



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19



Initiatives of Change  
International

Building trust across  
the world's divides



# MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Initiatives of Change is building bridges of trust in many countries.

This is no easy task when walls are going up all over the world, nations are fracturing into their component groups and ‘the rule of law’ is giving way to ‘might is right’.

This is the same scenario which led to war in the 1930s. How do we alter course?

We urgently need to strengthen cooperation within communities and between nations. Only on that basis can we establish peace, ensure every person has the essentials for daily life and meet urgent global challenges such as the climate emergency and extremism of all kinds. The inner journey is what we must draw our strength from now – while understanding that sometimes this is a difficult journey.

Initiatives of Change reaches out to connect our world through efforts based on inner personal change. Everyone can play a part in this task of repairing and building bridges across the divides. We can all recognize where we have treated someone else badly. Restoring a broken relationship teaches us the skills of trustbuilding, a fundamental element of a vibrant and just society. We can help to build the attitudes which a world of cooperation needs.

Initiatives of Change demonstrates this through the actions of people in many countries. We can all be the change we want to see in the world, and we can help the world by first looking at the changes that are needed in our own lives. This report carries a few examples of a worldwide movement which is giving hope to thousands by inspiring change in hearts, minds and attitudes.



**Suresh Vazirani**  
President



**Imad Karam**  
Executive Director

# INITIATIVES OF CHANGE INTERNATIONAL

Initiatives of Change International is a non-profit organization registered in Switzerland, serving the wider lofC movement. Thirty-six national bodies and programmes comprise its formal membership. Each member operates autonomously with a focus on addressing specific local needs.

## What is Initiatives of Change?

Initiatives of Change (lofC) is a worldwide movement of people, who are committed to the transformation of society and to building trust across the world's divides.

lofC International has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC and IOM) and participatory status at the Council of Europe as well as a seat at the International Organization for Migration. lofC International is governed by an International Council of up to 11 members who contribute their time and experience voluntarily. Day-to-day management is carried out by an Executive Director who oversees the operations team.

## What Drives Us Forward

**The Vision:** a just, peaceful and sustainable world to which everyone, responding to the call of conscience, makes their unique contribution.

**The Mission:** to inspire, equip and connect people to address world needs, starting with themselves. We work worldwide on many initiatives through a network of individuals, groups and organizations.

## Our Areas of Focus

**Trustbuilding:** Peace and social cohesion through trust and reconciliation.

**Ethical Leadership:** Developing a leadership culture based on moral integrity, compassion and selfless service.

**Sustainable Living:** Economic justice and environmental sustainability through transformation of motives and behaviour.

## ACROSS THE GLOBE



## A Brief History

Initiatives of Change grew out of the work of Frank Buchman (1878-1961), an American Christian minister of the Lutheran denomination.

Buchman believed there is a divine purpose for the world and everyone in it, and sought to demonstrate the connection between faith and change in society. In the period between the two World Wars, as European nations began to re-arm for war, Buchman called for 'moral and spiritual re-armament' as the way to build 'a hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world'. Following World War II, Moral Re-Armament (MRA), as it became known, promoted trustbuilding and reconciliation among former enemies, based on changes in individual motivation and character.

Over the years his work expanded to include people of different religions and none. In 2001 it changed its name to Initiatives of Change.

## International Council

The International Council is an elected board that provides leadership to IofC in line with the goals of Initiatives of Change International and the decisions of the annual Global Assembly.

### International Council Members:

Suresh Vazirani (India) (President)  
 Mounir Beltaifa (Tunisia/France) (Vice President)  
 Bill Hamilton (USA) (Treasurer)  
 Barry Hart (USA)  
 Cecilia (Thembi) Silundika (Zimbabwe/Canada)  
 Olena Kashkarova (Ukraine)  
 Steven Kimaru (Kenya)  
 Yeonyuk Jeong (South Korea)  
 Mayur Shah (India)

# FINANCES

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
<b>INCOME (in CHF)</b>		
Membership fees	38,408	39,247
Donations from IofC/MRA bodies	145,027	176,296
Committed giving	2,065	1,869
Fees for web services	28,895	28,146
Other donations	43,907	40,064
Donation of office space		30,600
<b>Total income</b>	<u>258,302</u>	<u>316,222</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE (in CHF)</b>		
Work with International Organizations	35,768	96,914
International website and communications	60,558	87,212
President's budget and International Council	49,232	43,723
Operations, administration and coordination	80,347	67,669
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>225,904</u>	<u>295,519</u>
<b>Earnings before interest</b>	<b>32,398</b>	<b>20,704</b>

# PROGRAMMES

Initiatives of Change formally recognizes certain programmes as members of our network. We partner with these programmes to provide visibility and support for their global reach.

## Creators of Peace (CoP)

Tanzania's first Creators of Peace Circle took place at Dar es Salaam University College of Education at the end of August 2018. Seventeen women, aged 24-25, took part. 'I have learnt that forgiveness starts with my own acceptance of wrongs done, and it should always begin with me,' said one participant. During the year, Creators of Peace Circles took place in more than 20 countries, including Colombia, Mali, Syria, Nepal, Switzerland and New Zealand.

## Initiatives for Land, Lives and Peace (ILLP)

The ILLP team was invited to hold side events at the UN climate summit in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018. The first, held jointly with the African Development Bank, focused on trustbuilding in the context of land restoration and climate resilience. The next, held with the Global Environment Facility, dealt with ecological literacy. Both side events were well attended and received a good response.

## Foundations for Freedom (F4F)

'Participatory budgeting' enables citizens to choose priorities for public spending in their communities. This is now being implemented in more than 140 Ukrainian towns and cities, thanks largely to the impetus from F4F, the Initiatives of Change network in Ukraine. Under this programme, a town or city council invites its citizens to propose how a part of their budget should be used. After a vote, the most popular projects are implemented. 'This can help understanding and trust to grow in Ukrainian communities,' says Kostiantyn Ploskyi, chair of F4F.

## Farmers Dialogue International (FDI)

In October 2018, Korean farmers and FDI organized a dialogue on 'The role of family farming for sustainable biotic communities'. It demonstrated the significant role of cooperatives in Korean farming and their strong relationships with consumers. Delegates attended from DR Congo, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and France.

You can find out more about these programmes by visiting our [website](#).





# PEOPLE ARE OUR PURPOSE

Initiatives of Change is active in over 60 countries. One of its strengths is its capacity to generate grassroots initiatives by committed individuals. We celebrate how our teams address our three areas of focus. Here is a snapshot of some of their activities.

## Australia

On the basis that everyone’s story matters, the residents of the Sydney suburb of Blacktown – 366,000 people from 188 nationalities – were invited to join in a forum on ‘Australians sharing a new story’ in April 2019. Some 250 people participated in various events through the weekend. Through hearing each others’ stories of struggle and achievement, they aimed to ‘find a new story of our shared humanity’. Speakers included a Chief Inspector of Police, a former child soldier from South Sudan and an Imam who had flown to New Zealand to assist at the funerals of the 51 killed in Christchurch.

## France

‘Pari(s) à 2’ promotes meeting and dialogue between French people and migrants through convivial outings in pairs in Paris to combat loneliness and put an end to prejudice. People are paired up on the basis of common areas of interest. They meet for half a day every two weeks, over about three months. Such activities as walks, opera or a simple coffee are all opportunities to understand French culture while learning from each other.

## Caux Scholars Program

Twenty-three Caux Scholars took part in the four-week Caux Scholars Program in June and July 2018. They also participated in the Caux Forum on Towards an Inclusive Peace, which focused on addressing violent extremism and on restorative justice. Scholars joined community groups of Forum participants, both as contributors and co-facilitators. After the programme, scholars were encouraged to apply what they had learned in their home countries. Some thousand people from 54 countries have taken part in the Caux Scholars Program in the last 27 years.

## Egypt

Throughout 2018, the Egyptian Moral Rearmament Association (EMRA) team met each month to discuss their role in promoting moral values and national unity. A special concern was to reinforce relations between Muslim and Christian citizens. EMRA’s annual Ramadan Iftar at the Agricultural Club in Dokki was followed by sharing among Christian and Muslim attendees. EMRA condemned the attacks on Christians in Minya, and members met with Coptic bishops.



TRUST

ETHICAL  
LEADERSHIP

## United Kingdom

On World Refugee Day, 100 people, many of them refugees, gathered in a parliamentary committee room to mark the end of the pilot phase of lofC UK's course, Refugees as Re-Builders™. The course is for settled refugees who wish to contribute to the recovery of their countries of origin as well as to their host country. Two refugees, Dr Teame Mebrahtu, an Eritrean educationalist at Bristol University, and Dr Nagi Barakat, former Libyan Minister of Health, received awards for their outstanding contributions to the recovery of their countries of origin.



BUILDING

SUSTAINABLE  
LIVING



## Indonesia

Generasi Cerdas Indonesia (GCI) collaborated with lofC Indonesia to run three teachers' camps in 2018. The camps focused on reflective teaching, a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Muhamad Ramadhona, founder of GCI, remarked, 'We hope that each of us will feel inspired to learn through this time together, particularly for the success of your schools.'

## Chad

The launch of *Chad – a journey to hope* took place in N'Djaména in March 2019, co-hosted by the Chadian Association of Initiatives of Change and Chad's National Network for Peace and Reconciliation (CSAPR). The documentary depicts a bid to forge a national network of Chadian mediators, transcending the ethnic, religious and political divisions that have beleaguered the country since its inception. Former enemies and renowned peacemakers from Nigeria, Imam Dr Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor Dr James Wuye, were invited to Chad by the UN and CSAPR to lead the process. The film was made by lofC's For the Love of Tomorrow Films, with funding from the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union.

## India

lofC India's 'Governance and Grampari Adopted Village' programme covers five villages over three years. Among the results are a new awareness about forest fires: Grampari has supplied villagers with water pumps which can be carried on their backs to put out fires. Another project includes reed bed filtration systems to filter grey water, which can be used for agriculture and other purposes. This has had a great impact on village women, who are starting to take an active part in village development work.

## Netherlands

In The Hague, Hindus, Christians and Muslims are gathering around their common belief in protecting the earth and taking joint action to make their faith communities more sustainable. This is made possible through the *Geloven in Groen* (faith in green) initiative. Representatives of more than 26 houses of worship are taking part in the gatherings.



# INITIATIVES OF CHANGE CENTRES

IofC has five international centres where we host a variety of conferences, dialogues, and programmes.

You can learn more about our Centres for change at <https://www.iofc.org/centres>. Start planning your visit now!

## ARMAGH Melbourne, Australia

'Armagh', the Australia-Pacific Centre for Initiatives of Change in Melbourne, was a generous gift to the work of Initiatives of Change in 1956 from the Cecil Mackay family. Over the years since then, this gracious 100-year-old home has been used for IofC conferences, events and training courses, notably the Life Matters workshops which draw participants from all over the Asia Pacific region. Indigenous Australians often contribute their culture, spirituality and stories to programmes at Armagh, which is situated on the land of the Wurundjeri nation.



Read more about Armagh on IofC Australia's [website](#).

## ASIA PLATEAU Panchgani, India

Nestling in the western hills of India and overlooking the Krishna Valley sits Asia Plateau, a centre for introspection and dialogue. Created in 1967, it runs training courses in character development throughout the year for people in industry, the armed forces and NGOs, as well as for school and university students and for families.

In the past four decades men and women of all classes, races and religions have experienced a change in motivation and behaviour at Asia Plateau, which has caused ripples in their personal lives, families, workplaces, communities and beyond. Thousands of people from all walks of life took part in programmes at Asia Plateau in 2018.

Asia Plateau's rural development and environmental centre, Grampari, is located on the 68-acre Asia Plateau campus. Grampari teaches communities to protect their water sources, reduce and manage waste, and to farm sustainably.



You can learn more about Asia Plateau and Grampari by visiting [their websites](#).





Photo credit: Adrien Giovannelli

## CAUX PALACE

### Caux, Switzerland

In 1946, around 100 Swiss individuals and families, led by the Geneva-born diplomat Phillipe Mottu, bought the Caux Palace. The former hotel was given new life as an international conference centre for Initiatives of Change. Immediately after World War II, hundreds of meetings between French and German delegations took place there, creating a solid ground for further reconciliation efforts in Europe. Over the years, Caux has become a reference point for reconciliation and trustbuilding efforts.

Continuing that tradition, every summer over 1,500 people from all over the world come to the Caux Forum to explore their role in bringing change in the world. This annual programme of conferences, training and dialogues aims to inspire, equip and connect individuals, groups and organizations to build a just, peaceful and sustainable world. It offers a safe space of trust, care, solidarity and respect, in which participants can interact openly and in-depth.

Learn more about Caux Conference Centre and Caux Forum by visiting [their websites](#).

## GREENCOAT PLACE

### London, United Kingdom

Greencoat Place, lofC's centre in central London, offers office space, conference and training facilities, and accommodation to lofC's programmes and outside lets. It is the hub for lofC UK's work in empowering refugees, building trust between and within communities, and promoting ethical leadership. Public events take place there throughout the year.

For more information visit [their website](#).

## SITIO SÃO LUIZ

### Petropolis, Brazil

Sitio São Luiz is the conference and training centre of Initiatives of Change in Latin America. It was acquired in 1965 through the sacrifice of many people. People from all walks of life take part in a variety of programmes including lofC events and events run by like-minded groups who rent the facility.



# GET INVOLVED

Our network consists of individuals, initiatives, and members committed to the fundamental principles of Initiatives of Change and connected to its activities.

## Our Approach

Initiatives of Change has a distinctive approach to generating change. It includes:

### Starting with yourself

We believe that personal and global change go hand in hand. Each individual has the power and the responsibility to self-reflect and align their actions with their values, thus 'being the change' they want to see in the world.

### Leading through our values

Our core values of purity, honesty, unselfishness and love create a strong basis for dialogue, decision-making and self-development.

### Inner listening

lofC places the search for inner wisdom at the heart of our approach. When people listen to what is deepest in their hearts, insights often come which lead in unexpected directions. Many understand this experience as guidance from God, others as the leading of conscience or the inner voice.

### Creating a safe space

Throughout all its activities, lofC seeks to create a confidential space free from judgment, where each individual can speak freely regardless of their cultural, spiritual, social or economic background.

## Join Us

lofC has no formal membership requirements. We encourage individuals to join us on a journey to go deeper and utilize the power of storytelling and quiet reflection to initiate change and impact society.



**initiativesofchange**



**@lofCIntl**



**Initiatives of Change International**



## Be the change!

Here are some ways you can get started:

- ✓ Take time to reflect, and listen to your inner voice. What changes are needed in your own life? You can visit our [Start with yourself](#) page for guidance.
- ✓ Connect with a local team. Visit [our website](#) to see where your closest teams are located and find out who to contact.
- ✓ [Donate](#) to support our work. Whether your donation is a one-time pledge or a recurring contribution, know that you are providing support to teams that need your help.



# PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

Initiatives of Change collaborates with like-minded organizations for the purpose of achieving greater impact. The challenges we face cannot be overcome alone, but in partnership we can model our values and build bridges that everyone can cross.

**'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.'**  
 – African Proverb



## Council of Europe (CoE)

Since 2005, Initiatives of Change has held participatory status at the Council of Europe (CoE), which has 47 member states. IofC is a member of one of its three advisory bodies, the Conference of International NGOs.

IofC delegates have been entrusted with a variety of special assignments, concerning human rights and business, and the digital society and cyber trust. IofC is represented on the Executive Committee of the North-South Centre, which organizes programmes and exchanges with Europe's neighbours to the south.

Some of our partners include:



## Trustbuilding Signature Programme

In 2019 IofC International is launching a new international trustbuilding programme in partnership with the Fetzer Institute, a respected US not-for-profit foundation. The programme will be piloted in Kenya, Canada, and a third country to be determined.





Initiatives of Change  
International



'IofC International upholds values as a way to bridge the many divides across our globe. I believe that no other organization is better at establishing trust and encouraging individuals to discover how they can create change. While we all face many challenges, I believe that through each challenge, we are led to incredible opportunities.'

— Suresh Vazirani, President IofC International

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