Center on International Cooperation
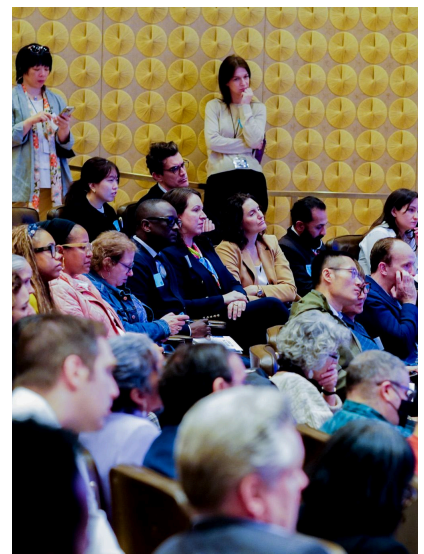
NYU | ARTS & SCIENCE

NYU Center on International Cooperation

Business Plan

Table of Contents

—

Cover photos courtesy of CIC staff and partners.

Vision and mission

Our vision

Be a leading organization for the advancement of effective multilateral action through thought leadership, convening power, and innovative applied policy to prevent and respond to armed conflicts and other crises, promote equitable global governance, and build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies in an era of profound global transformation.

Our mission

Inform and strengthen collaboration among local and national governments, international organizations, and the wider policy community to build trust, prevent and respond to crises, and advance peace, justice, and inclusion at all levels.

Theory of change

CIC advances multilateral action by the strategic integration of research, policy partnerships, advocacy, and trust-building in a divided world.

We act under the following assumptions:

Synergizing local, national, and international efforts

We leverage international platforms to amplify local and national actions while using successes at these levels to inform and drive global action. Our work recognizes that no single country can address global challenges alone. Therefore, we foster a dynamic interchange between local and national initiatives and international multilateral actions, building on a foundation of solidarity and mutual respect.

Driving collaborative action

Global challenges cannot be solved by any single actor. We believe change is most effectively achieved through the collaboration of key decision-makers in government and multilateral organizations, combined with the catalytic influence of civil society, academia, and the private sector. Trust-building is essential to this process, as it strengthens the relationships needed to create and sustain comprehensive, impactful solutions in today's fractured multilateral environment.

Mobilizing data and evidence for action

Data and evidence are the cornerstones of our approach. We use research to build the case for change and to guide and measure the effectiveness of the solutions

we've helped shape. Through inclusive and evidence-based dialogue, we build trust with and encourage stakeholders to take informed actions rooted in a shared understanding of today's challenges and opportunities.

Achieving measurable outcomes

Our success is measured by the tangible changes we help realize in policy, practice, and on-the-ground impact. We set clear, actionable goals for each of our initiatives, ensuring that our efforts contribute to the advancement of peace, justice, and inclusion on a global scale. These outcomes are achieved by fostering solidarity among diverse, cross-regional stakeholders, aligning their efforts towards common goals.

Integrating functions for impactful engagement

We integrate our research, partnership, and advocacy efforts to create a unified and powerful approach to external engagement. This integrated model ensures that our messaging is consistent, our influence is maximized, and our brand as a leader in international cooperation is reinforced. Trust-building is key to this integration, ensuring all stakeholders are aligned and working together effectively.

Investing in people and knowledge

We recognize that our people are our greatest asset. We foster a culture of continuous learning, solidarity, and innovation. Additionally, we prioritize strong knowledge management and project management systems to ensure our work is efficient, impactful, and scalable.

Securing sustainable and flexible funding

We prioritize securing sustainable and flexible funding by fostering strong relationships with key partners built on solidarity and mutual trust. To maintain our responsiveness, we explore both traditional and innovative funding avenues, with a particular emphasis on securing core funding. This enables us to allocate resources where they are most needed and ensure the long-term sustainability of our mission.

Solidarity and trust-building

At the heart of our theory of change is the belief that solidarity and trust are essential to navigating and bridging divides within the multilateral system. By actively fostering these values in all our interactions, whether in research collaborations or partnerships, we aim to build a more cohesive and effective international community capable of addressing the most pressing global challenges.

1. Thematic and Regional Programs

Promoting and Defending Multilateralism (MR Program)

The program seeks to defend and promote the values of multilateralism amid rising global tensions and polarization. Our work is guided by the belief that collaborative, multilateral approaches are essential to solving pressing global issues. The program responds through multiple interconnected areas: "Case for Action and Solutions" by advocating for multilateral solutions to global challenges; strengthening collaboration between the United Nations (UN) and Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs); and ensuring effective multilateral strategies for addressing fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV).

Case for Action and Solutions

This workstream draws from the calendars of the UN, MDBs, the G20, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and regional bodies to identify and offer solutions that respond to the multilateral system's challenges and critical moments. We are in a multilateral moment, a confluence of factors marked by sophisticated geopolitical tensions, geoeconomic fragmentation, and a growing challenge to the values and principles of international law. All of this is unfolding amid rapid technological advances, many of which are evolving faster than the policies meant to guide and contain them. There has never been a more critical moment to defend and promote multilateralism—even as disillusionment with its effectiveness reaches unprecedented levels, yet it's also a time when there has been the greatest disillusionment with its success. CIC will continue to grapple with these questions and actively engage with member states across regions, multilateral institutions, and global thought leaders to reimagine this moment and define the institutional imperatives necessary to sustain the multilateral system.

In 2025–2026, we will focus much of our attention on the UN80 reform initiative of the UN Secretary-General, within the broader discourse on how to re-invigorate multilateralism, as well as the selection process of the next UN Secretary-General. The UN80 Reform and new Secretary-General selection project will be implemented in collaboration with the Inequality and Exclusion and Justice teams within the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies program at CIC. The big picture multilateral discourse will be implemented in collaboration with the Pathfinders' SDG16+ team.

Additionally, we will closely engage with other multilateral processes and events on the calendar. Here, the MR program will also seek to collaborate with other CIC programs. Some of the events include:

- The World Social Summit.

- The G20 ministerial meetings.
- The World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual and Spring Meetings.
- The African Development Bank annual meetings.

Financing for development has remained a key issue in multilateral engagement, causing considerable tension between various country groupings. With the finalization of the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), our focus will shift to the implementation of the agreed-upon commitments outlined in the outcome document. To this end, CIC will partner with other think tanks to support the development of a People-Led Accountability Framework for the FfD4 outcomes. Launched as a Sevilla Platform for Action, this initiative aims to ensure fidelity to action and evidence on how this translates to lived outcomes for people on the ground, as well as track milestones that demonstrate progress. The idea is to ensure global discussions are informed by evidence-based reality.

As CIC, we see ourselves as a trusted, candid, behind-the-scenes partner for member states and multilateral institutional leaders who are at the forefront of discussions. Our approach encompasses convening cross-regional meetings, holding small closed-door discussions, conducting one-on-one conferring, facilitating alliance-building engagements, providing briefings, issuing reports, and publishing blogs. In all this, we see the great need to amplify the agency and effective engagement of those voices that are less prominent. In addition, we also collaborate with and through other think-tanks, academic institutions, and civil society organizations by partnering to co-host events, providing expert content through speaking or writing, or co-publishing reports.

UN-MDB Cooperation

This workstream will focus on strengthening collaboration to address issues of fragility, conflict, and violence in a time of dwindling financial resources. To complement the workstream on case for action and solutions, the focus will be on how collaboration between the UN and MDBs can produce better outcomes for development, in the context of the UN80 reform. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Prevention and Peacebuilding program, we will continue to explore how the UN and MDBs can better support countries in implementing their national prevention strategies.

Other areas of work

The MR program will collaborate with the Prevention and Peacebuilding program to develop a risk and protective factors toolkit that the private sector can use to analyze risk and protective factors in frontier markets.

In addition, in collaboration with the Inequalities and Exclusion program, the MR program will continue to develop a specific project focused on global governance, digital technologies, and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Promoting informed discourse on the UN80 reform agenda and selection of the next UN Secretary-General.	• Produce two to three internal briefings to member states on UN80 options and the new Secretary-General selection. • Produce and publish three to four analytical briefs on issues of UN80 reform and the new Secretary-General selection. • Convene at least four closed-door cross-regional member states' convenings. • Hold at least 10 private meetings with key decision makers. • Convene at least two think-tank meetings. • Hold one side event during the High-level Week.	• Produce two internal briefings for member states on the new Secretary-General selection. • Produce and publish two analytical briefs on issues related to UN80 reform and the new Secretary-General selection. • Convene at least four closed-door cross-regional member states convenings. • Convene at least two think-tank meetings.
Outcome 2 Deepened reflection on the future of multilateralism and the role of the Global South in shaping that future.	• Two to three out-of-the-box discussions on multilateralism. • Two Global South convenings.	• One report. • Two Global South convenings.

Outcome 2 Supporting informed UN and MDBs approaches to FCV.	• One consultation with the World Bank on effective national prevention strategies. • One consultation with Regional MDBs on effective national prevention strategies.	• One joint UN-MDB meeting on national prevention strategies.
Outcome 3 Supporting people-led accountability on FfD4 commitments.	• People-led monitoring and accountability framework developed. • Data collection in pilot countries undertaken.	• People-led FfD4 report released.
Outcome 4 Informed the private sector engagement in FCV contexts.	• A toolkit on risk and protective factors for private sector engagement developed.	• One country case study to test the toolkit.
Outcome 5 Informed CIC engagement on global governance in digital technology and AI.	• At least one policy brief.	• At least one member state convening.

Prevention and Peacebuilding

The Prevention and Peacebuilding program supports efforts to prevent the outbreak of violence, build peace, and advance a new vision for UN peace operations. Amid declining trust in the multilateral system, the program's objectives are to provide an evidence base for improving on-the-ground responses and influence global, regional, and national policymaking. The focus will be on developing evidence-based tools and data-driven approaches for decision-makers and practitioners, as well as their multilateral partners, and supporting the commitment made during the Pact for the Future and the 2025 Peacebuilding Architecture Review (PBAR)—building on the achievements of previous years.

Prevention and Peacebuilding

The Prevention and Peacebuilding team will continue to convene member states to build trust in prevention. The program will bridge the gaps between academic research, policy, and practice by developing tools to assist national actors in identifying risk and protective factors for violence, implementing successful national prevention and peacebuilding strategies, and measuring impact.

CIC is working to develop concrete recommendations for multilateral actors and donors to support national and local actors effectively, including through PBAR negotiations. CIC will offer concrete recommendations to enhance system-wide coherence, thereby strengthening prevention and peacebuilding efforts, both within the UN system and beyond. Collaboration with the Pathfinders program on Halving Global Violence will encompass all forms of violence and link national to local prevention efforts, while alignment with the Promoting and Defending Multilateralism program will continue to engage on ways the UN and MDBs can better support countries in implementing their national prevention and peacebuilding strategies. The Prevention and Peacebuilding program will also collaborate with the MR program to develop a risk and protective factors toolkit that the private sector can use to analyze risk and protective factors in frontier markets.

Peacemaking and Peacekeeping

The multilateral system, including the UN, is experiencing a crisis of trust. Many member states have expressed concerns that the UN has deviated from its core mandate, including maintaining international peace and security, as enshrined in the UN Charter. At the same time, shifting geopolitical dynamics are straining international cooperation and narrowing opportunities for effective peacemaking. UN peace operations are facing a crisis of confidence, reflected in recent drawdowns and the growing trend towards UN-endorsed and mandated missions

managed outside traditional UN channels, such as the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti.

Contingent on funding, CIC will continue working on peace operations reform to help the UN confront these challenges, evaluate the decline in confidence, and propose a new vision for UN peace operations. CIC will explore how peace operations and peacemaking efforts—including UN, regional, and ad hoc operations—can better align with evolving geopolitical realities and international security threats, ensuring that they remain effective in mitigating the most urgent dangers to international peace and security. In partnership with the Congo Research Group (CRG), our program will focus in particular on Africa and the Great Lakes region.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Developing tools for effective peacebuilding and prevention approaches.	• Develop evidence-based tools for national actors and their international partners to design and implement effective prevention and peacebuilding efforts. • Provide technical assistance to national and local actors, as well as the UN, on the development and implementation of national prevention strategies, including the tools developed during Year 1 (i.e., a matrix of risk and protective factors). • Develop three to four evidence-based policy documents.	• Develop evidence-based tools for national actors and their international partners to design and implement effective prevention and peacebuilding efforts. • Publish evidence-based principles and parameters for effective national prevention strategies and build support from UN member states and other key stakeholders to ensure uptake. • Develop three to four evidence-based policy documents. • Continue providing technical assistance to national and local actors, as well as the

		UN, on the development and implementation of national prevention strategies and other peacebuilding and prevention efforts.
Outcome 2 Strengthen system-wide coherence to more effectively support national actors in prevention and peacebuilding efforts.	• Produce a mapping of the prevention architecture. • Provide support in follow-up to member state commitments under the Pact for the Future, the PBAR, and support intergovernmental bodies, particularly the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).	• Provide recommendations to enhance the coherence of the UN system in supporting prevention efforts by local and national actors. • Provide support in follow-up to member state commitments under the Pact for the Future, the PBAR, and support intergovernmental bodies, particularly the PBC. • In collaboration with the Promoting and Defending Multilateralism program, continue to engage on ways the UN and MDBs can better support countries in implementing their national prevention strategies.

| Outcome 3

Strengthen localization of humanitarian assistance and links to peacebuilding. | • Produce a companion piece for humanitarian actors to the report Aid Strategies in politically estranged settings.

This workstream will be terminated on August 31st, 2025. | |
|---|---|---|
| Outcome 4

Peacemaking and peacekeeping | • Pending funding, we will research the criteria for success of regional, sub-regional, and ad hoc peacekeeping missions.

• Pending funding, we will produce recommendations for effective PBC advice to the Security Council or the General Assembly, particularly on Africa. | • Pending funding, we will produce timely analyses on planning, budget, and finance, support for non-UN operations, and considerations for the new Secretary-General, particularly regarding structural reforms. |
| Outcome 5

Informed the private sector engagement in FCV contexts. | • Pending funding, we will develop a toolkit on risk and protective factors for private sector engagement. | • Pending funding, we will conduct a country-specific case study to test the toolkit. |

Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies

The Pathfinders program will continue to work on enhancing policies and practices that promote peace, justice, equality, and inclusion, while highlighting the interconnectedness of these areas across various sectors. Through its various teams, the program will drive a shift in international policymaking, prioritizing effective investments in peace, justice, inclusion, equality, and good governance at local, national, and global levels.

To this end, it continues to identify commonalities among divisions, amplify practical, evidence-based policy solutions, support collaboration, and drive action, universally and at all levels. With SDG16 remaining off-track across all targets, and in

the context of deepening divisions, Pathfinders has continued to focus on creating tangible outcomes at national and local levels, and sharing these gains globally, while building coordination, coherence, and increasing consensus.

By focusing on initiatives that directly impact people's daily lives, Pathfinders will maintain their leadership in facilitating international and multilateral discussions that lead to the real changes people expect from their governments and institutions worldwide, particularly in the face of global megatrends, compounding crises, and a rapidly evolving multilateral landscape.

The initiatives outlined below, such as Peace in Our Cities and the Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control (GENSAC), directly support mayors and grassroots civil society in their lifesaving work, while the Halving Global Violence Flagship report and its costing of violence studies continue to impact policy at the national level in various country contexts across three continents. The Inequality Solutions Portal provides a growing collection of best practices and policy solutions, contributing to the recently launched Global Alliance Against Inequality. And the Justice for All team unites regional and global networks of stakeholders to transform how policymakers and donors approach justice, including through the Justice Action Coalition and two regional alliances. Additionally, the SDG16+ team ensures that the recommendations, partnerships, and best practices from these efforts are integrated into policymaking, intergovernmental negotiations, and advocacy in New York, Geneva, and capitals worldwide.

These initiatives will be strategically leveraged on international platforms to amplify national and local successes, shape global policies, and foster dynamic collaboration between local, national, and multilateral actions.

SDG16+ Policy and Advocacy

The SDG16+ Policy and Advocacy team continues to drive impactful international, national, and local action to build more peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. Our strategy will actively foster trust and solidarity among stakeholders, ensuring that solutions are supported by broad-based cooperation across regions. We will intensify member state and partner engagement, while strengthening collaboration between the different Pathfinders teams and CIC, more broadly, to advance policy action that leverages SDG16+ interlinkages and governance across development, as well as peace and security priorities, adapting our approach to an evolving multilateral landscape and using improved data and communication to shape outcomes.

We will mobilize data and evidence, ensuring that policy recommendations are grounded in rigorous research, boosting trust in our solutions.

To this end, we will further amplify three interlinked narratives: the complementarity among SDG16's primary pillars of peace, justice, equality and inclusive institutions; the cross-cutting and enabling role of SDG16 within the 2030 Agenda and across the UN system, and the critical relevance of SDG16+ to sustainable solutions in addressing, navigating, and preventing current and future crises, including at the national and local levels amid UN reform.

We will build on the progress in supporting and integrating SDG16+ implementation with large development organizations, while bringing in new partners, including from philanthropy, the private sector, and international financial institutions. At the same time, we will continue to contribute to and influence global events and intergovernmental processes, weaving a "golden thread" between past and future milestones, reinforcing the central importance of the policies and principles of SDG16+ in a shifting multilateral landscape and any future global development agenda. With five years remaining in the 2030 Agenda, we will establish clear, measurable goals to track our progress and demonstrate tangible impact in line with our commitment to transparency and outcome-driven work. To maximize our influence, we will seamlessly integrate efforts across the Pathfinders' teams, and as much as possible, across CIC, ensuring our messaging and activities are aligned for a unified and compelling approach to external engagement.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Support government and partner commitment and action, deepen SDG16+ narratives and provide politically viable policy guidance, inform replication and address domestic constituencies across regions, and amplify the need for SDG16+ amid profound global transformation.	**Membership and Voice:** • Maintain bilateral meetings and increase membership, focusing on SIDS, by at least one member state. • Facilitate three to four meetings with permanent and deputy permanent representatives, further supporting the narratives above as linked to relevant ongoing processes and further weaving the "golden thread." • Hold two to three expert/technical-level meetings in support of the above.	**Membership and Voice:** • Deepen relationships across member states, while maintaining a cross-regional focus. • Facilitate two to three meetings with permanent and deputy permanent representatives, continuing the global, golden thread narrative amid reform, while drawing concrete links with national and local impact. • Hold two to three expert/technical-level meetings.

- Draft and circulate one to two high-level statements, including in anticipation of the 2027 SDG Summit.

- Convene four events/dialogues with member states and partners, with a continued focus on broadening the audience and buy-in.

- Deepen new relationships through one joint event, including with business or philanthropy (e.g., on the value of applying an SDG16 lens to green transitions).

- One blog or thought piece reflective on SDG16+ and the rapidly evolving status quo.

Pathfinders' team engagement:

- Provide support and coordination linked to global and regional moments and milestones.

- Provide input for one to two cross-Pathfinders publications or thought pieces, leveraging expertise and collaboration.

- Support two exploratory meetings between Pathfinders teams and multilateral/ regional bodies for potential partnerships.

- Draft and circulate one to two high-level statements, including in anticipation of the 2027 SDG Summit/2028 Pact for the Future Review.

- Convene up to three innovative, cross-sector dialogues with member states and partners, to build community in "SDG16+ and meeting the moment."

- Deepen new relationships through a joint event, such as one focused on business or philanthropy (e.g., adaptive governance).

- One blog or thought piece reflective on SDG16+ and the rapidly evolving status quo.

Pathfinders and CIC engagement:

- Support links with global and regional moments/milestones.

- Provide input for one to two cross-Pathfinders or cross-CIC publications, or thought pieces.

- Work with teams through up to three events/dialogues to amplify SDG16+ policy interlinkages at the country level; showcase return-on-investment findings; highlight the centrality of SDG16 to development, peace and security, and human rights amid

	• Support cross-Pathfinders policy discussions through one to two joint events or meetings at national or local levels, GC dependent.	reforms and/or unpack SDG16 and adaptive governance. • Create one or two new relationships/partnerships focused on new CIC frontiers, such as climate and AI.
Outcome 2 Support the inclusion of SDG16+ in future development agenda discussions and its mainstreaming in international organizations and agencies, civil society networks, operational NGOs, and/or academic institutions.	• SDG16+ policies and approaches integrated into one to two policy documents by 2025–2026. • Convening and supporting Pathfinders member states and partners on integrating SDG16 principles in any development agenda, with the possibility of a 2027 statement on the same. • Produce a white paper, in collaboration with partners, on the centrality of SDG16 pillars for any global development agenda, grounded in domestic shifts and geopolitical dynamics, including possibly around AI and global governance.	• SDG16+ policies and approaches are integrated into partner policy documents/thought pieces. • Impacting discussions on post-2030 in the lead-up to 2027 and 2028. • Produce follow-on analysis/white paper, with partners, on the centrality of SDG16 pillars for any global development agenda, grounded in domestic shifts, adaptive governance, and return-on-investment analysis. • Unpack SDG16+ integration in new/evolving social contracts, governance partnerships, and institutional checks and balances.
Outcome 3 Support internal organization and consolidation of messaging.	• Support internal organization/operational coherence. • Funding dependent, explore and/or draft terms of reference on the co-creation of a knowledge	• Continued support of the internal organization and systems for improved communication and internal knowledge management.

	management system for applied SDG16+ policies with partners.	• Funding dependent, explore creation/co-creation of a knowledge management system for applied SDG16+ policies with partners.
		• Funding dependent, support roll-out of a CIC CRM.

Pathfinders: Halving Global Violence

In the year ahead, the Halving Global Violence (HGV) team will build on the momentum from its research, convenings, and programmatic networks to translate its findings and recommendations into real-world impact to prevent and reduce all forms of violence. Over the past year, the HGV Task Force successfully launched its Flagship Report and rolled it out to numerous sectors, including a global launch, a high-profile UN event, a launch at NYU for the academic community, an IFI-focused event at the World Bank Annual meetings, and regional workshops in Africa and Latin America. The report's findings and recommendations garnered considerable attention and interest from key stakeholders, resulting in an update of the Task Force that included key new practitioner members. Similarly, GENSAC and Peace in Our Cities have added notable new members and gained momentum following high-profile engagements, impactful local projects, and successful global strategy convenings in the past year.

We plan to capture this momentum and leverage it to turn the Flagship's recommendations into lifesaving action at the international, national, and local levels. The HGV Task Force will continue to onboard new members, whom it will gather and consult with to enact an updated strategy focused on the uptake of its recommendations by actors across sectors. The ongoing Zimbabwe gender-based violence costing effort, undertaken in collaboration with the World Bank and numerous government ministries, along with a series of seven city-level pilot projects through the Peace in Our Cities' Peace Incentive Fund, are examples of the types of efforts that will help put these principles into practice. This will be complemented by continued high-profile engagements to ensure sustained focus on the Task Force's efforts, including events planned for the High-level Political Forum, on the margins of the UN General Assembly, through published pieces, as well as national and regional workshops, and in conjunction with new partners like Gallup, who have tremendous reach.

Concurrently, the GENSAC and the Peace in Our Cities networks will continue to inform our efforts through the experience of their members, who will also support their efforts to achieve direct impacts in their communities and translate them to the multilateral stage. Specific objectives include continuing the expansion of the Peace in Our Cities network, including in the Southeast Asia region, to advocate for the central role of mayors and local leaders in violence prevention and empower their efforts. Another priority is GENSAC's aim to address the underrepresentation of women in multilateral peace and security policymaking—especially on conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and arms control—by supporting initiatives such as the Humanitarian Disarmament Forum, the Arms Trade Treaty, and the UN First Committee, given the clear evidence of the critical role women play in building sustainable peace and security.

We similarly plan to leverage and support the work of our colleagues within CIC and the broader NYU community. This includes a series of possible projects with the Prevention and Peacebuilding team to enhance prevention efforts for all forms of violence, as well as advancing the work of the newly formed NYU Peace and Social Transformation Working Group.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 The HGV Task Force and its recommendations achieve impacts in different regions and sectors at local, national, and international levels, supporting violence reduction goals.	• Development of new research streams and products, resulting in the publication of five blogs and policy papers that build on the findings of the Task Force report and examine specific manifestations of violence in greater detail. • High-profile event featuring Task Force analysis and partnerships at multilateral fora, including with Gallup on the margins of the UN General Assembly High-level Week. • Continued expansion and diversification of	• In-person meeting of the Task Force to outline strategic areas of focus and engagement moving forward. • Development of a strategy to inform the post-2030 agenda on all forms of violence.

	the Task Force and its efforts. ● Support pilot programming in at least seven countries to ensure continued direct, real-world, and measurable impact of the Task Force and its recommendations.	
Outcome 2 GENSAC consolidated itself as a premier international reference on gender-responsive small arms with the expansion of direct support to members on violence reduction initiatives, membership growth, and increased visibility at international fora.	● Continued increase in GENSAC members with representation from up to five new countries and/or regions, prioritizing regions heavily impacted by gun violence. ● To support regional expansion, successfully hold a multi-country workshop in Central America. ● Implementation of country-specific projects and campaigns with GENSAC members in at least three African countries. ● GENSAC engagement at two to three high-profile international disarmament forums, including hosting side events, delivering statements, and supporting workshops during UN Disarmament Week and the Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.	● Global GENSAC members convening in one of the three GENSAC regions to share experiences and good practices for gender-responsive SALW control. ● Regional workshops on relevant, member-driven armed violence topics. ● Strengthen the participation of GENSAC women peacebuilders and disarmament experts by providing opportunities to engage in two to three high-profile international disarmament forums.

Outcome 3 A robust and consolidated Peace in Our Cities network helps to reduce urban violence on a global scale.	• Incorporation of at least five new members into the Peace in Our Cities network, focusing on cities with emerging urban violence challenges. • Expansion of the network into Southeast Asia. • Completion of Peace Incentive Fund 2.0 projects with measurable outcomes and analysis on successful and replicable models for urban violence reduction. • Direct support and engagement to ensure the inclusion of two city-based partners in international forums, as well as support for two information exchanges between city leaders.	• Regional meeting of Peace in Our Cities members. • Continuation of the Cities Exchange program. • Advancement of key efforts to ensure Peace in Our Cities' ability to function as a standalone entity, including obtaining a fiscal sponsor, board, and/or dedicated staff.

Pathfinders: Justice for All

Following the publication of the landmark "Justice for All" flagship report in 2019, the Justice for All program is implementing the action agenda, successfully building collaborative partnerships and convening key stakeholders to strengthen the global and regional movement for people-centered justice. Today, over 60 countries endorse these principles. The program unites leading justice organizations through initiatives such as justice partner calls, the Justice for Women working group, the Justice for Displaced Populations informal working group, the Ibero-American Alliance for Justice, and the African Alliance for People-Centered Justice.

We will continue to support the Justice Action Coalition (JAC) by developing proprietary tools, platforms, and processes that deliver measurable impact and practice-enhancing knowledge. This work will also provide cost savings and returns

on investment to the coalitions, organizations, and local and national governments delivering justice. As the head of the co-secretariat to the JAC—a high-ambition coalition of countries and organizations dedicated to closing the justice gap—the program has facilitated strategic high-level discussions and supported joint statements at the UN, including at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and the UN Sixth Committee. The JAC's workstreams coordinate efforts on justice data and evidence while promoting learning and exchange among countries. The JAC seeks to ensure coherence in international assistance and secure effective funding for people-centered justice initiatives.

Aligned with our theory of change, we will actively foster trust and solidarity among stakeholders, ensuring that the tools and platforms we develop are grounded in robust evidence and collaboration. This includes our efforts to highlight best practices in justice and convene diverse partners to strengthen the people-centered justice movement.

The program will also ensure progress on SDG16.3 ("Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all"). First, with continued efforts in Africa and the Ibero-American region, through the strengthening of both regional alliances. We will also explore the relevance and viability of a smaller alliance in the Asia-Pacific region. Additionally, building on the success of the first two cohorts of Young Justice Leaders, the program will support a third cohort (launching in Spring 2026), emphasizing the importance of amplifying youth leadership in justice and multilateral spaces to accelerate progress on SDG16.3 in the remaining years of the 2030 Agenda. We will work diligently to ensure that the contributions of young people are recognized and incorporated into our broader advocacy efforts.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Increased national action on people-centered justice to accelerate implementation of SDG16.3.	• Maintain leadership in peer exchanges and provide targeted assistance through partnerships at the country level, complementing the work of other partners and the JAC in at least two countries. • Profile two good practices on people-centered justice to	• Facilitate cross-country learning by organizing at least one regional or thematic peer exchange moment, with concrete follow-up actions tracked across participating countries. • Identify metrics to track the implementation of the Justice Financing Framework and

	be shared with at least five countries, and offer support to them in adopting similar approaches. • Pilot the Justice Financing Framework metrics in at least two countries or institutions and test methodologies for long-term impact tracking.	develop a mechanism to measure its long-term impact.
Outcome 2 Develop more cohesive international support for data, evidence, innovation, and financing to empower a movement for justice for all.	• Continue promoting people-centered justice and convene or participate in at least eight regional and international gatherings. • Set up the basis to establish a regional alliance in Asia and the Pacific region and convene members for at least one meeting to develop actionable commitments.	• Position people-centered justice as a core component in the lead-up to the 2027 SDG Summit by mobilizing key stakeholders, contributing to official processes, and co-leading side events that highlight justice as an enabler of sustainable development. • Continue strategic and high-impact work on evidence-to-action by identifying and promoting initiatives that ensure measurable outcomes in justice reform.
Outcome 3 Sustained and strengthened the people-centered justice movement through integrated research,	• Publish six to eight blogs, Champions of Change interviews, policy briefs, and reports profiling people-centered justice.	• Continue profiling people-centered justice best practices in published content. • Participate in up to five justice and development

partnership, and advocacy efforts.	• Continue to profile and support the work of young people in the justice sector with the launch of a third cohort of Young Justice Leaders.	gatherings and promote people-centered justice. • Continue to profile and support the work of Young Justice Leaders.

Pathfinders: Inequality and Exclusion

In 2021, the Inequality and Exclusion program team published its flagship report, "From Rhetoric to Action: Delivering Equality and Inclusion." It was launched by seven heads of state and government, as well as leading representatives from multilateral and civil society organizations, and other distinguished global voices. Since then, the program has worked with partner countries, multilateral organizations, and civil society to put research into action, facilitating collaboration among key stakeholders to advance equality and inclusion at national, regional, and international levels.

Inequalities of all kinds have worsened since the COVID-19 pandemic, with in-country income and wealth disparities increasing in most countries. A newer challenge is the rise of between-country inequalities, which has contributed to a growing trust deficit between high-, middle-, and low-income countries. Addressing these inequalities, particularly through innovative financing policies, has quickly become a priority for many of our partners, making it a central focus of the program. Funding policies—including addressing debt distress, climate financing, and broader reform of international financial institutions—remain critical for reducing both between- and in-country inequalities. Financing will remain a key global topic for 2025–2026, following the Financing for Development conference. The Inequality and Exclusion team will also explore how new funding can be allocated most effectively to achieve the SDGs. Inequality and exclusion span multiple sectors, making it essential that every policy promotes equality. The Inequality Solutions Portal, which offers a collection of policies across sectors—from justice systems to renewable energy and tax reforms—drawing on experiences from dozens of countries, continues to grow successfully, reaching 183 countries and a quarter of a million visits. The program also published cutting-edge research on the links between inequalities, polarization, and disinformation, as well as inclusive policymaking and housing inequalities.

As we move forward, the program will expand the number of countries involved, including through the Global Alliance Against Inequality, launched in June 2025, which emphasizes inclusive policy solutions at both national and international

levels. The Inequality and Exclusion team will actively seek every opportunity to build solidarity and trust among nations and stakeholders, fostering collaboration to drive meaningful progress on equality and inclusion.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Visible international collective action to reduce inequality and exclusion within and between countries.	• Consolidating and expanding the Global Alliance Against Inequality, adding up to five new members. • Produce further research on inequality and inclusive governance, publishing up to three blogs or policy papers. • Write up to three blogs on inequality issues.	• Positing the Global Alliance Against Inequality as the platform to engage on issues related to inequality and exclusion during the 2027 SDG Summit.
Outcome 2 Participating national actors will pursue some of the "comprehensive menu of policy options" from the 2021 flagship report to reduce economic inequality and exclusion of disadvantaged groups.	• Conduct up to two country visits and/or work with local partnerships to identify policy priorities for collaboration on inclusive policymaking. • Collate lessons from the country level to include at least ten further examples of impactful policies on the Inequality Solutions Portal.	• Expand the Inequality Solutions Portal.
Outcome 3 Lessons from Pathfinders inspire others to act.	• Increase the usage of the Inequality Solutions Portal, reaching 500.000	• Increase funding from a wider set of donors. • Continue to expand the partnership with

	visitors from all regions.	the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) beyond the regular exchange of fellows.
	• Receive up to three Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity visiting CIC to advance the cross-fertilization of work and promote collaboration.	

Congo Research Group (CRG)

Founded in 2015, the Congo Research Group (CRG)'s mission is to conduct and promote rigorous, independent research on the complex interplay between politics, violence, and the political economy in Congo, making its findings available to a broad audience.

In 2025-2027, CRG will continue to collaborate with Ebuteli, its research partner in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), while also expanding into new areas of work. CRG will pursue an initiative with Ebuteli focused on two interrelated issues: forging a coherent peace process in the DRC and addressing heightened geopolitical competition over Congolese natural resources between major global and regional powers. The objective of this project is to integrate international research on the DRC with local research in Congo, thereby informing international and national policy debates.

Second, CRG will seek to establish a new Africa-focused research program bringing together think tanks and research centers from across the continent. This program will examine how Africans, and African researchers in particular, are addressing questions and challenges related to the current global geopolitical climate. It will convene key African research institutions to reflect on questions including how geopolitical alignments in Africa are shifting with the influence of great and middle powers; how the emerging global geopolitical landscape will affect development and peace and security in Africa; and how multilateral institutions such as the UN, African Union (AU), World Bank, and IMF will shape the continent's future. This new initiative will enable CRG to strategically leverage its experience in developing and implementing a research agenda with Ebuteli, promoting a continental research program anchored in Africa with a coordination structure at CIC and a foothold in the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Produce a detailed understanding of the dynamics of armed violence in the Uele, Ituri, and Kivu regions through innovative ways to monitor and analyze violence.	**Peacebuilding in the DRC in a new era of great power competition:** ● Publish one report on "creating a peace process" in the DRC. ● Produce two blog posts and two policy notes on topics related to DRC. ● Host a public launch of the DRC peace process report.	● Build out comparative research on ad hoc and regional/sub-regional peace operations in the DRC and elsewhere (with the Prevention and Peacebuilding program)
Outcome 2 Political economy and peacebuilding.	**Peacebuilding in the DRC in a new era of great power competition:** ● Publish one report on geopolitical competition in the DRC. ● Hold a public report launch on geopolitical competition in the DRC	● Develop a new research project on the new actors in the political economy of the Great Lakes region of Africa
Outcome 3 Bringing together African perspectives on global geopolitics.	**21st Century Geopolitics in Africa:** ● Conduct two stakeholder convenings. ● Publish two blog posts related to African geopolitics.	● Conduct two stakeholder convenings. ● Publish two blog posts related to African geopolitics.

2. Finance and Operations

CIC's Finance and Operations (FINOPs) team is committed to delivering fiduciary and operational success by strengthening its financial strategy for long-term sustainability and enhancing management in grants, human resources, risk and compliance, procurement, and business continuity. The strategy is centered on providing support to CIC and program leadership in assessing productivity and budgetary resources, enabling informed decisions on the financial direction of the center. This strategy responds to a CIC-wide push on effective project management and securing sustainable funding.

In recent years, the FINOPs team has focused on building a sustainable infrastructure to facilitate excellent donor stewardship, improving responsiveness in contracting and payment processing, and providing CIC staff and partners with sound guidance on procurement, hiring, compensation, and visa processing. Additionally, efforts have been made to strengthen collaboration with key strategic areas within NYU, including human resources, insurance and risk management, procurement, general counsel, sponsored programs, and post-award accounting. These efforts have yielded positive results, including stronger financial and forecasting analytics, more timely procurement and award processes, and a reduction in administrative delays. In the upcoming year, the team will continue to prioritize operational effectiveness, focusing on knowledge management and business continuity by developing organization-wide protocols and fostering a culture of knowledge sharing.

The team will also leverage existing NYU resources, particularly fundraising expertise, to enhance financial sustainability and streamline workflows between NYU and CIC in areas deemed high risk. Recognizing that CIC's most valuable asset is its team of experts, retaining talented individuals through staff engagement and a balanced work culture is critical, ensuring that our people remain at the forefront of our strategy.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Develop a team culture and leadership opportunities that foster a deep sense of connection and engagement among staff in our work.	• Design training and team-building activities for staff with a 75 percent participation rate by the end of the year. • Conduct an annual staff survey by Q1 and	• Design training and team-building activities for staff with a 75% participation rate by the end of the year. • Conduct an annual staff survey by Q1 and

	disseminate results by Q2, aiming for 80 percent employee job satisfaction. ● Maintain staff retention at 85% or higher throughout the year. ● A competency framework will be developed by Q2 to support performance reviews.	disseminate results by Q2, aiming for 85 percent employee job satisfaction. ● Maintain staff retention at 85% or higher throughout the year.
Outcome 2 Provide continued business operations improvements that facilitate excellent service delivery, grant due diligence, and knowledge sharing, where timely and insightful analysis and reporting inform prudent, strategic decision-making and donor accountability.	● Conduct annual updates to the standard operating procedure (SOP) by Q4 and aim to reduce FINOPS turnaround time to five business days by the end of the year. ● Evaluate in Q3 the effectiveness of the budget monitoring tools to forecast accurately six months in advance so that senior management can make decisions and pivot resources as needed. ● Continue to fine-tune grant tracking and pre-award budget and proposal for program leads, with training conducted by the Grants team for program leads to effectively build strong grant budget proposals by Q3. ● Conduct a SWOT analysis of internal	● Evaluate the rate of satisfaction for FINOPS turnaround time at five business days and set plans to address cases that require a long response time. ● Continue to fine-tune grant tracking and pre-award budget and proposal for program leads, with annual training in Q4 conducted by the Grants team for program leads to effectively build strong grant budget proposals. ● Revisit the SWOT analysis of internal operations to identify areas for prioritization in Q1.

	operations to identify areas for prioritization in Q1.	
Outcome 3 Foster cross-team collaboration and strategic partnership with the university to raise 100 percent of the operating budgets.	• Strengthen the Fundraising and Relations Team (FRT) with tools and resources that can amplify CIC's philanthropic reach beyond the current portfolio. • Diversify revenue streams by cultivating five new prospects or relationships, with one as core unrestricted funding.	• Evaluate the FRT tools for effectiveness and continue to build upon the structure to add more fundraising partners through CIC's advisory Board, fellows, and key partners. • Diversify revenue streams by converting the prospects into committed grants from two new sources, with one as core unrestricted funding.

3. Communications

CIC's communications strategy, covering the period from September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2027, includes several key objectives: optimizing digital communications to enhance online presence and engagement, deepening media outreach to amplify CIC's thought leadership to ensure our research and analysis reaches broader, more diverse global audiences, strengthening internal communications to foster better collaboration and information sharing, and strategic planning to support long-term goals and adapt to emerging needs. These objectives align with a CIC-wide push to deliver integrated and impactful engagement across all communications channels, ensuring our messaging is consistent, trust-building, and strategically aligned with our research and policy contributions.

By effectively communicating CIC's policy products and research findings, the team aims to target decision-making audiences with more precision, ensuring that our efforts resonate with the right external stakeholders. This outreach promotes CIC's brand and supports the development of strong financial and policy research partnerships by demonstrating the value and impact of our work. Internally, the strengthened communication fosters a unified approach to these efforts, ensuring

that all staff are aligned in promoting CIC's mission and strategic goals and are equipped with adequate strategic communications resourcing.

A renewed focus will also be placed on enhancing CIC's visibility within NYU. Raising our profile among NYU faculty, students, and administrators is crucial to expanding collaboration, attracting top student talent, and aligning with institutional goals related to global engagement. This dual focus on external and internal audiences is crucial for amplifying CIC's influence and securing the partnerships necessary for long-term success.

Relevant Outcomes	Outputs in Year 1 (2025–2026)	Outputs in Year 2 (2026–2027)
Outcome 1 Transition to NYU's branding and editorial guidelines to ensure consistency and alignment.	• Roll out NYU's branding and editorial guidelines across all CIC publications and digital assets. • Ensure that all new projects and materials comply with the updated guidelines. • Offer at least one staff training session annually to reinforce guidelines. • Maintain the internal portal or resource center with the latest tools and templates. • Integrate brand and messaging guidelines into onboarding and team workflows, and deliver at least one briefing session annually to strengthen staff alignment with CIC's communications objectives. • Develop a CIC Style Guide that incorporates the most relevant elements from NYU's editorial standards,	• Develop a module (video or slide deck) for new team members—staff, student workers, and fellows—on branding and editorial expectations. It will cover key topics, including proper logo use, tone and style, templates, and where to find internal tools. It will also be integrated into CIC's onboarding process to promote early alignment with CIC guidelines and reduce inconsistencies in outputs. • Host at least one refresher training session per year on CIC branding and editorial tone for current team members. These sessions will reinforce branding and editorial practices, using recent CIC materials to illustrate best practices and common issues. Written guidance will

	along with CIC-specific style conventions tailored to our work and audiences. The guide will be a living document, updated at least twice a year to reflect evolving practices and priorities.	be shared after each session to serve as reference material.
Outcome 2 Optimize CIC's digital communications to enhance online presence and engagement.	• Launch up to five interactive online campaigns and initiatives annually to engage our audience. • Experiment with two new digital tools and platforms annually to enhance online presence and engagement. • Host at least one digital communications workshop per year and pilot at least one new tool or format annually to promote innovation, improve digital literacy, and enhance staff engagement across platforms.	• Conduct a review of the CIC website to assess content relevance, design consistency, accessibility, and technical performance. Archive or update outdated pages, streamline navigation, and compile a prioritized wishlist of features and design updates for a potential future website revamp. • Strengthen the integration between CIC's website and external digital platforms, such as social media and email newsletters, by improving linking and embedding media to maximize reach and engagement.

Outcome 3		
Expand media outreach to broaden CIC's reach and influence.	• Proactively pitch stories and op-eds to targeted media outlets, aiming for at least one pitch per month. • Generate reports every two months on media coverage. • Utilize multimedia content (videos, infographics) to enhance media stories and social media engagement at least four times a year. • Maintain and expand the database of media contacts and relationships. • Foster a culture of media engagement within CIC to ensure ongoing proactive outreach.	• Expand the use of audiovisual storytelling to enhance media outreach and engagement by producing short expert videos and data visualizations to complement CIC publications and key messages, supporting press outreach on at least five projects per year.
Outcome 4 Strengthen internal communications to foster better collaboration and information sharing.	• Create and manage CIC Pulse, a monthly internal newsletter to keep staff informed across programs and departments, celebrate milestones and achievements, and foster a sense of community and collaboration. • Foster a culture of open and transparent communication throughout the organization. • Hold regular standing meetings with programmatic team colleagues (monthly, bi-weekly, and as needed) to	• Launch a short periodic survey to gather staff input on CIC Pulse content, frequency, and usefulness, and use the results to guide improvements. • Integrate internal communications practices—including CIC Pulse and shared file systems—into the onboarding process for new team members to support consistency and collaboration from the outset.

	plan upcoming deliverables, publications, and other projects. • Manage internal editorial and events calendar.	
Outcome 5 Conduct strategic planning to support long-term goals and adapt to emerging needs.	• Foster collaboration between the Communications team and other departments by organizing regular meetings to align content and event planning with strategic goals. • Embed strategic planning processes into CIC's organizational culture and standard operating procedures. • Organize one annual strategy session for the Communications team to assess the past year's performance, review team roles and capacity, and define strategic priorities and innovations for the year ahead. • Develop comprehensive, ongoing communication plans for key events, report launches, and other significant projects.	• Develop scenario-based crisis communications plans for rapid response and emerging issues (e.g., humanitarian crises, global elections, etc.) to ensure CIC can respond quickly and strategically when needed. • Collaborate with program leads during the pre-award proposal development process to ensure communications components—such as outreach, visibility, and knowledge translation—are strategically integrated.

CIC's communications strategy is designed to elevate CIC's influence and streamline efficiency, transforming its communications approach to have a greater

impact on international cooperation and the broader research and policy communities across our thematic and regional focus areas. Media engagement will be more proactively pursued through strategic pitching, cultivating relationships with journalists, and leveraging op-eds and commentary to position CIC experts as authoritative voices on the most pressing global issues. Continuous evaluation and adaptation will ensure the strategy remains relevant and effective, aligning CIC's communications with its research and policy contributions.

4. Risk Mitigation

Over the past five years, marked by successive global health, political, and economic crises, we have remained grounded in our core vision and mission. As the world evolves rapidly— through shifting diplomacy and rapid technological advances— our work has become even more crucial in addressing complex challenges related to multilateralism, crisis prevention, and the promotion of peace, justice, and inclusion.

In 2024–2025, CIC has undergone a period of leadership transition. Despite this, our programs remain strong, our partnerships active, and the center resilient in the face of change. CIC's Acting Director, a tenured professor at NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and a long-time partner of CIC, is committed to leading the center on its core priorities while keeping a nimble readiness to seize opportunities to build new relations and foster stronger connections within NYU, the UN, and other mission-aligned partners. We will continue to strengthen our communications with staff and partners throughout these transitions to ensure the right balance of continuity and change, and work collectively as a team to achieve the greatest impact.

Areas	Risk	Risk Mitigation
Strategic	- Rising divisions between member states may constrain collaborative work. - Inability to reach an agreement on reforms at the UN or IFIs may prevent the take-up of some work.	- CIC has developed a strong trust relationship with Northern and Southern countries, as well as across regions, which is expected to continue. - Strategy includes country- and regional-level work, which can continue and

		intensify when global work suffers delays or setbacks.
Financial sustainability	• Shifts in some member state government priorities and foundation reforms may affect grants and timelines.	• CIC is exploring expanded relationships with some actors as priorities shift for others. We will maintain solid and frequent contact with our donors to ensure that work is well understood and that activities can be adjusted as needed within our own strategy and plan. CIC will also look to diversify its funding streams even further to include new foundations, corporate, and individual giving.
Human resource turnover	• Change in leadership may create a period of uncertainty and require relationship-building with key stakeholders.	• Good transition plan in place, with the previous Executive Director to provide institutional knowledge and relationship handover.