

Walking Together Toward Healing and Hope: A Creative Reflection on the Interdiac TSG In-Person and Partnership Meetings

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The chill of November wrapped around us as we arrived in Cesky Tesin in Czech Republic—different stories, different countries, one shared calling. When the International Academy for Diaconia and Social Action (Interdiac) Thematic Support Group (TSG) Core Team gathered from November 11–13, 2025, the room felt like a meeting of rivers finally flowing into one place. Each person carried experiences from conflict zones, communities in transition, and ministries of compassion. Yet, what stayed with many of us was not the heaviness of these realities, but the gentle truth that companionship remains the most transformative form of courage.

Our sessions unfolded like a tapestry being woven before our eyes. Discussions on the 3 Themes: Spirituality, Diaconia in War and Frozen Conflict Situations and Youth in the Margins became not just an academic frames but became windows into each other's lived realities. We shared how political tensions shape daily life, how local churches wrestle with inclusivity, how communities struggle with trauma yet remain resilient. Even difficult conversations about broken systems, polarized societies and our own limitations opened deeper pathways of trust. The most striking insight? That the work of peace and Diaconia today demands not only strategies but also shared humanity: stories, listening, vulnerability and the boldness to stand together even when the road is steep.

The second gathering, our Partners Meeting from November 24–26, 2025, felt like a deep breath. A moment of grounding after the intense clarity of the first. Here, organizations, faith institutions and community actors met eye-to-eye to reflect on where our collaborations are flourishing and where they must grow. Conversations stretched late into the evenings as partners shared innovative practices from the field, renewed commitments and bold dreams for 2026 and beyond. Again and again, one message echoed: we are stronger, wiser and more prophetic when we co-create rather than walk alone. Many participants described the encounter as a “coming home to a community that understands the weight of service.”

What emerged from both meetings was not only a set of priorities, frameworks and action steps—though these were clearly shaped. More importantly, we walked away with a renewed sense of purpose: to cultivate spaces of justice, healing and accompaniment in societies marked by fear and fragmentation. With every conversation, it became clear that our real work is not simply technical—it is deeply spiritual and relational. It is about holding stories, embracing diversity and imagining the world not as it is, but as it can be.

As we returned to our countries, many carried a quiet but powerful conviction: peace grows when ordinary people choose to walk with one another in extraordinary times. The November gatherings were not just meetings. They were milestones of courage, solidarity and hope. And the seeds planted in those spaces will continue to bloom in our ministries, communities and movements long after the winter has passed.