to significantly reduce the pretrial detention population at the Kuje Correctional Center as part of a broader reform effort underway thanks to the 2015 Administration of Criminal Justice Act. PartnersGlobal implements the program with the Network of University Legal Aid Institutions (NULAI), New-Rule, and Partners West Africa Nigeria (PWAN).

The project has seen several successes in clinical legal education, legal representation, and technology.

**Legal Education**

- Through skill-building and one-on-one assistance, Nigerian clinical law faculty have improved their ability to prepare the next generation of lawyers.
- Nigerian faculty are now better able to articulate the topics and activities they will use to support students in applying the 2015 Administration of Criminal Justice Act in the field.
- Many universities have expanded the pretrial detention clinic model to include other clinics and student skills development competitions.

**Legal Representation**

- By pairing pro bono lawyers with law students to support cases, the project provided legal representation to 475 pretrial detainees.
- In 11 months of providing legal aid, 12 detainees were released on bail, 9 were discharged, 4 had their cases struck out, and 2 were acquitted.
- Pretrial detainees were at first reluctant to work with law students, but now regularly request legal representation from them. Judges regularly ask law clinics to take up cases outside of Kuje.

**Technology**

- With project support, the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee has widely adopted technology to improve efficiencies and uncover gaps in the administration of justice.
- The project integrated a Case Management Module into the Nigerian Corrections Information Management System, which unearthed 189 detainees at Kuje who did not have court dates.
- The project fostered a stronger relationship between the Chief Judge and Nigerian Correctional Services, which are now in direct contact on detainees with unassigned cases.
- The Case Management Module showed several instances where prosecutors failed to appear in court, which prompted the project to contact the Directorate of Public Prosecution to investigate the reasons for the absences, a first step in instilling institutional accountability.
Local Partners

Our network of seven Affiliate Centers in Latin America includes some of the most respected peacebuilding organizations in the region. Present in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru and Mexico, the Partners Network Affiliate Centers are dedicated to peacefully transforming conflict, promoting multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement on different topics, and ensuring more inclusive and just societies by protecting the civic space.
In 2019, PartnersGlobal continued our work with local civil society organizations throughout Latin America to build sustainable peace and mitigate the drivers of conflict.

PartnersGlobal is one of the implementing partners of this recently awarded five-year, USAID-funded peacebuilding program in Guatemala. The program, which is implemented in conjunction with Creative Associates International, Save the Children, and Fundación ProPaz, seeks to reduce social conflict and violence and improve social cohesion and peacebuilding in Guatemala’s Western Highlands Region.

In 2019, the Partners team played a key role in the project’s launch and in developing annual conflict sensitivity plans for the project.

To inform the project’s capacity-building activities, PartnersGlobal conducted a comprehensive and participatory assessment of key government institutions working to prevent and address social conflicts and a national-level stakeholder mapping and needs assessment to identify relevant nongovernmental actors that will receive accompaniment and training through the project.

With this information in hand, the project team now has a better understanding of the most pressing capacity-building needs of key technical personnel from government and nongovernmental institutions to effectively prevent the escalation of tensions and conflict. This information will guide the project’s interventions in the years to come.
Building Peace

Designing a Curriculum for Positive Peace

In partnership with Rotary International and the Institute for Economics and Peace, PartnersGlobal developed a universal curriculum for positive peace which equips young people with the frameworks, language and skills to understand and reflect on positive peace. Positive peace not just the absence of violence, but the creation of a just society for all and one in which conflicts are managed peacefully. In 2019, the curriculum was piloted with youth leaders in Mexico and Colombia.

Positive Peace in Colombia
In September 2016, the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia signed the official Peace Accords, bringing a brutal, 50-year conflict to an end. But as long-time peacebuilders, we knew that to make this peace sustainable the enthusiasm for and ownership of this peace that exists at the national level must extend beyond the capital, down to the communities and, importantly, to the country’s youth. This is what our Positive Peace Curriculum set out to do.

Our team engaged youth from around the Colombia in positive peace workshops. The curriculum was built around eight pillars of positive peace, including: good governance; an equal distribution of resources; free access to information; a stable business environment; high levels of human capital; the acceptance of women’s rights; low levels of corruption; and good relations among neighbors. The workshops encouraged the youth to think through how positive peace, or a lack thereof, manifested in their communities and what action they could collectively take to improve the situation.

By convening more than 200 young changemakers from around the country, we also aimed to build a wider, stronger network of activist and organizers who would be champions of peace in their own cities and neighborhoods.

As phase two of project, the youth who had participated in the workshops convened in smaller groups in their localities to analyze the specific context of their communities, the gaps in positive peace, the assets available to advance positive peace.

Jointly, these young leaders carried out 46 positive peace actions in 15 of Colombia’s 32 department, covering all eight pillars or positive peace and directly benefited some 2,500 people, including other youth, victims of conflict, Venezuelan refugees, and indigenous women, among others.

From cooking classes to provide women victims of the conflict with an income-generating activity to community dialogue on shared history and reconciliation, these efforts were diverse and impactful. As partners on this project, we are immensely grateful to these young leaders and their communities for undertaking the hard work of transforming beliefs and breaking paradigms, many of which are associated with violence and escalation, and laying the groundwork for positive peace.
Success Strengthening Human Rights Systems in El Salvador

PartnersGlobal provides technical assistance and accompaniment to the Dialogue Component of this five year, USAID-funded human rights program. The program, which is implemented by Counterpart International, Partners El Salvador, and the Due Process of Law Foundation is strengthening governmental and nongovernmental systems to protect and promote human rights in El Salvador.

The main success of PartnersGlobal's technical accompaniment to this program has been the development and approval by consensus of a Common Advocacy Agenda on Human Rights that is guiding the program's grants component and the advocacy actions of organizations representing women, LGBTI populations, youth, and people with disabilities.
Middle East & North Africa

Local Partners

With Affiliates in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen, and committed partnerships with local organizations across North Africa and the Gulf, PartnersGlobal is able to promote democratic governance and engage civil society across the Middle East and North Africa region.
Years of civil war and a lack of government services from education to clean drinking water have left ordinary Yemeni citizens deeply frustrated and disillusioned with their national leaders.

To address the deep frustration and disillusionment ordinary Yemeni citizens feel toward their national leaders, the Enhancing the Role of Citizens and Religious Leaders in Yemen’s Political Transition project, funded by the State Department’s Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, supports a bottom-up dialogue process that gives ordinary citizens a mechanism to express and address their concerns. The dialogues are the first step in the development of small grant activities with program participants, ranging from rehabilitating schools, repairing sewage and water networks, and removing invasive tree species from public spaces. The project is implemented by the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy, Partners Global and Partners Yemen.

**Snapshot: Restoring the Sewage System**

Citizens of Tuban, a small town in Lahj governorate in southern Yemen, have been dealing with and trying to address a dysfunctional sewage system for nearly a decade.

After conducting a community dialogue on the issue, Partners Yemen and local partner LCSO, Rowad Altanmiah (Development Pioneers in English) began coordinating the rehabilitation of the Al Wahat sewage network in Tuban. Partners Yemen and Rowad Altanmiah engaged community members and local government officials from the beginning of the effort and, as a result, they have been invested in its success, donating more than $8,000 of in-kind contributions to the $18,000 project. After years of frustration and a lack of a working sewage system, citizens and local government were able to fix the problem and restore an essential service to their community.

**Snapshot: Ensuring security for girls in school**

Conflict and insecurity has driven attendance at the Balqees School for Girls down. Parents and students alike were uncomfortable with the school’s low walls that left the students exposed to outside harassment and other threats.

Through the dialogue process, attended by 400+ residents, community members discussed the challenge and shared their desires to send their girls back to school in a safe, secure environment. They noted that the current situation was untenable. As long as the low walls remained, they did not feel comfortable with their daughters attending. During the talks, community members, proposed adding more security around the school, increasing the height of the wall and shielding students from outside harassment and threats.

The community joined together to build the new wall and continue the conversation about the importance of girls’ education and student safety. More than 50 students re-enrolled.
Funded by Global Affairs Canada, the Workforce Empowerment for Women through Iraq’s Labor Law (WE WILL) project supports women’s empowerment through Iraq’s new labor law. WE WILL focuses on supporting human rights and contributing to Iraq’s rebuilding effort through enforcement of gender equity provisions in the labor code.

The project engages local attorneys, law students, unions, civil society organizations, and the Iraqi Ministry of Labor all in a collaborative effort to ensure women are protected and empowered to be full participants in Iraq’s economic development.

In September 2019, Partners Iraq staff participated in Baghdad’s Peace Carnival, a day where the city’s civil society organizations come together and engage the public in learning how they can build a more peaceful and inclusive future for Iraq. At the Peace Carnival, the Iraq Center discussed how members of the public perceive the status of working women in Iraq, highlighting aspects of the labor law that outline specific protections in the areas of recruitment, pay, and workplace rights. Alongside these discussions, the team had art and games to draw attendees over to the Partners Iraq booth.

The Partners team has joined forces with the Higher Judicial Council, the Ministry of Labor Social Affairs, the Iraqi Bar Association, and local civil society organizations to make sure the gender provisions under Iraqi Labor Law 37/2015 are implemented and respected. We are providing ongoing support to attorneys on how they can best serve their clients seeking to assert their legal rights under this law.
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 West Africa
Nigeria

Socios Perú

Partners Serbia

PDCS Slovakia

Partners Yemen