



## **ICRD Strategic Plan**

**Updated February 2012**

The *Mission of ICRD* is:

***To Prevent and Resolve Identity-Based Conflicts that Exceed the Reach of Traditional Diplomacy by Incorporating Religion as Part of the Solution.***

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The Mission forms the basis of a new *theory of change* based on practical impact. There are several complementary elements that characterize the monitoring of that impact, which include:

- 1) *Objectives* that, when successful, will fulfill the Mission;
  - 2) *Activities* that measurably advance those Objectives, and;
  - 3) Unique ICRD *Tools and Capabilities* that, when properly cultivated and brought to bear, facilitate the successful implementation of those activities.
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### **Criteria for Engagement:**

In many cases, ethnic, tribal and religious conflicts do not lend themselves to resolution at the level of government-to-government intervention. To complement those efforts, ICRD brings its unique capabilities to bear where it can have a measurable impact consistent with the Mission:

*What we do* – Prevent or resolve “identity-based conflict,” when:

- Struggles of individual or group identity are a primary factor in the conflict;
- Religious identity is a driver of conflict;
- Religious identity could act as a potential mitigator of conflict.

*Where we work* – Communal conflicts that “exceed the reach of traditional diplomacy,” in which:

- US foreign policy has a strategic interest;
- US diplomacy has abandoned or has not yet engaged the area of conflict;
- Official diplomats cannot reach important conflict actors;
- Religious actors are actively involved in conflict, or are ineffectively engaged in peace processes;
- ICRD has relationships that facilitate access to key conflict actors and ensure local buy-in.

*How we have impact* – “Incorporating religion as part of the solution,” by:

- Bridging the political and religious spheres in support of peacemaking;
  - Deploying inter-religious action teams to areas where conflict threatens or has already erupted;
  - Training clergy and laity in the skills of peacemaking, and;
  - Supporting interpretations of religious teachings that reduce misunderstanding and conflict.
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ICRD's Mission provides the vision for a positive change in the world, one in which peace equates to reconciled relationships between perceived adversaries. ICRD's new impact-oriented framework for measuring outcomes postulates how specific steps lead to these changes. The following objectives, strategies, and sub-strategies describe how that change will happen, and how ICRD will advance it.

### **Objectives - Theory of Change:**

ICRD believes that its mission will be fulfilled if it can achieve the following Objectives:

1. Decreasing religion's role as a driver of conflict;
2. Increasing the capacity of religious peacemakers;
3. Increasing the role of religious clergy and laity in peacemaking;
4. Increasing policy-makers' awareness of and receptivity to the potential contributions of religious peacemakers.

### **Strategies:**

ICRD combines innovative and traditional strategies to create a unique organizational capability for addressing identity-based conflict through religion and diplomacy. They are:

External:

1. Identify and promote tolerant and non-violent religious language and teachings;
2. Build peacemaking and reconciliation capacities;
3. Increase civic and inter-faith engagement to promote peacemaking;
4. Expand political engagement with religious actors and interests.

Internal:

1. Develop messages and products that contribute positively to the debate, increase general knowledge of ICRD subject matter expertise, and facilitate access to areas in need;
2. Build and maintain thematic and peacemaking expertise and religiously pluralistic representation within all levels of the organization;
3. Systematically engage with and develop the capacity of local partners to provide local ownership, relevance and sustainability.

### **Sub-Strategies and "Work-streams":**

Within the fixed framework of Mission and Objectives, complex contexts and the desire for institutional learning require that ICRD nurture a creative and adaptive approach. As new opportunities arise, internal capacity is built, local partners grow into leadership roles, and ICRD learns from its successes and shortcomings. Sub-strategies and work-streams serve as the general frame of reference for annual work-plans that allow for new approaches. Current and past examples include:

1. Researching "best practices" for madrasa curriculum enhancement;
2. Promoting religious tolerance in Islamic educational materials;
3. Training adversarial groups on spiritual reconciliation;
4. Conducting policy forums for US policy makers and experts on Islam.