

## SUPPORT DOCUMENT<sup>1</sup>

### CAUX DEMOCRACY PROGRAM 2024-2026

#### How can democracy be revitalised across Europe and the world?

<p><b>General objective</b></p>	<p>The objective is to enable, facilitate and encourage the capabilities and attitudes needed to revitalise democracy in Europe and across the world.</p>
<p><b>Audience/targets</b></p>	<p>All those who are concerned for social cohesion, human rights, governance and diversity issues and want to debate solutions to key challenges for democracies worldwide. All those who are willing to pass from policy recommendations to implementation, based on cooperation between all stakeholders and the recognition that everyone has the power and responsibility to “be the change”.</p> <p>The number of in-person participants per year to the different activities is estimated at approximately 700 and the target for on-line participants is 300+. Over 2'000 in-person participants during the period of three years<sup>2</sup>.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Latest updates 10<sup>th</sup> February 2024

<sup>2</sup> Measurement of communication targets and multiplier effects to be developed.

## 1. Introduction

In the words of Frank Buchman, who started Initiatives of Change (previously Moral Re-Armament) “Democracy’s inspired values are a life to be lived, a road to be followed”. Throughout the past 78 years, the approach of the Caux Initiatives of Change Foundation is that democracy depends on ordinary people and people in power who take responsibility and aim to live by high moral values.

International IDEA's Global State of Democracy Report 2023 makes clear that for democracy to thrive, a critical need is collaboration between the formal and informal institutions, movements and organisations that provide checks and balances to power. They also enable opportunities for change in non-democratic societies.

All stakeholders with an interest in reinforcing the legitimacy of the democratic model of governance have a role to play in creating, maintaining and supporting such collaboration, as well as being innovative in shaping such cooperation.

*“We should remember that democracy thrives on participation and is threatened by apathy, fear and intolerance as much as by economic challenges. We must not take democracy for granted.”* (European Parliament president Martin Schulz in 2012).

The Caux Foundation is a Swiss based organisation and member of the global people’s movement, Initiatives of Change. The Network has a long track record of focusing on the rights and responsibilities of individuals, protecting fundamental freedoms, and helping everyone discover their role in extending those freedoms across the world.

## 2. Problem statement – Democracy and the Inner Capacities

### The Global State of Democracy

The IDEA Global State of Democracy 2023 report states: *“The global state of democracy in 2023 is complex, fluid and unequal. Across every region of the world, democracy has continued to contract”*. Data shows that countries with net declines in democratic performance again outnumbered those with net advances.

The report highlights the role of so-called “countervailing institutions” in stopping the erosion of democratic institutions and reacting to the entrenchment of authoritarian forces. In their terms “countervailing institutions” go beyond the traditional understanding of “checks and balances”. They include governmental and non-governmental institutions, organisations and movements that “*check the*

*aggrandizement of power and balance the distribution of power to ensure that decision makers regularly integrate popular priorities into policy”.*

Countervailing institutions include entities that play an irreplaceable role in ensuring that democracy remains of and by the people. These include human rights organisations and electoral management bodies, civil society networks, popular movements and investigative journalists.

Europe shows the highest democratic performance globally, with many countries, including Switzerland boasting long histories of strong institutional and non-institutional countervailing institutions.

Across Europe millions are struggling with stagnant incomes and the cost-of-living crisis. The damage wrought by climate change spreads ever wider. Political instability grows in many countries.

Democracy is under attack on the European continent. The Russian Government’s aggression against Ukraine is a war against democracy itself.

Yet Europe is better off than much of the world. Millions still immigrate each year from Africa and Asia. Many are able to thrive here when they cannot in their home countries. After centuries of conflict, European nations have learnt to cooperate. And most of Europe has an asset which citizens throughout the world crave – democracy and the rule of law.

Several European countries have faced challenges related to their foreign policies that have had negative impacts on stability in other contexts. Addressing these challenges requires European countries to adopt foreign policies that prioritize peace, human rights, and sustainable development, both within Europe and in their interactions with other regions. European experience can help countries develop governance with justice, whilst European wealth can nurture inclusive economies. The experiences of non-European countries also shape European democracy and Europe’s role in promoting democracy. The diversity of perspectives and skills brought by different partners and individuals stimulates new ideas and approaches.

The quality of representation in many African countries is a challenge on the consolidation of democracy. It has been negatively affected by the continuing wave of coups d’état, as well as civil conflict in Ethiopia and Sudan. Despite these trends, participation on the African continent is an area of regional strength. Recently, in Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, popular movements have played a vital role as countervailing institutions in constraining governments<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The Global State of Democracy Report 2023

The broad democratic decline witnessed across the Asia and Pacific region in recent years has mostly halted. There is, however, no signs of a turnaround. Throughout the Americas there is also a continuing decline in democratic principles. In Western Asia, the trend of personalized authoritarianism has been on the rise, albeit in different forms.

In short, democracy is in trouble. It is stagnant at best and declining in many places. But there are innovative approaches and signs of hope such as declines in corruption and increasing levels of political participation in several countries.

People's engagement with countervailing institutions—which range from pacifist movements, civil society protests, to voting and engagement in community organisations—motivates progress, even if it is initially tenuous. This public participation, even in dangerous and unstable places, is the hope for the future of democracy.

### **Key question**

*Individuals have a crucial role to play in establishing peace and cooperation internationally. What do we need to enable this change?*

### **The inner capacity to deal with complex environments and challenges.**

Climate change, the Covid pandemic, and the war on Ukraine are cited as the reasons for the lack of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. But we are also lacking the inner capacity to deal with our increasingly complex environment and challenges.

Democracy is not explicitly mentioned as a standalone target within Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16)<sup>4</sup>, but the principles and practices of democratic governance underpin and reinforce the achievement of the specific targets and broader themes articulated in that goal. A democratic political system is considered crucial in building the foundations for peaceful, just, and inclusive societies as envisioned by SDG 16 and associated measures.

However, in establishing global peace and security, our blind spot is the cognitive and emotional skills needed. Personal and global change go hand in hand. Each one of us has the power and the responsibility to self-reflect and align our actions with our values.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>

The starting point for the Inner Development Goals Initiative (IDG)<sup>5</sup> is the development of our inner qualities. Trustworthiness, tolerance, and transparency are key to transforming structures, supporting the revival of good governance and integrity in public life.

These qualities are easy to advocate but much harder to embody in practice. The Centre for Dialogue in Caux, increasingly considered as part of International Geneva, is becoming a global centre for development and influence on the Inner Development Goals, critical for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2024, in Geneva and in Caux, the Caux Foundation and the Inner Development Goals Foundation will organise a [Caux Inner Development Goals Forum](#) from 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of July with the Opening Ceremony in Geneva on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

The four inner development goals aimed at “enabling change” strengthen efforts to achieve SDG 16. Qualities such as courage and optimism help us gain real agency, break old patterns, generate original ideas, and persevere in uncertain times.

Participating in the Caux Forum, in Round Tables, dialogues and trainings aims to unlock the individual potential and encourage individuals, groups and organisations to reflect on their roles, explore their resources, and connect with their responsibilities as changemakers. Everyone can make a difference.

### Key question

*How can we ensure democracy is nurtured and taken care of every day?*

## 3. The Caux Democracy<sup>6</sup> Programme 2024-2026

### 3.1. The Caux Democracy Programme 2024-2026

"The Caux Democracy Programme" is a comprehensive initiative designed to promote and enhance democratic governance, human rights, and sustainable

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Geopolitical definitions are not universally agreed upon, and the concept of Europe is dynamic and subject to change based on political developments and perspectives. This program takes a broad definition of Europe, using as reference the Council of Europe, that aims to promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law across its member states.

economic development. It is part of our Caux Transformative Experience strategy 2022-2030 and our Global Engagement in International Geneva strategy 2024-2030.

**General objective**

To enable, facilitate and encourage the capabilities and attitudes needed to revitalise democracy in Europe and across the world.

Caux Foundation's distinctive collaborative advantages and added value reside in:

- Our recognition that change in the global community is linked to change in individuals and that people can act from a sense of global interdependence and responsibility.
- The achievements of a network active in 45 countries and formally incorporated in 36 countries.
- Our conducive role for innovation and transformative experiences by hosting “for change” at the Caux Palace.

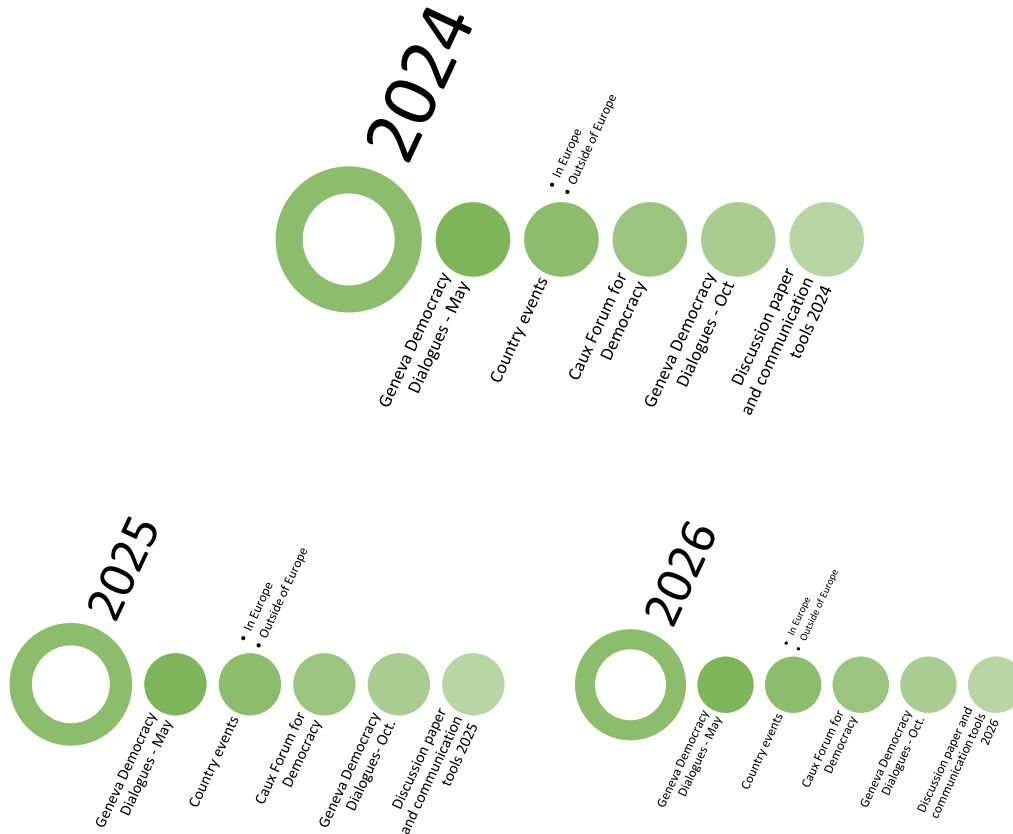
**3.2. Theory of Change**

**THEORY OF CHANGE - Revitalising democracy**



### 3.3. Cycles of activities and timeline

The program will be run over a period of three years, framed by 3 cycles of activities.



The program will be delivered around four main sets of activities:

<b>Caux Fora for Democracy</b>
<b>The Geneva Democracy Dialogues (May and October)</b>
<b>Diversity and Inclusion Events</b>
<b>Communication and Partnerships</b>

We estimate that about 700 will participate in-person each year in the different activities and more than 300 online.

- Caux Democracy Forum - 200 in-person for 4 days; 300 in-person for the Opening Session; >200 on-line. (Annual figures)
- Geneva Democracy Dialogues– 80 in-person; >100 on-line (Annual figures).
- Diversity and Inclusion events – 300 in-person; 10 events with average 30 participants (Annual figures).
- Communication – targets and audience to be defined.

The Program of the Caux Democracy Forum is different to most similar gatherings as it follows the approaches of Initiatives of Change, aiming to make it a transformative experience for all participants.

The five-day program includes an Opening Session, 4 plenary sessions, 18 different workshops / dialogues /sprint labs, 4 greetings of the day/quiet reflection, 4 discussions in community groups.

These activities will be facilitated by the expertise of members of the lofC network and will benefit from the contribution of partner organisations.

Of the 36 national teams and international programmes that comprise Initiatives of Change's international association membership, the eleven European national entities have agreed to engage in the Democracy Program. Others, such as lofC in India and its Training Campus in Maharashtra are also committed to the Program.

The Caux Foundation puts partnership at the centre of the organisation's activities. A collaborative and cooperative mindset is embedded in Caux' culture, strategies, and operations. These partnerships will enhance the achievement of shared goals with internal and external stakeholders.

### **3.4. Workstreams and cross-cutting issues**

The program prioritises three workstreams which feed into existing ongoing agendas<sup>7</sup>.

- Workstream 1: Healing the wounds of the past - Forgiveness and Restitution.
- Workstream 2: People Centred Economics.
- Workstream 3: Civil Society fostering Dialogue- From Polarisation to Participation

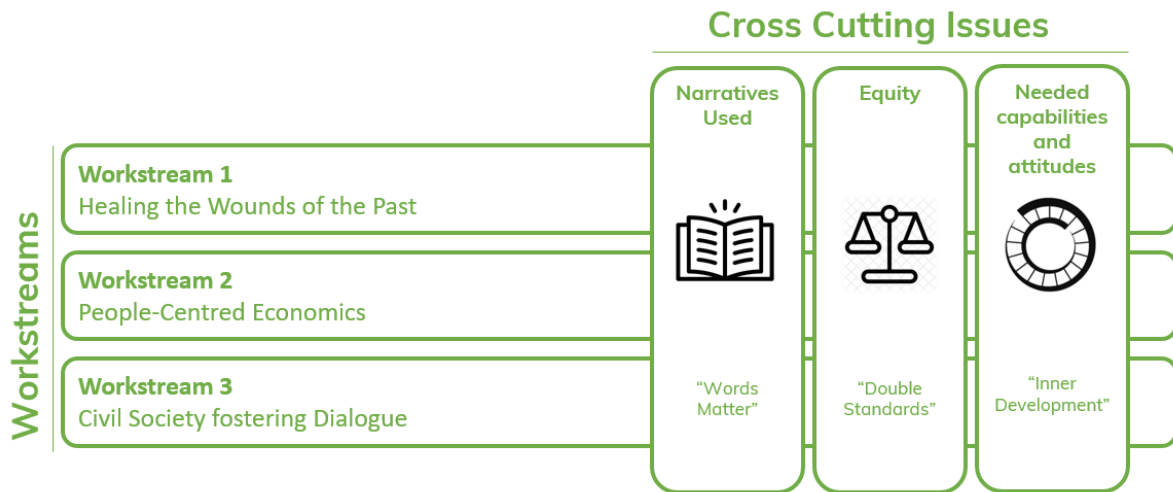
Each of the workstreams will discuss cross-cutting issues:

- Narratives used (“Words Matter”)
- Equity (“Double Standards”)
- Needed capabilities and attitudes (“Inner Development”).

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<sup>7</sup> To develop in next version





The priorities for the workstreams and cross-cutting issues result from a consultative process (September to November 2023) with the IofC network and external stakeholders including youth groups and refugees in Europe. During Geneva Peace Week 2023 the consultation process benefited from interviews with over sixty individuals from the private sector, UN agencies, civil society organisations and academia.

Special attention was given to hearing from people living in challenging humanitarian contexts, young people, people living with disabilities and those from the LGBTQI+ communities. These engagements set the grounds for diversity and inclusion throughout the three-year program.

**Workstream 1: Healing the wounds of the past – Forgiveness and Restitution.**

**Specific Objective 1**

To equip participants of the Democracy Program<sup>8</sup> to reflect, discuss and address historical trauma as it challenges democratic development and Europe’s ability to promote democracy in and outside of Europe.

Unhealed wounds of the past - personal, national, and international – destroy relationships and this weakens democracy. Successful democracies work to heal historical wounds and build inclusive societies.

<sup>8</sup> The “Caux Fora for Democracy”, the “Geneva Round Tables for Democracy” and the “Diversity and Inclusion Events” in multiple countries

Developing democratic values involves education, active participation, and the cultivation of a culture that values democracy as a way of life. European experience can help countries develop democratic values.

This will be welcomed only if Europeans recognize the reasons for the resentment towards Europe in many world regions. Some of that resentment comes from authoritarian countries who will always denigrate democracy. It also comes from countries which have suffered from European arrogance, exploitation, and xenophobia.

We need to recognize the pain and injustice in many past relationships and develop policies capable of healing. Out of this will come the cooperation needed to achieve the globally agreed aims of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Drawing on the experiences of people from all continents and many cultures, the workstream will offer an opportunity to learn from each other. The trainings, plenaries, workshops, dialogues and times of quiet reflection are designed to equip participants to address historical trauma by fostering:

- A greater understanding of the impact of historical wounds, and the existing mechanisms for addressing injustice.
- Heightened skills in dialogue facilitation, conflict transformation, trauma awareness and story sharing.
- Learning from personal experiences of healing past wounds and building trust.

### Key questions

*What narrative is needed to address historical trauma?*

*What capabilities and attitudes are needed to acquire true agency, break old patterns, generate original ideas and act with persistence in uncertain times for democracy?*

## Workstream 2: People-Centred Economics

### Specific Objective 2

To promote an economic framework that prioritizes human rights, social justice, and sustainable development and explore the change needed at individual and collective levels.

Democracy is characterized by citizens' participation in decision-making processes, protection of individual rights, and the rule of law. Democracy and a human rights economy are rooted in core values such as equality, justice, and individual freedoms. They complement each other in creating a just and inclusive society.

People-centred economics involves citizens in economic decision-making, ensuring their voices are heard in shaping economic policies and in their implementation. The People-centred economics workstream will explore the attitudes and capabilities which will enable economic decisions to be made transparently and subject to public scrutiny within a democratic framework.

Democracy protects human rights through legal and political mechanisms and the people-centred economics should extend this protection, to economic and social rights, ensuring that economic policies do not infringe fundamental human rights.

#### Key questions

*What narrative is needed to guide progress towards democracies that thrive, rather than simply survive in Europe and worldwide?*

*What capabilities and attitudes are needed to build a societies which satisfy the well-being of its citizens while respecting planetary boundaries?*

### Workstream 3: Civil Society fostering Dialogue.

#### Specific Objective 3

To strengthen social cohesion and democratic engagement, in particular amongst young people, by fostering dialogue within diverse communities, and promoting active citizen participation in decision-making, thereby mitigating disenchantment and scepticism towards the political process.

A fundamental principle of democracy is that those affected by decisions should have a say in them. But many young people feel that they are not included. They are disenchanted with political representation and sceptical of policy decisions and are increasingly alienated from public political life.

However, in Western democracies, according to a recent Eurobarometer survey<sup>9</sup>, a large majority of young people see human rights and freedom of expression as priorities which Europe should be promoting.

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<sup>9</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 99 - Spring 2023

More recent democracies also face the challenge of involving young people, who have often been in the front line of the fight for democracy and human rights, aspiring to live in a society based on the rule of law and human dignity. But when they achieve this, their expectations about freedom of expression, transparency and good governance are frustrated.

We will focus on this disenchantment and explore ways to turn the situation around. Youth disengagement is not an isolated phenomenon but a particularly acute symptom of decreasing trust in democracy. This workstream will focus on youth participation but not in isolation. Their concerns will be brought to intergenerational discussion with the aim of discovering how to enable the voices of young people to be heard in decision-making. There is clearly a strong “appetite” for democracy. It would be wrong to say that all young people have lost interest in politics. But the Edelman Trust Barometer 2023 indicates the growing gap between traditional political structures and young people.

The workstream on “Civil Society fostering Dialogue” will offer an open and interactive process that scans and reconciles language, perspectives and values that underpin democracy.

The aim is to share experiences and value hands-on concise tools such as the user-friendly Dialogue Toolkit<sup>10</sup> elaborated by the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe.

### **KEY QUESTIONS**

*How can we draw on young people’s energy to revitalise democratic institutions and processes?*

*People’s movements - such as Initiatives of Change - which are the only means of expression in some countries, are often regarded as locomotives for political change, strengthening democracy and human rights. Can they have a significant impact in countries which do not yet have a democratic tradition?*

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/dialogue>