

THE GLENCREE CENTRE FOR
PEACE & RECONCILIATION

Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026

Established in 1974 in response to the conflict in Northern Ireland, the Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation works to prevent and transform political and inter-communal conflict and build peaceful, inclusive societies. We bring individuals and groups impacted by conflict together and help them find pathways to reconciliation and sustained peace through facilitated dialogue, relationship-building, public discourse and shared learning.

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The Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation and a registered charity in the Republic of Ireland. Registered Charity No. CHY5943. Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) No. 20009823.

Under the Patronage of the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.

Preface

Looking to the Future

The development of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation (Glencree) Strategic Plan 2022-2026 is informed by evidence, experience, analysis, and an intensive period of reflection. Over thirty interviews with key external stakeholders and the commissioning of research (www.glencree.ie/news/scoping-study/) have informed an ambitious, realistic and courageous direction of travel.

Glencree has undertaken this process at a moment of rapid political polarisation, economic and social change. Key factors shaping the current peacebuilding operational context revolve around complex scenarios associated with demographic shifts, climate change, environmental stress, technological disruption, rising inequalities and exclusion, unprecedented rates of urbanisation and a pandemic that has immobilised an entire world since 2019.

After almost five decades of working for peace, it is gratifying to learn that our reputation remains characterised by non-partisanship, independence, and confidentiality. A peacebuilding organisation since 1974, over the last 47 years Glencree has built and maintained a high value reputation as a trusted, independent organisation that has worked quietly and credibly to build relationships with, and between, people in the context of political conflict and violence.

Our five key strategic objectives include our intention to contribute to the continued development and nurturing of conditions and relationships that support peace and reconciled communities in Ireland, within Northern Ireland, between the UK and Ireland, and at European and international levels.

We are committed to developing Glencree as a Centre of Excellence in practical peacebuilding and learning exchanges, to developing and extending our intercultural work, to sharing our experiences of working in several international conflict contexts, and to ongoing monitoring, evaluation, learning and review.

Strong organisational governance and the development of the history and heritage of the Glencree site will also be a strong priority for us. This will mean that, during the next phase in Glencree's public and community service, we will be well-placed to enhance the opportunities for peace and meet the challenges of building peace both locally and globally.

Board of Glencree

September 2021

Our reputation remains characterised by non-partisanship, independence and confidentiality after almost five decades working for peace.

- Barbara Walshe, Chairperson

About Glencree

A Place of Peace Since 1974

Since its inception in 1974, midst the political turmoil on the island of Ireland, Glencree dedicated its early efforts, in a non-partisan way, to supporting the resolution of violent political conflict at home. The establishment of a peace centre to reconcile divisions and political conflict on its own shores was, and remains, a unique genesis.

Responding to interest from other jurisdictions for insights and learnings from Glencree’s knowledge and experience of supporting peace, and its knowledge of the implementation and consequences of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, the organisation subsequently extended its efforts to contribute to the building of a more peaceful world. Over the years, Glencree has supported peace efforts in 10 countries including

Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan and Palestine/Israel. As well as sharing learnings, this work also presents very useful opportunities for Glencree to learn from the experience of conflict transformation in other jurisdictions.

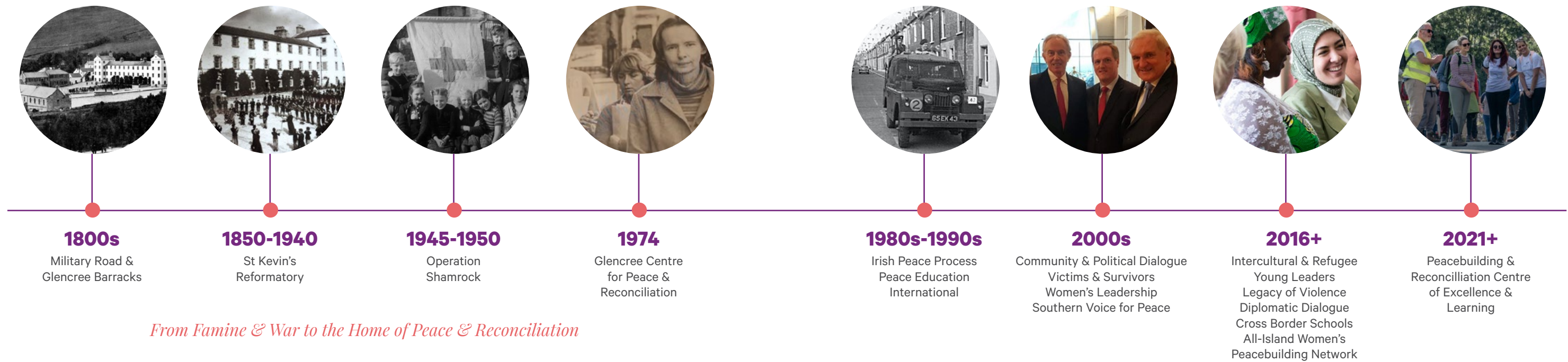
As part of the consultation process for this strategy, Glencree was grateful to learn that our reputation remains characterised by non-partisanship, independence, and confidentiality. Over the past five decades, this approach has enabled the organisation to convene politicians, combatants, NGOs, diplomats, policymakers, faith leaders, law enforcement and security personnel and people affected by conflict to engage in processes of relational change where the possibilities for peace are imagined, explored and pursued.

This new plan is a commitment to re-energise and re-focus our public service ethic, taking account of changing global and conflict dynamics.

In 2024, Glencree will celebrate its 50th anniversary. While this will be a time to honour our journey over the past half-century, our focus will be keenly trained on the roadmap and ambition for Glencree into the future. Executing this new plan will strengthen Glencree’s ability to adapt and respond to the changing circumstances and challenges of peace in Ireland, within Northern Ireland and beyond these shores over the coming decades.

The contribution that Glencree has made to reconciliation and the building of positive relationships across the island of Ireland and beyond is immense and well recognised.

- President Michael D. Higgins



The Context

For Peacebuilding & Supporting Reconciled Communities

This five-year Strategic Plan outlines Glencree’s commitment to contributing to the development and nurturing of conditions and relationships that support peace and reconciled communities in Ireland, within Northern Ireland, between the UK and Ireland, and at European and international levels. It was guided and informed by:

- An internal and external consultation process
- Analysis and research of the internal and external contexts related to Glencree
- A scoping study of international peace organisations and bodies

Work to prevent and transform conflict and to support peace and reconciliation operates in very dynamic geo-political, cultural, social and economic contexts. These contexts are characterised by a range of factors including:

- Shifts in, and competition for and between, global, regional and national centres of power
- Challenges to the strength of multilateralism
- Unequal impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Unequal impacts of the climate crisis
- Expansion of technology’s role in conflict, security and terrorism
- Instability and fragility of some established and emerging democracies
- Involuntary migration and particularly migration of those seeking international protection
- Changing nature and diversity of national, ethnic and faith identities

- Polarised public and political discourses
- Poverty and inequality, including gender inequality
- Radicalism and violent extremism
- The legacy of violence and intergenerational trauma

These factors affect people’s lives and impact policy decision-making in Ireland and within Northern Ireland. They also influence Ireland’s relations with Northern Ireland, Great Britain, the EU and the wider world.

There are also specific critical issues in the immediate post-conflict context of this island.

These include the construct of the UK’s decision to leave the EU; the implementation of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and its successors; and the range of outstanding legacy issues specifically for victims and survivors. The risk of paramilitarism and continued marginalisation of some from democratic means remains. Persistent segregation within Northern Ireland, including in housing, community and education, continues. There is also the need to ensure that the ‘peace dividend’ of better social and economic outcomes is more widely enjoyed.

Several other critical issues include the remaining years of the Decade of Centenaries and the contested narratives related to partition and the foundation of the two states. Contested constitutional issues remain on the agenda. The consolidation of stable government in Northern Ireland remains a challenge.

In the immediate post-conflict experience on this island and between Ireland and the UK, and in the context of the impact of Brexit, the strengthening of political, social, economic and cultural relationships across a range of sectors in these jurisdictions is essential.

International and National Policy Contexts

There are no easy or unilateral solutions to conflict prevention and conflict transformation. There is a wide range of international and national policy effort that supports co-operation and endeavour across governments, business, humanitarian, environmental, health, human rights and peacebuilding organisations that work to prevent and mitigate violent conflict and build peace. The United Nations is a key instrument for such policy effort and co-operation.

This wider international and regional context is important to Glencree as it seeks to relate to, engage with and contribute to such initiatives as:

- The realisation of the *UN Global Goals 2030* that focus on sustainable development, many of which specifically address conflict-related issues such as gender, economic and political inequality, climate crisis, poverty and disadvantage
- *United Nations Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security* that seeks to strengthen the participation and influence of women peace builders and Ireland’s National Action Plan for its implementation
- *EU Global Strategy*, specifically ‘*Global Ireland*’ - *Ireland’s Global Footprint to 2025*
- The EU’s policy priorities on international development and specifically Ireland’s strategy: *A Better World*
- The EU framework to supporting dialogue under the *Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacity*.

We are also mindful of the considerable impact that the Covid pandemic has had on peacebuilding efforts, not just on this island but throughout the wider world. As we emerge into a post-Covid reality, it is more important than ever to refocus our efforts on dialogue, cooperation and the building and sustaining of relationships.

[...] forge new pathways for new understandings and relationships that support people in finding solutions that lead to lasting peace for future generations.

Since the signing of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in 1998, many policy efforts have evolved to support reconciliation through the three-strand approach of relationship-building between communities in Northern Ireland, between Ireland and Northern Ireland and between Ireland and Britain.

The policy initiative *New Decade, New Approach (2020)* supports the return to devolved government in Northern Ireland. The *Stormont House Agreement (2014)* proposes measures to address the legacy of the conflict, and of course, the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement itself remains a key policy instrument towards reconciliation by democratic means.

More recently, the Programme for Government sets out the Irish government’s commitment to work with all communities on this island to build consensus around a shared future, underpinned by the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. One of its key actions is the recently launched Shared Island initiative that involves:

- Working with the Northern Ireland Executive and the British Government to address strategic challenges faced on the island of Ireland
- Further developing the all-island economy, deepening North/South cooperation, and investing in the Northwest and border regions
- Fostering constructive and inclusive dialogue and a comprehensive programme of research to support the building of consensus around a shared future on the island.



Peace and Peacebuilding: A Dynamic Concept

Established for almost 50 years, Glencree can be understood as a “peace centre” that contributes to a long-term goal of reconciling conflict-affected societies, seeking to strengthen mechanisms and institutions that offer non-violent ways to deal with the past, preventing and resolving conflicts as they arise. It has been noted that this very much echoes the United Nations’ Agenda for Sustainable Development, the current notion of “sustaining peace” used by UN agencies and donor governments¹.

Some have noted that peacebuilding, as a concept, has evolved in such a way that is less inclusive of activities in the humanitarian, development, mediation and social work spheres, and in other spheres such as architecture, urban planning, or public health. Currently, peacebuilding may be understood as being synonymous with “post-conflict peacebuilding”, and refers to a specific type of external intervention situated somewhere between the end of peace-keeping operations and before the processes of long-term reconstruction and recovery.



While incompatible narratives of history remain, there also remains an imperative to forge new pathways for new understandings and relationships that support people in finding solutions that lead to lasting peace for future generations.

Engaging with the diversity of identities on the island, and specifically supporting better community and intercultural relations between people who have arrived and settled here from conflict-affected zones around the world and their more established local neighbours in urban areas throughout Ireland, is a policy context of interest to Glencree.

The similarities and differences between sectarianism and racism are much argued in both academic and policy literature.

Notwithstanding that, both are obstacles to peaceful and reconciled communities. The Irish Government’s recent White Paper to *End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection Support Service (2021)* outlines a new policy approach for people arriving from conflict-affected areas in other jurisdictions and countries. The Irish Government has also commenced a process to put in place a new National Action Plan on Racism. The relationship between racism, sectarianism and hate crime, and the legislative, policy and practice frameworks to address them across the island, are emerging as key future contexts for Glencree.

Given these conceptual shifts, Glencree understands its peace work to involve consolidating processes of dialogue, trust- and relationship-building, network-building, education and awareness in order to strengthen the ability of state, societal institutions, communities and individuals to develop pathways to reconciliation in the long run.

¹ Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (2020), Scoping Study: Global International Peace Centres & Peace Education Bodies. Glencree: Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.



Towards Glencree's Five-Year Strategy

The developments overviewed in previous pages highlight the ever-dynamic contexts within which Glencree will work, over the next five years, for peace and reconciliation. There will, of course, be challenges and opportunities that are unforeseen now.

Informed by evidence, experience and analysis, Glencree's plan outlines five strategic objectives, seven organisational values, an explicit commitment to strong organisational governance and an undertaking to engage in ongoing monitoring, evaluation, learning and review. These mean that during the next phase of Glencree's history of public and community service, we are well-placed to enhance the opportunities for reconciliation, and meet the challenges of building peace.

Our Vision

Our vision is for everyone to live in peace.

Glencree stands for the possibility that peace and reconciliation are achievable when we act on what really matters to us.

Our Mission

Our mission is to prevent and transform violent conflict by engaging people in dialogue, trust- and relationship-building.

Our Values

Independent

We are an independent, non-governmental organisation and registered charity.

Non-Violence

We work from the belief that conflict can, and should, be resolved non-violently.

Inclusivity

We support the participation of everyone engaged in, or affected by, conflict.

Equality and Diversity

Every person possesses innate dignity, and we treat each person with respect.

We welcome diversity within Glencree and embrace the identity, culture, power, gender and faith dimensions of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Transparency

We commit to the highest standards of transparency and accountability including to our Board, members, participants, staff, organisational partners and donors.

Confidentiality

We ensure the effectiveness of our activities and the safety and well-being of participants, staff and organisational partners by maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality.

Improvement Through Learning

We value learning and gaining knowledge from our work experiences, and through regular review and evaluation. We also place emphasis on developing the skills and well-being of our staff. We share our learnings and creative approaches within Glencree, and with others locally and globally, while at the same time endeavouring to learn from them.



Our Approach

Glencree adopts several distinct but related approaches within, and across, its programmes and activities as follows:

Facilitating dialogues with groups and individuals

Glencree practices a process-centric, co-designed method of facilitating dialogue, where participants control the agenda and Glencree manages the process. Dialogue, as an open-ended process, includes a series of informal meetings and discussions that builds trust before bringing a larger group of participants together.

Informal diplomacy

Diplomacy is normally conducted at inter-state levels. There are also various levels where independent entities or persons, who are trusted by parties to a conflict or situation, engage and establish dialogues and pathways to dialogue. Glencree engages in these trusted, confidential dialogues and acts as a bilateral or multilateral interlocutor.

Empowering and supporting the development of networks and relationships

Glencree brings a diverse range of people and organisations together to help build the necessary supportive and challenging relationships and networks required for social change, political reconciliation and intercultural integration. This includes all-island, cross-community, cross-border networks and between groups in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Sharing learning and building capacity

Glencree shares experiences from our programme work with other peace and reconciliation organisations and communities and with the statutory and voluntary sectors. We engage with people in countries or regions impacted by conflict to share our experiences of the Irish peace process: how it was developed, managed and sustained. A key area of focus is also to learn from dealing with the issues that arise in a post-conflict society.

Glencree provides technical assistance to support capacity-building in conflict-affected regions including dialogue, facilitation, mediation, negotiation and conflict analysis. We also support and empower cohorts from political, policy and NGO sectors, women and young people in the areas of leadership, policy, influence and civic action.

Providing peace education

Glencree engages with school and university students in Ireland and overseas, providing the forum for them to explore their own prejudice, bias and stereotyping and gain an understanding of issues that arise in relation to identity, diversity, anti-racism and conflict resolution.

Promoting public discourse

Glencree fosters spaces of public discourse where civil society and the wider public witness, listen, acknowledge and critically engage with diverse voices, compelling stories, creative approaches and innovative research on building sustainable peace, reconciliation and conflict transformation.



Glencree's 5 Strategic Objectives

Objective 1:

Support peace, reconciliation and positive relationships within Northern Ireland, on the island of Ireland and on a British-Irish basis

Objective 2:

Promote public awareness and understanding of, and engagement with, peacebuilding and reconciliation activities

Objective 3:

Support positive community relations, inclusion and diversity by engaging and empowering people and groups affected by political or inter-communal conflict

Objective 4:

Develop Glencree as a Centre of Excellence in practical peacebuilding and learning exchanges for local, European and international conflict prevention and transformation

Objective 5:

Strengthen and develop our systems, structures, staff capacity and the Glencree site to enhance performance and results

Strategic Objective 1



Support peace, reconciliation and positive relationships within Northern Ireland, on the island of Ireland and on a British-Irish basis.

Strategic Goals

1. Support the implementation of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and other key and emerging policy frameworks and agreements
2. Facilitate dialogue with and between different victims and survivors of the conflict
3. Engage with people and communities marginalised from mainstream politics and peacebuilding
4. Develop relationships with relevant stakeholders in the political, policy and diplomatic spheres and with civil society on these islands
5. Support the engagement of women in peacebuilding on the island of Ireland

Strategic Objective 2



Promote public awareness and understanding of, and engagement with, peacebuilding and reconciliation activities.

Strategic Goals

- 1. Enhance public dialogue on current and emerging issues in peace and conflict in Ireland
- 2. Promote greater understanding, across both jurisdictions of the island, of conflict in and about Northern Ireland and on building future reconciled communities
- 3. Raise public awareness of the historic context of the conflict on the island, including Glencree's role as a peacebuilding body, by categorising, curating and digitising Glencree's archival records

Strategic Objective 3



Support positive community relations, inclusion and diversity by engaging and empowering people and groups affected by political or inter-communal conflict.

Strategic Goals

- 1. Create and support opportunities to facilitate trust and safe-space work with people from different faiths, ethnicities and identities, and with those from conflict or post-conflict countries to lead to intercultural and policy dialogues
- 2. Outreach to people seeking international protection in Ireland, to support their emotional wellness, their recovery from trauma, and to link them to local communities
- 3. Identify opportunities for facilitated dialogues and/or capacity-building in urban situations of inter-communal conflict

Strategic Objective 4



Develop Glencree as a Centre of Excellence in practical peacebuilding and learning exchanges for local, European and international conflict prevention and transformation.

Strategic Goals

- 1. Develop and strengthen peacebuilding learning networks, exchanges and partnerships at local, European and international levels
- 2. Develop high quality practice-based learning programmes with third level education institutions (with a particular focus on dialogue and mediation)
- 3. Engage with, and share learning from, Glencree's experiences with local, European and international peacebuilding networks and processes, endeavour to learn from these networks and processes, and contribute to the development of international policy and practice
- 4. Strengthen the capacities of national, European and international peacebuilding community partners to develop locally-led initiatives that contribute to conflict prevention and transformation

Strategic Objective 5



Strengthen and develop our systems, structures, staff capacity and the Glencree site to enhance performance and results.

Strategic Goals

- 1. Secure Glencree's finances to ensure its sustainability
- 2. Develop and upgrade the facilities of the Glencree campus, which includes the Glencree Visitors' Centre, to achieve stronger self-generated revenues for Glencree's peacebuilding and reconciliation work
- 3. Develop and embed a results and learning culture across Glencree's Board and staff
- 4. Sustain an organisational and governance structure that supports clear lines of accountability and meets standards of best practice
- 5. Enhance Glencree's human resources and supports to retain and develop staff and Board members
- 6. Strengthen Glencree's brand, communications and intellectual property rights
- 7. Establish an IT strategy for Glencree



Our Contribution

How Our Work Contributes to Change

This section shares our understanding of the assumptions we make in Glen Cree about how our work contributes to the realisation of durable peace and reconciliation. Our working methodologies, approaches and services and the design and implementation of our programmes and activities, reflect these assumptions.

Uncovering these assumptions is a learning process in itself. Testing them in the reality and struggle of conflict transformation settings, and evaluating them for their capacity to support Glen Cree to realise our strategic objectives, informs this learning and challenges us to review our assumptions.

The changing external dynamics of political, social, economic or cultural contexts, in which programmes operate, are also important factors in the extent to which conditions prevail to demonstrate the success of any underlying theories or assumptions.

At this point in Glen Cree, the two overarching theories below are based on the knowledge and experiences of Board and staff members, including former staff members.

Future theories could be built on these that systematically take account of programme participants' knowledge and experience, and evidence generated from evaluation and learning processes.

Theory One

If we build trust with people engaged in, or affected by, violent or inter-communal conflict, and create conditions for welcoming, inclusive and safe-space dialogues, opportunities emerge for people to:

- Build and sustain relationships
- Deepen understanding of their experiences and histories and those of others
- Explore understandings of different political, ethnic, faith, gender and other identities
- Support lesser-heard voices and experiences to participate in decision-making that affects them
- Work towards conflict prevention, conflict transformation and reconciliation

Theory Two

If we develop and promote social and cultural values and norms in favour of non-violence, inclusion and equality, this strengthens:

- Community, sectoral and public voices for peace and
- The social and political conditions to nurture and promote peace and reconciliation



Implementation and Monitoring of Strategic Plan

Glencree’s strategic plan will be implemented by the Executive through integrated annual work plans, individual and team performance management and annual monitoring and evaluation processes. The Executive will report to the Board (6 times per annum) on the progress of the plan. A mid-term review will be conducted in 2024 to assess the effectiveness of the plan and make any necessary adjustments. The organisation will also align our annual reports with the strategic plan to demonstrate how our work is supporting our key strategic objectives each year.

Statement On Costed Plan & Fundraising

The 5-Year Strategic Plan will be supported by a 5-Year costed plan, the aim of which is to provide the Glencree organisation with the financial information needed to assist in decision making, prioritise activities and identify funding gaps that need to be fulfilled to achieve the Strategic Objectives (SOs), Strategic Goals (SGs), related activities and their KPIs.

Key elements of the costed plan include: a budget, developed and organised by the SOs and their associated SGs; income and expenditure required to deliver on this work over the timeframe of the strategic plan, including forecasted revenues (their sources and mix), operational costs, programme costs and existing capital structure; assumptions, constraints, risks, success factors and a timeline for achieving the funding needed to implement the SOs/SGs. This timeline will include an annual, mid-term and final review of the budget and expenditure, and a plan to develop the follow-on costed plan.

Acknowledgements

Glencree’s strategic review process was conducted over an 18-month period during 2020/2021. We are profoundly grateful to all those who contributed to the process, including our staff and Board, volunteers, funders, external stakeholders and other peacebuilding organisations and initiatives.

Our particular thanks to Adam Grennan whose project management was crucial to the success of the process.

Our continued thanks to the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Office of Public Works (OPW) whose ongoing support has helped us build a strong foundation for Glencree over the past five decades and look to the future with a renewed sense of purpose and optimism.

We are also deeply grateful to the Swiss Embassy in Ireland, and to H.E Ambassador Louis-José Touron whose support for Glencree has enabled us to develop this crucial strategic pathway for the next phase in the development of our organisation and our role in peacebuilding and reconciliation on this island, within Northern Ireland and further afield.



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