Advanced Consortium on
Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity
Earth Institute | Columbia University

Sustainable Peace

COMPLEXITY, PEACE AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

If peace ever breaks out – how will we know it?
What are the most basic dynamics of sustainably peaceful societies?
What does science have to tell us about the essence of sustainable peace?

Research has shown that a central characteristic of peaceful societies is that they have **a clear vision for how to live peacefully**. They all develop an image and a mindset and the language, norms, taboos and institutions necessary to sustain peace. Yet few scholars study peace - they study aggression, violence and war and, in turn, peacemaking and peacebuilding in that context.

Building on a long legacy of research at Columbia University, the **Sustainable Peace Project** is focused on understanding the most vital aspects of peaceful communities.

This multi-year, trans-disciplinary project aims to enhance our understanding of the core dynamics of sustainably peaceful societies through the synthesis of evidence-based science across disciplines. We are currently working with community stakeholders, policymakers, and 70+ scientists from an array of fields conducting empirical research on sustainable peace to visualize the dynamics of sustainable peace. The visualization employs complexity science and causal loop diagramming to synthesize, model and validate the most basic dynamics that enable societies to develop in sustainably peaceful ways.

Project Objectives:

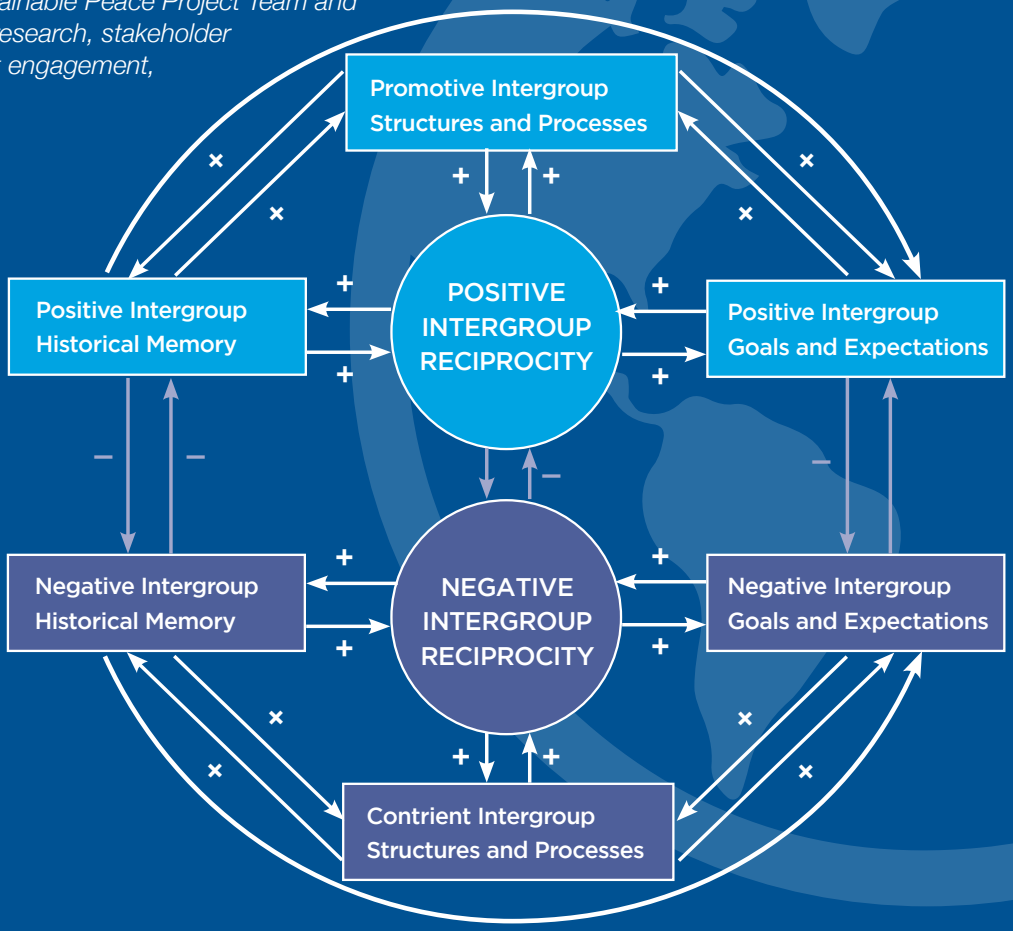
- **To have a positive impact on communities globally** by a) supporting decision makers in doing less harm by enhancing their understanding of the science of sustainable peace and complex systems and b) enhancing well being by informing policies and practices in a manner that increases probabilities for sustainable peace.
- **To increase our understanding of sustainable peace** by employing empirical data-based science, complexity visualization, nonlinear mathematical modeling, and community dialogue together in mutually informative ways.
- **To support the development of more adaptive decision-making processes** by developing decision-support tools and questions and by modeling and utilizing such processes in the design and conduction of workshops.

The Project has four integral components:

1. **Mapping the Science of Sustainable Peace** – Engaging experts and examining leading science to inform, visualize and refine a basic Dynamic Model of Sustainable Peace.
2. **Validating the Model** – Examining the existing scholarship and re-examining anthropological data on peaceful communities to validate the model.
3. **Learning with Community Stakeholders** – Gathering local perspectives as stakeholders engage in dialogues about sustainable peace in their community in order to test the model's validity and applicability (e.g., the Basque Country, Afghanistan)
4. **Mathematical Modeling** - Creating a mathematical model in order to test and reveal properties that may be difficult to discern through other methods.

AC⁴ Sustainable Peace Model

Developed by the Sustainable Peace Project Team and informed by empirical research, stakeholder workshops, and expert engagement, as of October 2016



1-2. Photos of ground-truthing workshop with the model of sustainable peace to understand the dynamics of peace and conflict in the Basque Country, June 2016. Photo Credit: Agirre Lehendakaria Center. 3. Sustainable Peace Project Team presenting on the project in the Basque Country. Photo Credit: Agirre Lehendakaria Center. 4. Sustainable Peace Project Principal Investigator Peter T. Coleman, Ph.D. giving presentation at Columbia University, June 2016.

Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict and Complexity (AC⁴) strives to foster sustainable peace through innovation and integration. We work to enable and support integrative research and practice on sustainable peace, constructive conflict engagement, and sustainable development. This is built on an understanding that building peaceful and sustainable societies requires a systemic approach, leveraging the expertise and knowledge of scientists and practitioners from across disciplines and areas of practice. By connecting thought leaders at Columbia University and around the world, AC⁴ works to build opportunities to apply leading-edge science to generate solutions for some of our most pressing social and environmental challenges.

For more information, please contact us:

Email: : jd3298@columbia.edu
Phone: (212) 870-2771

475 Riverside Drive
Interchurch Center, Suite 253
New York, NY 10115

Advanced Consortium on
Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity
EARTH INSTITUTE | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

ac4.ei.columbia.edu