



# Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development - SeeD AISBL

August 2020

SeeD’s mission is to leverage evidence to identify pathways for fostering social cohesion and contribute to the global debate on conflict prevention. We value diversity as a vehicle for protecting human rights and for building resilient societal structures which consolidate peace. Our values are aligned with the goals of [the Black Lives Matter](#) movement, and we fully embrace BLM’s commitment to eradicating racial discrimination and ensure human dignity for black people worldwide. For several years, we have worked to bring understanding to the root causes of conflict, which all too often gravitates around structural inequalities and lack of inter-group harmony.

Our values echo the preamble of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969), where governments declared that “any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and that there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice, anywhere”. The BLM’s mission speaks strongly to our peacebuilding mandate and we stand in solidarity with people and organisations working to eradicate race-based supremacist ideologies.

Modern scientific research by biologists, anthropologists and geneticists demonstrate the non-existence of biological races among humans, and during the 200,000-year history of modern humans there has only ever been a “single lineage sharing a common long-term evolutionary fate”.<sup>1</sup> Although biological races do not exist, race and racism remain a reality in human cultures and ingrained in social constructs which give voice to cultural realities. In SeeD, we try to understand these potential racial dimensions by investigating inter-group relations.

SeeD’s research methodology seeks to understand what perpetuates racial bias and intolerance and how these can drive communities to conflict. We provide evidenced policy recommendations for how these threats to social cohesion can be addressed and resolved constructively. Our work has shown that all too often societies, characterised by inequality, usually have an inclusion deficit which is historically structured and deliberately designed to marginalise specific out-groups. We are convinced that countries need to fully celebrate the contribution made by people from ethnic and racial minority groups and ensure that their voices and experiences are accurately represented in the national psyche.

As an organisation we acknowledge that we can do more to ensure we fully integrate the perspectives of diverse cultures, so we can represent the priorities and legitimate concerns of ethnic minorities and the Global South. In renewing our commitment to diversity, we will be taking the following actions to strengthen our connection to the values and efforts of all those organisations which are dedicated to equality and fighting racism in all its forms.

Institutional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review and take specific action to improve recruitment practices at SeeD to ensure candidates from ethnic minorities in Europe and candidates from the Global South have equal opportunities to work with us. This will include a review of how and where we advertise positions, ensuring recruitment criteria does not unduly discriminate based on race or culture and new staff members share our organisational values of tolerance and diversity.</li> <li>b. Introduce an internal reflection process for our staff so we can question our own unconscious biases, while providing a safe space for self-learning.</li> <li>c. Identify resources for all SeeD staff members to read and watch and reflect on individually and collectively.</li> </ul>
Solidarity with BLM groups & leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Starting in Cyprus, where our HQ is located, we will engage with local BLM leaders and groups, and those who are committed to eradicating racism and working for the human rights of marginalised minority groups.</li> <li>b. We will explore ways to collaborate with BLM groups in other countries where we work.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Wald Sussman, *The Myth of Race*, Harvard University Press, 2017, p. 8



## Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development - Seed AISBL

Research sensitivity & priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Review and improve our inter-group relations and social tolerance indicators to ensure that we can better capture systemic racism and implicit biases.</li><li>b. Develop an analytical framework and model that identifies drivers of racial bias and intolerance, and entry points to remedy them in the countries where we work, and inform our partners, stakeholders and international peace and development actors on the findings.</li><li>c. Review existing and develop new measurement metrics that assess racial supremacist ideologies, radicalisation and violent extremism.</li><li>d. Ensure that all social tolerance and intergroup harmony indicators used in all Seed country projects are equipped to assesses inherent racial bias beyond looking at contextual social-demographic groups.</li><li>e. Actively collaborate with organisations and academics who are working to improve policy approaches to eliminating racial discrimination and inequality in our global society.</li></ol>
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