

The Mutualism Canvas

Shift from security rooted in control and force toward security grounded in cooperation, reciprocity, and shared resilience.

ORGANIZATION

DATE

FACILITATOR

1 Audit Your Militarized Assumptions

Where does militarized thinking live in your strategy, policy, and culture? Mark each pattern, then name the mutualist shift.

MILITARIZED		MUTUALIST
Competitors framed as "enemies"	→	Potential collaborators & allies
Information guarded, zero-sum	→	Shared, open, abundance logic
Transactional relationships	→	Relational, long-term investment
"Winning" requires others losing	→	Shared benefit, cocreated wins
Threat = adversaries only	→	Threat = breakdown, inequality, brittleness

2 Invest in Cooperative Infrastructure

Support systems that share resources and distribute governance: renewable energy co-ops, community land trusts, open-source platforms, regional mutual aid, cross-sector resilience partnerships. Replace competitive scarcity with abundance logic — shift incentives so collaboration out-rewards unilateral control through shared ownership, revenue-sharing, transparent joint ventures, and procurement preferences for peace-building enterprises.

3 Build Trust as Strategic Infrastructure

Treat trust-building as essential security work: transparent governance, regular stakeholder engagement, conflict resolution built into operations, relationship over transactional efficiency. Grow the skills that enable mutualism — active listening, mediation, consensus-building, systems thinking.

4 Celebrate Interdependence

Make cooperation visible and valued. Track the health of cooperative relationships: trust among partners, quality of collaboration, shared-benefit distribution, resilience to shocks, longevity of agreements. Acknowledge partnerships publicly, share credit generously, create recognition for bridge builders.

5 One Shift — This Week

The one relationship where shifting from competition to cooperation could generate better outcomes for all parties — and the first step you'll take toward it. One relationship. One step.

Win–win,
or win–lose?

The Cooperation Test — What is one relationship in your work where shifting from competition to cooperation could generate better outcomes for *all* parties — and what first step could you take toward that this week?