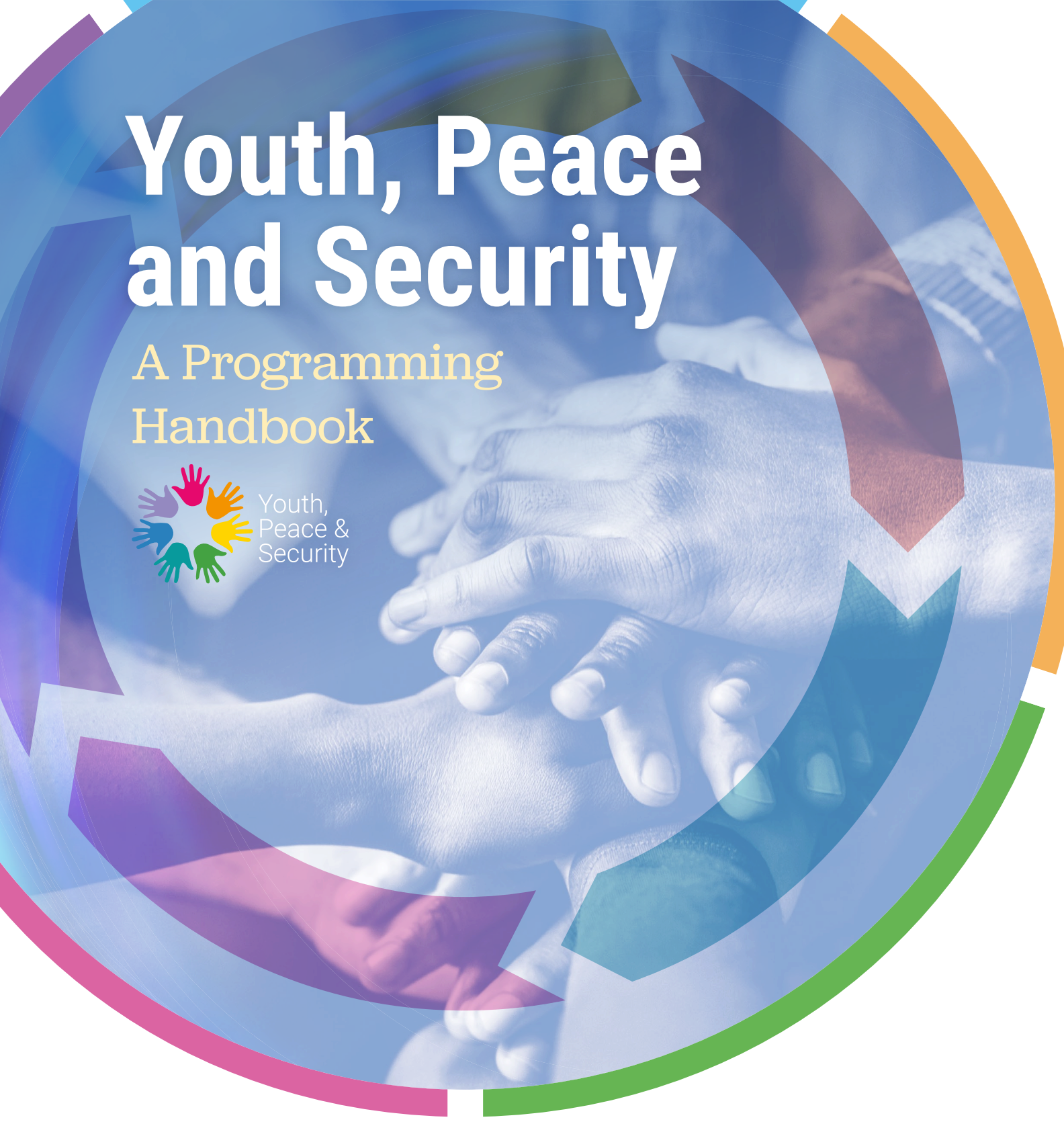
Youth, Peace and Security

A Programming Handbook

Youth, Peace & Security



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Preventing Conflict. Sustaining Peace

Youth, Peace and Security: A Programming Handbook

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Executive summary

Youth, Peace and Security: A Programming Handbook, developed by the United Nations with the generous support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy – the Swedish Agency for Peace, Security and Development – seeks to contribute to the operational readiness and capacity of United Nations practitioners to implement the youth, peace and security (YPS) agenda.

For the United Nations, the development of the handbook was led by the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the Peacebuilding Support Office in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, in consultation with a task force including various United Nations entities represented at global, regional and country levels, as well as Folke Bernadotte Academy partners.

The handbook is intended to be used by country, regional and global teams in the United Nations system, but it can also provide insights and guidance to field practitioners beyond the United Nations, including other international or regional organizations, national counterparts, youth-led and youth-focused organizations, movements and networks, and peacebuilding organizations.

The programming handbook builds on recent evidence and increasing momentum to prioritize youth-inclusive and youth-sensitive peace and security programming, as a core element of more sustainable and long-lasting peacebuilding efforts. It follows the inter-agency *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding*[1] and expands on the promising practices and limitations that the subsequent *Practice Note on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding*[2] identifies. The findings and recommendations from *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*[3] also serve as a basis to guide youth-led and youth-focused peacebuilding programming. In addition, the handbook builds on a review of existing guidelines[4] and lessons learned from previous youth-focused peacebuilding efforts, both by the United Nations system and by partner organizations. The objective of the handbook is therefore to complement existing guidance by filling the gaps and responding

1 United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding (2014). *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding.* New York. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-10/Guiding%20Principles%20on%20Young%20People's%20Participation%20in%20Peacebuilding_1.pdf.

2 United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding (2016). *Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note.* New York. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-10/PRACTICE%20NOTE%20-%20Young%20People%27s%20Participation%20in%20Peacebuilding%20%282016%29.pdf.

3 United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (2018). *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security.* United Nations publication. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy.

4 These existing guidelines include the "PBF guidance note on youth and peacebuilding" (available at https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_guidance_note_on_youth_and_peacebuilding_2019.pdf) and "Translating Youth, Peace & Security Policy into Practice" by the United Network of Young Peacebuilders and Search for Common Ground (available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-11/2016.11.22%20-%20Translating%20Youth%2C%20Peace%20%26%20Security%20Policy%20into%20Practice%20-%20Guide%20to%20kick-starting%20UNSCR%202250%20Locally%20and%20Nationally.pdf).

to the priorities identified by young people and partners in a concrete and user-friendly way.[5]

At the core of the handbook are approaches to meaningful youth inclusion throughout the analysis, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding programmes and projects. Meaningful inclusion entails identifying the specific needs and potential of young men and women of diverse backgrounds in relation to sustaining peace.

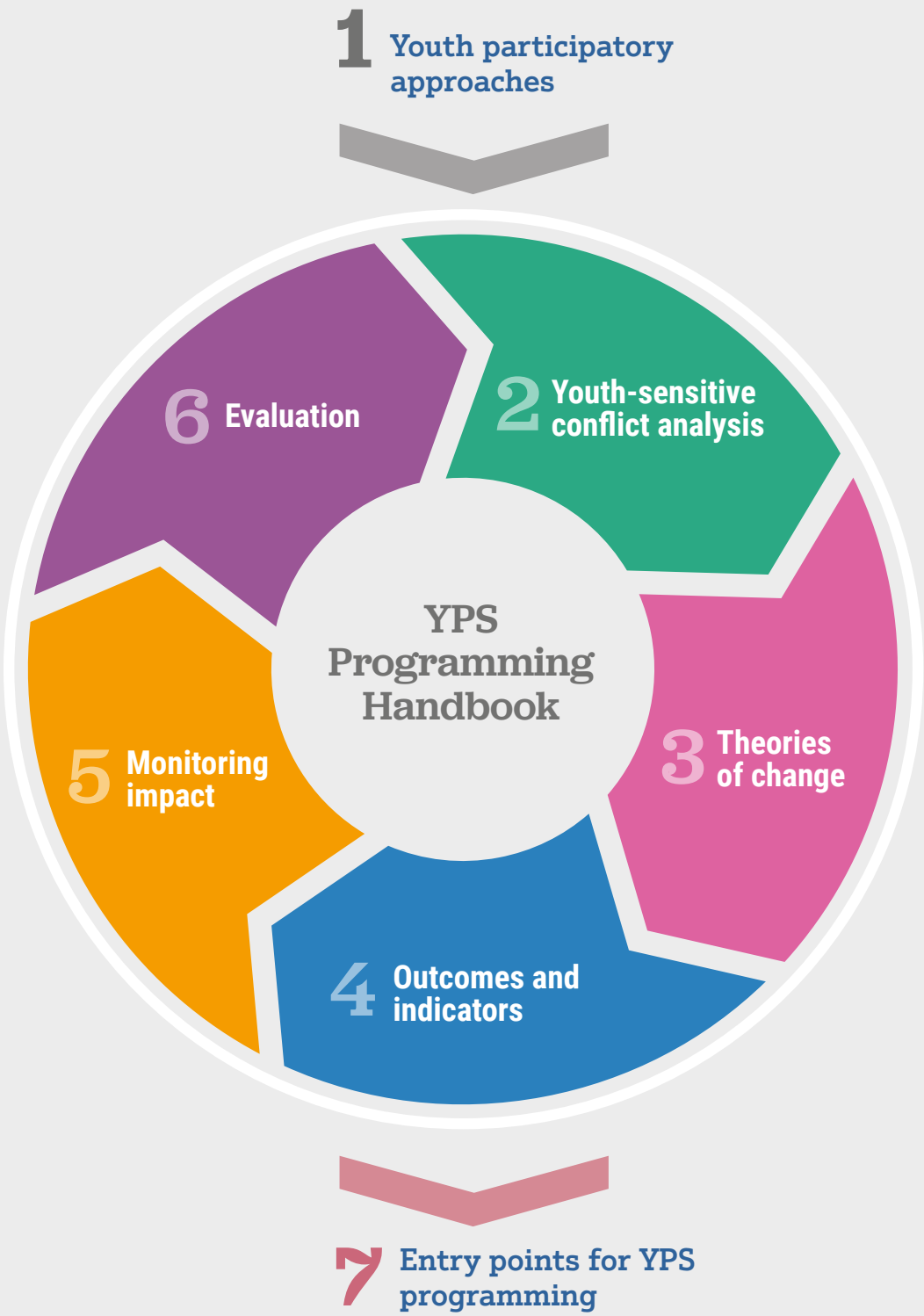
Following an overview of the YPS agenda and background on changing attitudes towards the role of young people in peacebuilding in the **Introduction**, the handbook offers strategic guidance and practical advice on its operational implementation.

- **Chapter 1** provides directions to ensure meaningful youth participation, arguing that youth engagement makes projects effective. This chapter proposes specific recommendations on whom to engage and how to engage, and formulates specific assessment questions to consider.
- **Chapter 2** introduces tools and operational steps for undertaking a youth-sensitive and youth-inclusive conflict analysis, and aims to provide insights into the specific situation of youth, the context, and how age interlinks with conflict dynamics and opportunities for peace. Youth can lead or co-lead the analysis process, and should be engaged to ensure conflict sensitivity and doing no harm.
- **Chapter 3** spells out approaches for developing YPS strategic priorities and theories of change, with examples related to political participation, economic empowerment and decent jobs, education and gender. Youth-sensitive theories of change help make programming assumptions explicit and increase the effectiveness of projects. Collaborating with youth in the formulation of these strategic priorities and theories of change can reduce the risk of teams making assumptions inconsistent with the lived experience of youth.
- **Chapter 4** addresses the formulation of YPS outcome statements and indicators, highlighting the importance, when developing a YPS project, of focusing on "positive peace" outcomes and conflict transformation for longer-term solutions. Working with youth in the indicator design process can help identify what needs to be measured.
- **Chapter 5** provides guidance for monitoring YPS projects. Monitoring schemes should be created to include sources of youth-specific information. Partnerships with youth can improve the understanding of the contexts through shaping and carrying out monitoring.
- **Chapter 6** explores how to evaluate the impact – and not just direct outputs and outcomes – of YPS programming and meaningful youth inclusion. It discusses youth-sensitive, youth-led and youth-focused evaluations. Working with youth in monitoring and evaluation heightens the organization's transparency and accountability towards youth, and can improve uptake of recommendations.
- **Chapter 7** proposes a series of YPS programming entry points, illustrated by concrete project examples, structured in accordance with the five pillars of Security Council Resolution 2250: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration.

The successful implementation of this handbook will ensure that projects and programmes are informed by a full understanding of the ways in which young people experience and participate in their societies, and their interaction with peace and security matters.

5 For example, in December 2018, the Folke Bernadotte Academy organized a joint United Nations Learning Forum on YPS to reflect on the current context of the YPS agenda and agree on the actions needed to move forward with its implementation. For key takeaways from the forum, see https://fba.se/contentassets/e2d4c0a0cec24098afdda2a40fe1906a/executive-summary.pdf.

Overview of contents



KEY MESSAGES

CHAPTER 1

Youth participatory approaches

- Young people have the right to participate
- Youth engagement makes projects more efficient
- There are different forms and degrees of participation
- Do no harm and always be conflict sensitive

CHAPTER 2

Youth-sensitive conflict analysis

- The process of developing a conflict analysis can facilitate dialogue between youth and decision-makers
- A youth-sensitive conflict analysis provides insights into the specific situation of youth, the context, and interlinkages between age and conflict dynamics and opportunities for peace
- Youth can lead or co-lead the analysis process

CHAPTER 3

Theories of change

- Including youth in visioning exercises recognizes youth's right to have a say in defining their societies and own lives
- Youth-sensitive theories of change can help make programming assumptions explicit and increase the effectiveness of a project
- Collaborating with youth can reduce the risk of making flawed assumptions about the lived experience of youth

CHAPTER 4

Outcomes and indicators

- YPS outcomes should be concrete and youth specific
- Working with youth in designing indicators can help in identifying what needs to be measured
- Indicators should be disaggregated by age, sex and key social factors

CHAPTER 5

Monitoring impact

- Monitoring should include sources of youth-specific information
- Partnerships with youth will improve the monitoring process

CHAPTER 6

Evaluation

- Working with youth on monitoring and evaluation heightens the organization's transparency and accountability towards youth, and can improve uptake of recommendations
- Prioritize the ability to work with youth in the recruitment of the evaluation team

CHAPTER 7

Entry points for YPS programming

- YPS programming goes across the humanitarian-development–peacebuilding nexus and the pillars of the UN system: human rights, development, and peace and security
- Youth peace work takes different forms and so does YPS programming

Preface

Investing in the capacity, agency and leadership of young peacebuilders can strengthen their ability to collaboratively lead peace efforts, and to use their skills to tackle other challenges that affect them, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

This recognition of young people as a positive force in preventing and resolving conflict and building sustainable peace has gained significant momentum since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security (YPS) on 9 December 2015. The historic resolution marked a fundamental shift in acknowledging the positive role young women and young men play in the maintenance of peace and security, and the importance of enabling their meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels. Since then, the YPS agenda has developed into a comprehensive agenda, consolidated by Resolution 2419 (2018), which recognized the importance of regional and sub-regional bodies for the implementation of the YPS agenda and called for the meaningful inclusion of young women and men in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. Most recently, Resolution 2535 (2020) gives a welcome boost to the YPS agenda, signalling Member States' determination to drive practical action forward in an integrated and coordinated way across the United Nations system as a whole and asking specific actions of various United Nations entities.

This handbook builds on the momentum gathered around the trio of resolutions and responds to the call by Resolution 2535 to ensure full, effective and meaningful participation of youth without discrimination of any kind. This includes any bias on the grounds of race, colour, sex, gender identity, language, socio-economic status, disability, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Such participation is key to advancing peacebuilding processes and objectives that take into account the needs of all segments of society.

In response to the Secretary-General's call for accelerated implementation of the YPS agenda, this handbook provides guidance to all United Nations entities on the implementation of the YPS agenda in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of context-specific interventions that are youth sensitive and youth inclusive. It seeks to complement existing guidelines created by the United Nations and partner organizations and reflect priorities identified by young people and partners in recent learning forums and consultations. It addresses, in particular, the need to meaningfully engage young women and men in all stages of the programming process.

While this cutting-edge guidance targets practitioners in the United Nations system, it is our hope that it will also be useful to Member States, as well as civil society organizations and

other international organizations, such as regional and sub-regional organizations.

The handbook was developed by the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, with the generous support and technical insights of the Folke Bernadotte Academy. It reflects our joint commitment to continuing to drive forward the YPS agenda as a central component of the United Nations' work for and with youth, and as a core dimension of our work to support national efforts to build and sustain peace.

Diene Keita, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director for Programme, United Nations Population Fund

Oscar Fernández-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support

Haoliang Xu, Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme

Sven-Eric Söder, Director-General, Folke Bernadotte Academy

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The development of this handbook would not have been possible without the generous support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy, which provided not only financial means but also technical expertise and in-depth knowledge to this endeavour through its Youth, Peace and Security Team. Special thanks go to team leader Erike Tanghøj.

The development of the handbook was led by three United Nations co-chairs – the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (Cécile Mazzacurati), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Noëlla Richard) and the Department of Political Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA)/Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) (Marie Doucey) – which collaborated closely with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (Erike Tanghøj). Thank you to Chelsea Payne and Laura Buzzoni (DPPA/PBSO) who supported the finalization of the handbook.

Our deepest appreciation and gratitude are extended to Tammy Smith, the primary drafter of this handbook, whose design, monitoring and evaluation expertise, and years of experience on youth peacebuilding programming, provided the core contents of this handbook.

Paula Sevilla contributed in important ways to the drafting of the handbook and background research – her work is warmly appreciated.

A task force composed of dedicated United Nations colleagues provided invaluable guidance and support throughout the entire process: Ruth Bolline Awuor Aluoch (DPPA), Anna Azaryeva Valente (United Nations Children's Fund – UNICEF), Regev Ben Jacob (UNICEF), Brice Bussiere (Peacebuilding Fund Secretariat, Madagascar), Susanna Dakash (UNDP), Drew Dunbrack (UNICEF), Emilia Hannuksela (Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth), Tatyana Jiteneva (UN Women), Vilma Kyyroenen (DPPA), Tamasha Mkimbo Mpyisi-White (Department of Peace Operations – DPO), Rozan Naji (DPO), Rukaya Mohammed (UN Women), Samid Sarenkapic (UNFPA), Joao Scarpelini (Resident Coordinator Office, Somalia), Anna Tarant (DPO) and Miguel Trancozo (UN Women). Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

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This handbook also benefited from the review of numerous UN colleagues and partners from the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security, to whom deep gratitude is extended.

New York, January 2021

Abbreviations

AI	appreciative inquiry
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DE	developmental evaluation
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
DPPA	Department of Political Peacebuilding Affairs
EPI	Everyday Peace Indicator
GBV	gender-based violence
MoV	means of verification
OH	outcome harvesting
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PYD	positive youth development
SCORE	Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGM	sexual and gender minority
ToC	theory of change
ToRs	terms of reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOY	United Network of Young Peacebuilders
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WG-YPB	Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding
WPS	women, peace and security
YPI	Youth Promotion Initiative
YPS	youth, peace and security

Introduction

Successfully building and sustaining peace and achieving the peace, justice and inclusion goals set forth by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development require a drastic transformation of attitudes and support for young people, as demonstrated by *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*.[6]

Enhancing the impact of peace and security policies and peacebuilding programming can be achieved only through a deep understanding of young women's and men's particular lived experiences of violence, injustice and exclusion, both in situations of violent conflict and in contexts of inequality, insecurity or uncertainty outside conflict settings. Moreover, a new, more inclusive, approach to youth, peace and security (YPS) should recognize the important role that young people play in the prevention of violent conflict and building peace.

In 2016, about 408 million young people (aged 15–29 years) lived in settings affected by armed conflict or organized violence – that is, about one in four young people in the world. Violent conflict is therefore a pressing issue for them. Moreover, not taking young people into account in peacebuilding programming would fail to acknowledge a large cohort of the population, if not the majority, in many countries facing peace, security and development challenges today.

Approaches fuelled by the distorted notion that young people are a threat to peace and security fail to recognize that the majority of young people do not partake and are not at risk of partaking in violence.[7] Many young women and men are, on the contrary, tirelessly working to prevent conflict and sustain peace in their communities. Often disregarded and excluded from formal venues of participation in peacebuilding, young people "are strikingly creative in forging alternative places of belonging and meaning through which to express themselves".[8] Recognizing and supporting the many ways in which young people engage in peacebuilding is an essential step towards developing peaceful and prosperous societies.

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 1: Defining "youth"

Resolution 2250 defines "youth" as people aged 18–29 years but notes the variations that exist at national and international levels. The United Nations defines "youth" as people between the ages of 15 years and 24 years, "for statistical purposes" and "without prejudice to other definitions by Member States" (United Nations General Assembly, 1981). However, various United Nations entities use different age definitions. A wide variety of age definitions are also used at regional and national levels. This handbook uses the terms "youth" and "young people" interchangeably.

6 United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (2018). *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*. United Nations publication. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

The importance of youth in peace and security

Young people's unique contribution as peacebuilders stems from their particular knowledge and experiences of violence and injustice that go beyond the traditional war setting and include different forms of exclusion and discrimination, from organized crime to sexual and gender-based violence (GBV). These different forms of violence often manifest themselves across different but interlinked facets of young people's lives, ranging from the domestic to the public, and are perpetrated by different actors, from violent extremists to the state. They are also heavily gendered, with young women and sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) being particularly at risk of domestic violence, sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, torture and forced labour, among other forms of violence.

> "So there is here a central question for us all: believing that we are facing enormous challenges, believing that the best hope for those challenges is with the new generations, we need to make sure that we are able to strongly invest in those new generations."
>
> *– The Secretary-General's speech at the University of Cairo, 15 February 2017*

Violent conflict affects youth by destroying sources of stability and belonging, as well as disrupting the processes of the transition into adulthood through the interruption of young people's education and the destruction of social support structures and livelihood opportunities. Nevertheless, even in non-violent contexts, inadequate education and the precarity of jobs and social services also prevent young people from fully enjoying the independence and agency associated with adulthood.

Grievances described by young people thus concern not just violence but also economic, social and political rights, and require responses that tackle broader issues of inclusion, trust, equality and equity. These naturally bridge the peace, development and human rights pillars of the multilateral system, presenting "a powerful transversal vehicle for integrated policy approaches".[9]

Understanding the interplay of these diverse forms of violence, injustice and exclusion allows a shift to occur from simplistic and reactionary approaches to youth in relation to peace and security, to evidence-based, comprehensive, youth-inclusive conflict prevention that is better aligned with the tenets of the Sustaining Peace Agenda and peacebuilding efforts that adhere to the 2030 Agenda imperative to "leave no one behind". It also sheds light on the impressive resilience and resourcefulness of young people in the face of such development challenges and reveals the great contributions they can – and already do – make in the peacebuilding process.

The growing mobilization of young people and their untiring advocacy to have a say in local, national and international policies and programming have caught the attention of the international community and policymakers. Greater commitments and partnerships with young people at the United Nations

9 Ibid.

and in other regional and national settings demonstrate the increased recognition of the need to include young people and an acknowledgement of their invaluable contribution to sustainable development, human rights, and peace and security.

Young people and the 2030 Agenda

Throughout the multilateral system and in national, regional and local contexts, the critical role of youth in driving positive change in society is being increasingly recognized. Young people are described as key agents of change in the 2030 Agenda and crucial actors in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (20 targets across six SDGs are specifically directed at youth).[10] The meaningful inclusion of young people is also key to the commitment in the 2030 Agenda to "leave no one behind", and the role that young people play in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies in particular (SDG 16) is fundamental and more widely acknowledged.

Working with and for young people

"Young people constitute a tremendous and essential asset worth investing in, opening the door to an unparalleled multiplier effect," asserts the first-ever United Nations Youth Strategy, "Youth 2030",[11] which was launched in 2018. The United Nations Youth Strategy marks a shift away from merely working for young people and towards an approach that involves them, amplifying their voices and engaging them as partners and leaders. By recognizing the important and unique contributions of young people to the prosperity of their societies, it lays out fundamental commitments to work with youth across its three pillars of peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development. The main components of the strategy include:

- support of youth leadership and greater staff awareness of youth-related issues
- strengthened knowledge production
- accelerated resource mobilization and partnership development
- a greater funding base and mechanisms for youth-focused programming and youth-led actions.

It also sets forth five priority areas:

1. engagement, participation and advocacy
2. informed and healthy foundations
3. economic empowerment through decent work
4. youth and human rights
5. peace and resilience-building.

Through these priority areas, the United Nations Youth Strategy outlines the holistic, youth-inclusive path that the YPS agenda advocates. Notably, the fifth priority of peace and resilience-building seeks to "support young people as catalysts for peace and security and humanitarian action". Its roadmap draws from not only changing mindsets within the United Nations about peacebuilding and prevention, but also the great mobilization in previous years of youth and partners demanding that young men and women are seen no longer as either perpetrators or victims of violence, but rather as partners in preventing violence and sustaining peace.

10 United Nations Development Programme (2017). "Fast facts: youth as partners for the implementation of the SDGs". Available at https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/results/fast_facts/fast-facts--youth-as-partners-for-the-implementation-of-the-sdgs.html.

11 United Nations (2018). *Youth 2030: Working with and for Young People – United Nations Youth Strategy.* Available at https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf.

New attitudes towards youth and a new agenda for peace and security

The shift in the understanding of young people's role in peace and security began to take form through declarations such as that of the Secretary-General in his 2012 report *Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict*,[12] in which he advocates the participation of "a wider set of actors" in peacebuilding efforts, including young people.

Young people have mobilized themselves throughout the world to demand a seat at the table in peace and security efforts. During the first Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security in August 2015, hundreds of them jointly drafted the Amman Youth Declaration,[13] which called for greater partnerships with young people in addressing issues of peace and security, violence prevention and peacebuilding, gender equality, and young people's empowerment.

Security Council resolutions on youth, peace and security

In Security Council Resolution 2250, adopted on 9 December 2015, the Security Council recognized, for the first time, "the important and positive contribution of youth in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security". [14] The resolution identifies five pillars for action, and calls for mechanisms that allow the meaningful participation of young women and men in peace processes and dispute resolution and that address the underlying causes of the rise in violent extremism and conflict.

The momentum around the YPS agenda grew in conjunction with the shift of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture towards a greater focus on conflict prevention. The resulting sustaining peace approach has been intrinsically linked to the goals of the YPS agenda since the

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 2: The five pillars of Security Council Resolution 2250

Participation – Take youth's participation and views into account in decision-making processes, from negotiation and prevention of violence to peace agreements.

Protection – Ensure the protection of young civilians' lives and human rights, and investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes perpetrated against them.

Prevention – Support young people in preventing violence and in promoting a culture of tolerance and intercultural dialogue.

Partnership – Engage young people during and after conflict when developing peacebuilding strategies, along with community actors and United Nations bodies.

Disengagement and reintegration – Invest in youth affected by armed conflict through employment opportunities, inclusive labour policies and education promoting a culture of peace.

Source: United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (2018). *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth and Peace and Security*. United Nations publication. Available at: https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy

12 United Nations, Security Council (2012). *Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*. 8 October 2012. A/67/499–S/2012/746. Available at https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/740644?ln=en.

13 Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security (2015). Amman Youth Declaration. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-10/AMMAN%20YOUTH%20DECLARATION%20%28English%29_0.pdf.

14 United Nations Security Council (2015). Security Council Resolution 2250. 9 December 2015. S/RES/2250. Available at https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/814032?ln=en.

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 3: The Sustaining Peace Agenda

The twin resolutions on sustaining peace (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282) marked the transformation of the United Nations' approach to preventing and resolving conflicts. Inspired by the claim underlying the 2030 Agenda that there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development, the new framework aims to bolster integrated approaches to building and sustaining peace "at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions", with the prevention of "the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict" at its heart.

The Sustaining Peace Agenda shifts the focus away from siloed security responses and towards conflict resolution and collective, whole-of-system actions that build the resilience needed for societies and institutions to address peace and security challenges. By envisaging prevention as a development and governance process, the agenda convenes the United Nations peacebuilding, humanitarian, human rights and development bodies under one common goal of reaching sustainable peace.

beginning. Security Council Resolution 2282[15] explicitly mentions Security Council Resolution 2250 and "calls upon Member States and relevant United Nations organs and entities to consider ways to increase meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in peacebuilding efforts".

The subsequent reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace continue to encourage the meaningful inclusion of young people in peacebuilding, since "the youth and peace and security agenda offers opportunities to galvanize coherent United Nations engagement in support of young people and their contribution to peacebuilding and sustaining peace".[16]

The Security Council has adopted two other resolutions dedicated to YPS:

- In 2018, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2419,[17] calling for the meaningful inclusion of young people in peace processes.
- In 2020, the Council adopted Resolution 2535,[18] laying out concrete steps for the operationalization of the YPS agenda, including a request for the United Nations to improve capacity-building and technical guidance related to YPS, to which this handbook responds.

Foundational YPS documents and mechanisms

Prior to the adoption of Resolution 2250, the Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding (WG-YPB) developed the *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding* in 2014 to inform strategies and programmes promoting the meaningful participation of young people in peacebuilding. This document laid the foundations for the recognition of young people's

15 United Nations Security Council (2016). Security Council Resolution 2282. 27 April 2016. S/RES/2282. Available at https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2282(2016)&referer=/english/&Lang=E.

16 United Nations Security Council (2018). *Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: Report of the Secretary-General.* 18 January 2018. S/2018/43. Available at https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/sg_report_on_peacebuilding_and_sustaining_peace.as_issued.a-72-707-s-2018-43.e.pdf.

17 United Nations Security Council (2018). Security Council Resolution 2419. 6 June 2018. S/RES/2419. Available at https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2419(2018).

18 United Nations Security Council (2020). Security Council Resolution 2535.14 July 2020. S/RES/2535. Available at https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2535(2020).

FIGURE 1

Milestones for Youth, Peace and Security

2012

INTER-AGENCY WG-YPB ESTABLISHED

The WG-YPB brought together a wide constituency of civil society organizations, including youth-led and youth-focused organizations, United Nations entities, donors, academia and intergovernmental bodies. This group was renamed the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security in 2016.

2014

GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING

This document defined nine overarching principles to ensure the meaningful involvement of young people in peacebuilding. The guiding principles helped shift policy discussions towards the recognition of young people's role in peacebuilding.

2015

GLOBAL FORUM ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY IN JORDAN AND AMMAN YOUTH DECLARATION

The Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, held in Jordan, led to the adoption of the Amman Youth Declaration, calling for greater partnerships with young people in addressing issues of peace and security.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2250 ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

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2016

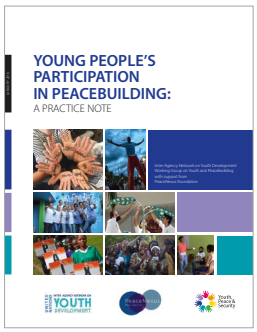
LAUNCH OF THE PEACEBUILDING FUND'S YOUTH PROMOTION INITIATIVE

The Youth Promotion Initiative (YPI) of the United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was launched for the first time in 2016, to support the implementation of Resolution 2250. The YPI supports innovative projects, focused on youth empowerment and participation, with the potential for catalytic effects and peacebuilding outcomes, and strengthens the participation of young women and men in existing prevention and peacebuilding initiatives.

TWIN RESOLUTIONS ON SUSTAINING PEACE (A/RES/70/262 AND S/RES/2282)

LAUNCH OF *YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING – A PRACTICE NOTE*

The practice note – the first evidence base to capture promising practices in youth and peacebuilding – explores existing assumptions and theories of change (ToCs) concerning youth and peacebuilding, provides an overview of promising practices, and proposes overarching recommendations for donors and policymakers.



2018

THE MISSING PEACE: INDEPENDENT PROGRESS STUDY ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

HELSINKI SYMPOSIUM ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN PEACE PROCESSES

The international symposium explored strategies to ensure young women and men have the space and opportunities to engage in and influence formal peace and mediation processes. It included the launch of a global policy paper on youth participation in peace processes, *We Are Here: An Integrated Approach to Youth-inclusive Peace Processes*, which provided evidence of the impact young people have had in past and current peace processes.

YOUTH2030
WORKING WITH AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

UNITED NATIONS YOUTH STRATEGY (YOUTH 2030)

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2419

Security Council Resolution 2419 called for the meaningful inclusion of young people in negotiating and implementing peace agreements, recognizing the role that youth could play in conflict prevention and resolution.

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2020

2020: FIRST REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON YPS

In March 2020, the first report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on YPS was issued. The report demonstrated that, although there is a growing recognition of the essential role that young people play in peace and security, core challenges remain, including structural barriers limiting the participation of young people and their capacity to influence decision-making; violations of their human rights; and insufficient investment in facilitating their inclusion and empowerment.

2020: SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2535

Security Council Resolution 2535 emphasizes the meaningful inclusion of youth in peace processes and humanitarian action, as well as the protection of young peacebuilders and the "civic and political spaces" in which they operate. Resolution 2535 includes specific provisions for the integration of YPS into thematic and geographical reports and briefings to the Security Council, as well as a biannual report dedicated to YPS.

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 4: Definitions

Peacebuilding comprises a range of activities or approaches expressly designed and intended to strengthen national capacities at different levels with regard to conflict management in a non-violent manner, address the causes or drivers of violent conflict and promote peace.

Conflict is inherent to all societies and human interactions and can be important in making progress, for example on social, economic, political and cultural rights. Institutions, including political and judicial, are critical to the management of conflicts in a non-violent manner.

Conflict prevention aims to prevent the emergence of violent conflict and identify a non-violent means of resolving the tensions; stop ongoing violent conflicts from spreading or escalating; and deter the re-emergence of violence.

Conflict transformation is a complex process of constructively changing relationships, attitudes, behaviours, norms, values, interests and discourses in conflict settings. Conflict transformation aims to build underlying structures, cultures and institutions that encourage peace rather than violent conflict.

meaningful contribution to peace and was referenced in Resolution 2250.

To complement these guiding principles, a practice note was developed to provide evidence of successful programming on YPS.

The working group, which forms part of the broader United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development and which is co-chaired by the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, Search for Common Ground and the United Network of Young Peacebuilders, is now called the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security and continues to play an instrumental role in the implementation of the YPS resolutions.

The Missing Peace – Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security

In line with the priorities of the Sustaining Peace Agenda, the progress study (requested by Security Council Resolution 2250) urges governments and the multilateral system to discard the tough security and reactive approach to violent conflict in favour of a comprehensive violence prevention path, in which young people play a key role. Such an approach recognizes that, although a small minority of young people may engage in violence, the majority not only are peaceful but also demonstrate exceptional forms of resilience to situations of conflict and insecurity.

The shift from viewing young people as "troublemakers" to acknowledging them as essential partners who are already meaningfully driving social and political change requires the following:

- Invest in the capacity, agency and leadership shown by young peacebuilders.
- Address the structural barriers limiting the meaningful inclusion of young people and ensure an enabling environment for the breadth of youth-led and youth-focused organizations and activities.
- Partner with youth-led and youth-focused organizations and recognize them as equal and essential partners for peace.

The progress study argues that turning the demographic dividend represented by youth

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 5: Lessons learned from the women, peace and security agenda

Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)[19] on WPS emphasizes the important role of women in peace and security efforts. It calls for equal participation and the inclusion of women in conflict resolution, peace processes, humanitarian response and post-conflict decision-making, and urges actors to apply a gender lens in policies and programmes.

The YPS agenda can learn from the achievements and challenges of the promotion and implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. In the 20 years since the adoption of the resolution, the work of the global WPS movement to ensure women's participation and inclusion has provided an insight into strategies to support the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2250 on YPS, and potentially useful mechanisms to include youth in decision-making and peacebuilding work at different levels, from a local level to an international level. The linkages between the two agendas also offer opportunities for partnership and strengthening.

Nevertheless, a key message from young people is that the recognition of the relationship between the YPS and the WPS agendas should not result in youth being equated with women or the employment of tokenistic and unnuanced approaches to both agendas. Instead, the bridge between the implementation of the resolutions should be built by understanding the gendered experiences, challenges and opportunities of young people in peace and security matters, and the implications of age dynamics in the WPS agenda. This is particularly the case when it comes to recognizing the contribution of young women to peacebuilding efforts and their often overlooked needs in the contexts of transitional justice, economic, security and educational reform, and disengagement and reintegration programmes, as well as the way in which violent masculine identities affect young people's attitudes and responses to violence, peace and security.

19 United Nations Security Council (2000). Security Council Resolution 1325. 31 October 2000. S/RES/1325. Available at https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/res_1325e.pdf.

into a peace dividend will require a drastic change in attitudes and practices regarding youth in peace and security. Addressing the "violence of exclusion" by transforming political, social and economic systems to meaningfully engage youth in the decisions and processes that affect them will involve fostering the reciprocal trust between young people, their communities, governments and the multilateral system that is essential to building and sustaining peace.

What is next?

The momentum garnered through the restless activism of young people and the increasing recognition of governments and the multilateral system of the imperative to meaningfully involve youth rather than see them as a threat is now solidifying and generating the political will for change. Nevertheless, accomplishments such as the United Nations Youth Strategy and Security Council Resolutions 2250, 2419 and 2535 are not the end but rather the beginning – they offer a common framework for developing a roadmap and ensuring coordination across YPS actors.

The YPS agenda now requires efforts to integrate it into programmes, policies and rules of operations, following the recommendations of the progress study. The next steps include:

- establishing larger and more adequate funding mechanisms and procedures, both within government entities and throughout

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 6: *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding*

1. Promote young people's participation as an essential condition for successful peacebuilding.
2. Value and build upon young people's diversity and experiences.
3. Be sensitive to gender dynamics.
4. Enable young people's ownership, leadership and accountability in peacebuilding.
5. Do no harm.
6. Involve young people in all stages of peacebuilding and post-conflict programming.
7. Enhance the knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies of young people for peacebuilding.
8. Invest in intergenerational partnerships in young people's communities.
9. Introduce and support policies that address the full needs of young people.

Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding (2014). *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding*. New York. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-10/Guiding%20Principles%20on%20Young%20People's%20Participation%20in%20Peacebuilding_1.pdf.

international agencies, as recommended by the progress study
- gathering data and carrying out an analysis to better inform policymaking at the local, national, and international levels
- designing systems of focal points and networks that ensure coordination and a mainstreaming of YPS language.

New guidelines need to help staff and teams recognize and invest in young people's resilience and understand the specific needs of youth-led and youth-focused peacebuilding, to tailor programming accordingly. To support this, effective guidelines will offer practical means of including young people in the design, implementation and monitoring of peacebuilding programming – whether youth-focused or generalized – rather than just demanding their participation.

Monitoring and evaluation guidelines for YPS programming can help United Nations staff and country teams not only evaluate its impact, but also assist and support youth-led organizations in building their own capacity and mutually learning from their work. Finally, these guidelines need to be effective in helping practitioners develop a do-no-harm approach so that increased attention to youth does not jeopardize the diversity of youth-led work or limit the creativity with which young people engage in peacebuilding and are active in their communities.

YPS programming

As noted, the passage of Security Council Resolution 2250 in December 2015 signalled recognition, on the part of Member States, that inclusion of youth views, concerns and participation is essential to sustaining peace or achieving a fair and lasting peace. The very need for a resolution that recognized young people's positive contribution to peace arose from decades of analysis and programming that were frequently based on inaccurate assumptions that labelled young men as perpetrators of conflict and young women as victims. This created a two-fold problem that compounded age-based stereotypes and gender-based ones.

Even when youth were not negatively stereotyped, projects were typically designed without hearing young people's views about different gender identities, in particular young women's views about their own visions of the future and the best means to achieve them. As a result, although the resolution provided peacebuilders with a strengthened mandate on YPS, practitioners

began 2016 with limited experience of and practical guidance on how best to partner with youth to advance sustainable peace.

This handbook seeks to address that gap. It offers guidance on how to develop interventions that are responsive to the situation and needs of young people and that meaningfully engage diverse groups of young people throughout the process. In this regard, it will support practitioners to ensure:

- **youth sensitivity**, meaning that YPS initiatives are based on and respond to the specific realities, needs and aspirations of young people
- **youth inclusivity**, meaning that young people are given the right to participate and that their views and experiences are taken into account throughout the programme cycle. (See Figure 2)

Although both of these aspects are equally important and mutually reinforcing, some situations may present challenges to youth's leadership of and direct participation in analyses of the context, prioritization exercises and the design of projects.

Whether a precarious security situation is making traditional modes of consultation too risky, a team is unable to reach the most excluded young people to ensure a more inclusive approach or compressed proposal development timeframes are leaving little time for participatory approaches, this guidance can help project teams meet their minimum obligation to apply a youth lens when considering how their intervention speaks to the various factors that motivate and hamper young people's visions for peace and their leadership and participation.

Even in constrained circumstances such as these, however, it is incumbent on teams that such interventions build in early opportunities for validating programming outcomes and assumptions with youth and identifying ways to partner with young people in the project. By focusing on these two aspects of accountability to young people – youth sensitivity and youth inclusion – the module underscores that striving to create enabling environments for youth's agency, participation and leadership in peacebuilding and security-related matters is everyone's business.

FIGURE 2: Youth sensitivity and youth inclusivity

Youth sensitivity

Understanding young people's unique perspectives and how young people might experience life differently to other members of the same community will be an important aspect that will determine the impact of any given intervention.

That requires the application of an age perspective (also known as a youth lens) to all analyses to ensure teams can really understand the specific realities young people live, helping to inform better policies and programmes.

Youth inclusivity

The inclusion of young people is directly linked to their meaningful participation. In YPS programmes it is crucial to ensure that young people are guaranteed their right to participate throughout the process.

Teams have the responsibility to enable, facilitate and support youth participation through the establishment of participation mechanisms that will guarantee young people's engagement throughout the project cycle.

Sustaining peace across programmatic settings

The need for peacebuilding programming arises, in some way, because of a conflict factor that often originates in inequitable development or access to justice that has provoked tension among excluded groups or provided the oxygen that fans the flames of long-standing grievances or perceptions of illegitimate or corrupt government.

Problems arising from inequitable development and barriers to citizens' exercise of rights affect every country – Member States underscored this fact when they adopted SDG 16. Consequently, peacebuilding is not unique to crisis-affected contexts or those facing extreme poverty-related development challenges. In conflict prevention, youth engagement will also reveal itself as a powerful tool for addressing and re-balancing the social indicators of an impending crisis. Given this, this handbook provides guidance for programming across the full range of country settings.

Despite its relevance to all country settings, this guidance recognizes that programming in high-risk environments that are rife with insecurity presents particular challenges. Conflict or insecurity in particular geographical locations may limit project teams' access to certain populations and may more deeply politicize even the most banal actions. This prompts the need for robust approaches to risk analysis and mitigation to ensure a do-no-harm approach to youth outreach, partnership and programming.

Not all crises, however, are the same. Rapid onset crises call for an immediate response to a situation that may not have been envisaged. In these settings in which humanitarian action typically prevails, in addition to identifying early opportunities for peacebuilding, humanitarian actors may use this guidance as a complement to existing guidelines on working with and for young people in humanitarian action.[20] The guidance contained here may inform rapid situation analyses, needs assessments and response plans, and monitoring to ensure that humanitarian action responds to young people's needs, capacities and views vis-à-vis the YPS agenda. By contrast, protracted conflicts present situations in which many challenges, although difficult, are nonetheless predictable. Therefore, even if the situation is still rife with conflict, humanitarians, development actors and peacebuilding specialists have the opportunity to plan programming that responds to young people's peace and security goals and that allows them to be in equal partnership with other stakeholders.

However, traction with regard to the economic, political and social problems that drive conflict is most often gained through structural transformation associated with traditional development programmes. Although this close relationship means that resources and strong partnerships are available as complements to peacebuilding efforts, project teams should be wary of falling into a common trap that assumes that all development or security work occurring in contexts affected by conflict supports peacebuilding.

As this guidance makes clear, although there is a relationship between peacebuilding programming and humanitarian, development and security work, there are also important differences in the types of outcomes that are pursued, in the indicators that are selected and – most importantly – in the ToCs that are driving programming choices.

As a result, the aim of this guidance is to offer tools to help humanitarian, development, security

20 Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action (forthcoming). *With Us, for Us, by Us: IASC Guidelines on Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises.* United Nations Children's Fund and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

sector and peacebuilding practitioners work more closely with young people to operationalize the peace and security agenda in a way that responds to diverse youth concerns and goals.

Given this, this handbook is not meant to be a comprehensive guide to any of the individual programming cycle topics. Instead, it is best viewed as an accompaniment to existing guidance on the basic processes of conflict analysis, results-based programming and monitoring and evaluation, and can be utilized to inform a more youth-inclusive approach to existing guidance. For further reading, a list of suggested resources can be found at the end of each section.

PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

BOX 7: Minimum requirements of YPS programming

- ✓ Young people should at least be consulted throughout the programme cycle.
- ✓ YPS programmes should be based on a youth- and gender-sensitive conflict analysis and should clearly seek to address a specific conflict and/or security situation that is relevant to youth.
- ✓ A YPS ToC should explain how the proposed actions are meant to positively affect a conflict and/or security situation while contributing to improving the experience of young people.
- ✓ The outcome statements are clear about the kind of change the programme seeks with respect to a conflict and/or security factor. The outcome statements should be related to one or several of the five YPS pillars.
- ✓ Project indicators must be at least age and sex disaggregated.
- ✓ Evaluations must assess the degree to which the initiative has fostered peace and contributed to youth's improved situation and meaningful participation.

TABLE 1: Linkages to processes and frameworks

Chapter	Linkages to processes and frameworks	
1 – Youth participatory approaches	• Multi-stakeholder engagement • Project and programme development • Organization of consultations and events	• SDGs review and follow-up, e.g. in voluntary national reviews • Steering committees and advisory boards
2 – Planning and conducting a youth-sensitive conflict analysis	• Recovery and peacebuilding assessments, jointly conducted by the European Union, United Nations and World Bank • Common country analyses, conducted by United Nations country teams	• Humanitarian needs overviews • COVID-19 socioeconomic impact assessments, conducted by United Nations country teams
3 – YPS strategic priorities and theories of change	• Integrated strategic frameworks, developed by the United Nations in settings where there is a peacekeeping operation • Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, prepared by countries as part of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank	• United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks, developed by United Nations country teams • Humanitarian response plans • United Nations COVID-19 socioeconomic response plans
4 – YPS outcome statements and indicators of change	• Development of project and programme documents • Development of indicators • Databases and indexes	• Periodic reviews of United Nations common country analyses • Results and resource frameworks
5 – Monitoring YPS project implementation and impact	• Periodic project reviews • Project reporting • Midterm evaluations • Situation monitoring • SDGs monitoring and reporting	• Early warning • Oversight • Quality and assurance management • Reporting for intelligence analysis
6 – YPS knowledge-based evaluation	• Process evaluations • Midterm evaluations • Final evaluations	• Inception reports • Report writing • Workshops and advisory boards
7 – YPS entry points	• United Nations peacekeeping and political missions • United Nations agencies, funds and programmes • United Nations specialized agencies • United Nations Secretariat	• Governments at national, subnational and local levels • Civil society • Youth organizations, networks and movements • Intergovernmental organizations • International financial institutions

CHAPTER 1

Youth Participatory Approaches

Understanding meaningful participation

Resolution 2250 urged Member States to give youth a greater role in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels and consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes. However, what does "meaningful participation" really mean?

From a rights-based perspective, young women and young men have the right to be informed and consulted and to have their voices taken into account regarding all matters that have a direct or indirect impact on their lives and futures. The realization of their right to participate needs to be guaranteed by duty-bearers and the United Nations.

From an efficiency perspective, ensuring that diverse groups of young people are engaged and have a say in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes can significantly improve the relevance, legitimacy, sustainability and impact of projects.

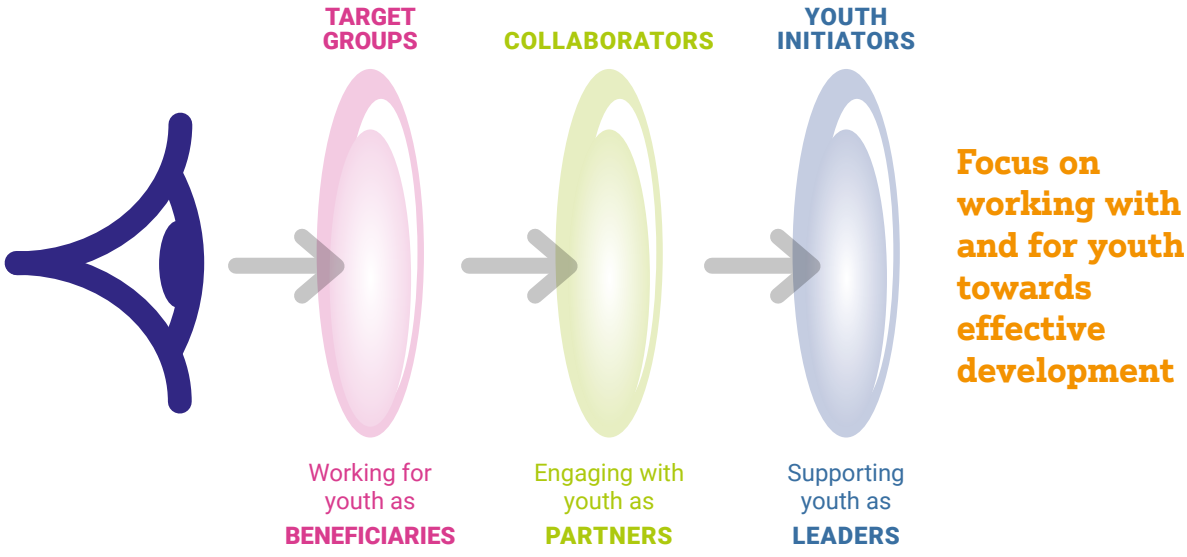
Engaging young people when undertaking a conflict analysis and designing and implementing a project does not only mean providing them with access to these processes. It also involves the United Nations holding itself accountable to an important constituency, and generating as complete a picture of the context as possible so that interventions are responsive to realities on the ground.

Young people may engage in project design and implementation in a number of ways, including as key partners and as local experts providing a unique perspective on prevailing conflict dynamics. The different roles have implications for project teams – for example how they identify individuals with whom they want to work or engage and how they structure their work to ensure that they are not doing any harm.

The three-lens approach to youth participation[21] is helpful in understanding the ways of working with and for young people as well as supporting the work that young people do for sustainable

21 Development for International Development–Civil Society Organisation Youth Working Group (2010). *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers.* Available at https://www.youthpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/library/2010_Youth_Participation_in_Development_Guide_Eng.pdf.

FIGURE 3: The three-lens approach to youth participation[22]



development and peace (see Figure 3). The three lenses are:

- working for youth as beneficiaries
- engaging with youth as partners
- supporting youth as leaders.

Projects that target youth or that have an explicit focus on youth issues are those working for youth as beneficiaries. Projects engaging youth as partners are collaborative interventions with varying degrees of youth cooperation and responsibility.

When projects support young people as leaders, they enable youth-led activities and a conducive space for participation in decision-making processes and structures. These three lenses of youth participation are not mutually exclusive or static, and project teams can use them to consider the most suitable practices in their context.

Accordingly, an awareness of different forms of and approaches to youth participation is important. It will support project teams in facilitating young people's meaningful participation and will avoid tokenistic or instrumentalizing inclusion. The principles and barriers to meaningful youth engagement defined by the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth are an important reference in this area.[23]

There is a plethora of models theorizing youth participation, both offline and online (see suggested reading in Box 8 for a compilation and critical assessments of these models).

Each of these theories and models visualize different aspects, dimensions and challenges for meaningful participation. They also reflect diverse social contexts,

22 Ibid, p.3, adapted from *World Bank Development Report 2007*.

23 United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (2017). *Principles and Barriers for Meaningful Youth Participation*. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20522UNMGCYPrinciplesandBarriersforMeaningfulYouthEngagement.pdf

situations, relationships and processes in which youth participation takes place.

All the models have limitations, but they provide useful tools for analysing and understanding participation typologies, degrees and dimensions that will help teams "qualify" youth participation. The models should be used in view of the specific contexts and local approaches to national ownership that are crucial to the project teams' efforts in sustaining peace.[24]

Some models also provide interesting tools to help benchmark progress in regard to increased youth participation (such as Roger Hart's "ladder of youth participation"[25] and other similar versions[26]). Such models will help teams understand where they stand at the beginning of the project and will present the path teams should strive to follow in improving the status of their engagement with youth.

Other models will support teams in planning for an online event[27] or in evaluating a participatory process.[28]

Regardless of the model or terminology that is used, it is important to acknowledge that there

SUGGESTED TIP

BOX 8. Suggested reading

Creative Commons (2012).
"Participation models: citizens, youth, online — a chase through the maze"

Karsten, A. (2011).
"Meeting citizens half-way? Different models and concepts of participation"

are different levels and forms of participation, including non-participation. It is also imperative for any project team to understand how these forms interlink with different functions (or roles), and forms of agency and power.[29]

For example, a young person who is invited to speak at an annual forum fulfils a different function to a young person who is being appointed to an advisory board. When it comes to agency, young people who are part of setting the agenda of a meeting have more agency than those passively receiving information. In addition, regarding power, youth that have been asked to provide inputs to a decided project plan have less influence than if they had been involved in shaping the project's focus and objectives since the project's inception phase.[30]

Furthermore, young people's work for peace and security takes many different forms of civic and

24 Development for International Development–Civil Society Organisation Youth Working Group (2010). *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers.* Available at https://www.youthpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/library/2010_Youth_Participation_in_Development_Guide_Eng.pdf

25 Hart, R. (1992). "Children's participation: from tokenism to citizenship". Innocenti Essay No. 4. Florence, Italy: United Nations Children's Fund International Child Development Centre.

26 See the following compilation: Creative Commons (2012). "Participation models: citizens, youth, online — a chase through the maze", second edition, November 2012. Available at https://www.youthpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/library/Participation_Models_20121118.pdf.

27 Wenmoth, D. (2006). "Participating online – the four Cs", 10 November. Available at http://blog.core-ed.org/derek/2006/11/participation_online_the_four_.html.

28 Davies, T. (2009). "Can social networks bridge the participation gap?", 18 May. Available at https://www.timdavies.org.uk/2009/05/18/can-social-networks-bridge-the-participation-gap/.

29 Gaventa, J. (2006). "Finding the space for change: a power analysis". IDS Bulletin, vol. 37, No. 6.

30 Treseder, P. (1997). *Empowering Children and Young People: Promoting Involvement in Decision-making.* London: Save the Children.

political engagement,[31] such as bridging divides in communities to foster social cohesion, self-organizing civil society dialogues and participating in national peace committees. These are examples of how youth contribute to sustaining peace through participation in both formal and informal structures.

Project teams can consider connecting formal structures with youth's alternative avenues for participation by, for example, bringing together youth-led organizations and youth-led civil society platforms with decision-makers to include youth's perspectives and needs in policies and programmes on peace and security. Often young people can bridge the gap between formal and informal peace work and can partner with project teams to foster a whole-of-society approach.

Youth engagement in peace processes unfolds across different layers of the process – in the room, around the room and outside the room. In other words, youth engagement in peace processes is not restricted to negotiation tables at the elite level but unfolds across the three layers, which are of equal importance in sustaining peace.[32]

As noted previously, it is also crucial to understand that there are practices of non-participation. Such practices are commonly mistaken for participation, for example those in the form of one-off "consultations" that are not set up to have any meaningful influence on the issue at stake. These types of practices can be referred to as "tokenism", "manipulation" and "window dressing".

In these cases, young people are invited to merely fulfil the function of "wallflowers". Their experiences, perceptions and opinions are not considered to be of importance. Even if they were given the opportunity to voice their concerns, their contributions would not be taken into account. Youth are simply manipulated and, in the worst-case scenario, even taken advantage of by power-holders.

For participation to be meaningful, there needs to be some degree of power-sharing and interaction.[33] Meaningful participation is not automatically achieved by simply having young women and men physically present in the room. They must be allowed to raise their voices and influence decisions that are being taken, including when they are not in the room. An enabling environment is necessary if their contributions are to make a difference.[34]

Consequently, young people should not be engaged if there is no real opportunity for them to make, change or influence decisions. A project team should therefore always critically analyse its rationale for wanting to involve young people, to avoid "tick-the-box" or "symbolic" exercises.[35]

In practice, a project team will most probably use a mixture of different forms of and approaches to participation, depending on the circumstances surrounding the project. Different levels of participation can be legitimate and considered meaningful depending on factors such as the following:[36]

31 United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (2018). *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*. United Nations publication. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy.

32 Altiok, A. and I. Grizelj (2019). *We Are Here: An Integrated Approach to Youth-inclusive Peace Processes.* United Nations publication. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2019-07/Global%20Policy%20Paper%20Youth%20Participation%20in%20Peace%20Processes.pdf.

33 Driskell, D. (2002). *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth – A Manual for Participation.* Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

34 Warburton, D. (2007). *Making a Difference: A Guide to Evaluating Public Participation in Central Government.* London: Involve.

35 Ibid.

36 Sustainable Community (2017). "What is the spectrum of public participation", 14 February. Available at https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2017/02/14/spectrum-of-public-participation/.

- the type of process that young people will participate in, for example government processes, such as a constitutional review, project development, annual participation events and official or unofficial peace processes
- the expected outcome of young people's participation
- the prospects for the sustainability of the project outcomes
- the available time and budget
- who else is involved in the project process
- the insights that a youth-sensitive and age-responsive context, conflict and stakeholder analysis has provided on the role of youth in conflict dynamics and opportunities for peace
- the platforms for participation that are being used (e.g. there are other forms, dimensions and aspects of participation that need to be considered if planning for online participation,[37] supporting existing youth-led platforms at the community level or enabling a space for youth in formal structures and processes).

Regardless of the situation, there are some qualitative considerations that project teams can apply to ensure that the participation of young women and men is more than "a façade of good intentions"[38] and that it becomes meaningful. The next section addresses such considerations.

PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

BOX 9: Mainstreaming youth views/goals/ roles versus youth empowerment

The goal of **mainstreaming** is equality. It recognizes young people's right to play an equal role and have their perspectives factored into initiatives with other actors to achieve a peacebuilding goal. Success is based on the achievement of the peacebuilding goal, but measurement must include the role and perspectives of young women and men in that achievement.

Youth **empowerment** is fundamentally about providing young women and men with specific opportunities, resources and skills so that they can advance their peacebuilding goals and participate fully in civic, economic and political life. Success factors emphasize the degree of change in youth achievements, skills and confidence, and attitudes.

> "It is not only a question of whether or not the project teams think that the engagement of young people has been meaningful. It is the youth themselves that determine if their participation has been meaningful or not."

37 Davis, T., and others (2011). "Rethinking responses to children and young people's online lives". In *EU Kids Online 2 – Final Conference* London School of Economics and Political Science, London, September.

38 White, S. (1996). "Depoliticising development: the uses and abuses of participation". *Development in Practice*, vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 6–15.

How to ensure meaningful youth participation

Practically speaking, to ensure meaningful youth participation, project teams need to be mindful of who to engage and how to engage them.

Who to engage

Project teams must have valid, evidence-based reasons for determining which young people to engage in programming. Teams must reflect on who can speak on behalf of which community and who might be able to address a particular problem; for example:

- Are elite or privileged youth appropriate ambassadors to speak about the problems facing marginalized youth?

Teams must also consider how to reach various stakeholder groups while working in contexts in which cultural and religious norms might limit the way in which young women and men may participate.

Moreover, project teams should be sensitive to the subtle ways in which young people's various identities – such as class, caste, religious affiliation, ethnicity, tribe and more fluid notions of gender – may combine in the prevailing cultures. For instance, the project teams must consider the ways in which different gender identities shape young people's lived experiences, capacities, goals and opportunities for participation. Young female ex-combatants, for example, will probably have different concerns and needs – as they join disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes – from their male colleagues, whereas a transgendered young man from an elite family may face tougher challenges in exercising his political rights than his lower-status cisgender counterpart.

It is important to recognize that young people sometimes hold opinions that support long-standing social divisions, discriminatory structures and harmful gender norms, and express points of view that run counter to our interventions' peacebuilding goals. In fact, we should anticipate that many segments of the youth population will share biases and stereotype others in similar ways to the rest of the population.

Furthermore, contexts marked by transition – whether that be a transition from relative stasis to a crisis or a transition from conflict to peace implementation – are moments of rapid change. Such change often brings renegotiation and redefinition of gender roles and responsibilities that may open up opportunities for action or curtail modes of participation for young people of different gender identities, including young women and men.[39]

By considering young people's different and overlapping identities and roles, project teams increase the likelihood of partnering with youth cohorts that are most relevant to the peacebuilding and security changes that are sought. This kind of deep reflection not only will help during the implementation of the initiative of the United Nations but can also aid in building an effective exit strategy by establishing enduring partnerships early.[40]

> "The term "youth" does not describe a homogeneous bloc of actors who have the same opinions and access to power. In fact, young people are as diverse as the general population."

39 Myrttinen, H., and others (2014). *Rethinking Gender in Peacebuilding.* London: International Alert, p. 6.

40 Paffenholz, T. (2004). *Designing Transformation and Intervention Processes.* Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, pp 1–17.

How to engage

By appreciating that young people hold a range of identities, opinions, capacities and motivations, we must also recognize that young people may be reluctant to engage with the United Nations, security and justice institutions, governmental representatives or other actors in the process of peacebuilding programming.

Past experience of exclusion, manipulation or tokenistic treatment or young people's perception that their views and life experiences have been misunderstood or are considered to be not as important as those of other stakeholders may increase young people's reticence about joining peacebuilding processes. Project teams and duty-bearers alike must recognize the potential for this reluctance and proactively plan for ways to incentivize youth participation and foster young people's trust.

Despite our best intentions to design participatory processes, it is important to be mindful that, to succeed, projects may require additional support to incentivize key actors. For example, duty-bearers such as line ministries, institutes and local, regional or national governmental offices responsible for policy, laws and programmes that affect young people may need additional capacities to better factor youth's lived experience and views into their daily work and to help them establish partnerships with young people.

Conversely, young people themselves may also need youth-dedicated processes, additional resources and access to training to enable them to enter into a partnership on an equal footing.

For the young people who participate in activities and projects, access to resources and information is important. Young participants should have access to resources that facilitate and support their active engagement and influence. This includes resources such as allocated speaking time, translators and printed materials. They should also have access to information about the process, and the event or activity that they intend to engage in. This includes information about the purpose, expected outcome, format and rules of engagement with regard to their participation.[41] Particular attention should be given to young women's access to resources and information, as they often face gendered limitations on their participation.

> "Casting a wide net of inclusion should fundamentally be about ensuring that the voices of all segments of the youth population are heard, regardless of whether or not we share their views or positions."

Supporting the direct participation of young people and their access to power affects the efficiency of the project and activity (keeping in mind that their influence and power in peace processes are not always related to their proximity to formal meetings of the elite).[42] Participating youth should be able to interact with power-holders and duty-bearers, and influence decisions being taken. Two-way communication can be applied to avoid youth becoming passive recipients of information. Youth should also be given the opportunity to directly engage in the process, rather than being indirectly represented by a (non-youth) actor mediating their voices. Furthermore, to strengthen accountability, young

41 White, S. (1996). "Depoliticising development: the uses and abuses of participation". *Development in Practice*, vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 6–15.

42 Altiok, A. and I. Grizelj (2019). *We Are Here: An Integrated Approach to Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes. United Nations publication*. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2019-07/Global%20Policy%20Paper%20Youth%20Participation%20in%20Peace%20Processes.pdf.

TABLE 2: Assessment questions to plan for meaningful youth engagement

Planning their overall engagement

1. Why do we need to engage young people in this particular process? What is unique about their engagement or contribution? How will they particularly benefit from it?
2. What are the concrete opportunities for young people to engage in the process? How will their engagement happen (e.g. youth consultations, youth-led implementing partners, advisory groups)?
3. Are there risks that young people's engagement in this process might be limited or tokenistic? If so, how might we address them?
4. Do the young people we are trying to reach have a desire to be included? If not, explore the reasons for their reluctance and how to incentivize them.
5. What do we know about the young people in the community in which the project/activity will take place? Have they been previously engaged in similar processes? Are they often marginalized or included in these kinds of processes?
6. Would it be necessary to negotiate young people's participation with other stakeholders (e.g. community elders, government authorities)? If so, how might we convince the other stakeholders of the value of engaging young people in the process?
7. Would it be safe and would it feel safe for all young people to engage in this process/activity? Would there be any consequences of their engagement (e.g. prosecution by authorities or elders, stigma)? If there are risks, how might we address them? In what ways can young people feel safer in engaging in the process (e.g. having peers in the group)?
8. Do the young people we are trying to engage in this process/activity come from the same background or similar backgrounds? If so, what could be done to widen/diversify the young people who are reached?
9. Are there any cultural or social bias and barriers that might prevent or jeopardize the participation of young women? If so, how can we address them?
10. Have we included a representative and diverse range of young people, including representation of different gender, racial, ethnic, linguistic, tribal and religious identities and people with disabilities? Can this be addressed?
11. Are there existing youth peacebuilding activities and/or youth-led mechanisms and platforms that we can support and engage in to contribute towards the project outcome?
12. What information do we need to provide young people with to enable them to decide if and how they want to engage in the process, and in what format?
13. What kind of support (operational, capacity, etc.) might we need to provide young people with to enable their full and meaningful participation in the process?

Before a meeting or consultation

1. When would be the most appropriate time/date to schedule a meeting to not affect or limit young people's participation (e.g. school-age youth may not be able to participate during class time, whereas young women may face barriers to their participation in evening meetings because of domestic responsibilities, cultural prohibitions or an increased level of night-time security risks)?
2. Are the objectives of this meeting/consultation clearly defined? Have they been communicated properly to all the young participants?

3. Would the meeting/consultation be more effective if it was co-designed and co-hosted with youth themselves?
4. What would be the best format for this meeting/event? What methodology might enable us to create a safe and dynamic space for a dialogue among young people?
5. If the meeting includes the participation of other stakeholders (particularly non-youth), how can we ensure that the voices of young people will not be silenced or disregarded (intentionally or unintentionally) by other participants?
6. Do we need to make specific arrangements to enable young people's meaningful participation during the meeting (e.g. providing translations into local languages, sign interpretation and/or transport costs)?
7. Is there enough information available to enable all young people to make informed decisions during the meeting? If not, how might we appropriately inform them about the meeting and the agenda?

During a meeting or consultation

1. Have the participants been informed about the meeting's objectives and format, and who will be in attendance?
2. What ground rules can be agreed with the participants to ensure a respectful and collaborative environment throughout the meeting?
3. How can we ensure that we do not allow a single group/constituency to dominate the discussion? What mechanisms/strategies can we use to ensure young people's voices are not overshadowed during the meeting? Are specific strategies/mechanisms needed to amplify the voices of young women?
4. How can we ensure that the format/methodology chosen for the meeting is working for our young participants and will help us to reach our objectives? Will there be opportunities to adapt or change the methodology during the meeting itself?
5. What indicators might we use to assess the quality of young people's participation during the meeting? (Did they speak? Were they voted onto a committee? Were their suggestions considered by the overall group?)
6. How can we ensure that any views, comments and suggestions that the young people make during the meeting will be taken into consideration?
7. Have we clearly communicated to the young people how their contributions will be used after the meeting and what the next steps will be?

After a meeting or consultation

1. Were we able to ensure meaningful and diverse youth participation in the meeting? What do youth participants think? If not, what could have been done differently? If so, what were the good practices and lessons learned?
2. Did the meeting contribute to changing the perspectives of elders/authorities on young people?
3. Have the recommendations/suggestions that the young people made during the meeting been integrated into our policies/programmes?
4. Have we provided feedback to the young people on how their inputs/recommendations will help shape the project going forward?

people should receive feedback on how their input will be taken into consideration. They should also be presented with a means of appeal or complaint in case they perceive that the outcomes of the process and/or the decision taken do not correctly reflect their views and perspectives.

Although the vast majority of youth who currently participate do so on a voluntary basis, our commitment to achieving broader inclusion of harder-to-reach or vulnerable youth should compel us to consider extra measures – from financial incentives to making provisions for transport and childcare – so that we can extend the opportunity of partnership to those who are typically silenced and ignored.

As we seek a broader, more meaningful engagement of young people and encourage closer connection with and greater sensitivity of duty-bearers, appreciation for the potential to do harm must be at the front and centre of the design of the policies, processes and projects of the United Nations.

Although the principle of "do no harm" pertains to all of the work of the United Nations, different types of programme settings and focuses may require special consideration when working with young people or applying a youth lens. Younger adolescents or those from minority language groups, for example, may need greater levels of protection than their older peers or require additional steps to gain consent.

In terms of risks inherent in contexts, programming in conflict settings presents heightened degrees of risk to youth that project teams must actively seek to mitigate and continuously monitor. The importance of identifying the specific risks that different cohorts of young people face across the range of programme settings underscores the critical role that conflict analyses play in conflict-sensitive planning and programming.

In practical terms, when teams are planning to meaningfully engage youth, there are some aspects that require proper consideration. For instance, it is important to recognize the fact that the term "youth" does not describe a homogeneous bloc of actors who have one set of goals, similar opinions and the same access to power. Young people are as diverse as the general population and often experience multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination and marginalization.

Given this diversity, some young populations may require different and specific approaches to enable their participation. This means that programming staff may need to make special efforts to reach out to marginalized youth, who are often excluded from peacebuilding efforts.

CHAPTER 2

Planning and Conducting a Youth-sensitive Conflict Analysis

Understanding what a youth-sensitive conflict analysis is

A conflict analysis is the foundation on which strategic planning and programme design for sustaining peace is built. Nearly all United Nations guidance for conflict transformative and peacebuilding programming stresses the importance of conducting a conflict analysis before planning and designing a youth-focused and gender-sensitive intervention.[43]

Despite that, conflict analyses commonly disregard the agency of young people in their communities and overlook how conflict may affect young people differently.

Against this backdrop, this chapter will carry out the following:

- It will explore the benefits of ensuring that a conflict analysis is sensitive to youth and will discuss the disadvantages of excluding youth from the process.
- It will provide step-by-step suggestions on how to meaningfully engage young people and how to apply a youth lens throughout the different steps of a conflict analysis process.

There are already plenty of good conflict analysis guidelines and resources available, some of which are listed in the appendix to this chapter. However, these tools typically, by default, do not consider the perspectives of young people. Therefore, this chapter does not aspire to serve as a comprehensive guide to how to conduct a conflict analysis. Rather, it aims to complement existing tools by providing guidelines for applying a youth lens to conflict analysis.

Defining a youth-sensitive conflict analysis

The purpose of a conflict analysis is to provide an evidence-based description of the context of the conflict, the conflict dynamics, the actors involved and the opportunities for peace. A comprehensive conflict analysis will inform better peacebuilding programming and policy decisions.

43 See, for example, (1) *CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2016). Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics – A Resource Manual*. Cambridge, Massachusetts; (2) United Nations Children's Fund (2016). *Guide to: Conflict Analysis*. New York. Available at http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/Guide_to_Conflict_Analysis_-_UNICEF_Nov_2016.pdf; (3) YouthPower Learning (2017). *Promising Practices in Engaging Youth in Peace and Security and PVE/CVE – Summary of Key Interventions and Examples*. Washington, D.C.

Conflict analyses can vary greatly in scope and scale. A conflict analysis may examine the conflict context at national, regional, local or community level or in relation to specific sectors or themes, such as education and health. Conflict analyses commonly include different elements and specific analyses that build on each other. Some common elements are shown in Figure 4.

A conflict analysis is carried out through a process that includes different mapping and analytical steps that involve various actors. When it is done in an inclusive and participatory manner, the very process of carrying out a conflict analysis can also serve as a means of dialogue and mediation, as well as an entry point for reconciliation. This may enhance the validity of the analysis, increase trust in decision-making processes and pave the way for closer partnerships.

The United Nations employs a number of processes that may seem similar to a conflict analysis. Some examples include:

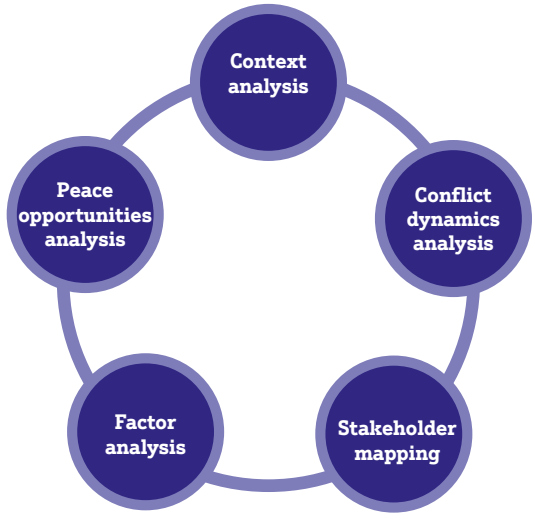
- recovery and peacebuilding assessments[44]
- common country assessments
- humanitarian needs overviews.

These processes examine different aspects of the country or regional settings in which the United Nations works to inform strategic planning and ongoing situation or programme monitoring.

However, the purpose of these exercises is different from that of a conflict analysis. They take a broader view of the situation to gain a comprehensive understanding of the political, economic, social and cultural factors prevailing in a given context. This broader view of the situation helps the United Nations understand barriers to and opportunities for helping national and local governments and communities to advance their development goals and prepare for and respond to emergencies.

44 Formerly known as post-conflict needs assessments.

FIGURE 4: Example of common components of a conflict analysis



In contrast, conflict analyses explicitly aim to unpack the current and historical factors that drive conflict or promote peace and social cohesion. They are used for two important but distinct purposes:

- to inform "do no harm" conflict-sensitive programming
- to indicate effective entry points for peacebuilding programming.

Conflict analyses also help identify how multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities may exacerbate or reinforce conflict factors by producing social instability, eroding confidence in governing institutions and fracturing social trust. Examples of such vulnerabilities include a lack of preparedness for natural disasters and/or climate-related challenges.

Conflict analyses and the United Nations

Conflict analyses are required in all country settings to ensure that United Nations programmes are conflict sensitive by identifying how actors and dynamics may

pose a variety of risks in a given context. A conflict analysis would typically be part of the common country assessment that the United Nations country teams would conduct before developing a United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.[45]

Moreover, because partners' identities, capacities, political affiliations and even gender can affect how the United Nations is perceived or where it can deliver services or programmes, conflict sensitivity considerations go beyond the thematic operations of the United Nations – they encompass the very organizations that the United Nations partners with to deliver its services or programmes. As a result, conflict analyses can help the United Nations to avoid doing harm and exacerbating existing tensions and inequalities by anticipating how interaction between actors and factors may put the conflict context, programming and the reputation of the United Nations at risk.

However, the work of the United Nations frequently extends beyond merely ensuring that it is doing no harm by seeking to positively affect conflict drivers and factors of instability through peacebuilding. Conflict analysis in this regard aims to advance peacebuilding by orienting programming to positively affect key factors and actors of conflict and peace.

This is an important distinction that separates good peacebuilding programming from good programming, that happens to occur in conflict settings. Peacebuilding programming must intentionally seek to tackle conflict factors, including root causes, and support pathways for peace.

45 See United Nations Sustainable Development Group (2019). *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework – Internal Guidance.* United Nations publication. Available at https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/UN-Cooperation-Framework-Internal-Guidance-Final-June-2019_1.pdf.

Youth and conflict analysis

As conflict analyses are central to the way in which the United Nations builds its country strategies and programmes, which actors, challenges and opportunities for peace are mentioned and which are omitted have serious implications for how the United Nations understands the context and sets priorities.

On this score, conflict analyses have typically fallen short when it comes to understanding the role of youth and the differential impact of conflict on young people.

Conflicts often place near-insurmountable burdens on young people, as they are, among other things:

- the most affected by the collapse or failures of the education sector, as well as a lack of training and employment/decent job opportunities
- the most affected by criminality and violence, in particular homicides, and GBV, including sexual violence
- the most likely to be recruited into armed forces[46]
- the most likely to carry the (experienced or inherited) trauma of conflicts for years and decades after a conflict.[47]

When young people are mentioned in conflict analyses, however, they are frequently identified only as either aggressors, which typically signifies young men, or as victims,

46 However, violent conflict can also bring about rapid changes in social norms. Peacebuilding offers opportunities to reintegrate young people into/support their inclusion in peaceful civilian life, political processes and job markets. The United Nations Development Programme *Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace, 2016–2020,* is available at https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/Youth-GPS.html.

47 https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-armed-conflict.pdf.

which often implicitly means young women, in a conflict.[48]

Even the way in which tropes or concepts that are not directly about violence – for example phenomena such as a "youth bulge" and "youth unemployment" – are used can implicitly invoke the threat of young men who are ready to join violent groups or armed militia to get what they want through force or receive remuneration in the absence of a salary.[49]

Such stereotypes about youth lead to erroneous assumptions that ascribe far too much power to the idea that the negative behaviour of young men has a decisive influence over a country's peace and development trajectory. Likewise, they also ascribe far too little power to the experiences of young women, who may play a range of roles, from revolutionary leaders and combatants to local peacebuilders.

In reality, within decision-making bodies, policymaking processes and meaningful consultations, youth are more often than not omitted from analyses and denied access and agency, which limits the impact of their positive contributions and curbs their participation in civic life.[50]

Why do we produce conflict analyses that either exclude young people or treat them as a homogeneous bloc?

One reason is that the existing data on which analyses are based frequently are not disaggregated, which makes it difficult to see how key aspects of the context produce varying outcomes for different populations, such as younger children, ethnic minorities, youth with disabilities, youth of different sexual orientations or gender identities, and youth from different castes.[51]

As a result of this lack of data, youth are frequently excluded from or treated in a tokenistic fashion in stakeholder consultations, focus group discussions and key informant interviews organized during the course of a conflict analysis.[52] Whether because of mere oversight or because of a presumption that youth voices are not important enough to include in data collection, these omissions constitute a serious gap in the conflict analysis methodology. If we cannot "see" the full range of the youth population in the description of the situations, it is hard to take into account their situations and conflict-specific roles, needs, capacities, goals, resources and challenges as we design programming interventions.

48 United Nations Development Programme (2006). *Youth and Violent Conflict.* New York, p. 11.

49 The term "youth bulge" refers to the demographic reality of countries with a large youth population, whereas "youth unemployment" refers to young people's challenges in finding gainful employment or a livelihood. Although neither of these terms necessarily entails disparaging notions of problematic youth, negative associations have been driven by a faulty analysis of statistical correlations between youth and conflict or peace. Although research does indicate a moderate statistical correlation between countries with higher levels of peacefulness and smaller youth populations, correlation is not causation. It should be noted that some of the world's least peaceful countries do not have large youth cohorts and that not all countries with large youth populations suffer from conflict. See Hagerty, T. (2017). "Data for youth, peace and security: a summary of research findings from the Institute for Economics & Peace". Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace.

50 Ibid., p. 6; and United Network of Young Peacebuilders (2015). A*greed Language on Youth, Peace and Security – A Report by the United Network of Young Peacebuilders.* The Hague, the Netherlands, pp. 11–13.

51 United Nations (2020). *World Youth Report – Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, p. 75.

52 Io-Liyong, A. (2015). "11 ways to help young people", 4 June. Available at https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/06/11-ways-to-help-young-people-in-conflict-zones/.

Youth-sensitive conflict analysis

Understanding the heterogeneous nature of the youth demographic is key to exercising youth sensitivity. A youth-sensitive approach to conflict analysis does not only enable a better understanding of young people's situations at large and specific "youth issues". It also helps us to shed light on a number of perspectives that are relevant to the broader context and dynamics of a conflict, and gain a better understanding of how age might interlink with the root causes and drivers of conflict and opportunities for peace, for example.

A youth-sensitive conflict analysis can therefore contribute to an understanding of:

- how young people of diverse backgrounds and gender identities are described and how youth is defined, based on the cultural, social and economic context
- how stereotypes, norms and power structures based on age and gender are linked to the different dynamics and aspects of a conflict
- how young people interface with other generations and social identities
- how a conflict affects the rights, needs and opportunities of young women and young men from diverse backgrounds
- how young women and men of different backgrounds organize themselves and what roles they play in the conflict and peacebuilding process
- what push and pull factors influence young people's decisions and behaviours in conflict.

By exploring these aspects, a youth- and gender-sensitive conflict analysis can contribute to strengthening the rights-based aspects of peace and security programming. In addition, if it is done in a participatory way, it can also serve as a first step towards bridging the gap between young people and decision-makers, and thereby countering incorrect narratives and policy myths surrounding the youth demographic.

Planning and carrying out a youth-sensitive conflict analysis

Phase 1 – Preparation and design

Before starting to collect and analyse data, it is important to dedicate some time to clearly defining the purpose, scope and methodological approach of the conflict analysis exercise. This includes identifying data gaps and deciding on what information needs to be collected by whom, from whom, how and when.

From a youth-sensitive perspective, this requires that you carry out the following:

- determine the degree and form of youth participation that are necessary and feasible throughout the different steps of the conflict analysis exercise
- identify potential risks and obstacles that youth might face when participating in the process and identify mitigation strategies
- identify and agree on practices and codes of conduct that will support the meaningful participation of youth with different backgrounds and gender identities
- allocate financial resources and build the capacity of implementers and team members so that they know how to apply a youth lens and can meaningfully engage with young people throughout the exercise.

> Consider the possibility of youth co-leading the conflict analysis process.

When initiating a youth-sensitive conflict analysis, consider if the process as a whole, or elements of it, can be co-led or entirely led by youth. At a minimum, ensure that a diverse group of young people and/or youth-led or youth-focused organizations are represented in the team leading the analysis and that they are participating in working groups tasked with designing and conducting data collection or drafting specific sections of the report.

Beyond their engagement in process design, data collection and analysis, young people's participation should be considered in reference groups for validation and review at relevant stages of the process.

YOUTH REPRESENTATION

When inviting youth to take part in a conflict analysis process, be aware of sensitivities about who can represent who. In particular, when identifying young people to participate in conducting or informing the analysis in stakeholder or reference groups or as subjects of data collection, ensure that outreach extends to frequently marginalized or excluded groups. This includes young people:

- of different age groups
- with disabilities
- of diverse gender identities
- from under-represented groups, such as indigenous communities and communities in rural areas.

Given that the goal of conflict analysis is to examine the roles of key actors in conflicts and capture the ways in which others contribute to peace, the information produced by a conflict analysis can raise alarm among some powerful stakeholders.

> Young people's engagement in your conflict analysis exercise may expose them to risk. That is not a reason to exclude them, but a reason to rethink methods.

Identifying how institutional corruption or a lack of accountability and inclusivity erodes public confidence or delegitimises security institutions, or how local community members join together to defend the rights of marginalized others, implicates powerful actors in negative dynamics. It also potentially exposes those who are working for peace and against powerful actors who benefit from conflict.

Consequently, inviting a diverse group of young people to participate in conflict analysis – whether through collecting data, contributing personal experiences of insecurity, expressing grievances or analysing evidence that indicates the destabilizing role of powerful interests – may expose them to risk.

This should not be a reason to exclude youth from engaging in the process of conflict analysis. In

> Do not wait until the very end of the process to conduct a validation exercise with young people, as there will not be sufficient time to address concerns and omissions specific to youth.

fact, it underscores the obligation of the United Nations to ensure that the way young people engage in the process and how their data and analyses are used does not expose them to harm. In fulfilling this obligation, do not decide on behalf of youth on the dangers that they face – always consult youth directly about the risks they face and support their suggestions for how to mitigate these risks.

Similarly, the team should always be mindful of and try to mitigate the potential limitations on youth's meaningful participation that negative power dynamics between youth and non-youth might have when planning for, for example, reference group meetings or wider consultations. It is therefore crucial to design the process carefully and ensure that any meeting that will take place during the process accounts for cultural practices that may make it difficult for some young people to speak against elders or indeed speak at all.

It is advisable to collaborate with youth in the planning phase to identify the necessary codes of conduct, practices and approaches that will be applied throughout the exercise. They might give you information about specific limitations that youth face that you are not aware of or solutions that you have not thought of. (There are helpful tips on how to plan for youth-sensitive meetings and consultations in Chapter 1 of this handbook.)

When seeking youth participation in, for example, data collection, reference groups, stakeholder consultations or working groups, consider providing financial support to cover costs such as transport to meetings or a small stipend to enable the participation of youth who are not financially well off.

This may require working with administrative and logistics staff to identify solutions for reimbursing costs when it is not possible to verify expenses and/or allowing costs related to interpreters and accompanying support persons for minors and those with disabilities or other needs to be reimbursed.

If youth are going to be working together with other stakeholders in the conflict analysis process, consider whether they might need support or training, prior to launching the process, to bolster their confidence or advocacy skills – especially if they have not been part of a similar process before.

> "Meaningful participation in conflict analysis often requires resources and logistical support."

> "When engaging younger youth/adolescents, remember to seek parental permission and have safety and protection protocols in place."

It is equally important to reflect on what kind of support or training the team members and consultants might need prior to a conflict analysis process to strengthen their capacity to partner with young people and adopt a youth-sensitive approach to their work.

Furthermore, in some contexts, particularly those affected by a conflict, attempts to bring together young people representing different communities can trigger negative reactions among community and family members. Depending on the context, consider using a low profile format or launching communications and other initiatives promoting a positive narrative of cross-community

cooperation to support and empower young peacebuilders.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A central element in the planning and designing phase of a conflict analysis is the drafting of the terms of reference (ToRs). It is the ToRs that clarify the purpose of the conflict analysis, establish the scope and timelines of the exercise and provide guidance to implementers on what to do and how.

Unless it is explicitly requested in the ToRs the chances of youth and their perspectives being included throughout a conflict analysis are rather low. Guaranteeing the application of a youth lens and various modes of youth participation in the ToRs is therefore crucial to a youth-sensitive conflict analysis. It will increase the likelihood that the final product will adequately capture dynamics and stakeholder views that will provide the foundation for youth-responsive action.

PREPARING FOR DATA COLLECTION

Before data collection can start, we need to know if the data we need are available or not. This is done through a gap analysis. A gap analysis is a critical step, since absent data or missing evidence may lead to incomplete or inaccurate context analyses.

From a youth perspective, a gap analysis entails collecting all available primary and secondary data on the situation of youth to identify what we might already know and what we do not know about the specific situation of youth.

Unfortunately, the data available on most contexts are not age or sex disaggregated, and the specific experience of young people is often not reflected in existing studies. To fill these evidence gaps, new surveys or studies could be commissioned on topics particularly relevant to youth. The topics of such new reports, as well as the methods for how to develop them, should be co-decided with a diverse group of young people. Such a participatory decision-making process might include the arrangement of consultations and dialogue platforms.

PROGRAMMATIC GUIDANCE

BOX 10: Helpful suggestions when drafting ToRs

Ensure that the ToRs state that data on the living conditions and realities of youth will be gathered regardless of their level of participation throughout the process.

Make sure that the ToRs explicitly outline how and when young people's participation will be ensured, such as during the validation of results to ensure that their views are accurately reflected.

If the ToRs provide an outline of the report's structure and content, ensure that youth-specific information is included in the report outline and identify what kind of youth-specific data will be collected.

Ensure that the ToRs stipulate that financial resources will be allocated for engaging and reaching out to youth of different backgrounds, including hard-to-reach youth.

When hiring outside consultants, ensure that job descriptions explicitly seek specialists with experience of programming with youth and/or include qualified junior consultants.

> Early investment in youth capacities for data collection can reap benefits for youth inclusion throughout the entire programme cycle.

Likewise, the data collection tools and methods applied throughout the conflict analysis exercise should also be youth responsive and inclusive. If possible, the team responsible for conducting the data collection should consider using an array of data-collecting techniques to reach out to diverse youth groups, including groups led by young women. Such techniques can include:

- desk reviews of reports, studies and articles written by youth and/or youth organizations
- key informant interviews with representatives of youth organizations and groups
- intergenerational focus groups and/or gendered groups
- crowdsourcing via mobile phones and social media to gain input from a large and geographically spread group of youth
- public opinion surveys aimed at exploring the attitudes towards and perceptions of young women and men in society.

It is recommended, as part of the preparatory phase, to mandate, train and equip youth to collect and analyse data that meaningfully speaks to young people's concerns, needs and aspirations and that reaches them through youth-relevant means and media. Investing in youth capacities early in the process can reap benefits for youth inclusion throughout the entire programming cycle.

INSPIRATION

BOX 11: Initiatives

Examples of initiatives that use dialogue platforms to include youth in decision-making and design include:

"Dialogue for the future" youth platform in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Peace and Community Cohesion project in South Sudan

Young women's and young men's participation in governance in 20 conflict-prone communities in Guinea.

YouTube Creators for Change collaboration

SUGGESTED TIP

BOX 12: Suggested reading

Save the Children offers a step-by-step guide to youth-led data collection:

Dersham, L., and others (2011). *The Youth Conflict & Tolerance Survey Tool Guidebook*. London: Save the Children.

PROGRAMMATIC GUIDANCE

BOX 13: Helpful suggestions when preparing for data collection

At a minimum, examine whether existing data are sufficiently disaggregated to reflect the differences between youth and the general population, as well as the diversity among the youth population, including by age, sex, socioeconomic class, geographical region, caste, ethnic identity and disability.

Review existing data collection and analysis tools of the United Nations, the government and other key participants in the conflict analysis to map if they apply a youth lens or not.

Review relevant reports and studies of United Nations agencies and potential peace operations (in particular the United Nations Police),[53] the government and other key stakeholders from a youth perspective.

Map reports and studies produced by youth and their organizations that are relevant to the exercise.

Ensure that robust systems are in place with regard to how data provided by young people and about young people will be coded, stored, used and shared, and who youth may contact if they have questions afterwards.

Ensure that consultants have sufficient knowledge and capacity to apply a youth lens to their work, analyse youth-specific data, partner with young people, and use the data generated by them.

When devising data collection exercises and establishing reference groups and validation exercises, make sure that key actors, institutions and ministries that are important for youth are included as key informants or members.

With regard to the youth outreach for the focus groups, whenever possible, try to combine various outreach channels, such as online surveys, open application calls, civil society organizations, schools and youth networks, to get information from different angles.

53 In mission settings, peacekeeping staff such as the United Nations Police and civilian counterparts such as Civil Affairs may already be conducting situational awareness exercises and may possess in-depth knowledge of local community dynamics. This knowledge should be leveraged to produce a broader overview of the environment, although attention must be paid to the extent to which existing efforts are youth sensitive.

Phase 2 – Data collection and analysis

When collecting data for your conflict analysis through stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, desk reviews, etc., you need to make sure that you gather information that is relevant for all core elements of a conflict analysis.

From a youth perspective, this entails the praxis of collecting a data set that contains not only descriptive information about young people's situation in the given context, but also information about how young women and men perceive and relate to the dynamics, factors

1. Preparation and design
2. Data collection and analysis
3. Validation and quality assurance
4. Report writing and information sharing

and actors of the conflict, as well as about how other stakeholders perceive youth.

This section contains a brief overview of the different analytical layers and recommendations on what data should be gathered and analysed to safeguard youth sensitivity.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

A context analysis uses the studies, data and evidence collected in the gap analysis. The purpose of such an analysis is to provide project teams with a better understanding of the political, economic, sociocultural, gendered and demographic factors that might correlate with the conflict and which might hamper or enable their response in both the short term and the long term.

A youth-sensitive context analysis forms the basis of any youth-responsive programming process. It particularly looks into the situation of youth, as well as the dynamics and potential inequalities among and between generations.

Owing to cultural norms, biases and practices, formal and informal institutions and other stakeholders central to the conflict context may treat young people and elders differently. This difference may produce challenges for youth that are hidden from older people. Applying a youth and gender lens to a context analysis helps us identify such age-related discrimination and understand its effects as well as how it correlates with other intersecting forms of discrimination.

When conducting a youth-sensitive context analysis, it is important to remember that youth is not a homogeneous group. As a result, when gathering and analysing the data, it is crucial not only to listen to youth's diverse experiences but also to actively reflect on how young people of different backgrounds are being affected by inequalities in society at large and by the conflict itself.

> “Invite youth from various backgrounds to participate in informing the conflict analysis to increase the likelihood that young people's unique and diverse perspectives on the situation are captured.”

CONFLICT DYNAMICS ANALYSIS

Whereas the context analysis looks at the situation at large, an analysis of the conflict dynamics describes the main issues or trends in the present conflict. It provides a holistic view of the conflict situation by identifying trends, behaviours, key threats and violence patterns of the prevailing conflict(s), as well as the current and emergent foundations for peace.

It is fundamental to ensure that this element of the conflict analysis is both inclusive of and sensitive to youth. Otherwise, negative stereotypes of youth may find their way into the data. Such biases in the data might distort the analysis at a later stage.

To avoid such potential biases, we need to not only consult a broad set of informants from different backgrounds but also go beyond the common praxis of only researching how some groups of young people may negatively affect peace and security. We need to take a broader approach and ask how the conflict is affecting youth as a demographic group and how younger generations and their behaviours, attributes and actions influence the dynamics of the conflict both positively and potentially negatively.

TABLE 3: Examples of questions to consider when collecting and analysing data for a context analysis

Demographics

1. What is the demographic composition of the youth cohort?
2. How do young people of different backgrounds describe their role in society?
3. How are young people perceived or described by other stakeholders in the context?
4. Which activities, values and norms are young people associating themselves with?
5. Which activities, values, norms and stereotypes are associated with young men and young women?
6. How do these social norms affect power structures, young people's behaviour and non-youth's behaviour towards youth?
7. Which age-related inequalities do you observe at different levels of society?
8. How do ethnic, religious, caste, tribal, sexual orientation and geographical distinctions, etc., create different opportunities and risks for youth? How do youth perceive these differences?

Rights and justice

1. Do youth of different backgrounds have the same access to basic services as non-youth?
2. Which specific rights abuses and forms of discrimination do young people of different gender identities experience in the context? Are they similar to the experiences of non-youth?
3. How might young women's and young men's exercise of social, political and economic rights differ from that of other stakeholders at the local, subregional and national levels?
4. Do institutions, policies and social groups have specific protocols and/or procedures to cater for young people's specific needs?
5. Do youth have access to justice in the same way as other groups in society?
6. How are youth in conflict with the law being perceived and treated? Are their rights protected?
7. Do young people of different backgrounds have trust in institutions. If not, why? In particular, what is the level of trust and confidence that adolescent girls and young women have in the rule of law institutions in regard to their requests to access justice?

Gender equality

1. What are the power structures, norms and social expectations associated with young women and young men?
2. Are adolescent girls and young women being provided with the same access and opportunities as their male counterparts/peers?
3. Are there specific challenges or barriers hindering adolescent girls' and young women's access to services and opportunities?
4. Are the needs and aspirations of adolescent girls and young women somehow different from the needs and aspirations of their male counterparts?
5. Are there any specific risks or threats being faced by adolescent girls and young women?
6. Are there any specific risks or threats being faced by young boys and men?

Security

1. Which security mechanisms are available in both the formal and the informal security sectors for the protection of youth? How responsive are they to the needs of young women and men?
2. Are youth included in the composition of the security institutions as well as in the decision-making processes pertaining to the development of national security policies and strategies? If yes, who are these youth and what role do they play? How are they organized?
3. How do crime and other security concerns affect young people differently? Are youth partaking in criminal behaviour? If so, who are these youth and what are the push and pull factors?

4. What is the police force's perception of youth? (Do the police perceive young people as a threat, victims, perpetrators, etc.?)
5. Do the police have specific protocols for interacting with and handling youth?
6. What are the perceived experiences of young people of the security forces (experiences of injustice, targeted discrimination, etc.)?
7. Conversely, consider whether young people perceive police forces in terms of prevention, protection and security, or more in terms of repression and violation/limitation of human rights and fundamental liberties.
8. Are youth adequately aware of the level of accountability of the police and security forces? Are they aware of the police internal oversight structures that they can contact in the event of abuse?
9. Are youth joining criminal gangs, armed groups or violent extremist groups? If so, who are these youth and what are the push and pull factors? What measures are in place to mitigate the phenomenon?

Education and employment

1. What formal and informal opportunities for education do young people of different backgrounds have access to?
2. What do young people perceive to be the barriers to accessing education? Are the barriers gendered? Are there rural–urban divides?
3. Are there any specific challenges that young people face in transitioning from school to work? Are the challenges related to gender?
4. What are the barriers to employment for young people? Are the barriers related to gender?
5. What are the main income-generating opportunities for youth? Are they in the formal or informal sector?

Youth political participation and representation

1. What does the political representation of young women and men look like? Do young people of different backgrounds want to be politically engaged? Why or why not? Do young women face specific challenges?
2. Do young people of different backgrounds feel that they have opportunities to influence decision-making? Do young women have equal access to decision-making?
3. In what ways are young people politically engaged, formally and informally? (Are they members of political parties? Are they engaged in elections? Are they engaged in informal networks and movements?)
4. Are there mechanisms of youth participation in decision-making at local, regional and national levels? Are those spaces safe? Are those spaces inclusive? Who uses these mechanisms? Are they the "usual suspects" or diverse groups of young people? What are the barriers to the participation of others?

Youth organization and representation

1. What are the formal youth-focused and youth-led organizations that exist at different levels of society?
2. Is there a national body for youth organizations? Is it representative?
3. How do young people feel about youth organizations? (Do they perceive them to be positive or negative? Are they neutral or pushing someone else's agendas?)
4. Which informal networks and social movements do young people engage in?
5. How do the authorities and decision-makers engage with/relate to those youth-led organizations? (Are they encouraged, prosecuted, combated?)
6. Are there policies and/or programmes in place to support or limit young people's (political) engagement and organization in society?

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Although the two previous analytical elements provide a broad understanding of the conflict situation, a factor analysis helps teams narrow down the analysis by identifying the specific root causes of the conflict.

Root causes are those structural, proximate or trigger factors that create the conditions that fuel violence, exacerbate tensions and erode trustful relationships or that work towards peace.

Root causes can include structural factors, such as a lack of rule of law, illegitimate government, inequitable access to rights, resources and basic services, structural discrimination, and political and social exclusion. Proximate and trigger factors that can provoke violence can include instability in neighbouring countries, the unjustified use of violence by security forces, elections and floods.

Root causes are considered key to the situation if their removal or transformation would produce a significant improvement or reduce the risk of conflict.

When seeking out a youth perspective on key factors and actors identified by others, one must

TABLE 4: Key questions to consider in factor analysis

Are there any linkages between age and the key issues and root causes of the conflict?
What do young people describe as key issues, root causes and conflict drivers?
• Are there any differences among the demographic in how root causes and key issues are described (e.g. local–national, rural–urban, by ethnicity)? • Do these descriptions differ from those of other generations/social groups?
How do the root causes affect different groups of young women and young men (e.g. unemployment, rights abuses, discrimination)?
How and when have grievances been voiced by young people and other generations/social groups?
Are there any benefits for young people who partake in the conflict? Jobs? Status? Recognition? Addressing grievances?

TABLE 5: Examples of youth-specific considerations in regard to conflict dynamics

What are the direct impacts of the conflict on different groups of young women and young men?
• For example, what do age- and sex-disaggregated data tell you about, for instance, conflict-related deaths, homicides, forced migration and displacement of young people?
What roles do different young women and young men play in relation to the conflict?
How is the conflict affecting the sectors, institutions and services that are important to young people?
How do age-based identities, norms and issues feature in the recruitment practices of the security sector and/or armed groups?
• Are young people directly targeted for recruitment? • Which young people are typically targeted? How are gender and gendered norms utilized in recruitment tactics?
How are young people being perceived in the conflict? As supporters of peace or contributors to the conflict?
• Is there a stigma around former fighters? Or is society receptive to reintegrating fighters (or youth in conflict with the law) into communities?

remember that youth may experience these factors and actors differently, especially girls and young women, who may face additional barriers or challenges in the situation because of the ideology of patriarchy or violent masculinities.

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

Stakeholder mapping and analysis identifies all actors who might be part of the events and dynamics described in the previous analyses and/or might have an impact on the conflict. It defines their relationships, roles and ability to influence the process. These actors may be local, national, regional or international, and include individuals, social groups and institutions. They may be directly engaged in the conflict, working towards peace, indirectly involved or just affected by these dynamics. In the mapping exercise, it is important to observe actors beyond the obvious stakeholders directly partaking in the conflict.

A stakeholder analysis should also specifically study the relationship between the key issues of the conflict and the actors associated with them. If this is carried out, the team will be able to pinpoint key actors who either are (or can be) significant drivers of the conflict or peace or are most directly affected by the conflict.

The importance of applying a youth-sensitive approach and engaging youth representatives in a stakeholder mapping exercise cannot be overstated. Apart from gaining an understanding of the potential linkages between age and the conflict, a youth-sensitive analysis also helps us identify the push and pull factors that influence young people's decisions in a conflict setting. Conversely, when it is done well, this step can reveal ways in which positive youth roles and actions may be reinforced and promoted.

Applying a youth-sensitive approach to stakeholder mapping

When developing the stakeholder mapping, it is critical to avoid generic labels such as "women" and "youth", as these are rooted in the assumption that these demographic categories are homogeneous and are similarly related to the conflict issues analysed. To avoid this pitfall, it is necessary to fine-tune the stakeholder mapping by implementing the following:

Map specific youth actors that have a relationship with the key issues of conflict, for instance youth-led peacebuilding grassroots organizations and student associations.

TABLE 6: Questions to consider when carrying out a youth-sensitive stakeholder mapping and analysis

- Who are the actors (i.e. individuals, organizations, institutions, states) in the conflict according to youth?
- How do youth perceive those different actors? (As allies? As gatekeepers?)
- Out of the identified stakeholders, who do youth see as the key drivers of the conflict and why? Which actors do youth see as the key drivers of peacebuilding?

- Are there youth-led actors (organizations, networks, informal structures) playing an active part in the conflict and/or the peacebuilding process?
- Who has influence (an initiative, funding, political power, information and media channels available/used by youth) over the youth-led organizations and/or initiatives?

- How do the identified key actors perceive the young people? (As a threat? As troublemakers? As peacebuilders?)
- How do they see themselves as stakeholders? Passive and powerless or active and important?
- Are there any intergenerational differences in the perceptions of particular stakeholders? If so, are there any insights into why these differences exist?

- **Adopt gender- and age-responsive lenses when analysing other actors**, for instance by disaggregating the demographics of a specific party in the conflict – if an armed group or militia is mostly composed of men aged 17–25 years, what does this entail for programming? If a given power structure, such as a parliamentary caucus, has no young people and no women, what does this tell you?
- **Identify overlooked youth subgroups**, even if they have relative weight or power in the conflict dynamics. It is, for instance, relevant to question whether or not a specific political party has a youth wing. Although these youth groups might be traditionally overlooked, they deserve more attention from the programme.

Engaging youth representatives in a stakeholder mapping exercise

Developing youth-responsive stakeholder mapping means engaging young people in the conflict mapping exercise itself. To create good preconditions for the exercise, it is recommended that sensitivity or training workshops be provided for non-youth partners, especially duty-bearers, such as key staff from governmental ministries, who may be participating in the mapping and analysis to improve their awareness of young people's situation in their areas of expertise.

When conducting the mapping and analysis, it is also important to consider the multiple networks and identities that youth may possess in any given context, such as family ties, gender, clan identity, friendship groups, religious affiliation, schoolmates and ethnicity, and how this might cause biases. It is also necessary to ensure a balanced and representative group of young people engaged in the exercise. Proactive measures should be taken to ensure the inclusion of hard-to-reach youth groups – whether they are categorized as such because they are geographically marginalized (those in rural areas and conflict areas, and those with limited access to services) or because they tend to be made invisible as a result of cultural norms (for instance youth identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex).

PEACE OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

A final element of a conflict analysis can be the exploration of opportunities for peace. Peace opportunities can be everything from ongoing peace projects, community-based initiatives and civil society platforms to local traditions, rituals and practices, and national and local institutions that might facilitate, for example, reconciliation and trust-building. Identifying these capacities and opportunities is essential, as they might provide programme teams with entry points and, if appropriately exploited, favourable preconditions for designing feasible and sustainable peacebuilding programmes.

Therefore, this last element is essential to youth-responsive programming approaches. If youth voices regarding young people's definitions of peace and peace opportunities that are led by or that are important to youth are not included in the analysis, the chances are that they will not be included in the strategic planning exercise that follows.

Table 7 contains some suggested questions to help guide data collection on opportunities for peace.

Phases 3 and 4 – Validation and quality assurance, report writing and information sharing

1. Preparation and design
2. Data collection and analysis
3. Validation and quality assurance
4. Report writing and information sharing

VALIDATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure the accuracy and relevance of the data collected and the analysis in the report itself, a validation and quality assurance review that is inclusive of – if not led by – youth is central to a youth-sensitive conflict analysis process.

Furthermore, beyond their engagement in the drafting teams, youth representatives should also be allowed to be part of reference groups that review and validate the analysis at different points in the process. Do not wait until the very end of the process to conduct a validation exercise with young people, as there will not be sufficient time to address concerns and omissions specific to youth.

When arranging validation exercises, ensure that youth members receive the report at the same time as other reference group members. In addition, make sure that their comments and suggestions are reflected in subsequent revisions of the report.

When conducting quality assurance exercises, always try to ensure the inclusion of diverse youth constituencies, not only the youth who were consulted throughout the process or who are members of the reference group. Ensure that different youth who have not been

TABLE 7: Key questions in peace opportunities analysis

How do young people of different backgrounds and genders define peace?
Which existing peace efforts are youth led?
• Which efforts are recognized and seen as legitimate by other actors?
• How many young women and men do they engage?
• How meaningful is the participation of young people in non-youth-led initiatives?
• What types of efforts are seen in different parts of the country and at different levels (e.g. political, development, dialogue/mediation, education/ training)?
• Who are engaged and who are typically not engaged in these efforts?
• Do they encourage young people's participation as equal partners?
• Do they factor youth needs, concerns, capacities and goals into negotiated agreements?
• Have they been initiated and by whom?
• Are they perceived as legitimate?
• Are they inclusive of young women?
• Are they effective/successful?
• Are there any barriers preventing young people from engaging in these peace efforts?
What other initiatives, spaces and platforms engage young people and support societal resilience?
• How many young people do they engage?
• How meaningful is the participation of young people in non-youth-led initiatives?
• Who are engaged and who are typically not engaged in these efforts?

consulted previously get the chance to confirm if the report reflects their situation as well.

Finding ways of broadening the validation so that other youth are included is important with respect to marginalized youth and youth outside the capital city, especially if they have not had an opportunity to voice their opinion earlier in the process.

REPORT WRITING

In the final phase of any conflict analysis process, the data collected will typically be synthesized into a final report. Such a report, if youth sensitive, should provide an evidence-based description of the situation of youth as well as recommendations on how to further engage young women and men in peacebuilding.

Whether and how the final report portrays the particular experiences, roles, capacities and goals of young people sets the stage for how the context is understood by decision-makers and the public alike. The report acts as a touchstone for subsequent prioritization and programming choices.

It is therefore important to carry out the following:

- Review how young people of all gender identities are depicted in the text and ensure that young people's positive contribution to peacebuilding is accounted for.
- Special attention should be given to whether the report repeats unhelpful negative and gendered stereotypes of young women and men, and whether it focuses on only negative roles and behaviours of youth.
- Moreover, it is important to ensure that the language used to describe youth-related findings does not objectify young people or treat young people as a homogeneous group.
- Ensure that youth perspectives are mainstreamed throughout the entire report and not limited to one isolated section describing "youth issues".

In addition to its content, the report's length, language and format will have bearing on how effectively the findings of the conflict analysis are communicated and how accessible the report is to a broad audience.

Therefore, avoid using dense language and jargon typically seen in United Nations reports. Instead, deploy a wide range of communication strategies, including the use of illustrations and other visual media, so that stakeholders can express themselves and participate in analysing the factors and actors in conflict and peace situations.

INFORMATION SHARING

The last step in a conflict analysis exercise is the publication and dissemination of the report. Normally, the report is shared among stakeholders, such as United Nations entities, donors and national government partners. However, the report should also be made available to youth, especially if it contains information about them and their organizations.

When sharing the report, or parts of it, always consider the potential dangers that the possession of such information might entail for some youth. It is recommended that you partner with young people when disseminating and communicating the results. Apart from giving guidance on how to spread the results, youth representatives may be able to reach constituencies, especially peer groups, that other stakeholders find challenging.

Consider translating the report into relevant languages as well as presenting it in different formats, including visual and audio media, to boost accessibility, especially among the most marginalized youth who may struggle with written reports or who may be from under-represented language groups.

Appendix – Suggested resources

Organization	Title	Description
CDA Collaborative Learning Projects	*Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics – A Resource Manual*	Pages 1–27 include guidance on how and why to implement conflict sensitivity and conduct conflict analysis.
Folke Bernadotte Academy (E. Tanghøj and J. Kramer)	Internal briefing note on youth-sensitive approaches to conflict analysis	This briefing note provides step-by-step guidance on youth-sensitive conflict analysis (accessible upon request: info@fba.se).
Saferworld	Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding – a resource pack	This resource pack provides an understanding of current practice, available frameworks and lessons learned in relation to conflict sensitivity and is designed for development, humanitarian and peacebuilding practitioners.
UN	*United Nations Conflict Analysis Practice Note*	This 2016 note offers a brief outline of the core components of a basic conflict analysis and a guide to existing resources. It is consistent with the CDA tool and complements the United Nations Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning.
UN System Staff College	*Conflict Analysis Handbook*	This handbook sets out a three-part modular approach to conducting conflict analyses.
United Nations, European Union and World Bank	*Joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments – A Practical Note to Assessment and Planning*	Both a methodology and platform for joint analysis and planning, this practical note identifies immediate and medium-term recovery and peacebuilding requirements while laying the foundations for longer-term recovery and peacebuilding strategies.
UNDP	*Conducting a Conflict and Development Analysis*	An agency-neutral approach to conflict analysis with the goal of supporting evidence-based decision-making for UN engagement.
UN Environment Programme	*Conflict Analysis Framework: Environment and Natural Resources in Conflict*	The Conflict Analysis Framework is intended to be used by practitioners. It contains specialized knowledge on the links between natural resources and conflict, as well as standard terms and planning processes, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments.
UNICEF	*Guide to: Conflict Analysis*	This is a guide to conducting conflict analyses that recognizes settings as complex systems.

Organization	Title	Description
UN Sustainable Development Group	*United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance*	This provides guidance to United Nations Country Teams as they plan (see section on the United Nations Common Country Analysis), finance, deliver and evaluate their support for countries in achieving the SDGs.
United Nations Sustainable Development Group	*United Nations Sustainable Development Group Guidance on Conflict Sensitivity, Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace* (forthcoming)	The objective of this guidance note is to highlight the importance of conflict sensitivity in United Nations policies, programmes and activities; present a common framework through which the United Nations system can understand the interactions of its work on peace and conflict; and provide practical advice on integrating conflict sensitivity into the range of United Nations activities, with a view to contributing to building and sustaining peace.
UN Women	*Guide to Gender-Sensitive Conflict Analysis*	This is a practical guide on how to ensure gender-sensitivity is built into each step of a conflict analysis.

CHAPTER 3

YPS Strategic Priorities and Theories of Change

Understanding youth-responsive strategic priorities

By nature, conflict analyses identify vast ranges of key conflict factors and resources for peace – far too many, in fact, for any single programme or project to address. Moreover, some key drivers of conflict may be so harmful that they require other kinds of change to lay the groundwork before progress can be achieved.

By undertaking a visioning exercise to identify the big picture, we can pinpoint strategic priorities that can help us make informed decisions about which programming directions will be the most effective for achieving that vision.

Launching a visioning exercise requires us to contemplate what a more peaceful context would look like 5, 10 or even 20 years down the road. Given these time horizons, it is youth's future that is being decided on in such exercises. Including youth in visioning exercises, however, not only recognizes young people's right to have a say in defining their own future but – equally important – supports them in the positive roles they play today to realize that future.

> "Including youth in visioning exercises recognizes youth's right to have a say in defining their future."

In practice, however, young women and men struggle to get a seat at the strategic planning table.[54]

Strategic priorities may include broad topics, such as support for the security sector or security sector reform, increasing employment, access to transitional justice, peace negotiations, DDR and tackling corruption.

54 An analysis of 31 PRSPs carried out by the United Nations Population Fund, for example, revealed that only half were developed in consultation with youth. As a direct consequence of youth's exclusion from the consultation, the same study determined that only one in five PRSPs recognized youth as an important demographic that is vulnerable to poverty, whereas only 16 per cent of PRSPs specifically targeted youth, despite the fact that they constitute a majority of the population. See United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (2018). *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security.* United Nations publication, p. 20. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy.

PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

BOX 14: Strategic priorities serve three key functions in peacebuilding

1. They ensure that change directly and positively affects a key driver of conflict.
2. They act as a compass to guide the achievement of the societal-level change that is ultimately sought.
3. They enable the sequencing of priorities by indicating which conflict factors are most likely to change first and trigger positive changes to more sticky conflict factors.

Being clear about the strategic priorities that contribute to a longer-term vision of peace helps teams map a course for how their programmatic interventions will work together to realize the longer-term change that is needed. As strategic priorities clarify how project-level outcomes contribute to reducing a conflict factor and advancing the vision of peace, they hold us accountable for meaningful peacebuilding results beyond individual-level changes.

At country level, teams should assess existing strategic frameworks that may already be in place. In mission settings, these may include integrated strategic frameworks that seek to identify a United Nations-wide approach to the setting of strategic priorities in a given context. Such frameworks may include national PRSPs or the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks in non-mission settings and Humanitarian Response Plans in emergency settings.

Teams should evaluate the degree to which these overarching strategic plans are youth sensitive and advocate youth-responsive and -inclusive processes and priorities in future planning efforts.

As the visioning exercise is meant to inform programming, smaller organizations with modest budgets often worry that articulating a vision of peace at a strategic level may set the project up to fail, recognizing that they could establish overall project goals that are too ambitious. This is a particular concern among youth organizations, which typically operate on budgets as low as $5,000 a year.[55]

Although project goals need to be commensurate with project resources, in the absence of a strategic vision, project teams risk designing youth-centred initiatives that revolve around individual-level changes – projects that build youth's communication skills, provide vocational training, address trauma or foster intergenerational understanding – and that fail to recognize how these changes contribute to conflict transformation.

Consequently, identifying strategic priorities holds projects accountable for positively affecting conflict drivers, even when implementing smaller-scale initiatives that are more typical among youth organizations.

SUGGESTED TIP

BOX 15: Suggested reading

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2016). *Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics – A Resource Manual*. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

55 United Network of Youth Peacebuilders and Search for Common Ground (2017). *Mapping a Sector: Bridging the Evidence Gap on Youth-driven Peacebuilding — Findings of the Global Survey of Youth-led Organizations Working on Peace and Security.* The Hague, the Netherlands, p. 7. Available at http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Mapping-a-Sector-Bridging-the-Evidence-Gap-on-Youth-Driven-Peacebuilding.pdf.

Step-by-step guide to defining youth visions of peace and strategic priorities

Step 1 – Define a vision of peace

- Define a vision of peace that describes your expectations of what sustaining peace in a given context looks like in the future.
- Ensure that the statements are clear, concise and context specific, and are not vague phrases about how youth will encourage peace, foster social trust or spread tolerance.
- As the vision statements are drafted, assess the degree to which they reflect the concerns, hope and goals of diverse young people, or exclude their stated visions.

United Nations guidance on strategic planning suggests that programme teams should designate an individual to draft an initial vision statement that can serve as the basis of discussion for the rest of the team.[56]

An individual-driven approach to visioning, however, is not recommended for peacebuilding, since the vision in this process is not a description of an organization's future goals and role but that of a population in a specific country context.

Given this, the power to determine what that vision looks like needs to reside with the stakeholders living in that context and whose lives will be shaped by those decisions.

As previously noted, different sets of stakeholders are bound to have different visions of the future. This calls for a process of open discussion about national, regional and local goals. Recognizing the rights of all youth to meaningfully participate in this process is central to ensuring an inclusive vision of peace.

> "Facilitating the participation of youth in visioning exercises is essential, since it is their future that is being determined."

Box 16 contains some suggestions for what you can do to meaningfully include youth when defining a vision of peace.

Step 2 – Identify strategic priority areas

- Identify the broad, strategic priority areas of change needed to achieve the vision of peace.

  Keep the focus on thinking big, even if specific projects may ultimately contribute only a small part. This is not wasted effort. Understanding how smaller-scale changes can contribute to larger-scale change and affect some of the conflict factors will help to ensure that even the smallest interventions remain relevant.

- In doing so, consider what the factor analysis says about different youth populations' specific goals, capacities, opportunities and challenges, including those related to security threats. Ask yourself the following questions:
  - How might different sets of youth articulate different kinds of priorities or goals?
  - Are these differences reflected in the priorities emerging from a strategic planning process?
- Reflect on whether the selected strategic priorities have inadvertently omitted the positive contributions or challenges specific to youth. Typical peacebuilding priority areas, such as security sector reform and facilitating peace negotiations, frequently overlook youth and, in particular, young women because of their traditional focus on senior-level and state actors, who are very often exclusively male.

56 United Nations. *United Nations Strategic Planning Guide for Managers*, p. 5. Available at https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/4.5.1.6_Strategic%20Planning%20Guide_0.pdf.

PROGRAMMATIC GUIDANCE

BOX 16: Helpful suggestions for visioning exercises

As different groups are likely to have different and possibly inconsistent visions of their ideal future, consider hiring a facilitator to lead a process of dialogue that bridges different visions.

Training youth to facilitate this process could be an effective means of ensuring their participation and leadership in visioning exercises.

Provide a space for young people of different gender identities in which they can mobilize and debate through youth-specific consultations that bring together young people from different backgrounds to outline their visions of peace prior to visioning exercises with other stakeholders. This will enable youth to enter into stakeholder consultations with the knowledge, skills and information they need to be effective advocates for visions that reflect their perspective.

Consider whether young women or other specific youth demographic groups would benefit from dedicated consultation spaces in which they can discuss challenges and visions of the future that might be specific to their needs. Young people of different gender identities, for example, may require a higher degree of security in some contexts to safely secure their participation.

> “Lumping together youth, women, children and other marginalized groups shows that you have not done your homework.”

» Be wary of strategic priorities that use language that groups together “women, youth and other vulnerable groups”. Such constructions signal that planners have not identified context-specific priorities for youth – or women or vulnerable groups for that matter – but instead have included a generic and likely superficial statement on inclusivity.

» Enabling young people’s participation in the prioritization process by establishing clear processes to ensure that their views are heard and incorporated in the final outcome will help ward off the tokenistic inclusion of youth. This may include:

- making clear to other stakeholders that youth views will receive equal attention
- providing training or other sensitization efforts on the importance of youth inclusion to other stakeholders if necessary, prior to the exercise.

Understanding youth-sensitive theories of change

Agreeing on a strategic priority commits teams to a broad area of work that they anticipate will play a critical role in positively changing a conflict driver. For any given strategic priority, however, there are likely to be multiple pathways or approaches to achieving that change.

For example, increasing young people's confidence in local governments to reduce inter-community violence or competition over resources may involve:

- bolstering transparency in decision-making
- increasing the responsiveness of administrative offices to local communities
- encouraging more effective and youth-inclusive management of scarce resources
- helping local youth mobilize across the social divide to jointly demand better services.

These different pathways contribute to achieving the same overarching strategic priority.

Behind each programming pathway is a theory about why that particular approach will bring about the desired change. Selecting the most effective approach requires teams to critically consider their assumptions about which actions are most likely to produce that change. These assumptions are commonly referred to as a ToC.

ToCs benefit from research and studies that provide evidence that a given approach is likely to produce the desired change. Good project design starts by making such assumptions explicit, assumptions that should be tested throughout the implementation cycle to see if they still hold.

Given the relative newness of the YPS agenda, making programming assumptions explicit and testing them will not only increase the effectiveness of the individual project but also contribute to the knowledge base and improve future programming by providing critical information about what works and what does not work to empower youth.

TABLE 8: Theories of change versus logic models

Theories of change	Logic models
They are developed at the concept stage, when the general goal is known.	They are developed after project design, when the project components are known.
They are explanatory; they address the question of "why?"	They are descriptive; they address the question of "how?".
They are analytical; they examine embedded assumptions, ideally underpinned by evidence.	They are representational; they array project components in a causal chain.
They can be global (i.e. "contact theory") or project specific.	They must be project specific.

As ToCs explain why an action is assumed to produce a certain change, they inform the very initial steps of conceptualizing an approach at the design stage. A good rule of thumb for assessing a ToC is to determine whether a given formulation explains why a change is expected to happen or describes how it will happen.

If the statement explains "how" and not "why", it is not making the embedded assumptions that are driving programmatic choices explicit. Instead, formulations that explain how change is expected to work are referred to as logic models, because they summarize each step in a project's activities and examine how they are logically connected through time to produce the desired change.

Developing a logic model can only be done once teams not only have identified the programmatic pathway but also have determined the individual actions they will take to operationalize it. Both ToCs and logic models are important devices for evaluating the strength of a project; however, they serve distinct purposes and are done at different times of the project cycle.

Embracing complexity by unpacking underlying assumptions

The environments we operate in are complex and prone to rapid change. Complexity in our programming contexts occasionally creates confusion or undermines our confidence about what we know and what we assume will happen. This, in turn, frequently increases levels of anxiety when it comes to developing ToCs. Identifying a ToC, however, is simply a process of explaining why a given action or intervention is expected to provoke a specific kind of change.

To illustrate this point, imagine a hypothetical scenario in which a conflict analysis has indicated that sexual violence and GBV against young people accessing basic social services is undermining confidence in formal state institutions or faith in a peace agreement.

Table 9 proposes an array of programming pathways that illustrate how teams might approach this problem. Each pathway, however, comes with assumptions about what the core issue is and thus what needs

TABLE 9: Unpacking assumptions

Desired programme result: Eliminate sexual violence and GBV against young people who access basic social services

Programming approach	Assumption
Training staff providing basic social services in GBV protection measures	Core problem: Staff lack capacity in regard to or knowledge of what to do if they witness GBV in the workplace. It assumes that, if staff members knew about internal policies and protection mechanisms (e.g. whistle-blower complaint mechanisms, ombudsperson offices, human resources disciplinary boards), they would utilize those policies and mechanisms to ensure citizens are protected from GBV when they access basic social services. The ToC for this approach requires evidence that what is lacking is staff knowledge of existing mechanisms and policies rather than the willingness or ability of staff to exercise them.

Programming approach	Assumption
Hiring more female senior managers	Core problem: Impunity of perpetrators of GBV is driven by a male-dominated management structure. It assumes that, if women had decision-making powers, they would create and/or enforce internal disciplinary controls that would punish staff who perpetrate GBV. This assumption is based on a conviction that women are less likely to participate in or condone GBV and that their authority to enforce discipline will be recognized in the institutions. The ToC for this approach requires evidence that female managers have the knowledge, will and ability to discipline staff members for GBV.
Awareness-raising on women's rights among staff providing basic social services	Core problem: Staff providing basic social services do not understand rights and normative commitments. It assumes that staff are not aware of the full range of ways in which GBV is a harmful practice and that, if they knew, they would cease enabling or perpetrating GBV, because they would not want to cause harm. The ToC for this approach requires evidence that a lack of staff understanding of the fact that GBV does harm by violating the rights of victims is what drives assault.
Educating young people who are likely to access basic social services about their rights and protection mechanisms	Core problem: Potential victims cannot advocate for themselves or seek effective protection and justice. The assumption is that if young people are aware of the fact that GBV is a violation of their rights, they either will be able to fend off assaults because they know their rights or, if they are accosted, will know where to turn for protection and redress to hold the perpetrators accountable. This approach also assumes that protection mechanisms and internal disciplinary measures are efficacious. The ToC for this approach requires evidence that equipping young people with the knowledge of how to exercise their rights will reduce violence against them. This is a potentially dangerous ToC, since it (1) implicates victims in their own victimization and (2) may encourage more interaction with predatory actors without effectively addressing protection and justice mechanisms.
Establishing codes of conduct and disciplinary mechanisms in offices of basic social services	Core problem: A lack of consequences for perpetrators of GBV effectively acts as a green light for abuse. This approach assumes that codes of conduct or internal controls do not exist. It also assumes that, if such measures were put in place, their enforcement would curb perpetrators' actions, an assumption that speaks to institutional cultures based on patriarchy. The ToC for this approach requires evidence that staff need clear instructions on what is and is not permitted, as well as clear and meaningful censure when rules are violated.
Pursuing emblematic legal action against perpetrators of GBV in basic social services	Core problem: There exists a lack of consequences for both the perpetrators of GBV and the institutions that employ and enable them. This approach moves the locus of action outside the basic social service structure and into the more public sphere of the criminal justice system. It assumes that pressure from public knowledge and support generated by the case will make potential perpetrators less willing to risk their careers and reputation and force the institutions to change their organizational cultures and exercise more effective discipline. A part of this assumption is that public outcry can apply sufficient pressure to effect change, an assumption that is as much about transforming cultures of patriarchy as it is about governmental accountability to the public. The ToC for this approach requires evidence that judicial actors are more sensitive to rights violations and that public pressure on institutions can force broad internal change. The risk with this approach is that individual actors may be scapegoated, leaving the predatory organizational culture and structure intact.

> Being mindful of whose goals we are pursuing and through which partnerships will reduce the risk of instrumentalizing youth to achieve goals they have not set for themselves.

to change to see a reduction in GBV. The purpose of the table is to demonstrate the kinds of questions programme staff should be asking about their own work by detailing implied assumptions about what is driving the problem for each programming approach.

Before determining which approach is best for their project, teams should examine the range of programming options and associated evidence to understand how the various assumptions underpinning the different approaches play out in their specific contexts.

In reality, most projects will use a combination of several programming approaches, in recognition of the fact that complex problems need complex and multidisciplinary solutions. Teams may wish to utilize tools that promote systems thinking, which appreciates that settings are not only complex but also dynamic and call for non-linear, iterative thinking.

These tools provide methods for unpacking complexity while recognizing the interconnected nature of many peacebuilding challenges and opportunities. By delineating how different facets of a complex system reinforce each other, systems thinking supports project staff in identifying interconnected ToCs at different levels of the project.

Such "cascading theories of change" will help teams identify assumptions about how change is expected to occur across the entire project and thus develop ToCs for the overall impact or goal, for the different outcomes that will contribute to that change and for the various outputs that contribute relevant changes to achieving the outcomes.

Step-by-step guide to developing YPS ToCs

Step 1 – Determine possible programmatic approaches

» Together with partners – and particularly including young people and youth organizations, movements and networks – step aside from organizational mandates and budgetary constraints to generate a list of necessary conditions or resources to achieve change in a given strategic priority area in the given context.

  Be expansive and comprehensive, since elements deemed necessary for change that will not be addressed through programming should be considered risks to programming and factored into ongoing situational monitoring or rolling conflict analysis.

» Working back from the list of necessary conditions and resources, identify a range of high-level programmatic approaches that best contribute to producing the necessary conditions or resources in the strategic priority.

  Be careful not to reverse-engineer the process by thinking first about the inputs your organization expects to provide; keep your focus on the bigger picture. This will help foster innovation and avoid a "cookie cutter" approach to programming.

  Consider different approaches to youth-responsive programming. Youth-inclusive programmatic approaches can take different forms: mainstreaming youth views, goals and roles versus designing an initiative whose main focus is youth centred; or working on a goal that has been identified by youth versus working with youth to achieve a goal.

Some initiatives will employ more than one strategy in the same project. Teams should be aware of the choices they make and consider the implications of these choices to work out how best to partner with youth. Being mindful of whose goals we are pursuing and through which partnerships we pursue them will reduce the risk of instrumentalizing youth to achieve goals they have not set for themselves.

In doing so, ask yourself the following questions:

- How can we ensure that young people will benefit from this change? Do they require a youth-specific activity/intervention in order for us to effectively reach our goal? Or will we benefit more by establishing mechanisms to ensure young people are included in the overall programming?
- If we have a separate youth-specific programme/initiative, how does that feed back into the overall ToC? How do we ensure that the gains from that youth-specific intervention contribute to overall peaceful outcomes?
- If we are adopting an "integrated approach", how do we ensure young people will not be marginalized, neglected or disregarded during the process?
- What role will young people play in this process? Are they simply benefiting, or is there any specific opportunity/role for young people to lead the implementation of some of those initiatives? Can they maybe facilitate something?

> "Develop ToCs in collaboration with youth to reduce the risk that assumptions held by the team are at odds with the lived reality or goals of young people."

Step 2 – Unpack assumptions through a ToC to determine programming areas

- As a project is being defined, develop cascading ToCs that clarify how the changes produced at different levels of the project – input, output, outcome and overall project impact – build on each other.[57]
- Clarify the ToCs by reflecting on why change is expected to happen. Such assumptions may include taken-for-granted notions of what important stakeholders want, or how economic, political, cultural or communal factors are expected to function or react. Making our assumptions explicit can also reveal if deeply held normative commitments are driving programmatic choices in ways that may be at odds with the context.
- Consider including actor-specific ToCs to examine assumptions about why a particular

SUGGESTED TIP

BOX 17: Tip

At an early stage in project implementation, organize a "kickoff meeting" with youth to validate the ToC, since changes in the context may have invalidated your assumptions in the time between designing and implementing the project.

57 Evidence underpinning ToCs may take different forms. Evaluations of prior, similar efforts may indicate whether or not the approach is likely to work in a particular context. Thematic research or studies may highlight the necessary conditions for a ToC to hold. For approaches that have not been tested or researched, teams can still produce evidence-based ToCs through consultations, focus group discussions or key informant interviews that ask stakeholders to assess their programmatic assumptions.

segment of youth, for example, is well placed to achieve the desired change.

» Select the programmatic approach with the most effective ToC and match the approach to organizational mandates and resources to determine who is best placed to take the initiative forward.

Examples of YPS ToCs

Although the main thrust of the previous sections concerned building a good ToC in general, this last part elaborates on the ToCs for YPS programming areas highlighted as a priority by and for young people in *Mapping a Sector*.[58]

Each segment begins with a reflection on the basis for programming considerations before offering suggestions for ToCs across four dimensions of peacebuilding commonly referred to as the "4Rs" (see Figure 5):[59]

- redistribution
- recognition
- representation
- reconciliation.

Political inclusion

At the conceptual level, an individual's right to act politically is grounded on the conviction of individual sovereignty, or the recognition that all people possess the same universal rights and freedoms regardless of age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, etc. These rights and freedoms grant everyone an equal claim with regard to pursuing goals and voicing opinions.

As a result, responsive decision-making structures, such as governing institutions and peace processes, are the instruments through which fully free individuals collaboratively identify the common good, negotiate common goals and agree on ways to achieve them. In order for decision-making structures to arbitrate among diverse goals and claims in a way that produces perceptions of fairness, individuals must have confidence that the system provides a level playing field for all actors.

Doubt about equal access and representation in decision-making processes erodes people's perceptions of fairness, which delegitimizes institutions by raising concerns about efficacy, corruption and capacity. Such perceptions can trigger a downward spiral that breeds distrust among communities and between individuals and the institutions meant to support and protect them.

Conflict thrives in such settings and further undermines confidence in institutions' abilities to fairly adjudicate among claims by raising the stakes for trusting others. Once social trust is gone, fear rips through communities and divides people.

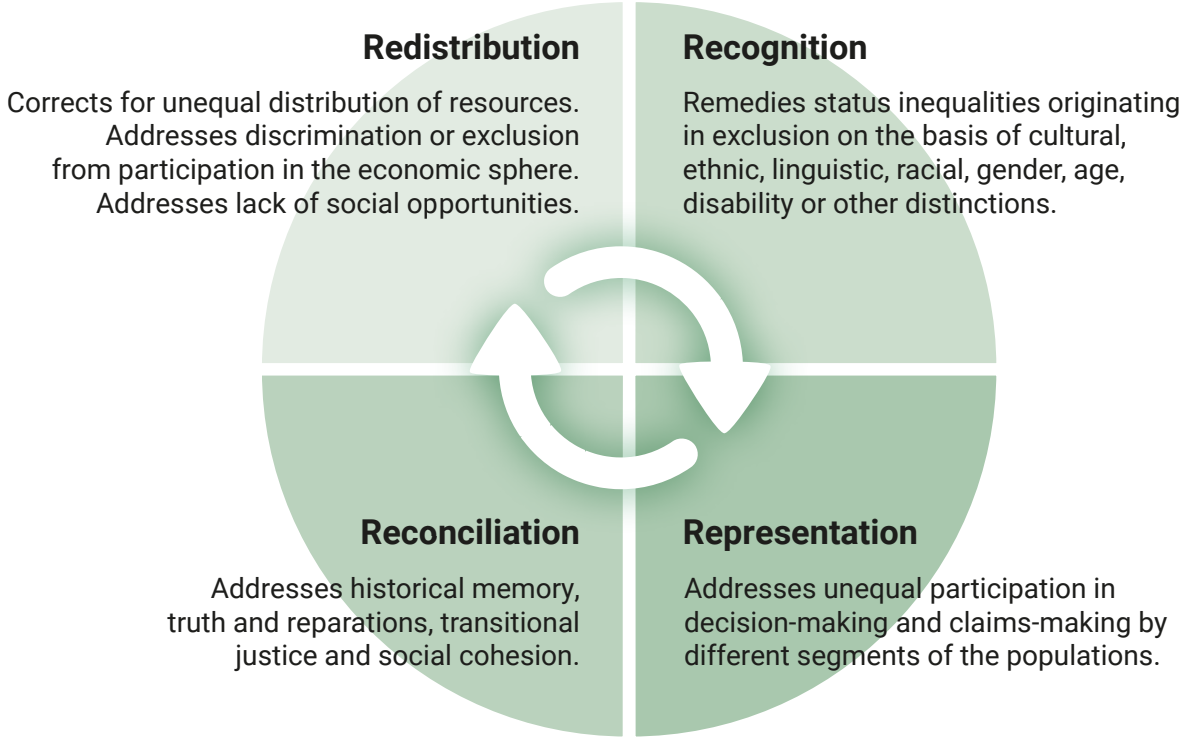
58 United Network of Youth Peacebuilders and Search for Common Ground (2017). *Mapping a Sector: Bridging the Evidence Gap on Youth-driven Peacebuilding — Findings of the Global Survey of Youth-led Organizations Working on Peace and Security.* The Hague, the Netherlands, p.43. Available at http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Mapping-a-Sector-Bridging-the-Evidence-Gap-on-Youth-Driven-Peacebuilding.pdf.

59 Applying the "4Rs" to each of the programming areas extends the groundbreaking work of Nancy Fraser (1995, 2005) and Mario Novelli, Mieke Lopes Cardozo and Allan Smith (2017), who posited these four aspects with respect to the role of education in peacebuilding.

Research demonstrates that the world's population is experiencing a crisis of trust. Among young people this crisis manifests itself as a reciprocal problem of neither trusting older generations to understand and take on board their concerns and views nor being trusted by older generations to participate in a responsible and socially productive manner.[60]

Young people typically struggle to gain recognition among older stakeholders, which leads to exclusion from key decision-making processes that affect them in the present and that set the stage for their futures. Negotiations around peace agreements or ceasefires routinely exclude youth, even if occasional peacebuilding programming aims to equip them to participate.[61]

FIGURE 5: The four Rs



60 United Network of Youth Peacebuilders and Search for Common Ground (2017). *Mapping a Sector: Bridging the Evidence Gap on Youth-driven Peacebuilding — Findings of the Global Survey of Youth-led Organizations Working on Peace and Security.* The Hague, the Netherlands, p. 49. Available at http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Mapping-a-Sector-Bridging-the-Evidence-Gap-on-Youth-Driven-Peacebuilding.pdf.

61 Altiok, A. and I. Grizelj (2019). *We Are Here: An Integrated Approach to Youth-inclusive Peace Processes.* United Nations publication, p. 9. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2019-07/Global%20Policy%20Paper%20Youth%20Participation%20in%20Peace%20Processes.pdf.

Who gets to sit around the negotiation table or whose laws and policies are enacted is as much to do with who has the power to partner with or exclude others as it is with equipping the marginalized with the knowledge and awareness they need to act. Consequently, young people's ability to engage rests not just on whether they have confidence in systems, knowledge of their rights or trust in others to act in accordance with laws and norms. Young people's ability to act is also constrained or amplified by the responses of those who hold the power.

ToCs regarding political inclusion must confront different aspects of power, including the following:

- "Power over" – perhaps the most intuitively understood notion of power, this refers to the ability to control, constrain or influence what others are able to do or think. Often exerted through force, "power over" is also built into the enforcement of laws, policies and administrative processes of the state.
- "Power to" – this refers to the potential of every person to set and pursue goals and shape his or her life and the world. It is about being able to act, which includes an awareness of both one's right to act and the process of taking action.
- "Power within" – this corresponds to a person's sense of dignity and self-worth and includes the ability to recognize and respect differences in others.
- "Power with" – this is shared power that is rooted in collaborative relationships and collective action. "Power with" can support group solidarity or provide the basis for positive relationships with others.[62]

ToCs about political inclusion rest on assumptions that greater engagement of diverse groups of youth within decision- and claims-making structures can produce positive effects related to the overall perceptions of fairness and inclusivity of political processes and institutions by tapping into youth's energy, commitment and creativity.

Programmatic assumptions about young people's political participation or inclusion, however, must include the different aspects of power noted previously. All too often youth empowerment initiatives focus on providing access to knowledge or skills-building – i.e. the power within – without recognizing that increasing the level of knowledge or awareness without enhancing opportunities and the willingness of others to collaboratively share power will not result in youth's political participation and inclusion. Rather, it threatens to lead to more frustration and alienation.

These assumptions must also confront the reality that diverse groups of youth have varying degrees of challenges, opportunities, resources and capacities. Moreover, in settings marked by conflict's downward spiral, ToCs must address the "chicken or the egg" problem of how to restore or establish confidence in institutions without a foundation of social trust. It is therefore crucial to design the programmes in a manner that does not exacerbate existing unequal power structures, including those between young women and men.

62 Sustaining Community (2019). "4 types of power: what are power over; power with; power to; and power within?", 1 February. Available at https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2019/02/01/4-types-of-power/.

TABLE 10: Theories of change on political inclusion

Redistribution (addressing inequalities)	Increasing young people's influence in decision-making and claims-making processes (in local and state governance, oversight bodies, peace negotiations, etc.) raises the likelihood that laws, policies and peace settlements will respond to the concerns of youth, their visions of the future and/or their needs. This aspect recognizes that, in many contexts, young people constitute the majority of the public yet are routinely excluded from important decision-making processes. OR For young women and young men to influence decision-making in formal institutions (such as governments, government institutions, non-governmental organizations and private corporations), leaders of these institutions must first be motivated and see the value of working with young women and young men. Organizations need to be aware of the behaviours and practices that exclude young women and young men from participating, as well as what enables young women's and young men's participation, so that organizational policies can be put in place to support this participation. Although policies are one aspect, the organizational culture, everyday processes and individuals' practices must enable and support young women and young men equally in regard to participation, thus giving them an equal voice in decision-making.[63]
Recognition (respecting difference)	When decision-making and claims-making systems are perceived as fair and the participation of all constituencies is perceived as a fundamental right, groups with opposing goals and identities will respect the outcomes of (non-violent) political processes.
Representation (ensuring participation)	Participation can be ensured by closing the political participation gap between privileged youth and more marginalized or excluded youth. In doing so, grievances that are rooted in inequality will be reduced, because the ability to participate in political and civic life will be more broadly exercised. In addition, a broad-based coalition of young people will be able to advocate for commonly identified aims instead of being driven apart by differences. OR Removing legal barriers to the political participation of young people through reforms of voting laws that address age, caste, religious and gender-based discrimination and exclusion will increase youth participation and, ultimately, their confidence in governing institutions. OR Power-holders in the community must make space for young women's and young men's participation. This will require that power-holders value and are motivated to work with young women and young men. Strong and open communication between young women and young men and power-holders will enable mutual respect to be gained and power-holders to see the value of youth participation. This will, in turn, increase the power of young women and young men and their capacity to create change in their communities.[64]
Reconciliation (dealing with the legacies of the conflict)	Local communities develop a reserve of social cohesion and interpersonal trust so that fear and misunderstanding cannot reactivate the divisions of the past that can be exploited to trigger present-day or future tension and conflict. This vein of work must tap into real and meaningful processes of building social cohesion that have been identified and/or validated by community members themselves – past work in this area demonstrates that outsiders frequently make unfounded assumptions about the kinds of interactions that signal a development of trust.[65]

63 Excerpted from Oxfam leaflet available at https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621042/dp-youth-theory-of-change-280820-en.pdf;jsessionid=AC76603A7A187E0F86CEA540116BDAFA?sequence=1.

64 Ibid.

65 An evaluation of the PeacePlayers International – Northern Ireland programme (2018), for example, revealed that building interpersonal trust among participating cross-sectarian youth did not translate into higher levels of engagement and friendship once participants returned to their communities. This was because other factors drove tension and division between the youth. Similarly, a social cohesion project in Kosovo (references to Kosovo must be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)) evaluated by Diana Chigas and others found that "building bridges" between ethnic Serbs and Albanians did not address the key driver of division and conflict, which was inflammatory actions and speech by local political and community leaders (Diana Chigas, and others (2007). *Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo? A Study of the Effectiveness of Peacebuilding in Preventing Violence: Lessons Learned from the March 2004 Riots in Kosovo.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and CARE International. Available at https://www.cdacollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Has-Peacebuilding-Made-a-Difference-in-Kosovo.pdf.

Economic empowerment and decent jobs

Peacebuilding projects designed around youth employment or livelihoods differ from strictly developmental approaches to economic inclusion in that they must pursue two aims: (1) promote economic empowerment and provide youth with decent employment or livelihoods; and (2) contribute to peacebuilding.[66]

However, evidence of whether better employment or livelihood opportunities translate into more peaceful societies is tenuous. Rigorous evaluations of youth employment peacebuilding projects are scarce, with available evaluations tending to focus on immediate outputs – namely the number of jobs created or the number of young women and men trained in a sector or provided with seed funding – without identifying whether and how these outputs helped promote or sustain peace.[67]

However, research findings confirm that unemployment, decent work deficits (such as a lack of social dialogue and fundamental rights) and a lack of access to livelihoods can be key contributing factors in conflicts because of three main drivers:

1. **a lack of opportunity**, such as a lack of youth employment and a lack of women's economic and social empowerment
2. **a lack of contact and social cohesion** across different social groups
3. **the existence of grievances** arising from inequality, exclusion and feelings of injustice.

If employment programmes adequately address these three drivers of conflict, then they will contribute to peacebuilding.[68]

Youth economic empowerment and employment programmes should therefore adopt holistic approaches to achieve peacebuilding outcomes and youth inclusion. They should also move away from past approaches rooted in an unfounded assumption that providing young women and men with jobs will prevent them from participating in violence and conflict.

In a similar vein, work based largely on research on ex-combatants[69] sees youth as troublemakers who, if left idle, pose a threat to peace and stability. Although this programming justification – known as the "idle hands" theory – may seem somewhat intuitive on the surface, numerous studies have in fact concluded that little to no evidence exists to support the assumed link.[70]

Instead, credible research suggests that, when young people do engage in conflict or join violent groups, their motivation is often more values-driven, seeking recognition, redressing rampant inequality or corruption, and longing for the kind of solidarity that comes with group membership – none of which is captured in the deeply transactional "idle hands" theory.

66 Izzi, V (2013). "Just keeping them busy? Youth employment projects as a peacebuilding tool". *International Development Planning Review*, vol. 35, No. 2, p. 103.

67 This problem underscores the critical importance of identifying meaningful peacebuilding outcome indicators and launching data collection monitoring schemes from the outset of programming to be able to assess the project's contribution to reducing a conflict driver and test the ToC.

68 International Labour Organization (2019). *Handbook – How to Design, Monitor and Evaluate Peacebuilding Results in Jobs for Peace and Resilience Programmes.* Geneva. Available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_712211.pdf.

69 Although there may be good justification for creating employment and other economic inclusion initiatives for this target group, teams should be careful not to conflate young people and ex-combatants.

70 See, for example, Bruck, T., and others (2016). *Jobs Aid Peace: A Review of the Theory and Practice of the Impact of Employment Programmes on Peace in Fragile and Conflict-affected Countries.* Berlin: International Security and Development Center; and Izzi, V. (2013). "Just keeping them busy? Youth employment projects as a peacebuilding tool". *International Development Planning Review*, vol. 35, No. 2.

Moreover, ToCs based on these assumptions often adopt a narrow conception of employment for peace. The International Labour Organization insists on the importance of creating durable economic opportunities and "decent jobs",[71] and therefore invites us to move away from short-term cash-for-work programmes conceived as a solution for "youth at risk".

Finally, ToCs based on these assumptions ignore the positive contributions of youth and implicitly exclude young women. For example, a focus on young women's economic empowerment can have long-term positive implications for gender equality and overall stability. However, despite a lack of evidence, the "idle hands" approach has been prominent and difficult to dispel, even in key United Nations policy arenas.

THE TROUBLE WITH A POPULAR TOC FOR YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT

An example of a frequent and popular ToC for a peacebuilding programme is as follows:

Creating more jobs for young people will naturally strengthen social cohesion and reduce the risk of violence.[72]

There are a number of shortcomings with this ToC.

Unclear definitions

1. "Unemployment" is notoriously difficult to calculate for any population. Although the International Labour Organization offers a three-step criterion, how the three steps are interpreted often leads to uneven application.
2. The definition of "youth" is frequently left unspecified, and, similar to "unemployment", it may differ greatly from setting to setting or among United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.
3. The notion of "youth unemployment" may be defined in various ways, all of which have implications for different kinds of programming choices.[73]

Fuzzy targeting

1. Which youth to target? Most projects have a vaguely stated aim of identifying "at-risk" youth or "vulnerable" youth without clearly explaining these criteria. Ambiguous categories mean that programmes are prone to a perceived or real favouritism or a lack of transparency. Instead, programmes should seek to specify the intended target group. For instance, instead of targeting youth "at risk", a project might target underemployed male urban youth aged 18–26 years who have been in contact with law enforcement in the past five years. Based on a clear definition, criteria for access to the programme can then be defined, alongside open and transparent processes for their application.
2. How many youth to target? Most peacebuilding programmes target only a small number of youth relative to the population as a whole but expect that their intervention will reduce overall levels of conflict or violence.

71 International Labour Organization (2017). R205 – Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). Geneva.

72 Taken from Izzi, V. (2013). "Just keeping them busy? Youth employment projects as a peacebuilding tool". *International Development Planning Review*, vol. 35, No. 2, p. 103.

73 Youth unemployment can be measured in different ways, including (1) as a percentage of the youth population; (2) as a percentage of the youth labour force; (3) in relation to total unemployment; and (4) in relation to the adult unemployment rate. By analysing youth unemployment in these four ways, we can deduce the extent to which unemployment is specific to youth, as opposed to it being a broader problem in society. Policy responses should vary accordingly. If the problem is specific to youth, appropriate interventions may need to be aimed at easing the transition of young people into the job market. If, however, unemployment affects the population in general, policy responses need to have a broader scope. (Adapted from Izzi, V. (2013). "Just keeping them busy? Youth employment projects as a peacebuilding tool". *International Development Planning Review*, vol. 35, No. 2.)

ToCs need to confront the fact that employment or livelihood initiatives seek individual-level changes. They then need to specify how change among a small fraction of society is expected to produce wider positive effects.

Unspecified engines of change

Perhaps the greatest flaw in the above-mentioned ToC is that it simply asserts that providing jobs to young people will result in greater social cohesion or will reduce violence, without explaining why.

Teams must ask themselves the following question: "What is the justification for this claim and do I have any evidence that this is true?"

Questionable quality of employment

Providing jobs to young people should also prompt questions about what kinds of jobs will contribute to reducing the conflict factor.

Despite the scarcity of rigorous evaluation in this area, lessons learned from past programming suggest that less dignified types of work, such as cash-for-work schemes that offer employment to youth that involves clearing rubble, will not yield benefits for peace.

Other programmatic approaches in this area that focus on the supply side of employment, such as training programmes, mentorships and other skills-building initiatives, may even exacerbate the frustrations of young people if they do not find meaningful employment afterwards.[74]

Critiques of youth employment and peacebuilding should not be taken to imply that there is no role for such programming. They in fact caution that youth employment approaches should be deployed only in limited cases in which there is good justification in terms of the peacebuilding change and data for sound targeting.

In settings in which diverting young people's attention away from conflict is appropriate, employment or livelihood schemes should be paired with other approaches that address the full range of pull and push factors that drive a small number of young people to violence.

> "Evidence of whether better employment or livelihood opportunities translate into more peaceful societies is tenuous."

74 Betcherman, G., Godfrey, M., and others (2007). "A review of interventions to support young workers: findings of the youth employment inventory", Social Protection Discussion Papers and Notes, No 41412. Washington, The World Bank. Available at: http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/498381468779418249/pdf/414120Youth0workers0SP0071501PUBLIC1.pdf; Blattman,C., Annan, J. and others (2011). "Civil war, reintegration, and gender in northern Uganda", *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* vol. 55, No 6, pp. 877–908; Hamilton, J. (1994) *Time Series Analysis.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 248.

TABLE 11: Theories of change on economic empowerment

Redistribution (addressing inequalities)	Based on opportunity cost theory, youth will be less inclined to engage in conflict if they have a compelling economic reason for wanting stability. Youth participate in conflict as an economic last resort, and, all things considered, gainfully employed youth will reject violence because they prefer licit employment, as long as they can access sufficient resources. OR Grievances related to economic injustice or rampant inequalities drive tension and conflict. By providing excluded or marginalized young people with employment or livelihood opportunities, the risk of conflict will decrease, because resentment among excluded groups will lessen or the sense of injustice will be reduced.
Recognition (respecting difference)	The risk of conflict is reduced when young people have a better understanding of or empathy for others. A lack of understanding or empathy occurs when young people lack spaces for establishing positive relationships or encounters. Positive views of others can be established or reinforced if young people are put in touch with each other through employment or livelihood activities. One example of this is having youth from different backgrounds work alongside one another in an enterprise or in partnership through complementary trade networks.
Representation (ensuring participation)	By eliminating barriers to certain economic sectors, fields or livelihoods and creating opportunities for future advancement, young people from across all social groups will feel that they are an equal part of the community or state and have hope for the future. OR When citizens have equal access to decision-making and claims-making, economic policies set a more even playing field, reduce the exclusion of young people, or specific groups of young people, from certain economic sectors and open up their prospects for advancement.
Reconciliation (dealing with the legacies of the conflict)	By redressing economic violence (such as discrimination, trafficking and slavery/forced labour) and addressing long-lasting scars and trauma from abuse and injustice caused by economic violence, young people from both privileged and marginalized communities acknowledge past rights violations and establish relationships based on social justice. OR The risk of conflict is reduced when young people have a better of understanding of or empathy for others. A lack of understanding or empathy occurs because young people lack spaces for establishing positive relationships or encounters. Positive views of others can be established or reinforced if young people from different backgrounds jointly acquire the same technical and vocational skills, improve their conflict resolution skills and are able to access employment services, because the programme matches skills with labour market demand and creates constructive inter-group contact. One example of this is having youth from different ethnic backgrounds work alongside one another in an enterprise or in partnership through complementary trade networks.

Education

As noted by UNICEF's Affolter and Azaryeva-Valente (2020), education "can be leveraged to contribute to the mitigation of conflict factors, and for strengthening social integration and cohesion, while at the same time ensuring the safeguarding of children's developmental and cultural needs and rights."[75]

Peacebuilding through education rests on evidence that formal and informal education play a central role in either supporting cohesive societies or exacerbating divisions among people who fuel conflict. The dual nature of the education sector means that project teams cannot assume that merely providing greater access to education will naturally reduce a conflict factor or reinforce peace.

75 Affolter, F.W. and A. Azaryeva Valente (2020). "Learning for peace: lessons learned from UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Context Programme". In *Children and Peace*, N. Balvin and D.J. Christie, eds. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

Education can exacerbate conflict because poor-quality education can cause frustrations through unmet expectations of a brighter future. This can be brought about by, for example:

- inequitable access to education as a result of either discriminatory design or the inability of services to reach marginalized communities (access for young women and girls is often particularly challenging), which can feed grievances
- preventing healthy cross-group relationships from forming by separating students based on group affiliations or other gendered or demographic markers
- socializing students into polarized narratives of national identity and history.

Providing greater access to education that spreads these problems risks feeding the bases of conflict rather than ameliorating them.

"Education can exacerbate conflict because poor- quality education can cause frustrations through unmet expectations of a brighter future."

TABLE 12: Theories of change on education

Redistribution (addressing inequalities)	By distributing educational resources more equitably, the effects of structural discrimination will be reduced, which will provide all young people with greater economic and social opportunities. As a result of marginalized youth's greater economic and social opportunities, young people will have hope and a stake in their futures. OR Equitable access to education signals to the population that the state is prioritizing the reduction in inequalities that feed grievances and fuel conflict. The assumption stems from research that shows that conflict is twice as likely to occur in countries with stark educational inequalities between ethnic and religious groups.[76]
Recognition (respecting difference)	By eliminating barriers to education because of status inequalities, including through curricular content and eliminating language that recognizes only the elite or dominant population, groups that were formerly excluded on the basis of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial, gender, disability, age and other distinctions will see a place for themselves in the state. OR When children and young people from conflicting groups interact, they increase their understanding of each other and spark friendships that reduce the chances of communal conflict at a later stage (i.e. a version of contact theory).
Representation (ensuring participation)	When all citizens have equal access to decision-making and claims-making processes regarding the educational system, they perceive these processes and their outcomes as fair and legitimate. OR The educational system adequately prepares all young people to engage in decision-making and claims-making processes, which raise their perceptions of fairness and legitimacy of the state.
Reconciliation (dealing with the legacies of the conflict)	A common, compulsory educational curriculum provides students with a fair and accurate historical narrative and supports the development of their mutual understanding of their role as equal citizens of the state.

76 UNICEF and FHI 360 Education Policy and Data Center (2015). *Does Horizontal Education Inequality Lead to Violent Conflict? A Global Analysis.* New York.

Gender

Gender inequality is a product of complex and interrelated historical, cultural, sociopolitical and economic forces through which established notions of masculinity are privileged over established notions of femininity – in other words men are essentially favoured at the expense of women and SGMs. Gender inequality and its numerous manifestations (such as GBV, exploitation and discrimination) are stumbling blocks to peace and security and serve as an indicator to predict the likelihood of conflict.

Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent WPS resolutions, as well as research and policy findings, have strongly established the importance and effectiveness of women's broad and diverse participation in peacebuilding, as well as the need for a gender-transformative approach to peacebuilding processes. However, despite the success of this agenda in highlighting the active and constructive role of women in advancing peace and security, Resolution 1325 and its subsequent resolutions have not sufficiently

documented the distinct realities, potential and contributions of young women.[77] Although Resolution 2250 on YPS provides a framework to fill this gap by focusing on the transformative role of young people in peacebuilding, it depends on implementation strategies recognizing how gender shapes young people's realities, perceptions and actions to make a truly transformative change. In designing and implementing YPS programmes that are gender responsive, the following principles are key to successfully filling this gap:

- **Do not lump women and youth together.** In designing peacebuilding projects, there is a tendency to lump "women and youth" together. This act takes away from the different experiences, needs and roles of men, women, young men, young women and young SGMs. Transformative peacebuilding initiatives need to take into consideration the different barriers to inclusion and participation that are shaped by patriarchal structures, misogyny and deeply rooted inequalities. These barriers may be further exacerbated by not only a person's gender and/or age but also other factors, such as their education, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, political affiliation and regional provenance.
- **Consider age sensitivity beyond the youth–adult divide.** The definition of "youth" or "a young person" varies depending on the context and the country, and even within the youth category, which can span more than 10 years, gendered needs, roles, access and resources vary. Peacebuilding initiatives must be mindful of this fact when identifying target groups in analyses and interventions, and must apply a rigorous approach to disaggregating data according to age and sex.
- **Ensure that the term "youth" is not equated with "young men".** Although there has been some progress on this issue in recent years, there remains a tendency to use the term "youth" in the peace and security discourse to refer to young men, making young women and also young SGMs invisible. It is essential in peacebuilding programming and interventions to not fall into a trap that is unfortunately still common of prioritizing young men when targeting "youth" and considering young women victims of conflict. However, young men are often only viewed as security threats and perpetrators of violence. Transformative peacebuilding interventions must challenge negative, gendered stereotypes such as these and ensure that the diverse experiences, roles and needs of young women and men are acknowledged and addressed. Furthermore, transformative peacebuilding initiatives must recognize the fact that the vast majority of young people are peaceful and that many young people are active and important agents for peace.
- **Challenge stereotypes to promote access.** The stereotypes of young people are plentiful. Some harmful stereotypes and assumptions about young people pertain to their perceived lack of experience and qualifications that prevents them from making a meaningful contribution to policy and programming decisions. This can result in their exclusion from networks and spaces of power, which often sit with older, male groups. In many contexts, young women carry the double burden of being a young person and being a woman. Gender and age biases can result in additional barriers to the participation of young women and can further limit their access to education, resources, property, health care and other services. Even women's groups may not directly engage with youth groups or actively support young women. It is also important to acknowledge that it is not only older women and men who hold negative stereotypes of young women and men. Young people also hold learned gendered stereotypes that may reproduce and solidify unequal power relations between women and men. It is therefore crucial

77 UN Women (2018). *Young Women in Peace and Security: At the Intersection of the YPS and WPS Agendas – Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security.* New York, p. 31. Available at https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/research-paper-young-women-in-peace-and-security-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2849.

that youth peacebuilding projects analyse young people's perceptions of gender equality and challenge any harmful stereotypes that reinforce exclusion, especially of young women.

- **Contribute to long-term results on gender equality and women's empowerment.** It is crucial to design youth programmes in a manner that does not exacerbate existing gender inequalities and patriarchy, but instead promotes gender equality, women's empowerment and the WPS agenda. Investing in young women and girls is a crucial element of societies becoming more stable and equal in the future.

TABLE 13: Theories of change on gender equality

Redistribution (addressing inequalities)	Addressing legal barriers to young women's access to financial resources, land and property, and basic social services, and the recognition of unpaid labour will enable young women to participate more fully in social, economic and political life, which is particularly relevant in conflicts and post conflict, during which female-headed households are more common. OR Understanding and addressing the specific needs and capacities of young female ex-combatants and women and girls associated with armed groups in DDR initiatives will increase the number of opportunities for successful reintegration of these groups and their post-conflict political participation. DDR initiatives are often mostly geared towards young men and too narrowly defined, and prevent young female ex-combatants and those associated with armed groups from acquiring relevant skills in typically male-dominated areas.[78]
Recognition (respecting difference)	Facilitating networking and partnerships between women's groups and youth groups, especially those led by young women, will enable them to develop joint agendas and strengthen their collective action for transformative change. Women's groups may not directly engage with youth groups or actively support young women within their own organizations. As a result, they often do not consciously address the age-specific concerns of young women or work on developing their leadership. This may translate into additional barriers to the participation of young women, who may not have the same political connections and networks as women who are older and more established.[79]
Representation (ensuring participation)	Engaging power-holders, including the media, in breaking down negative stereotypes, presenting more positive images of young women in public and political spaces, and empowering young women with regard to issues of participation, rights and justice will create more positive attitudes towards young women as leaders and decision-makers and will encourage greater participation in political life.[80]
Reconciliation (dealing with the legacies of the conflict)	Understanding, memorializing and handing down to younger generations the experience of war and conflict in a way that honours the full extent of women's social, political and economic contributions will increase the level of acceptance of women's non-traditional gender roles in a post-conflict society. History is frequently rewritten to omit women's roles in times of both conflict and peace. Women are often either reduced to minor roles or perceived to be in need of protection. In reality, women, including young women, frequently take up a broad range of roles in times of conflict that are more typically reserved for men, including household breadwinners, family or community decision-makers and armed fighters.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid.

80 Corlazzoli, V. and J. White (2013). *Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security, and Justice Programmes – Part II: Using Theories of Change in Monitoring and Evaluation. London: Department for International Development.* Available at https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/PartII-Theories-of-Change-for-Monitoring-and-Evaluation-With-Annexes-SFCG.pdf.

Appendix – Suggested further reading and resources on ToCs

Organization/author	Title	Description
Chris Alford	"How systems mapping can help you build a better theory of change"	This article provides a critique of oversimplified, linear ToC models and offers tips for systems mapping.
CDA Collaborative Learning Projects	*Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics. A Resource Manual*	Pages 50–61 provide guidance on constructing ToCs based on a conflict analysis and consideration of the roles and reach of actors and the level of change envisaged.
Vanessa Corlazzoli and Jonathan White	*Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security and Justice Programmes* – Part II	This document provides excellent guidance on the pitfalls of ignoring ToCs and considerations for developing well-evidenced programming hypotheses.
Keystone	*Developing a Theory of Change*	This is a guide to developing a ToC as a framework for inclusive dialogue, learning and accountability for social impact.
Oxfam	*Youth Participation and Leadership: Theory of Change Resource*	This document provides guidance specifically on ToCs for youth participation.

CHAPTER 4

YPS Outcome Statements and Indicators of Change

The building blocks of youth-responsive project design

Understanding outcome logics[81]

Each action we undertake constitutes an important element in achieving a greater result – an outcome – that positively contributes to change at the structural or societal level.

For peacebuilding projects, structural- or societal-level change must explicitly address a conflict factor. Given that outcomes set the desired change at the structural or societal level, they are typically beyond the immediate responsibility of any individual project. Instead, individual projects contribute towards change that is achieved with others.

Although outcomes are achieved with others, project teams are fully accountable for the lower level actions that constitute outcomes – the inputs and outputs that are implemented to achieve the desired change, such as the purchased computers and the training workshops we conduct.

A common pitfall in project design is setting the level of ambition too low and articulating outcomes that are really outputs, such as training local authorities on how to partner with young people and empowering youth to engage with political decision-makers.

Although these steps are important individual-level changes, they are merely the building blocks of another more significant change that transforms a conflict factor. Design failures such as this are frequently born from the fear that committing to a goal that is beyond the project's direct control may set the team up to fail.[82]

In peacebuilding, however, such reluctance can be dangerous, because, by failing to anticipate the greater impact of our work, we blind ourselves to

81 United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and peace operations units employ different definitions of "outcome" and "output". For the purposes of this guidance, "outcome" is meant to signify a societal, institutional or structural change, regardless of whether that change is identified within a project or a programme. "Outputs" are lower-order changes that contribute to achieving an outcome.

82 Peace Direct and Alliance for Peacebuilding (2019). *Local Peacebuilding – What Works and Why,* pp. ii and 4. Available at: https://peaceinsight-whatworks.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/pd-local-peacebuilding-report-v2.pdf

PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

BOX 18: Common traps or pitfalls of YPS outcomes

Outcome language is too vague
Example: Youth-inclusive mediation will increase peace.

The outcome lumps "youth", "women" and "vulnerable groups" into a vague, residual category
Example: Women, youth and marginalized communities have increased confidence in local government to resolve local conflicts.

The ambition is pitched too low
Example: Youth are capacitated to engage in local decision-making.

The outcome is not youth focused
Example: Increased social trust will reduce the risk of elections-related violence.

The outcome instrumentalizes youth for change that others want
Example: Youth work with police to identify and mitigate risks to local security.

The outcome treats all youth as a homogeneous group
Example: Better employment opportunities reduce the risk of violent groups recruiting young people.

whether the project's actions are improving key conflict factors or exacerbating them. To avoid this trap, project outcomes should identify the expected structural- or societal-level change to which outputs contribute.

When designing initiatives for conflict prevention and transformation, it is often tempting to focus on removing or reducing a negative force – for example trying to prevent armed groups and security forces from forcibly recruiting or abducting young people. Framing a project's outcomes in terms of reducing a negative factor, however, often places the project's focus on actors who engage in negative behaviour or who are affected by it. This, in turn, overemphasizes the role played by the comparatively few young women and men who engage in conflict and contributes to the tendency to label youth as a problem.

Instead, project teams should consider framing project outcomes in terms of positive peace. The Institute for Economics and Peace suggests eight equally important Pillars of Positive Peace (see Figure 6), which substantially overlap with the SDGs.[83]

In addition, research demonstrates that a positive youth development (PYD) approach to peacebuilding bears more fruit than initiatives introduced in response an immediate trigger of conflict or instability, which frequently result in shorter-term solutions.

PYD approaches, in contrast, recognize factors that both push and pull communities into conflict. By taking a more comprehensive, longer-term community-based development approach, PYD initiatives build meaning, belonging and recognition of youth's positive roles in ways that have been shown to be more effective in addressing root causes and breaking cycles of conflict.[84]

83 Hagerty, T. (2017). "Data for youth, peace and security: a summary of research findings from the Institute for Economics & Peace". Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace.

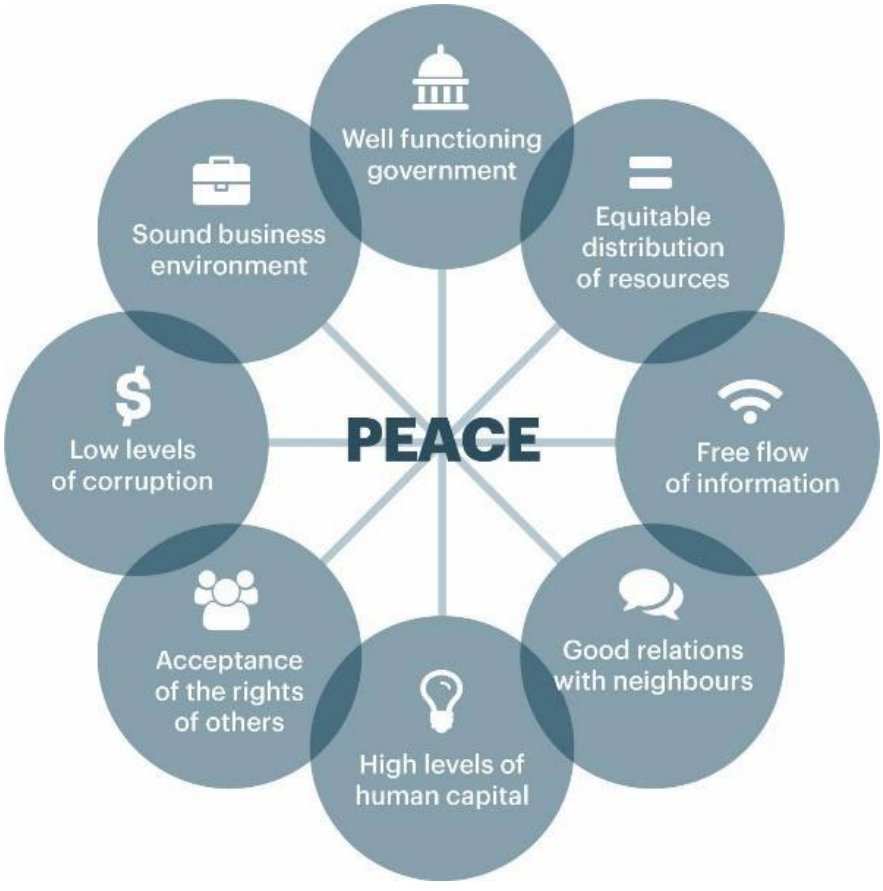
84 YouthPower Learning (2017). *Promising Practices in Engaging Youth in Peace and Security and P/VE – Summary of Key Interventions and Examples*. Washington, D.C., p. 1.

Projects that are designed to reduce a negative factor or that take a more reactive or repressive approach – for example strengthening police force capacity to monitor and respond to youth networks suspected of fostering violent extremist ideologies – may still be valid for a discrete set of problems, but they should be deployed sparingly. Moreover, in these cases, targeting becomes even more important and must be more precise, since most youth are neither involved in nor at risk of engaging in conflict.

Scales of YPS programmes

Peacebuilding initiatives with young people at the centre can be plotted along an increasing scale (see Figure 7), from initiatives that seek a general peacebuilding change that will positively affect youth as an important constituency to those that are led by young women and men seeking a peacebuilding outcome that is prioritized by youth.

FIGURE 6: The Institute for Economics and Peace's eight Pillars of Positive Peace



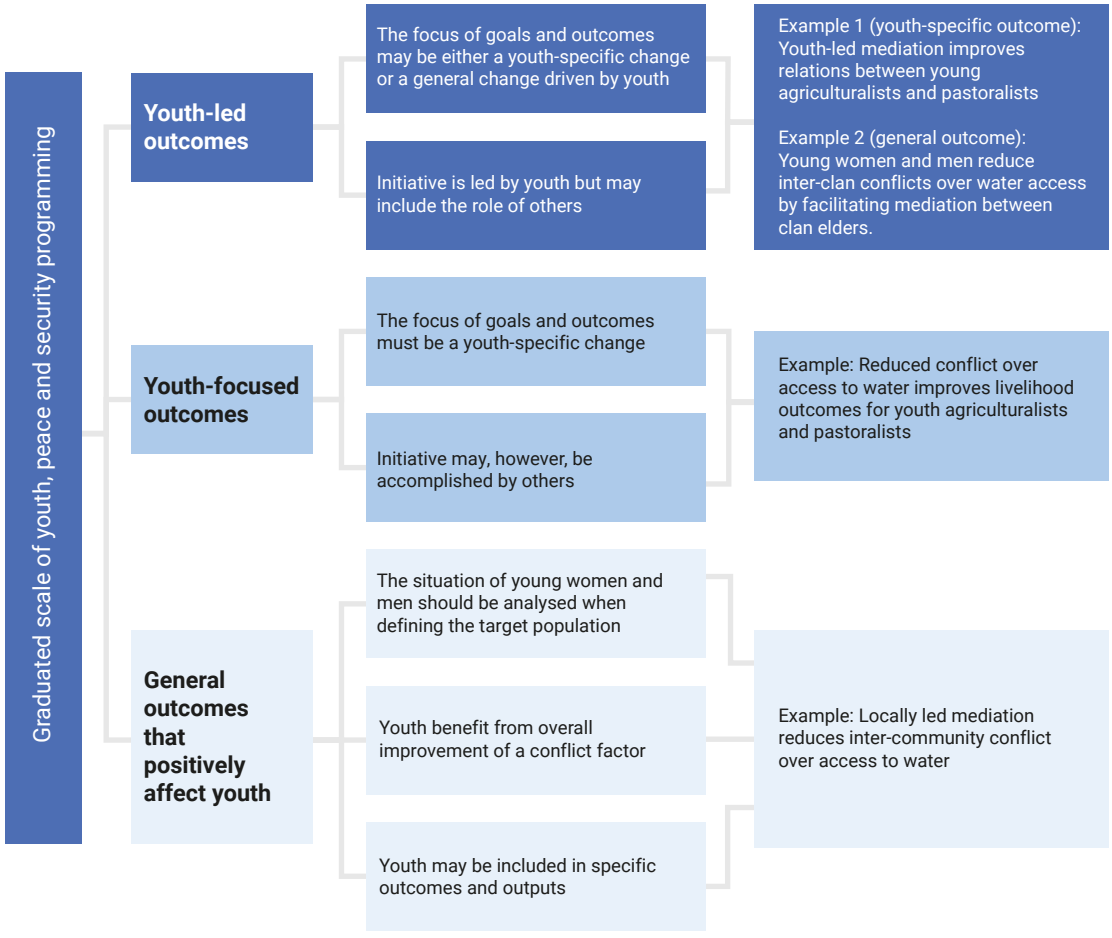
The degree to which projects meet different criteria with respect to outcome language, indicator selection, choice of implementing partners and stakeholder engagement will determine where the project falls on the scale shown in Figure 7.

The unique challenges and opportunities that young women and young men come across as they interact with various institutions, social groups, cultures and religions compel us to design project outcomes that are sensitive to the different situations, goals and needs of young women and young men.

In some settings that may mean working towards outcomes that specifically engage young women to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to benefit from peace initiatives. However, in other contexts, young men may face barriers to participation that need special attention within programming.

The project teams should refer to information on such context-specific gender differences in the conflict analysis and verify these differences with young women and men to ensure that project outcomes reflect their lived realities and goals and contribute to gender equality.

FIGURE 7: Graduated scale of YPS programming



Key actions and questions for formulating outcome statements

- Determine whether the highest-level achievement in the outcome statement is "empowerment", "having the capacity to…" or similar language that signifies individual-level change. If the answer is yes, chances are this is really an output, not an outcome.
- Identify the desired change that the empowerment or increased capacity will contribute to and reframe the outcome in terms of that higher-order change. Remember that this change should have a direct relationship with a strategic priority and clearly contribute to improving a conflict factor.
- To assist with the above-mentioned determination, use the logic model and conduct an outcome versus output diagnostic:[85]
- Consider whether the outcome statement assumes a negative dynamic or envisages positive change. If it assumes a negative

85 CDA's Reflecting on Peace Practice matrix, which teams use to plot project elements against types of change and types of stakeholders, is an excellent resource to facilitate this exercise.

FIGURE 8: Outcome versus output diagnostic

dynamic, assess whether the targeting of young women and men is precise enough to warrant the intervention.

Youth-specific considerations

- Ensure that project outcomes reflect a change that youth desire by designing project outcomes and outputs together. If time constraints make this infeasible, carry out a validation exercise to confirm that outcomes are youth inclusive prior to finalizing the project. This may help ward off risks inherent in scaling up nascent movements or formalizing informal networks that can stifle or even kill the original grassroots momentum.
- Analyse whether the project is taking a PYD approach by examining whether proposed outcome statements build young women's and young men's sense of belonging and confidence in their knowledge and skills, and acknowledge youth's positive contributions.
- Reflect on whether the language that is being used is explicitly or implicitly gendered.
- If young women and men have differential starting points with respect to the desired change, consider whether a specific gender-focused outcome is necessary to fully achieve the project's goal.

Are we making a positive contribution to peacebuilding? The role of outcome indicators

Conflict prevention, conflict transformation and peacebuilding programming occur in highly charged, complex settings that are in constant flux. Being able to understand what kind of impact our work is having in a given context is important for programme learning and adjustment, as well as accountability to stakeholders and donors.

> "Avoid making assumptions on behalf of young women and men about what you think should constitute meaningful change."

Outcome indicators contribute to that understanding by telling us whether we are achieving the anticipated structural- or societal-level change and whether that change is having the intended positive effect on the conflict driver. In other words, outcome indicators help us understand whether our ToCs were correct and valid for the setting. Project teams should ensure that their overarching objective can be measured and that related indicators are included in the results framework. Often, results frameworks include only indicators related to the project's outcomes and not to the transformational change – or "ultimate goal" – that the project seeks to achieve.

The focus on measuring structural- or societal-level change at the outcome level is in contrast to the focus of process indicators, which measure the project's inputs and outputs. These lower-level indicators inform managers whether the project is being implemented on time and as planned. Both outcome and process indicators are important, but input and output indicators will only tell us if we are doing what we had planned to do; they will not shed light on whether or not those actions were the right ones.

As they measure more concrete actions, process indicators tend to be quantifiable – for example the number of young women and men trained in workshops and the frequency of messages or population coverage of a social media campaign. By contrast, the higher-level changes sought by outcomes typically call for qualitative measures, since the change that is sought is more often about perceptions or attitudes or how well stakeholders are applying new knowledge and skills to contribute to structural change.

Addressing whether we are doing the right things compels us to ask what constitutes a meaningful

change across a range of stakeholders. Such an inquiry recognizes that different actors may have different goals or experiences in a given setting. This is an especially important distinction for young women and men because of their specific situation vis-à-vis institutions, social groups, cultural norms and religious practices.

Moreover, differences between young women and men may also produce alternative views on what constitutes meaningful change. To account for such differences, in addition to ensuring that indicators are adequately disaggregated by sex, age and other salient demographic features, project teams may consider whether indicators relevant to specific stakeholder groups are required. Project teams raise their chances of devising relevant, meaningful outcome indicators by planning together with youth stakeholders – that is, both young women and young men who are best placed to identify what constitutes meaningful change for themselves and their peers.[86]

Designing indicators that produce a relevant and accurate picture of the situation of young women and men not only is important for responsible YPS project implementation but also provides critical data to other important processes, such as the periodic reviews undertaken as part of the rolling common country assessments envisaged by the new development system reforms.

The availability of data on how specific groups of young women and men are faring in programming settings can fill existing information gaps and enable project staff and senior management within the United Nations to "see" youth and better understand how to support their positive contributions to sustainable peace.

> "Instead, invite them into the indicator design process so that they may identify indicators that are meaningful to them."

Step-by-step guide to identifying youth-relevant outcomes and indicators

Step 1 – Identify what needs to be measured and clarify the unit of measurement

» Describe what is expected to change in the programming environment if the outcome is successfully achieved.

Consider working with youth to identify Everyday Peace Indicators (EPIs)[87] relevant to the project's outcomes that can be easily collected by youth.

» Identify relevant units of measurement. The units of measurement may include specific sets of actors, pieces of revised legislation, and degrees of confidence in peace processes, governance or other actors and institutions. Remember that the change is likely to include qualitative measures, such as changes in perceptions or attitudes, and that what is measured needs to signal meaningful change to key stakeholders, including young women and men.

86 The Youth Engagement Community of Practice, led by YouthPower Learning, has generated a list of youth-generated measures of youth engagement and PYD, which is available at https://www.youthpower.org/sites/default/files/YouthLead/files/resources/Measuring%20Youth%20Engagement.pdf.

87 EPIs are bottom-up indicators of difficult-to-measure concepts, such as peace and tolerance, developed using a participatory grassroots approach. The EPI approach is grounded in a belief that local communities are better placed than external experts to identify changes in their local contexts. As such, it offers excellent opportunities for youth participation in the generation of indicators. More information on EPIs is available at https://everydaypeaceindicators.org/.

> Work with diverse groups of young people to generate a sense of who should be reached through project monitoring.

> Youth may be aware of underserved or ignored youth populations that may be invisible to others.

When searching for good measures of youth participation, teams may wish to refer to lists of youth-generated indicators:

- indicators of youth engagement
- PYD indicators.

Step 2 – Identify target population(s)

» Identify the target population(s) your project aims to reach and ensure that the indicator is disaggregated by sex and age to reflect different experiences within the population.

» Consider the degree to which group differences beyond sex and age disaggregation may be necessary. Salient categories may include distinctions between rural–urban youth, among religious, ethnic or tribal groups, economically or politically excluded youth, and youth who are not in education, employment or training, or across a range of gender identities.

Avoid oversimplification when considering gender equality in targeting. Approaches that include an even 50/50 split in representation between young women and young men, for example, may be appropriate for some outcomes but inappropriate for others. Referring to differences in baseline starting points can inform the selection of appropriate sex distributions or achievements.

Consult young women and men if large differences in baseline values exist between the sexes to understand what is generating the different outcomes. This will help inform the identification of realistic milestones and targets.

Step 3 – Establish a baseline

» **Include a baseline, a target and milestone measurements for each indicator.** Determining the baseline is critical for understanding what magnitude of change will ultimately be sought, since it provides key information on the status quo prior to project implementation.

» Baseline measures need to be disaggregated by sex and age so that they can inform project staff of the differential starting points of various stakeholders. Large differences in baselines between young women and young men, for example, may indicate to project staff that project interventions need to target young women more to bring them to the same level of improvement as their male counterparts.

» When indicator baselines reflect large differences between young women and men or other stakeholder groups, the milestones may not reflect change occurring at an equal pace among all stakeholders. Instead, they may need to be calibrated to ensure that each group reaches its specific target by the project's end.

» Although baseline values are knowable information, targets require teams to anticipate the size of the effect that the project is expected to have by the project's end. The project's impact will be influenced by the scale of its interventions, and the magnitude of the indicator should reflect those parameters.

For example, a community-based conflict reduction project would not be expected to significantly change the overall level of measurable conflict in a country, so the outcome-level indicator should aim for a significant reduction in violence at the

community level. Remember that, since different stakeholders may have different starting points, the magnitude of change may also be different across stakeholders.

Step 4 – Identify the means of verification

» **Identify the means of verification (MoV)**[88] **that will provide data for each indicator.** Indicator selection and monitoring/data collection plans go hand in hand. The perfect indicator is useless if there is not a way of obtaining data for it.

Work with youth to identify the plausible MoV and consider engaging them in data collection and monitoring plans. For more information, see Chapter 5 on monitoring.

» Be mindful that existing data sets[89] frequently do not include youth-relevant indicators and are often not disaggregated by age, sex and other categories that are important for understanding the situation of young people. As a result, peacebuilders implementing youth-sensitive and youth-responsive programming may have to plan and budget for dedicated data collection exercises to ensure that each indicator is associated with the MoV.

88 MoVs identify where project teams can obtain data for a specific indicator. Examples of MoVs include surveys, census reports, routinely collected administrative data and systematically recorded field monitoring reports. It is essential that teams identify the MoV at the same time as selecting an indicator to ensure that each indicator can be populated by reliable, verifiable and updated data.

89 For instance, the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE) is a tool initially developed by the United Nations Development Programme and the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development, with USAID funding, to gauge peacefulness in a society by measuring different aspects of social cohesion and reconciliation through context-specific data collection instruments. For more information on the methodology, including a list of indicators, and past SCORE country reports, see the website SCORE for Peace.

Appendix – Further reading on indicators

Organization	Title	Description
Catholic Relief Services	*GAIN Peacebuilding Indicators*	This report offers a mix of suggested outcome and output indicators for peacebuilding work, together with a description of what is being measured and possible MoVs.
International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding	*Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Indicators*	This document provides a list of high-level, global indicators, developed for the New Deal, to be used in conjunction with state- and community-specific indicators.
EPI	"What are Everyday Peace Indicators?"	This document describes the importance of capturing what meaningful peacebuilding change means to local communities and outlines the EPI process.
Global Affairs Canada	*International Assistance Results Reporting Guide for Partners*	In addition to discussing the importance of reporting, this guide offers step-by-step guidance on how to identify appropriate indicators and data, and how to assess the achievement of results.
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	*Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation*	This report covers the conceptual, methodological and empirical aspects of identifying context-sensitive indicators to promote and monitor the implementation of human rights.
United Nations Department of Peace Operations	*Monitoring Peace Consolidation: United Nations Practitioners' Guide to Benchmarking*	This handbook provides basic principles, guidelines and resources for United Nations field presences to measure progress towards or a regression in peace consolidation in mission settings through benchmarking, data collection and aggregation, and reporting.
United Nations Development Programme	*Improving the Impact of Preventing Violent Extremism Programming – A Toolkit for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation*	This toolkit includes modules, processes and approaches, as well as an indicator bank, that can be used as part of a capacity-building approach to monitoring.

CHAPTER 5

Monitoring YPS Project Implementation and Impact

Introduction

Key to successful peacebuilding is understanding whether:

- your YPS project is being implemented in accordance with what you set out to do
- your YPS project is having the anticipated effect
- that effect is making a positive difference in the overall situation.

Therefore, establishing vigorous monitoring across different levels of results is critically important.[90]

Although most United Nations systems are adept at capturing rates of project implementation – in other words, monitoring inputs and outputs – projects occasionally commit to outcome-level indicators but fail to collect data to monitor those results.

This is a particular problem for peacebuilding outcomes, which typically require data on difficult-to-measure dispositions, such as confidence in governing systems, perceptions of local security and levels of social trust – this information is rarely available through routinely collected data.

When the absence of disaggregated data on the situation of youth combines with missing outcome-level data, project managers are very often left in the dark about whether their interventions are having a positive effect on the lives of young women and men and whether their participation is contributing to peace and security.[91]

SUGGESTED TIP

BOX 19: Suggested reading

Corlazzoli, V. and J. White (2013). *Solutions to Measurement Challenges in Fragile and Conflict-affected Environments*. London: Department for International Development.

This is a how-to guide that presents a variety of tools, methodologies and approaches in the social sciences for measuring intangible change in conflict-affected and fragile environments.

90 Consult the appendix to this chapter for a description of the three levels of project monitoring.

91 Hagerty, T. (2017), "Data for youth, peace and security: a summary of research findings from the Institute for Economics & Peace". Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace, pp. 12–15.

To address this two-fold missing data problem, project managers should budget for and plan data collection exercises to coincide with moments when updated data will be needed, such as in:

- periodic project reviews
- project reporting
- midterm evaluations
- situation monitoring.

Access to updated outcome-level data helps hold teams accountable for whether their interventions are improving key conflict factors for all stakeholders and enables feedback loops for course correction when necessary.

Since peacebuilding outcomes, by definition, aim for change that goes beyond any individual project's result, teams need a method for deciphering the contribution they have made to the changes they observe. One way of obtaining this information is to collect data not just among the targeted population or geographical area, but also among non-targeted populations[92] with comparable characteristics.

Why is this important? Take, for example, outcome monitoring that records a 16 per cent increase in the openness of youth to cross social divides to work together. On the face of it, this seems like a positive outcome. What if, however, a similar group of youth who did not participate in the project improved their cooperation by 30 per cent over the same time period? This new information should prompt some serious questions about whether the project somehow inhibited youth's willingness to cooperate.

In this scenario, instead of reporting the 16 per cent increase as a success, project teams should acknowledge the underachievement vis-à-vis the control group, re-evaluate their ToCs and possibly revise their programmatic approach.

This kind of comprehensive monitoring enhances teams' accountability to stakeholders, because it provides two important pieces of information:

1. It helps teams understand not just if conditions have changed but also whether that change indicates success.
2. It provides an indication of the project's contribution to the observed change.

Youth-responsive outcome monitoring

Addressing the dual questions of "What data do we monitor?" and "How do we monitor data?" opens up space for ensuring that youth perspectives are included in the substantive information produced by robust monitoring, as well as for developing strong partnerships with young people to collect and analyse monitoring data.

What data do we monitor? Understanding the situation of youth

A first consideration for youth-sensitive outcome monitoring is determining whether planned or existing project monitoring schemes are designed to capture the information necessary for understanding the particular situations of young women and men.

Sources of information may include dedicated data collection schemes, such as those youth-driven innovations highlighted in the paragraphs to follow, as well as routine project management activities, such as field visit reports. These sources should provide project teams with an insight into whether and how substantive peacebuilding change is affecting the situation of different populations of young women and men.

92 These non-targeted populations are referred to as control groups; they allow project managers, stakeholders and evaluators to see what might have happened in a given context if an intervention had not been implemented.

How do we monitor data? Forging partnerships with youth to understand the context

Partnering with youth to shape and carry out monitoring provides young women and men with an opportunity to record, understand and communicate significant changes in their context.

As noted in earlier sections, differences in how institutions, social groups and cultural or religious ideologies treat young women and men result in differential outcomes for various segments of the youth population – such differences are frequently unacknowledged or hidden from decision-makers.

In this respect, in addition to providing a fuller picture of contextual dynamics, youth-led monitoring schemes can also influence the content and process of official statistical data collection and analysis. Furthermore, such schemes strengthen intergenerational and cross-sectoral partnerships by demonstrating the positive role of youth and including the unique perspective and skills they bring as a complement to other monitoring approaches.

By partnering with youth on outcome monitoring, United Nations project teams support young people's capacity for critical thinking and analysis while recognizing the right of youth to participate in meaningful oversight of the interventions that affect them, including interventions in the security sector. As a result, partnering with youth heightens the accountability of the United Nations to young women and men throughout the project cycle.

The quality of the partnership, however, is just as important as the partnership itself. United Nations teams should foster equal partnerships that do not expect youth to carry out work that may be important to the United Nations but that is perhaps not prioritized or even desired by youth themselves.

Once a commitment to partner with youth on monitoring has been made, project teams need to dedicate adequate time and resources to ensuring that young women and men have the tools they need to succeed. Recent reports highlight this point and call on donors to make available sufficient resources for building the capacity of youth to participate in monitoring.[93] Such support, however, should recognize that young women and men are already leading creative, cutting-edge ways of collecting data and understanding evolving contexts, and should seek to learn from and expand these existing good practices while continuing to foster innovation.

Moreover, monitoring peacebuilding outcomes can raise sensitivities or concerns for certain stakeholders, since it seeks to understand whether and how the overall situation has improved, and which segments of the population have benefited or been excluded from the improvement.

Political leaders, for example, may demand that indications of a worsening security situation are not made public. In other contexts, the act of monitoring itself may be perceived as spying or informing or even alleged as evidence of suspected collusion with untrusted security actors or Member States, all of which places monitors at risk. Project teams need to be aware of such risks and work with youth monitors to identify appropriate risk mitigation measures.

Figure 10 offers a range of suggestions for innovative ways in which young people can lead or participate in outcome or situation monitoring.

93 United Network of Youth Peacebuilders and Search for Common Ground (2017). *Mapping a Sector: Bridging the Evidence Gap on Youth-driven Peacebuilding — Findings of the Global Survey of Youth-led Organizations Working on Peace and Security.* The Hague, the Netherlands, p. 8. Available at http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Mapping-a-Sector-Bridging-the-Evidence-Gap-on-Youth-Driven-Peacebuilding.pdf; United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding (2016). *Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note.* New York p. 16. Available at https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-10/PRACTICE%20NOTE%20-%20Young%20People%27s%20Participation%20in%20Peacebuilding%20%282016%29.pdf.

Prior to selecting a monitoring approach, however, project teams should first analyse the sum total of indicators in their project's results framework, including input and output indicators and quantitative and qualitative outcome indicators. A first step in this process is to review each indicator's MoV, to map which indicators are already being collected through existing data collection efforts. After generating a list of indicators that still need dedicated data collection exercises, teams should reflect on the nature of the indicators themselves. Quantitative indicators, for example, will need rigorous but perhaps different data collection schemes compared with qualitative indicators, which may require approaches that capture respondents' sentiments or perspectives. As noted earlier, many peacebuilding outcomes, such as increased levels of social cohesion, confidence in security forces and an increased level of tolerance between groups, call for the collection of qualitative data.

However, a word of caution regarding planning for data collection must be mentioned here. Although it may be compelling to launch innovative data collection schemes, teams should be careful to collect only data that will be utilized to monitor the project or the broader context in which the project is implemented. To ensure utility, teams should identify when and how the data will be used prior to dedicating resources to their collection. Data that are collected but not used waste precious human, financial and time resources.

FIGURE 10: Innovative ways in which young people can lead or participate in outcome or situation monitoring

Participatory arts-based methods as rigorous data collection for transformative change.

- **Storytelling.**[94] This is a powerful mode of expression that can capture a respondent's reaction to a situation or object, or recollection of some experience.[95] A storytelling approach to data collection may involve youth in a range of ways, including through peer-to-peer storytelling and intergenerational storytelling, and by gathering teams of youth to code and analyse the stories of others. Storytelling can be verbal, visual or written, and can occur through face-to-face interaction or can be supported by social or traditional media. **Footage Foundation's Her{connect}Her project**, for example, provides a digital storytelling platform on mobile devices to cultivate agency and a sense of belonging among young refugee and migrant women while fostering empathy and understanding in host communities across several European countries.

94 Although storytelling as a data collection approach is compelling to those seeking rich, creative expression, teams must apply rigour in determining the population sample that will provide the stories and in coding and analysing the raw story information. Otherwise, individual stories are anecdotes, which are not considered data.

95 As people's opinions and memories are shaped by their interactions within institutions and social groups, stories provide valuable indications of how personal narratives have been shaped over time by these structures. Analysed on their own, however, stories are less reliable as reports of fact, even in the case of eye-witness testimonies. As with other data collection approaches, teams should use caution when examining stories for data and should apply rigorous sampling and coding methods.

- **Storytelling subcategory: visual data collection.** Photographs, illustrations and film are examples of visual arts-based data collection techniques that literally apply a "youth lens" to how a situation is perceived. Approaches using visual arts may encourage youth participation by tapping into their creativity while providing them with an outlet for experiences and thoughts they may otherwise find difficult to express or that numerical data cannot capture. Moreover, some research shows that communicating through metaphors may trigger fresh ideas on the subject matter, which could in turn yield new insights into evolving dynamics of conflict and peace in a context.[96] The photography initiative **PhotoVoice in the United Kingdom**, for example, supports young refugees in feeling more connected to their new schools and communities, more recognized and valued, and better equipped to engage and find a voice for themselves with new skills and more extensive networks.[97] In **Kyrgyzstan,** the Global Public Policy Institute project **"Cameras in Hand"** provided youth from different ethnic, geographical and linguistic backgrounds with an opportunity to work together on short films and social media campaigns to advocate change.

Direct observation. This is a systematic way of gathering data by watching behaviour or events, or by noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. Such approaches require a deep knowledge of the context, because observable significant changes may be subtle or may be hidden altogether from outsiders. As it is sensitive to the data collector's particular view, direct observation can provide young women and men with a systematic method for capturing change or a lack of change that is meaningful to them but frequently hidden from the rest of the population.

Crowdsourcing. Technology-based solutions – such as utilizing rapid SMS or social media to crowdsource data collection – many of which have been spearheaded by youth, have expanded tremendously in the past decade. As it works through mobile devices to survey interested populations, crowdsourcing provides expansive access to real-time data on specific topics of interest. **UNICEF's U-Report,** for example, gathers data from more than 8 million youth in more than 60 countries and is used to inform every aspect of planning and monitoring, and – to a lesser degree[98] – project monitoring, reporting and evaluation. Youth are also leading efforts to monitor progress towards the SDGs, with a focus on SDG 4.7 on education, through a crowdsourcing platform supported by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**. This innovative approach gathers data from youth at the local level to discern patterns that can be quantified and used for SDG reporting.

Traditional survey design and enumeration. When degrees of confidence in the validity of information on specific populations are required, teams may need to employ a more traditional approach to surveying and data collection. Although traditional surveys demand sophistication in both sampling populations and conducting interviews or questionnaires, youth may gain these skills through training that enables their participation or leadership. At the outset of the current conflict **in Yemen**, for example, **UNICEF partnered with teams of young women** who, given traditional gender norms, were uniquely placed to query female caregivers about household well-being. These surveys provided humanitarian actors and human rights defenders with the only available data on how the crisis was affecting vulnerable families and communities in both urban and rural areas.

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96 SUSPLACE (2018). *Arts-Based Methods for Transformative Engagement: A Toolkit.* Wageningen, the Netherlands, p. 7.

97 To support the ethical use of others' images, the Bond People in the Pictures Group, a network of non-governmental organizations working in international development, developed a set of principles to guide the ethical use of imagery in their work. The principles include doing no harm, informed consent, maximizing accuracy for diverse groups and captioning when possible, and the commitment to not perpetuate negative stereotypes. The principles are available at https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/bond-ethical-guidelines-for-collection-and-use-of-content.pdf.

98 Dhillion, A., I. Reinhart and D. Willett (2017). *Citizen-Driven Measurement of Sustainable Development Goals: How Perceptions Data Measurement Contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.* New York: UNICEF.

Appendix – Three-tiered project monitoring

- LEVEL 1 -

Input and output monitoring

Are we doing what we said we would do?

Project monitoring at this level asks whether the actions that we planned are occurring on time and on the anticipated scale. How many computers have been procured to support a nascent network of youth from across warring communities? Did we conduct the anticipated number of training workshops to prepare youth to use the computers to identify common needs and goals that should inform peace negotiations? At this level, we monitor actions such as training and the provision of goods and services that are fully in our control. Although this level is important for understanding whether project implementation is on track, it is not sufficient for determining whether our work is reducing a conflict factor.

- LEVEL 2 -

Project outcome monitoring

We are doing what we said we would do, but is it having the intended effect?

Monitoring at this level informs us if our programming assumptions about how change works – our ToCs – were valid. Training youth on how to use computers to support the identification of common needs and goals, for example, assumes that a key barrier to youth cooperation is the lack of communication tools to bridge geographical, political or social differences. Project monitoring at this higher-outcome level provides information on whether that assumption was valid or whether other more important barriers are preventing youth from cross-group mobilization.

- LEVEL 3 -

Project impact and situational monitoring

Our project is having the intended effect, but is it making a positive difference in the context?

Monitoring at this level compels us to consider our assumptions about change at a higher level of impact. Despite our project's success in supporting diverse groups of youth in identifying a common set of goals to inform peace talks, for example, negotiators still failed to reflect their views in the peace agreement. The project did not result in the desired impact, because our overall assumption that youth views were excluded from peace agreements because negotiators were not aware of them did not identify the most important barrier to inclusion. As a result, although we accomplished what we set out to do, we did not reduce the conflict driver and, in fact, may have exacerbated it if segments of the youth population feel that the exclusion of their voice reduces the legitimacy of the peace agreement.

CHAPTER 6

YPS Knowledge-based Evaluation

Introduction

Evaluations are evidence-based assessments of the quality of a project. There are various aspects of a project that may be evaluated to reveal different kinds of information; for example:

- **Process evaluations** tell managers whether implementation is on track.
- **Midterm evaluations** indicate whether a project is still relevant and on track to achieve its stated goals.
- **Final evaluations** assess whether a project's goals were met and, ideally, what effect it had on the broader context.

Evidence provided by evaluations contributes valuable knowledge of what works and what does not work for a given kind of intervention and informs the conditions necessary for success.

As noted in the introduction, given the relative newness of programming for YPS, evaluations are critically important to building the knowledge base and debunking myths about how to support and engage young women and men in peacebuilding.

Although final evaluations are frequently mandated by donors, given the dynamism of peacebuilding environments teams may wish to consider including other evaluation exercises that take place throughout implementation to allow learning and course correction before the project's end. Approaches such as developmental evaluation (DE) outcome harvesting (OH) and appreciative inquiry (AI) bring teams together at specific moments during implementation to reflect on incremental project achievements and changes in the context. Given this,

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

BOX 20: Youth-led evaluation in Northern Ireland

In 2016, PeacePlayers committed itself to a youth-led evaluation of its work with Catholic and Protestant youth in Northern Ireland. The approach unfolded over two years in three stages: (1) dedicated time and financial resources for evaluation training and planning; (2) data collection; and (3) analysis and write-up of the evaluation report. Conducted by a group of 18 young women and men aged 15–18 years, the high-quality final report benefited from the unique insights that a youth lens brought to an examination of "The Troubles" and demonstrates that a youth-led evaluation does not come at the expense of rigour. The final report can be found here: PeacePlayers Northern Ireland Evaluation.

they not only offer a structured space for group reflection but also provide opportunities to bring youth into the process of project management and evaluation. Although DE, OH and AI may not satisfy a donor's demand for a final evaluation, the periodic review inherent in these processes raises the likelihood that a given project will be more successful in positively affecting a key conflict driver, fostering stronger partnerships with youth, and providing valuable data and analysis to support a high-quality, actionable final evaluation.

It should, however, be recognized that not all projects will be required to carry out or even be fit for an evaluation. The resources needed to commission an actionable evaluation for projects with an extremely modest budget or short duration may make evaluations of such efforts unrealistic or not strategic. In these cases, project teams may consider partnering with young people to conduct other exercises, such as lessons learned exercises and after-action reports, to capture knowledge and assess results.

Different approaches to youth and evaluation

Prior to project implementation, teams should decide on the way in which young people will be included in evaluation.

One consideration is the nature of the initiative itself – projects that have the primary objective of partnering with youth to advance youth-identified peacebuilding goals, for example, must make sure that youth views and outcomes are a central part of the evaluation's investigation. Projects that mainstream youth to ensure that there is a youth lens on a general peacebuilding initiative should still aim to include youth, although how they do so and to what degree is a decision that may vary from project to project. Regardless of whether advancing youth goals was a primary objective or whether youth were mainstreamed, teams may consider a graduated scale of youth inclusion, recognizing that several of these approaches may be paired within a single evaluation.

In Figure 11, three approaches to youth-responsive evaluations are presented.

Step-by-step guide to designing and conducting a youth-sensitive evaluation

Step 1 – Prepare for an evaluation

- Be specific about how young people and their perspectives will be included within the ToRs for the evaluation process.

  In particular, make sure that the ToRs not only state that young people will be consulted but also identify how and when youth will be involved in validating the results to ensure that their views have been accurately captured.
- Given that evaluation questions establish the main avenues of investigation for evaluators, review the preliminary evaluation questions outlined in the ToRs to ensure that at least one is specific to youth.
- Ensure the available data and reports that will be made available to evaluators for desk review provide adequate information on the specific situation of young people of diverse backgrounds. If no age-disaggregated data are available, discuss how that information can be collected as part of the evaluation exercise.

Step 2 – Recruit an evaluation team

- Based on the ToRs, identify quality ranking factors for selecting evaluation teams and/or an external evaluator.
- In the list of evaluator competencies, require experience working with youth on evaluations or producing youth-sensitive evaluations.
- If hiring external evaluation consultants, ensure that job descriptions explicitly seek specialists with experience evaluating projects with a youth lens and/or include qualified youth in the evaluation team.

FIGURE 10: Three approaches to youth-responsive evaluations

Youth-sensitive evaluation

A **youth-sensitive evaluation** applies a youth lens to evaluate the particular experience of young women and men with respect to the project's implementation, outcomes and impact. It examines whether a project addresses the different priorities and needs of young people, and assesses if it has had an impact on young people's situation and, if so, how.

There is no specific methodology for carrying out a youth-sensitive evaluation. However, at a minimum it should do the following:

- Include at least one explicit youth-focused evaluation question.
- Ensure that the data that are collected and analysed are disaggregated by age.
- Include a discussion on age-based power and discrimination structures.
- Include conclusions and recommendations that address generational inequalities.
- Make sure that young people are respondents and include them in reference groups to ensure that the evaluation results reflect the particular experiences of young women and men of different backgrounds.
- **Youth-inclusive evaluation** goes beyond being youth sensitive by seeking opportunities to directly engage youth in the process of evaluation. Youth may be part of the evaluation team, including as respondents in data collection, or may be members of stakeholder consultations or reference groups to ensure that the evaluation results reflect the particular experiences of young women and men.

Youth-focused evaluation

A **youth-focused evaluation** pertains mostly to projects whose main focus is to achieve a specific youth and peacebuilding goal. It could, however, also be deployed when teams are interested in learning how an initiative that did not include youth may have nonetheless indirectly or unintentionally affected young women and men.

For example, if a DDR process was designed and implemented without considering youth, teams may benefit from a youth-focused evaluation to increase understanding of the consequences of the DDR process for youth. This information would contribute to better learning and greater accountability to a key but overlooked constituency.

Youth-led evaluation

A **youth-led evaluation** fully places young women and men in the driver's seat by hiring them to lead the evaluation or specific aspects of the evaluation process. A youth-led evaluation entails, among other tasks, young people:

- deciding the research questions
- recruiting the evaluation team
- deciding on the data collection instruments
- leading the data collection
- interpreting and analysing the findings
- presenting recommendations for change.

Remember that engaging young people in this way may require financial resources and prior training.

Although a youth-led evaluation approach ensures young people's ownership over the process, it does not automatically mean that the evaluation will be youth sensitive and/or represent the perspectives of all youth.

Although it might be more common for young people to lead evaluations of youth-focused programmes, young people may be very well suited to leading evaluations on projects that have other peace and security goals.

» If seeking to hire evaluation teams that include youth or that are led by youth, be sensitive to how the required years of work experience or desired education level may limit the ability of some youth to apply.

Step 3 – Inception report

An evaluation's first deliverable is often an inception report, prepared by an evaluator, that is based on an initial review of documentation and, occasionally, interviews with selected stakeholders. It sets out the evaluation's conceptual framework and timeline, anticipates barriers or limitations, and refines the key evaluation questions and methodology, including information on data sources and collection, sampling and key indicators.

» Review the proposed evaluation questions to ensure that they reflect the commitments to youth inclusion. If the evaluation manager or project teams have difficulty understanding how responses to the evaluation questions will yield critical information on youth, require that the evaluation team revises the questions.

» Review the proposed methodology and data collection instruments that are being proposed to answer each of the evaluation questions to determine whether they will provide adequate information to enable evaluations to produce youth-sensitive findings.

» As part of the inception report, evaluators conduct conflict-sensitive stakeholder mapping that guides the targeting of key stakeholders for data collection as well as informs data analysis by teasing out the relationships between stakeholder groups. Evaluation managers should ensure that the full range of the relevant youth population is adequately represented in stakeholder mapping and reflects age, gender identity, religious affiliation, geographical location and ethnic, caste or tribal identity differences. Consider conducting a youth-centred focus group to validate the mapping results.

» To review the evaluation's methodology, evaluation managers, project teams and the reference group should note how the evaluation team plans to include youth in data collection approaches such as surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. To review data collection instruments, evaluation managers and project teams should review the interview schedules or specific questions that informants will be asked for each methodological approach to ensure that they are both youth sensitive and youth inclusive. Youth members of the reference group should validate the methodology and content of the data collection tools.

Step 4 – Data collection

To complement existing data and reports, evaluation teams frequently organize field site visits to collect primary data to support their findings. During this phase of the evaluation exercise, it is important that the project teams monitor the extent to which the evaluators follow through on commitments to youth inclusion, as agreed in the approved ToRs. More specifically, the teams should:

» Assess the data coding schemes from a youth perspective. If youth experiences or perceptions are being omitted from coding schemes, teams should review the raw data to determine if they are omitting youth-related information.

> In focus group discussions, be sensitive to cultural practices that may make it difficult for some youth to speak against elders, initiate new ideas or mix genders.

A lack of youth-related codes might, however, be an indication of insufficient attention to youth in other areas of data collection work, including:

- stakeholder outreach (solution: explicitly seek out relevant youth to participate or ensure youth-specific space for participation)
- methodology (solution: revise the methodological approach to better reach youth with pertinent questions)
- data collection instruments (solution: consult youth on revising the way questions are framed to better and more accurately capture their views).

» As with outreach and inclusion of any stakeholder group, evaluation teams need a sampling strategy that reaches young people who are best placed to speak about the overall situation and/or project impact.

A common pitfall in this regard is overreliance on powerful local adults, such as elected officials, heads of political parties, tribal leaders and teachers, to identify which youth should participate. Although evaluation teams should not exclude youth on the basis of power brokers' recommendations, their outreach should go beyond hand-picked youth. The use of snowball sampling may assist teams in widening their reach.

» Recognize that participation in interviews or consultations may produce risks for participants who may come under pressure to provide only "positive" information on the implementation or the context as a whole. Evaluation teams should articulate how they will offset these risks and should exercise particular caution to protect the safety of young participants, who may be more vulnerable to pressure from other actors.

To ensure an effective do-no-harm approach, evaluation teams should:

- explicitly plan how to responsibly conduct informed consent for both minors and adults
- develop a strong data security plan to protect respondents' identities and information
- mitigate the risk that powerful actors may tag specific youth as "informants" because of their participation in the evaluation.

Step 5 – Validation exercises and report writing

» Conduct validation exercises to share the preliminary results before evaluators leave the field site or shortly thereafter. This will give the evaluators an opportunity to ensure that they have thoroughly understood what informants have told them and a chance to flag information gaps that could hamstring the final report. The participation of youth in validation exercises is essential to ensuring that youth views have been accurately understood and prioritized.

» Plan validation exercises sufficiently far in advance of the report drafting that, if gaps in information on youth perceptions or priorities are identified, there is time to collect the necessary missing data.

» On the basis of the preliminary results, the evaluation team will produce the draft final report, which should be shared with the evaluation reference group to obtain their feedback and endorsement.

» The evaluation manager should produce a checklist or response matrix that includes

youth-sensitive assessment questions to guide the review of the preliminary results and draft report. In Table 14, you will find examples of such questions.

- Ensure that youth who have been engaged throughout the project cycle are equal partners in the process of reviewing draft evaluation reports and endorsing the final report. Specifically, ensure that youth members receive the report at the same time as other reference group members and that their comments and suggestions are reflected in subsequent revisions of the report.
- If the evaluation's ToRs calls for the evaluation team to produce communication products on the evaluation findings and recommendations, ensure that the content is youth responsive and that the communications outreach adequately targets young people.

Step 6 – Management response

An often overlooked essential step in the evaluation process is whether and how an organization acts on an evaluation's recommendations. Many United Nations offices require an official management response, through which the organization outlines how it will respond to each of the recommendations and commits to a timeline of implementation. Apply a youth lens by:

- at a minimum, ensuring that youth-specific recommendations are not under-prioritized or ignored
- launching a strategic communications campaign to share information about how evaluation recommendations are being addressed with key youth stakeholders in the project area
- considering convening a youth consultative body or task force to monitor the implementation of the management response.

> "Providing access to youth monitors heightens the organization's transparency and accountability to youth and can improve the uptake of recommendations."

TABLE 14: Youth-sensitive assessment questions

Relevance

Has the project contributed to the improvement of young people's – including young women's – participation in peace and security-related processes? If so, how? If not, why not?

Has the project responded to the practical and strategic needs and aspirations of diverse groups of young people? Has this resulted in the improvement of youth rights and participation, including the rights and participation of young women? If so, how?
If not, why not?

Effectiveness

Has the project been efficient with respect to the goals of the YPS agenda? (For example, has it contributed to the protection of young people's rights and/or enabled meaningful youth participation in peace processes?) If so, how? If not, why not?

Did partner and target organizations benefit from the project in terms of institutional capacity-building in the area of youth mainstreaming? If so, how? If not, why not?

Impact

What is the project's impact on wider policies, processes and programmes that enhance age equality and youth rights? (For example, did it have an impact on reducing violence against young men? Or did it contribute to youth-specific policies and/or action plans?)

Sustainability

Are the positive results of the project in regard to increased youth participation and influence likely to be sustained after funding ends?

To what extent have young women and men and/or youth-led organizations achieved ownership of the results?

To what extent has capacity for youth mainstreaming through the project been built and institutionalized?

Appendix 1 – Further reading

Organization	Title	Description
ACT for Youth	"Youth participatory evaluation"	This resource describes key elements of a youth participatory evaluation.
CDA Collaborative Learning Projects	*Thinking Evaluatively in Peacebuilding Design Implementation and Monitoring*	This publication encourages evaluative thinking throughout the project cycle and suggests three evaluative exercises to conduct during programming: (1) programme quality assessments, (2) evaluability assessments, and (3) strategy and programme reflection exercises.
CDA Collaborative Learning Projects	*Evaluating Impacts of Peacebuilding Interventions: Approaches and Methods, Challenges and Considerations*	This document provides specific guidance on why, when and how to conduct evaluations of peacebuilding impact.
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	*Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility – Improving Learning for Results*	This document established the first guidance specifically dedicated to the evaluation of peacebuilding initiatives according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development–Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria.
Pact	*Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MREL) for Peacebuilding Programs*	This handbook provides an introduction to monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning with peacebuilding examples. Each chapter includes a learning exercise.
Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium	*The Online Field Guide to Peacebuilding Evaluation*	This guide provides an introduction to evaluation, and specific guidance to evaluation managers on evaluation planning, managing and implementation.
United Nations Evaluation Group	*Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations*	This is a guide to promote the implementation of human rights and gender-responsive evaluation practice in all United Nations evaluations.

Appendix 2 – Evolutionary approaches to project learning and adaptation

Table 5 outlines three approaches to real-time project assessment that are as much about robust project management as they are about evaluation. As they are frequently conducted during project implementation, all three approaches require more engagement from senior managers and project teams in the evaluation process than the commissioning of more standard external final evaluations. A successful application of the three approaches requires:

- senior management and project teams that are open to the possibility that their programming assumptions were wrong or that conditions have changed in ways that render their initial decisions ineffective or counterproductive for the context
- project management systems that allow changes in overall goals or approaches midstream
- the onboarding of facilitators who can generate trust among all evaluation users and lead periodic feedback sessions
- senior management and project teams that are committed to participating in feedback sessions and can dedicate sufficient time and financial resources
- access to updated data on changes in the context and actors' views and capacities.

TABLE 15: Three approaches to real-time project assessment

	What is it?	How is it done?	Further guidance
Appreciative inquiry (AI)	AI seeks to identify what produces the best outcomes for people, organizations and overall contextual settings. In contrast to more traditional evaluation approaches that examine shortcomings and missed opportunities as well as strengths, an AI approach starts from the central tenet that every system has the potential to be successful and vital. The role of AI is to identify what is at the core of systemic success and indicate ways of supporting it.	AI typically poses questions through a four-step process referred to as the "Four Ds": (1) "discovering" processes and dynamics that are working best; (2) "dreaming" of a positive vision of the future; (3) "designing" processes that will work towards achieving positive outcomes for the future; and (4) "delivering" results through an evolutionary process of empowering, learning and adjusting.	AI Commons' "Introduction to appreciative inquiry" The Centre for Appreciative Inquiry's "Generic processes of appreciative inquiry"

continues

	What is it?	How is it done?	Further guidance
Developmental evaluation (DE)	DE arose from a concern that waiting for a final summative evaluation in fast-changing and complex programme settings frequently renders evaluation data and findings obsolete or irrelevant. Instead, DE embeds evaluative exercises into the ongoing programme cycle by explicitly planning moments for feedback on how an initiative is affecting the context and suggesting adaptations to ensure it is meeting different people's needs across different points in time. DE is particularly appropriate when the achievement of results is not linear, when there is a high degree of uncertainty about the likelihood of success or when actors in the programme setting are expected to evolve and change over the implementation timeline.	DE is best led by full-time external evaluation facilitators who are embedded in programming teams. DE experts must introduce evaluation users (project teams and stakeholders) to the process and generate buy-in for their participation in periodic reflection. Working with a set of ToCs, DE experts identify evaluation questions tailored to the context and validate them with evaluation users. DE experts lead evaluation users through reflective exercises based on updated data and analyses. Through reflective exercises, DE produces knowledge of changes in the context and offers suggestions for further programmatic action or adaptation.	Patton, M. Q. (2010). *Developmental Evaluation – Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use.* New York: Guilford Press. Available at http://www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/cartscript.cgi?page=pr/patton.htm&dir=re.... Spark Policy Institute's *Developmental Evaluation Toolkit.* Available at: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/toolkit/developmental_evaluation_toolkit USAID (2017). *Developmental Evaluation in Practice: Tips, Tools and Templates.* Washington, D.C. Available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/15396/USAID_DEPA_MERL_Developmental_Evaluation_in_Practice-_Tips_Tools_and_T.pdf.
Outcome harvesting (OH)	OH is an approach that combines design, monitoring and evaluation by collecting or "harvesting" evidence of what has changed in a given setting (for better or worse) and tracing back the steps of the process to understand whether and how a project has contributed to that change. Similar to DE, OH is frequently deployed in complex settings when it is impossible to identify what an intervention will achieve or the specific steps needed over time. OH may be used as part of a DE approach or may be deployed as part of a final evaluation.	OH unfolds through six steps: (1) collaborative design of the harvest with harvest users; (2) reviewing or gathering data and initial assessment; (3) engaging with informants; (4) substantiating the identified outcomes; (5) analysing/interpreting and grouping outcomes into categories; and (6) supporting the use of the findings. These steps may be done as frequently or infrequently as deemed appropriate, given the project timespan, context dynamics and information requirements of users.	Wilson-Grau, R. and Britt, H. (2012). *Outcome Harvesting.* New York: Ford Foundation. Available at https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/Outome%20Harvesting%20Brief%20FINAL%202012-05-2-1.pdf. INTRAC (2012). "Outcome harvesting". Oxford, United Kingdom. Available at https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Outcome-harvesting.pdf.

CHAPTER 7

YPS Entry Points

PILLAR ONE – Participation

Promote and support meaningful youth participation in all phases of informal and formal peace, security and political transition processes, from pre-negotiation to implementation, including in national- and local-level dialogues, constitution-making, transitional justice, conflict resolution and other political and governance processes.

1. Identify youth needs and aspirations, remove barriers to youth participation and invest in youth innovative mechanisms.

» Support mapping of youth-led actions related to peace and political transition processes, and identify formal barriers (law, policies and regulations) and informal barriers (organizational culture and social practices), including gendered barriers, to youth participation in peace and security.	• A policy report on youth perceptions to inform the African Union's Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative has been developed, based on six "Youth Silencing the Guns" intergenerational dialogues.
» Establish safe spaces for and maintain regular consultations with diverse groups of young people, including the most marginalized, to identify their peace and security needs and priorities.	• A Peace Forum in South Sudan organized by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan included civil society actors, South Sudan academics, women and youth groups. • In Cyprus, the Famagusta Students Together and PeacePlayers Cyprus initiatives by the UN Mission have connected youth from all communities of the island through collaborative activities by creating a more enabling environment for their work. • UN Women's work with the Grand Debaters Association of South Sudan has involved hosting dialogues and debates between young women and men in schools (e.g. the "Under the tree dialogues", tackling peacebuilding-related issues).

» Support formal mechanisms and platforms for sustained interaction with a diverse range of young people and youth organizations, paying particular attention to the inclusion of young women, refugees and displaced youth, and other marginalized youth, and encouraging peer-to-peer collaboration among youth.	• The Joint Galkayo Youth Committee has engaged in reconciliation initiatives in Somalia. • A Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace, and Security in West Africa and the Sahel, which meets monthly, has been organized by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and UN Women.
» Create or strengthen permanent structures to encourage the participation of young people and youth organizations, movements and networks in, for instance, the design of response plans and the oversight and accountability mechanisms of peace and security architectures, and expand the infrastructure for the implementation of the YPS agenda by establishing and supporting youth centres as training hubs and spaces for youth self-development, youth spaces and youth organizations, as well as youth councils as advisory bodies.	• The UN Youth Task Force (United Nations Mission in Kosovo[99]) is a dedicated formal youth mechanism. • The UN guidelines on participation illustrate the content of the right to participate and provide clear and practical guidance for states on how to ensure participation at the national and international levels. The guidance on measures that should be adopted at each stage of decision-making processes are critical to ensuring the participation of youth in peace- and security-related processes.[100]
» Support cross-border collaboration among young peacebuilders	• "Jeunes et paix: une approche transfrontalière", a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) joint and cross-border initiative in Mali and Burkina Faso (PBF), supports youth participation in formal and informal mechanisms.

99 References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

100 *Guidelines for States on the Effective Implementation of the Right to Participate in Public Affairs,* adopted by the Human Rights Council through Resolution 39/11.

» Expand reach to remote communities through the use of digital tools to support the meaningful and inclusive participation of young people and the design of youth-friendly online participatory processes.	• UNDP Bangladesh has accelerated a digital peace movement with the overall aim of identifying drivers of violence and social cohesion, reaching vulnerable communities and piloting social engagement actions involving more than 10,000 young people. • In Ukraine, a dedicated School of Ambassadors of Peace was created as a training centre for teachers from colleges and schools, who then worked with youth in their communities on promoting peace.
2. Review the impact of peace and security policies and practices on young people.	
» Conduct a baseline assessment of the current situation of diverse groups of young people and provide support for youth-focused peacebuilding work, identifying gaps and possible ways of increasing youth participation in peacebuilding.	• Youth-led research and advocacy to influence public policies on peace and security as a part of UNFPA's and UNDP's support to the Regional Youth Cooperation Office, which works for peaceful coexistence in the Western Balkans, is being implemented through the PBF. • The Dialogue for the Future project has established dialogue platforms and youth forums across Bosnia and Herzegovina; these are examples of mechanisms providing a formal space for interaction between citizens and decision-makers to jointly identify, promote and implement dialogue and trust-building activities. • The Kosovo Roadmap on Youth, Peace and Security (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) and the Colombian National Consultation on Youth, Peace and Security (2017) are further examples of work in this area.
3. Promote and support youth participation in politics throughout the electoral cycle.	
» Adopt youth quotas and other temporary special measures.	• The Parliament of Uganda has five youth representatives, of whom one must be a woman.

» Facilitate young people's access to elected positions by aligning the age of eligibility to run for office with the voting age and by supporting youth parliament simulations and youth leadership programmes.	• The European Commission–UNDP *Handbook for Electoral Management Bodies on Youth Participation in Electoral Processes* describes how several countries have started to use quotas for youth participation and identifies three categories: reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative), legal candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative) and voluntary political party quotas, and suggests a broad range of recommendations throughout the electoral cycle – before, during and after elections.
» Address discriminatory legislation, patriarchal structures and attitudes that limit young women's electoral participation.	• The UNDP–UN Women report *Inclusive Electoral Processes* presents helpful recommendations.
» Facilitate the creation of spaces for dialogue and cooperation among a range of youth representatives (including representatives of political parties, ethnic/religious groups, different socioeconomic groups, urban and rural communities, and others).	• The UN Verification Mission in Colombia has convened inter-party youth dialogues among young people from political parties with opposing views on the peace process.
» Support youth participation in political campaigns and in electoral observation.	• Silba – Initiative for Dialogue and Democracy, a non-profit and cross-political youth organization, has worked to support democracy and bridge-building, including by facilitating the participation of students and young professionals in electoral observer missions.
4. Enable youth participation in core government functions and in national- and local-level public service and decision-making.	
» Encourage and support the development of youth-responsive peace and security public policies.	• UNDP's Comprehensive Security and Prevention of Violence that Affects Children, Adolescents and Youth in SICA Countries (PREVJUVE) project in Central America has provided support for the development and review of comprehensive citizen security policies, with an emphasis on linking national policies with regional priorities.

» Promote the meaningful inclusion of youth in national security strategies, supporting the development of target messages using evidence-based and context-specific arguments that convince policymakers to increase the participation of youth in the security sector and strengthen youth participation in national security strategies.	• In the Central African Republic, Liberia, Libya, Mali and Somalia, United Nations missions have established mechanisms that enable young people to contribute to the development of national security strategies.
» Support youth inclusion in social auditing, participatory budget design, monitoring mechanisms, accountability mechanisms and decision-making related to the allocation of public expenditure in local and national contexts, particularly in relation to peace and security, as well as development and peacebuilding funds.	• The Accountability Lab, in partnership with UNDP Guinea-Bissau and the Democracy and Governance Observatory, is developing a virtual incubator for accountability to support change-promoting youth in Guinea-Bissau to develop new ideas that promote accountability in relation to the COVID-19 response.
» Enable young people to play a role in decision-making on service delivery for their communities, including by ensuring accountability for equitable and inclusive access. In the education system, promote the participation of young people in school boards and in shaping curricula.	• In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF has been supporting a youth-friendly local governance initiative to increase the ability of young people to participate in local decision-making while strengthening the contributions of local governments to social cohesion and peace.
» Increase participation opportunities for young people in governance institutions at local level and support state officials to engage and respond to their concerns.	• A UNFPA/UNESCO/UNICEF project funded by the PBF in Guinea is encouraging young people to play a role in local governance and establishing local youth councils in conflict-prone areas.
» Promote youth participation in climate security and decision-making through mechanisms for effective climate change-related planning and management, including in relation to nationally determined contributions.	• The Mission 1.5 game and related educational activities provide an opportunity for people to learn about climate solutions and to share their preferences on what specific measures their country should undertake to limit global warming to below 1.5°C.

5. Support meaningful youth participation in constitution-making, transitional justice and the promotion of and support for the rule of law.	
» Involve young people, including young women, as key stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of transitional justice processes, including truth-seeking, reparation and reconciliation programmes, institutional reform processes aimed at rebuilding civic trust and preventing repeat violations, criminal justice and accountability for past violations, and memory and memorialization programmes aimed at future generations.	• In Colombia, a UN Women initiative has trained young women victims of sexual violence and forced disappearance on transitional justice in national and international contexts and the Integral System on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition. The women have also been provided with reparation through the transitional justice process.
» Support youth quotas in constitution-making within peace processes.	• A 20 per cent quota for youth in the National Dialogue Conference was established to shape the new constitution of Yemen in 2011, implemented with the strong support of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Yemen. • A UNFPA, UN Women and United Nations Office for Project Services project funded by the PBF focused on supporting women and youth participants in the National Dialogue Conference by providing them with the space and tools to strengthen their engagement in the political transition.
6. In the context of the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements in particular, support youth-led spaces and meaningful youth participation in consultation and processes.	
» Support local youth peace initiatives.	• The Young Women for Peace and Leadership programme of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders in conflict-affected communities of the Bangsamoro autonomous region is helping to address the limited local understanding of the peace agreement and build local ownership of the Bangsamoro Organic Law.
» Support the meaningful participation of young women in peace processes at all levels through, for example, grants and capacity-building and by facilitating mentoring programmes and networking.	• The PBF-funded project Strengthening Young Women's Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan seeks to strengthen the ability of young women leaders and young women's groups to collaboratively lead local- and national-level peace efforts.

PILLAR TWO – Protection, justice and human rights

Facilitate an inclusive, safe, enabling and gender-responsive environment in which youth actors, including youth from various backgrounds, are recognized and provided with adequate support and protection to implement violence prevention activities and support social cohesion; to carry out their work independently and without undue interference, including in situations of armed conflict; and to investigate thoroughly and impartially threats, harassment and violence against them, to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

1. Promote and support awareness-raising campaigns.	
» Raise the awareness of national governments and decision-makers on issues related to young people experiencing GBV, including conflict-related sexual violence and intimate partner violence.	• A UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP project funded by the PBF in South Sudan addresses the high prevalence of GBV, which hinders women's participation in the peace process and undermines progress towards sustainable peace.
» Raise the awareness of national governments and decision-makers on the protection of youth rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.	• Youth Initiative for Human Rights.
» Raise awareness on issues related to digital media literacy and countering fake news, hate speech, misogyny and discrimination online and offline	• UNDP Ukraine supports human rights education for students, teachers, civil society organizations and aspiring journalists by providing platforms for dialogue, contributing to the development of curricula, and organizing festivals, events and training.
» Ensure that national and local security coordination mechanisms are established and operational, with the active participation of young people and representatives of key security institutions and other entities such as ministries of youth, women, education and finance, etc., who share information and agree on joint responses to violence against youth, and provide a sustainable platform for dialogue and to address grievances, share perspectives and find common ground among young people and law enforcement officers in communities.	• Benadir authorities in Somalia have partnered with youth-led organizations to establish the Madal Furan, a permanent forum that brings together young people and security authorities to discuss grievances and agree on joint security solutions.

2. Engage with national human rights institutions and enhance human rights processes on and with youth, and youth access to legal aid and the justice system.	
» Ensure meaningful cooperation between young people and national human rights mechanisms, and increase access to legal aid and the justice system for young people.	• Canada, Korea and Portugal, and many other countries, have experience of having a Children and Adolescents Ombudsperson. • A PBF-funded project in El Salvador (with the participation of the International Organization for Migration, the UN Refugee Agency and UNDP) strengthens and consolidates mechanisms for protection and brings attention to the rights of people affected by various forms of violence, through participation, dialogue and institutional strengthening. • In Guatemala, UNDP works to promote and protect the fundamental rights of young people, and for the prevention of all forms of discrimination and marginalization. • Through its network of youth officers, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is providing capacity-building of young people and youth organizations/youth groups on human rights mechanisms and processes, in order to raise awareness and promote youth participation in processes such as the Universal Periodic Review and reporting to the UN treaty bodies.
» Play a convening role to ensure youth inputs into universal periodic reviews and facilitate the engagement and direct participation of youth organizations and young human rights defenders in activities with national human rights institutions.	• The European Youth Forum, among other institutions, has advocated for greater youth inclusion in universal periodic reviews.

3. Support safe spaces for young people and young human rights defenders.	
» Provide comprehensive guidance on the preparation of legal frameworks and operational plans to improve the care provided to youth, including young women, in conflict with the law and to provide support for young people's mental health, etc.	• The United Nations in Somalia has supported the establishment of a toll-free hotline to combat GBV for internally displaced persons.
» Support security institutions (including law enforcement, correction authorities and the military) on the design and implementation of cost-effective operational plans to enhance their institutional capacities to protect youth from all forms of violence.	• The Department of Peace Operations provides support for security sector reform. • UNDP in Kazakhstan has engaged with young people and the police, who work closely with vulnerable youth at community level. • The Protection Working Group for young peacebuilders and human rights defenders in the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security supports knowledge-sharing and policy guidance on how to enhance protection of young human rights defenders and peacebuilders.
» Create opportunities for young people to collaborate and co-create with elders, authorities and other adults in communities by jointly organizing activities – community clean-ups, cultural celebrations, sports tournaments – thus providing communities with the opportunity to experience intergenerational collaboration in practice.	• Together with partners, UNDP supported a sustainable community-based sports league in the West Bank/Gaza Strip to strengthen the participation of young women and men in sports as a tool to improve social cohesion, support psychosocial and physical health, and encourage team-building.
» Provide mental health and psychosocial support programmes to increase young people's resilience in the face of conflict and trauma, and enable safe spaces for youth in all their diversity, for example by establishing support centres for at-risk youth or youth who have been exposed to violence, abuse, etc., where they can find safety, psychosocial support and other help.	• UN Habitat has supported one-stop youth centres in Rwanda. • The UNFPA's Tillmaame Youth Centre in Somalia has supported mental health. • UNFPA has established youth centres in Syria and neighbouring countries, including in refugee camps.

4. Systematically promote gender equality and address GBV.

» Create safe, accessible, transparent, accountable, youth-friendly and gender-responsive mechanisms for young people to report experiences of violence, human rights violations and abuse, including all forms of GBV. Specifically target young men and boys with training on preventing GBV (including training on consent, etc.).

- UNFPA has produced a report entitled *COVID-19: Reporting on Gender-based Violence during Public Health Crises.*
- UNDP has produced a briefing note on GBV and support for the COVID-19 response.
- In Iraq, UNFPA is providing sexual and reproductive health services, as well as psychosocial support, to survivors of GBV, including members of the Yazidi community.
- UNFPA supports mobile health teams in several provinces of Afghanistan, providing internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities with reproductive health care, GBV prevention and response, and psychosocial services.
- In Libya, the United Nations Mine Action Service has run training sessions to empower youth to deliver small arms and light weapons risk awareness training, so that they can strengthen resilience in their communities and help reduce GBV.
- UN Women's initiative Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls to prevent and respond to sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces has gained the support of several champion cities in a peacebuilding context in Colombia.
- In Nepal, UN Women provides support to young women survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and GBV, to help them to document their experiences through storytelling.

5. Promote youth leadership for natural resource management, climate justice and security.	
» Engage young people, and in particular young human rights defenders, in identifying solutions.	• Young environmental journalists are working together to raise awareness about environmental and human rights protection in the mining sector. They receive support and training though the joint Swedish Environmental Protection Agency–UNDP Environmental Governance Programme.
» Apply a youth empowerment lens to understand the impacts of climate change and raise awareness of climate-related security risks.	• The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus has created a Youth Champions for Peace and Environment initiative.
» Support the role of young people in natural resource management and the prevention of conflict.	• With PBF funding, UN Women and UNDP support young women as mediators and agents of change for conflict prevention in relation to disputes over natural resources at the Mali-Niger border.
» Support youth networks and organizations working on climate-risk reduction and disaster preparedness and partner with youth in identifying climate-related risks to peacebuilding programmes.	• In Timor-Leste, UNDP's coastal resilience-building project and green schools programme are raising the awareness of youth on climate change issues and working together with young people for environmental protection. • YouthBRE! Eco-Camp (United Nations Mission in Kosovo), a project that runs eco-camps on environmental peacebuilding and sustainable living, has offered opportunities for young activists from diverse backgrounds to learn about environmental challenges and steps that individuals and communities can take towards more sustainable living, as well as connecting the activists with relevant stakeholders.

PILLAR THREE – Prevention

Promote and support inclusive and enabling environments in which young people, including youth from different backgrounds, are recognized and provided with adequate support to implement conflict and violence prevention activities and support social cohesion and reconciliation.

1. Support youth-inclusive and youth-responsive public policies and legislative frameworks (sectoral policies, planning and inter-ministerial coordination).	
» Work to support YPS mainstreaming in youth policies.	• The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNDP support YPS mainstreaming in youth policies and peacebuilding-related policies and activities in Liberia and Kenya.
» Ensure the inclusion of social cohesion and youth civic participation in governments' priorities and programmes.	• UNDP has supported the inclusion of social cohesion and youth civic participation in the State Target Social Programme "Youth 2025" in Ukraine.
» Create opportunities to increase young people's sense of shared identity and community belonging.	• UNDP's 16x16 initiative recognizes positive youth role models and celebrates the contribution of young people to peaceful, just and inclusive societies that can inspire others.

2. Promote equitable formal and non-formal education and learning for peace.	
» Transform education systems and institutions for peace.	• There are multiple entry points for transforming education systems and institutions to promote peace with and for young people. UNICEF's Global Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme – implemented in 14 conflict-affected and fragile contexts – showcases how a multidimensional approach can be used to promote education for peace. • In Myanmar, UNICEF has supported a multilingual national education policy to promote inclusion and social cohesion; UNICEF has also supported South Sudan's first national curriculum, which now incorporates and promotes the values of coexistence, tolerance and respect. • Educational institutions are another important entry point. Work with them in this area includes building the capacities of teachers and schools. In Colombia, UNICEF has been working in conflict-affected schools with teachers and administrators to help them to better support adolescents and youth in consolidating peace. • Supporting young people's participation in shaping education policies and curricula is critical. In Somalia, UNICEF has supported youth engagement, including youth-led community consultations on shaping the national education curriculum framework.

» Promote learning and peacebuilding competencies and skills in formal and informal settings.	• UNICEF South Sudan has been ensuring and expanding equitable access to education for young people, including through humanitarian action and by creating alternative education pathways for young people – especially the most marginalized and hard to reach. The aim is to bridge divides among them and create a foundation for strengthening their agency. • In Ukraine, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) has supported young people's practising of peace negotiations and recovery support. • Peace clubs in schools can act as useful entry points for creating safe spaces in which to address conflicts affecting young people at a local level. UNICEF in Côte d'Ivoire has been working with peace clubs to support the ability of schools, teachers and students to understand the roots of conflict and to build the capacities of participants to collaborate on managing and transforming conflict.
» Support civic, human rights and climate education for peace.	• UNDP has supported climate education for global action in Europe and Central Asia through the development of the Climate Box, which provides countries with a climate curriculum for schools. The project demonstrates that there is further scope to look into links between youth, education, climate and resilience. • The 4th Phase of the World Programme of Action for Human Rights focuses on youth as a target group following Human Rights Council Resolution 39/3.

» Support intercultural exchange and a culture of peace, including through peer-to-peer initiatives.	• In Kosovo, UNDP has organized "adaptive re-use camps" for cultural heritage as a means to build relationships among young professionals, creating the conditions for reconciliation as a prerequisite for peace and democracy. • The UN Verification Mission in Colombia has implemented A Son de Paz, a cultural exchange and reconciliation initiative between former combatants in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and local youth. • The Y-PEER network, supported by UNFPA, provides peer-to-peer education using alternative methods such as theatre-based techniques, role-play games and simulations, including in humanitarian and peacebuilding contexts. • UNDP Kosovo has worked to make schools a safe space for all, protecting students, teachers, schools and universities from attack.
3. Promote and support transformation of sociocultural norms.	
» Raise awareness of GBV at community level and work with young men and boys to challenge old-fashioned definitions of masculinity.	• The documentary *Not Your Property* (supported by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo) features the voices of survivors of GBV and highlights institutional responses, or the lack of them. Screenings can be combined with multi-stakeholder debates and followed up through community work. • United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq's Human Rights Office has implemented a mural project with young Iraqi artists, creating huge paintings in public spaces to depict issues of interest to Iraq's youth, such as child marriage, gender discrimination, climate change and the protection of minorities.

4. Create platforms for young media-makers, on social media as well as in traditional media, to enable young people to express their vision of society, disseminate their data and explain their views on current affairs, as well as their suggestions for resolving community issues.	
» Promote and expand youth-led advocacy campaigns and "digital activism" and "digital citizenship" on social media, TV and radio, helping young voices to reach broader audiences and increasing the impact of these campaigns in the community.	• Studio Sifaka – Leading the Way to Peace through the Voice of Youth is a PBF-funded project implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, with Studio Hirondelle, to provide young women and men with access to reliable and high-quality information through the establishment of a studio dedicated to them. • YouTube Creators for Change is another initiative that seeks to give young people a voice in the media and portray them as changemakers.
» Support youth-led data collection and visualization.	• Visualize 2030 is an initiative by the Arab Development Portal that makes data accessible to young people through advanced technology and visualization tools.
5. Promote youth participation in reconciliation initiatives and ensure their meaningful engagement in support for reconciliation processes.	
» Work with young people to avoid repeated cycles of sociopolitical violence and support reconciliation.	• UNICEF has worked in Burundi with adolescents through interactive theatre, radio and television to help transform their communities' relationships with the past and promote reconciliation. • UNESCO has worked with youth as actors for national peace and reconciliation in Mali.
» Support cross-border collaboration between and with youth.	• Youth and Peace: A Cross-Border Approach between Mali and Burkina Faso is a project run by UNFPA and UNDP and funded by PBF.
» Enable storytelling initiatives for reconciliation among youth former combatants and other local youth.	• UN Women, with its partner Mythos Labs, carried out the project My Power, which empowered 150 young women leaders in the Philippines and Indonesia to engage with their communities on addressing harmful social norms by producing and sharing short videos.

6. Increase young people's resilience through social and economic development opportunities.

» Enhance resilience through the provision of skills and by promoting youth economic empowerment, paying particular attention to young women, migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees and survivors of GBV.

- YouthConnekt Africa has worked to empower young people, connect them to opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship, and strengthen civic engagement and leadership.
- Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, led by ILO, has supported decent jobs for youth in all development contexts, including in fragile settings.
- Through Generation Unlimited Youth Challenges, UNDP, UNICEF, Plan International and the Scouts have supported the selection, mentoring and funding of youth-led innovative initiatives supporting youth education and entrepreneurship (e.g. a youth-led initiative in Syria).

7. Support mediation efforts, early-warning systems and youth peace committees.

» Young people's engagement in formal peace processes, community mediation structures and early-warning systems is important. Create formal channels for the engagement of young people with traditional peace committees (which are often led by adult men). Youth peace committees should be composed of diverse groups of young women and young men and be mandated to represent the interests of young people in formal peace processes.

- The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia supports the Galkayo Joint Youth Committee.
- Youth have been included in local peace agreements and conflict-resolution platforms in Kasai Province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the country
- UNV and UNDP have helped volunteers build early-warning and response systems for peace in Kenya
- UNV and UNDP have trained young leaders from the Ixil region in Guatemala in conflict resolution and transformation, with a special focus on conflict analysis, mediation, negotiation and dialogue to promote peace and social harmony in their communities

8. Promote youth-inclusive security policies.	
» Support assessments and political consensus on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth-responsive security strategies and plans.	• UNDP provides support to InfoSegura, which facilitates children's and youth engagement in citizen security policies in Central American countries. InfoSegura has consulted 9,000 young people through surveys, has conducted more than 10 focus groups and has carried out 30 interviews with various experts on youth and youth leaders.
» Convene youth-inclusive trust-building dialogues.	• In Goma (North Kivu), in February 2020, the Mission and the Conseil local de la jeunesse des quartiers supported six forums for youth and municipal authorities, including the security services, to discuss insecurity in Goma and involve youth in reducing violence (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Youth4Peace case study).
» Raise awareness among governments and other institutional actors on the negative impacts of youth marginalization and exclusion from policy- and decision-making, and on the counterproductive effects of "hard-edged" security approaches that compound the problem.	• The UNDP Frontlines report is intended to inform inter-agency collaboration on youth and the prevention of violent extremism, paving the way for a new generation of ambitious and powerful youth-inclusive initiatives.

PILLAR FOUR – Partnerships

Establish new and strengthen existing partnerships with and on youth, with a broad range of stakeholders, prioritizing partnerships with youth organizations, movements and networks themselves and partnerships that support the funding of youth-inclusive and youth-led initiatives.

1. Promote and support coalitions that engage a diversity of YPS actors.	
» Prioritize the creation of YPS coalitions to ensure a collective impact on YPS at local, national, regional and global levels. Such coalitions should be multisectoral and cross-cutting partnerships between young people, including young women; youth organizations; and multilateral government and civil society actors, including the private sector, religious communities, private foundations and educational institutions. Examples include:	• The Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security • Finland's National Action Plan on UNSCR 2250.
» Collaborate with regional entities.	• Regional youth organizations and networks, such as the Pan-African Youth Network for a Culture of Peace, the European Youth Forum, the Asian Youth Peace Network and the Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassador Network, regularly engage with national and regional actors on peace and security issues.
» Support partnerships with international financial institutions in crisis-affected situations.	• The UN–World Bank youth employment programme in Mali has been implemented to give young people a greater economic stake in society.
» Engage with the private sector and philanthropists	• UNDP has joined forces with the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) to launch the TEF–UNDP Youth Entrepreneurship Programme to empower an additional 100,000 young African entrepreneurs over the next 10 years with seed capital, business training and mentoring, using the Foundation's tried and tested approach to philanthropy, which prioritizes African entrepreneurs as the key enablers of economic development.

» Engage with academia.	• Work with academia to include human rights in the curricula of journalism universities and enhance the capacities of professors, as well as young women and men studying journalism, on promoting the values of tolerance, democracy and human rights. • In Ukraine, UNDP supports the Human Rights Academy for Journalism Professors to include human rights in the curricula and enhance the capacities of professors, as well as young women and men studying journalism, on promoting the values of tolerance, democracy and human rights, including through the organization of the Human Rights Media Festival.
2. Create opportunities for networking and collaboration among young leaders and youth-led organizations and movements as well as between youth, decision-makers and international organizations.	
» Jointly convene diverse youth forums and conferences; offer opportunities for young people of different genders and from different backgrounds to come together, connect, bond and build friendly relations with their peers.	• The first Global Forum on Youth Peace and Security, in Amman, was organized by the Peacebuilding Support Office, UNDP, UNFPA, the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) and Search, with the Government of Jordan. • YouthConnekt Dialogue in Rwanda has enabled children of the perpetrators and survivors and leaders who lived through the genocide to come together to discuss the history of Rwanda (with a focus on the genocide) and how they can build a better, brighter future. • Stories from the Other Side thematic working sessions bring together UN workers and young professionals from different communities (United Nations Mission in Kosovo). • The United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum has held sessions on sustaining Peace and SDG 16.

3. Support youth-led organizations, campaigns and initiatives.	
» Support young leaders and youth organizations, movements and networks that are vocal on YPS, and active in that space; always join youth spaces when invited and contribute meaningfully.	• The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali has supported International Peace Day activities, during which youth leaders and associations were trained on SCR 2250, and has provided technical, financial and logistical support for information and awareness-raising campaigns on the Peace Agreement, and for the Conference of National Understanding, held in 2017. • UN entities and partners have supported UNOY Peacebuilders and its activities as a global network strengthening sustainable youth-driven peacebuilding. • UNDP and the Major Group for Children and Youth have collaborated in the context of the 16x16 initiative to call for action on SDG 16 and increase meaningful youth participation in the review of SDG 16 in 2019. • In Ukraine, the Youth Innovation Challenge (#UInn) was held in 2017–2018 and 2019–2020 to collect and support the best innovative ideas about how to strengthen democracy and promote human rights in local communities.
» Support capacity development of youth-led groups such as youth organizations, groups and coalitions, through skills development and training opportunities as well as working on addressing self-limiting bias/ biased negative perceptions of youth.	• The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is working with the Répresentation nationale des étudiants du Congo and the international non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground to support capacity-building on conflict resolution and non-violent communication for 50 women student leaders from 30 universities and higher education institutes in Kinshasa. • UNDP Ukraine supports a youth worker programme providing capacity development to civil servants who work with youth and to leaders of youth NGOs. The more than 2,400 programme graduates are pioneering youth policy in Ukraine.

4. Support funding and resource mobilization.

» Support youth organizations and youth-led initiatives looking for funding channels and options, helping young people to develop and implement their own community interventions and building their capacity while promoting community impact.

- The PBF created a dedicated Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative.
- Through the UNDP funding window on governance, peacebuilding, crisis and resilience, UNDP is in the process of allocating close to $5.5 million to nine country offices for proposals with a focus on youth engagement, many relating to the COVID-19 pandemic (October 2020 data).

5. Support data collection, analysis and dissemination, research and evidence-building.

» Support the research, documentation and gender-responsive analysis of youth-led initiatives with the aim of drawing lessons from practical experiences, identifying good practices and building the evidence needed to further advocate for the implementation of the YPS agenda.

- A PBF-funded joint UN project supports the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in the Western Balkans (led by UNDP with UNICEF and UNFPA). It works on youth leadership for reconciliation, on young people's perceptions regarding peace and security, and on engaging with young people as partners throughout research processes: designing the research, validating and analysing results, identifying regional and national priorities, formulating policy and advocacy messages, and entering into dialogue with peers and decision-makers.
- The Infosegura project by UNDP and USAID in Central America has collected and analysed relevant data and made recommendations on how to develop policies that promote youth resilience.

PILLAR FIVE – Disengagement and reintegration

Promote and support actions that ensure that the needs, concerns and aspirations of youth former combatants – in all their diversity – are taken into account in reintegration processes and that young women and men can play a positive role in co-leading or implementing disengagement and reintegration processes.

1. Challenge gendered cultural and social norms that support violence among young people or that amplify stereotypes about youth.	
» Launch social awareness campaigns, promote reflections on gender stereotypes and counter negative perceptions of young people as a community threat.	• The Shughel Shabab Campaign (UNDP and UNESCO) in the Arab States has challenged negative assumptions about the role of youth in community and peacebuilding.
2. Enable the provision of opportunities for young people to actively and positively support the reintegration process.	
» Ensure high-level bodies and organizations in charge of reintegration processes include young people, for instance through dedicated working groups as part of national reintegration mechanisms.	• A youth working group has been established as part of the National Reintegration Council in Colombia.
3. Promote and support socioeconomic integration and empowerment.	
» Support comprehensive reintegration processes through productive activities.	• The Programa de reintegracion integral is implemented by UNDP, the UN Verification Mission, the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia to support socioeconomic reintegration in a comprehensive way.

4. Support access to protection guarantees and justice.	
» Ensure access to respectful and fair justice for young people who disengage from violence or conflict, ensuring compliance with international human rights standards and protection guidelines. In addition, seek to ensure their protection from their communities when they are being reintegrated by working with their communities on their relationship with these young people. Engage young people in memory and transitional justice processes, by improving access to truth, justice and reparations processes for victims of internal armed conflict, and promote non-repetition measures.	• UNDP supports a project on transitional justice in Guatemala together with the youth organization Paz Joven (Youth Peace) to implement the #Generaciónmemoria (#MemoryGeneration) initiative.
» Develop alternative sentencing programmes and more comprehensive approaches, for instance encouraging young people's rehabilitation through alternative sentences, which may include community work, engagement in the reconciliation process, skills development, etc.	• UNDP Trinidad and Tobago has promoted innovative responses to support youth offenders during COVID-19, with the launch of phase 2 of the Youth Peace Ambassadors Programme at the Youth Transformation and Rehabilitation Centre, a facility that houses youth offenders.
5. Facilitate family reunification/community reintegration.	
» Offer opportunities for reintegration of young people into their communities and reunification with their families, including through the establishment of parental support groups to enhance parents' abilities to support the reintegration of their children.	• UNICEF BARMM (formerly ARMM) in Bangsamoro, in the Philippines, helps build the resilience of people, in particular young people.
6. Make counselling and psychosocial support available and accessible.	
» Ensure access to high-quality counselling services and psychosocial support for young offenders, including access to opportunities to engage in community healing and reconciliation.	• UNICEF has supported reintegration in Libya. Through support centres, young people formerly associated with armed groups can re-establish a sense of normality in their lives.

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