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Youth Agency and Peacebuilding: An Analysis of the Role of Formal and Non-Formal Education

Synthesis report on findings from Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda

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Publication date
2016

Document Version
Final published version

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Lopes Cardozo, M. T. A., Higgins, S., & le Mat, M. L. J. (2016). *Youth Agency and Peacebuilding: An Analysis of the Role of Formal and Non-Formal Education: Synthesis report on findings from Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda*. Research Consortium Education and Peacebuilding. https://educationanddevelopment.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/youth-agency-synthesis-report-final16.pdf

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The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Youth Agency and Peacebuilding: An Analysis of the Role of Formal and Non-Formal Education

Synthesis Report on Findings from Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda

Authors: Mieke T.A. Lopes Cardozo, Sean Higgins, Marielle L.J. Le Mat

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University of Sussex
Centre for International Education

University of Amsterdam

Ulster University

The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Between July 2014 and December 2015 the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, a partnership between UNICEF and the University of Amsterdam, the University of Sussex, Ulster University and in-country partners, will address one of the UNICEF Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA) key objectives, *'contributing to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge in policies and programming related to education, conflict and peacebuilding'.*

Consortium teams carried out research in four countries over the course of the project: Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uganda. Each team will produce a specific country report which, alongside thematic Literature Reviews, will form the basis for three synthesis reports addressing the following specific thematic areas:

- the integration of education into peacebuilding processes at global and country levels;
- the role of teachers in peacebuilding;
- the role of formal and non-formal peacebuilding education programmes focusing on youth.

In addition, throughout the research project and as a cross cutting theme in all three areas, the research project aims to understand the dynamics and impact of various forms of direct and indirect violence in relation to education systems and educational actors in situations of conflict. Each thematic focus will also include a gender analysis.

The research seeks to generate evidence that can inform policy and practice aimed at the global and national peacebuilding community, and the global and national education and international development communities.

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Reference suggestion: Lopes Cardozo, M.T.A., Higgins, S., Le Mat, M.L.J. (2016). Youth Agency and Peacebuilding: an analysis of the role of formal and non-formal education Synthesis report on findings from Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda. Research Consortium Education and Peacebuilding, University of Amsterdam

The authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of views contained within this report and for opnions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNICEF and do not commit the organisation.

A complete set of Literature Reviews and individual Country Reports can be accessed through the Research Consortium for Education and Peacebuilding Web Portal: https://educationanddevelopment.wordpress.com/rp/research-consortium-education-and-peacebuilding/

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Acknowledgements

This report could not have been written without the hard work and support of the research teams in each of the case study countries. In Myanmar, the work was led by the University of Amsterdam (Mieke Lopes Cardozo, University of Amsterdam, Sean Higgins, University of Amsterdam, Elizabeth Maber, University of Amsterdam, Ritesh Shah, University of Auckland, Marielle le Mat, University of Amsterdam, Kiymet Schipper, University of Amsterdam, and in-country partners Hla Win May, Oo Aye Aye Nyein, Nandar Nwe Oo, Khin Mar Aung, Naw Tha Ku Paul (Mie Mie), Aung Thura HTun, Htet Yin Tun). In Pakistan, the work was led by the University of Sussex in partnership with the Aga Khan University (Naureen Durrani, University of Sussex, Laila Kadiwal, University of Sussex, Anjum Halai , Aga Khan University, Salima Karim Rajput, Aga Khan University). In South Africa, the work was led by Cape Peninsular University of Technology (CPUT) (Yusuf Sayed, Azeem Badroodien, Zahraa McDonald, Lorna Balie, Tarryn De Kock, Carel Garisch, Akiko Hanaya, Thomas Salmon, Widad Sirkhotte Kriel, Jacquiline Gaston, Kim Foulds) and supported by the University of Sussex. In Uganda, the work was led by Ulster University (Alan Smith, Alan McCully, Simone Datzberger, and in Uganda Tenywa Aloysius Malagala, Ms. Betty Okot, Brian Kibirango, Lucy Akello, Ronald Marindi, Benjamin Abura and Arthur Bantu).

We would also like to thank the UNICEF Country Offices in each of the respective case study countries and the PBEA programme management team, based in New York. We are also grateful to all the participants of the research projects in each of the countries who willingly gave their time, shared their knowledge and wisdom and suggested sources and resources that were drawn upon for this work. Finally, we would like to thank all the reviewers of the report: Saji Prelis (Search for Common Ground), Matilda Flemming (United Network of Young Peacebuilders), Prof. Mairead Dunne (University of Sussex), Prof. Eka Srimulyani (International Centre on Aceh and Indian Ocean Studies), Kate Moriarty (International Consultant), Fernando Balmaceda (UNICEF EAPRO), Teijja Vallandingham (UNICEF EAPRO), Friedrich Affolter (UNICEF HQ), Andrew Dunback (UNICEF HQ), and our consortium members at the University of Sussex and Ulster University for their feedback and critical commentary. The research became richer because of these inputs, while any errors, omissions and weaknesses are the responsibility of the Research Consortium.

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A Note on Referencing

In each Consortium Synthesis Report some specific references are sourced to individual Consortium Country Reports. The final Country Reports have been produced as complementary documents to each of the Synthesis Reports and therefore provide a first point of reference within this publication.

Each country report can be accessed in full at:
http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

List of Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CASE	Community Action Towards a Safe Environment
CCPEE	Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education
CESR	Comprehensive Education Sector Review (Myanmar)
CPE	Cultural Political Economy
EAG's	Ethnic Armed Groups
EFA	Education for All
FDG's	Focus Group Discussions
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IYDS	Integrated Youth Development Strategy
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LRA	Lord Resistance Army
NCA	National Ceasefire Agreement
NLD	National League for Democracy (Myanmar)
NYP	National Youth Policy
RDSP	Rural Development Support Programme
SALYN	South African Youth Leaders Network
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council (Myanmar)
SRA	Strategic Relational Approach
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UYONET	Ugandan Youth Council and the Uganda Youth Network USDP - Union Solidarity and Development Party

Explanation of Terms

4Rs/peacebuilding	The consortium's 4Rs theoretical framework to analyse (the role of education in) peacebuilding: to identify how processes of representation (participation in decision making - political), redistribution (equity in the distribution of resources - economic), recognition (affirming the diversity of identities) and reconciliation (dealing with legacies of conflict, e.g. healing across divides) can support transformation of the status quo.
Direct violence	Visible forms of violence, including (the threat of) physical force.
Indirect violence	Symbolic/cultural or structural forms of violence, referring for instance to stereotypical or exclusive narratives and beliefs, or to social and institutional structures used to exclude groups from satisfying their basic needs.
Formal education	Education initiatives that are government-led and/or follow formal curricula
Non formal education	Parallel (non-)governmental systems of schooling and (I)NGO or CBO led learning activities
Youth agency	The space for manoeuvre available to young people (in their 2nd and 3rd decade of life) in developing conscious or unconscious strategies that either support or hinder peacebuilding in relation to the broader cultural political economy context (see for a broader definition Ch 2, p.18)
Youth bulge	An increasingly used term which is gaining popularity in international writing about the burgeoning youth population. The authors of the report recognise the uncontested nature of the term, however would like to point out here that its widespread use is illustrative of the variety of (negative) youth framings entering the peacebuilding domain.

Executive Summary

This Synthesis Report aims to understand the ways in which the agency of youth – or their 'space for manoeuvre' – is impacted (or not) through a range of formal and non-formal education interventions, and how this enables or restricts young peoples ability to contribute to processes of peacebuilding and social cohesion, either in political, socio-cultural or economic ways. It combines a focus on youth agency, peacebuilding and education – an intersection that is often not addressed simultaneously. Recognising education's potential to enhance or undermine processes of sustainable peacebuilding and social cohesion, this report brings together a focus on the role of formal and non-formal education initiatives that are available to (some) youth in four conflict-affected countries: Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda. In addressing these issues the report aims to provide useful analysis and reflection for a range of audiences including scholars, practitioners and other professionals working in youth-related policy and programming as well as youth themselves, whose voice is too frequently marginalized.

Analytical framework and Methodology

This report highlights the consortium's theoretical framework and insights from literature on youth agency in conflict-affected settings as presented in our earlier developed Literature Review (Lopes Cardozo, Higgins, Maber, Brandt, Kusmallah, Le Mat, 2015) (see chapter 2). The youth agency specific methodology builds on:

- The consortium's 4Rs theoretical framework: the role of key processes of representation (participation in decision making - political), redistribution (equity in the distribution of resources - economic), recognition (affirming the diversity of identities) and reconciliation (healing across divides) within peacebuilding and the location of youth within these;
- the Strategic Relational Approach (SRA) to explore the space for manoeuvre available to youth to exercise agency in relation to peacebuilding; a Cultural Political Economy (CPE) approach: combining attention to the cultural (subject and identity formation) as well as political and economic dimensions of the intersections between education and peacebuilding;
- and insights from literature on youth agency in conflict-affected settings (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015), claiming that we need a more comprehensive understanding of youth agency for peacebuilding, by moving away from a victim-perpetrators binary to an understanding of heterogeneous constituencies embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict and peace;
- resulting in an exploratory and qualitative methodology using critical and participatory data gathering and analysis methods.

Four Country Case Studies: Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa, Uganda

"The rich diversity of research sites emphasises the need for conflict sensitive, contextually coherent approaches to enhancing the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes in each context, while serving to enrich globally relevant insights and reflections on the differing challenges, possibilities and potentials of education, as a key social sector, in the promotion of sustainable peace-promoting societies."

The four country case studies (Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa, and Uganda, see chapter 3) were selected with the intention of providing the maximum variety of contrast relating to the relationship between education and peacebuilding, in terms of geographical diversity, the nature and temporality of the conflict contexts explored and the drivers and root causes that underpin them. South Africa, emerged out of the struggle against apartheid, a conflict rooted in racism and social exclusion, whose legacies and inequalities remain more than two decades after the cessation of armed conflict. South Africa provides us with a rich resource to reflect more historically on the challenges and possibilities for the education system to contribute to promoting sustainable peacebuilding. Uganda, another country in Africa, remains divided between a peaceful South and Central Region and a Northern region that has suffered a series of punctuated armed conflicts for almost three decades. Pakistan, in South Asia, is a huge country that has suffered from a series of conflicts in recent years, linked to instability in Afghanistan, the global 'war on terror', regional tensions with its neighbour India and violent internal political unrest. Finally, Myanmar, presents us with a case study from South East Asia, of a country on the brink of entering a post-conflict period after decades of authoritarian rule, challenged by a range of armed and non-armed ethnic and political movements. The rich diversity of research sites emphasises the need for conflict sensitive, contextually coherent approaches to enhancing the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes in each context, while serving to enrich globally relevant insights and reflections on the differing challenges, possibilities and potentials of education, as a key social sector, in the promotion of sustainable peace-promoting societies.

Synthesis of Main findings: Placing Youth Central to the Analysis

"When situating youth within the four country contexts, and highlighting the specific cultural, political economy challenges faced by young people in these wide range of geographic settings, common challenges young people face across conflict-affected contexts are underscored."

When situating youth within the four country contexts, and highlighting the specific cultural, political economy challenges faced by young people in these wide range of geographic settings, common challenges young people face across conflict-affected contexts are underscored. They include:

- High levels of unemployment and lack of access to labour markets;
- Exclusion from decision-making/political processes at local and national levels;
- Alienated relationships with the state;
- Disengagement and frustration with the apparent irrelevance of formal educational provision;
- Widespread experiences of direct as well as indirect violence; and
- Structural gender inequalities reinforced by education and lack of adequate policy and programmatic attention.

These daily realities highlight how youth agency and well-being is, in all country contexts, deeply affected, constrained and shaped by the continuing existence of drivers of economic, political and cultural conflict.

The report discusses the voices of youth respondents, including how youth see peace, (formal) education and their most pressing challenges in relation to gendered inequalities and violence. Peace for youth in all four country contexts appeared to be a multi-faceted phenomenon, ranging from 'negative peace' (absence of direct violence) to 'positive peace' (reflecting equality and justice). A great range of youth perspectives indeed concerned the absence of fear/experiences of direct and indirect violence, and being able to trust. On top of that, their experience of freedom of movement and perception of opportunities to exercise their agency as peacebuilders were vital dimensions to youth's definitions of peace.

"The report discusses the voices of youth respondents, including how youth see peace, (formal) education and their most pressing challenges in relation to gendered inequalities and violence."

Youth-Related Framings and Policies

Main insights on framings of youth as represented within policy and societal discourses, reveal that these framings of youth generally reflect a dichotomous perception of youth as either a threat or a great potential for a country's security, stability and development, which has been articulated in a variety of literature (see e.g. Kemper, 2005; McEvoy-Levy, 2006; Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015). Notably, in synthesizing findings from Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa, and Uganda, the "youth bulge"[1.] was a recognised issue in all country contexts of study. This youth bulge on the one hand is seen a threat, as surely there are implications for youth (un-) employment and respective frustrations and grievances this might cause, and on the other hand, and on a more positive note, the large numbers of youth in (post-) conflict societies are also perceived as a potential force for economic, and social, political development. Bringing together the insights from the four country studies, we see a clear prioritization of seeing youth for economic development and growth. In a way, this can be connected to a broader observation that in most contexts, a (globally inspired, yet locally adopted) liberal peace thesis is dominantly influencing policy and investment directions, focusing on first strengthening markets and democratic governance, while often leaving aside (or for a later moment) substantial investments in social sectors, including education and other youth-relevant areas such as health. Secondly, in highlighting main reflections on (the absence of) youth-relevant policy frameworks in all contexts, our empirical findings confirm insight from the literature review on youth agency, education and peacebuilding (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015), in the sense that there is an absence of youth voice in policy and programming, which is problematic for ensuring adequate responses to youth needs and constituencies in post-conflict societies and education systems.

"There is an absence of youth voice in policy and programming, which is problematic for ensuring adequate responses to youth needs and constituencies in post-conflict societies and education systems."

Formal and Non-Formal Education Initiatives for the Promotion of Youth Agency for Sustainable Peace

Four-country analysis of a wide range of formal and non-formal education interventions have informed our analysis of the ways in which these focus on building respective socio-cultural, political and economic aspects of youth agency.

[1.] The term "youth bulge" is increasingly used and gaining popularity in international writing about the increasing youth population. The authors of the report recognise the uncontested nature of the term, however would like to point out here that its widespread use is illustrative of the variety of (negative) youth framings entering the peacebuilding domain.

The report outlines how (non-) formal education might work to empower youth, what scope of youth constituencies is being reached and finally the extent to which interventions are context-responsive, and what this means.

In relation to youth experience of formal education provision, the research teams uncovered what can only be described as a tragic paradox in relation to formal education provision in most of the conflict-affected contexts under study, few exceptional schools left aside. On the one hand, as noted above, youth have high expectations of the promise of education to impact their lives across multiple dimensions of their agency. On the other hand, the systemic exclusion of the majority of youth from secondary education, as well as serious weaknesses in curricula content and pedagogical processes undermine its potential to contribute to forms of political, economic, social and cultural empowerment that may enhance youth peacebuilding agency. Moreover, the resulting disillusion and disaffection noted by the research teams intersectionally cuts across class, gender and ethnic differences, with educated middle class male urban youth being just as likely to be dissatisfied – albeit of a different nature – with their education experience as poorer and more marginalised constituencies.

"Research on non-formal interventions underlined the very small and exclusive numbers benefiting. Youth needs in relation to work, political representation and cultural identity were addressed in interventions that aimed to provide relevant knowledges and skills."

Research on non-formal interventions underlined the very small and exclusive numbers benefiting. Youth needs in relation to work, political representation and cultural identity were addressed in interventions that aimed to provide relevant knowledges and skills. Interventions that recognised and built upon the existing initiatives and courage of youth facing challenging circumstances were particularly effective. However, we found that inattention to the contexts and daily realities of youth often undermines (or even reverses) the potential of education to enhance the agency of their youth participants in relation to labour market opportunities, cultural affirmation or participate in decision-making processes at local and national (political) levels. Moreover, the relational dimensions of youth agency – in particular their negotiation of inter-generational tensions and multi-level relationships with state authorities including the police and local government - were frequently bypassed. This research found managing expectations is crucial, as lack of work opportunities following vocational training interventions or lack of participation in decision-making processes following political awareness raising may exacerbate youth frustrations, thereby driving rather than mitigating conflict and alienation.

"In collecting data, particular attention was paid to gender and violence issues affecting young people across the four countries."

In collecting data, particular attention was paid to gender and violence issues affecting young people across the four countries. The intersection between violence and gender roles was clearly identified as having a major impact on young people's lives, both in terms of being subjected to violence and participating in committing violent acts. This was not limited to gender binaries that associate girls/women as victims and boys/men as perpetrators of violence and which varied across contexts.

Concluding Reflections, Recommendations and Ways Forward

Finally, we connect the prior analysis to the 4Rs analytical framework to clarify education's potential and limitations in relation to supporting the socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions of youth agency – and the intersections between these (see chapter 5). Our recommendations include:

1

Within policies of national governments and (international) civil society organisations alike, there is a need for more nuanced framings of youth, to acknowledge and respond to:

1. **a more refined and context-specific understanding that sees youth as agents of peacebuilding, and not merely as a threat**
2. **the complex nature of youth peacebuilding agency, including socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions of youth empowerment;**
3. **the multi-scalar nature of youth engagement and potential.**

2

The need for national governments to develop more effective, coherent policy and institutional frameworks to address youth needs in relation to the economic, political, cultural and social dimensions of their agency.

3

A further exploration is needed to understand how and why (formal and non-formal) education policy and programming implicitly or explicitly focus on addressing peacebuilding, and in what ways theories of change include or exclude aspects of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation.

4

Youth respondents call for more context-specific, needs-based and holistic education opportunities, both within formal and non-formal education programming. This would require:

1. **Locally-embedded needs-based analysis and approaches to overcome mismatches between intervention rhetoric and reality;**
2. **Addressing discrepancies between youth priorities for peacebuilding and those of (non-formal) education interventions;**
3. **Comprehensive rather than fragmented approaches to enhancing all aspects of young people's socio-cultural, political and economic agency.**

5

Considering the overall rather negative experience of youth respondents with the ways in which formal education fails to support their (socio-cultural, political and economic/livelihoods) needs, considerable reform efforts are needed. Particularly important areas for reform include:

1. **ensuring equal resources to ensure safe and sustainable learning environments for female and male learners and teachers;**
2. **better connection with the labour market and improved provision of vocational education;**
3. **more diverse and critical pedagogies applied to the teaching of history;**
4. **more inclusive language of instruction policies that allow for diverse identities and learning needs;**
5. **gender-responsive approaches to enhance equal educational/career opportunities for male and female students and teachers, and gender-transformative approaches to enhance relevance/appropriateness of educational content.**

6

Finally, the above recommendations illustrate a gap in knowledge and a dearth of systematic evaluation of both short and longer-term impact of formal and non-formal education on the lives and choices of young people in conflict-affected contexts. Future academic research and evaluative studies need to further explore the complexities listed above.

Introduction

Introduction

This Synthesis Report is written at a timely moment, as it responds to current global shifting agenda's and gears with regards to issues of peace, security and development, including the recent adoption of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, September 2015) and the even more recent UN Security Council adoption of Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (December, 2015). By urging member states to increase representation of youth in decision-making at all levels, the Resolution 2250 shifts attention from seeing youth only as a security threat, to recognizing them as a large section of the population than can potentially contribute to constructive change.

"This report is unique, in the sense that it combines a combined focus on youth agency, peacebuilding and education – an intersection that is often not addressed simultaneously."

At the same time, and in line with SDG number 4 (as well as 16, 8 and a range of others), attention is being directed internationally to the important role of education in zones of conflict, with an important advocacy role taken up by (members of) the International Network of Education in Emergencies. The new UN Resolution on Youth, Peace and Security includes several references to the importance of education for young people's lives, yet what becomes apparent is a specific view of education's role to foster "youth entrepreneurship and constructive political engagement". The assumption is that education should support "employment and training in preventing the marginalization of youth" and "investment in building young persons' capabilities and skills to meet labour demands through relevant education opportunities designed in a manner which promotes a culture of peace" (article 17a/b, UN Resolution 2250). In addition, article 16 includes "education leaders" in a list of actors that would need to be "empowered" to counter recruitment of youth into violent extremism and terrorist attacks; education systems are not directly referred to as one of the conditions that might be conducive to the spread of violent extremism. Considering the general lack of attention and evidence on the roles, actions and hopes of youth in conflict-affected situations, the Resolution 2250 is an important step forward in terms of international recognition. However, it does lead to a range of unanswered questions, including the ways in which education is supposed to support youth to engage in long-term processes of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and what this concretely means for actors working in this field.

This report is unique, in the sense that it combines a combined focus on youth agency, peacebuilding and education – an intersection that is often not addressed simultaneously. Recognising education's potential to enhance or undermine processes of sustainable peacebuilding and social cohesion, this report brings together a focus on the role of formal and non-formal education initiatives that are available to youth in four conflict-affected countries: Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda. In doing so, the report aims to understand the ways in which the agency of youth – or their 'space for manoeuvre' – is impacted, or not, through a range of formal and non-formal education interventions, and how this enables or restricts young people to contribute to processes of peacebuilding and social cohesion, either in political, socio-cultural or economic ways. Our analysis aims to illustrate both the heterogeneity of 'youth' in the four countries, as well as highlight how often only a selection of youth constituencies are included in (formal and non-formal) education.

In a way, this synthesis report might set itself out to do the impossible – to contribute something meaningful into the debates about "youth" – in others words, to say something meaningful about a massive, in some cases majority, segment of the population, while being such a diverse group. In addition, definitions of the term "youth" itself remain contested all over the globe, ranging from more technical age-ranges to a wide scope of social categorisations. Often, youth are portrayed as those that are 'in-between' childhood and adulthood, and that supposedly need protection, control, and social management to move from a state of dependency to one of independence and autonomy. Such mainstream ideas of youth have led in many contexts to a variety of deep-rooted fears, ambivalences, and unsettling anxieties around the implications of large and growing young populations (Sayed et al, 2016). Here, while recognizing the concept's cultural specificity, we have defined youth as those within their second and third decade of life, as further detailed below.

"This synthesis report builds on research that draws on a rich data base, covering several regions within four countries, presenting a special opportunity to clarify how youth may contribute to peacebuilding processes, how distinct cultural, political and economic factors impact on their capacity to do so and how in turn education may be mobilized to support them."

Moreover, against a background of uncertainty about who and which constituencies are to be included in the youth demographic, as well as their widespread projection as a major security problem, it may also be asking the impossible to attempt to understand their agency as peacebuilders. However, this synthesis report builds on research that draws on a rich data base, covering several regions within four countries, presenting a special opportunity to clarify how youth may contribute to peacebuilding processes, how distinct cultural, political and economic factors impact on their capacity to do so and how in turn education may be mobilized to support them. In doing so, we pay particular attention to the needs, challenges and daily realities of youth themselves.

In addressing these issues the report aims to provide useful analysis and reflection for a range of audiences whose professional work converges on the issue of how youth in conflict-affected contexts may be best empowered and supported. This includes scholars, practitioners and other professionals working in youth-related policy and programming as well as youth themselves, whose voice is too frequently marginalized. In writing for such an inclusive audience, the authors of this report are mindful of the need for more dialogue and knowledge-sharing between these groups who bring diverse perspectives and expertise in relation to the issue of youth agency.

In the following chapter 2, the report starts by presenting the methodology of the research, highlighting the consortium's theoretical framework and insights from literature on youth agency in conflict-affected settings as presented in our earlier developed Literature Review (Lopes Cardozo, Higgins, Maber, Brandt, Kusmallah, Le Mat, 2015). In the third chapter, we provide our main rationale for the selection of the four case-study countries and a brief overview of each country. In chapter four, we start by situating youth within the four country contexts, highlighting the specific cultural, political economy challenges faced by young people in these wide range of geographic settings. We then continue to discuss the voices of youth respondents themselves, including how youth see peace, (formal) education and their most pressing challenges in relation to gendered inequalities and violence. We then discuss

the main insights on framings of youth as represented within policy and societal discourses. After that, we delve into the four-country analysis of a wide range of formal and non-formal education interventions, and the ways in which these engage with building the respective socio-cultural, political and economic aspects of youth agency. Here, we outline the ways in which formal and non-formal education might work to empower youth, what scope of youth constituencies is being reached and finally the extent to which interventions are context-responsive, and what this means. In collecting data, particular attention was paid to gender and violence issues affecting young people across the four countries. Finally, in our last chapter 5, we connect the prior analysis to the analytical frameworks in order to discuss the key findings in relation to education's potentials or limitations in supporting the socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions of youth agency – or indeed the intersections between those. It is hoped that the theoretical framework adopted by the consortium will help to shine a light on the ways in which education may contribute to or hinder youth's location within sustainable peacebuilding – here understood as the unevenly addressed yet interconnected processes of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation.

"We outline the ways in which formal and non-formal education might work to empower youth, what scope of youth constituencies is being reached and finally the extent to which interventions are context-responsive, and what this means."

Methodology

Methodology

This Synthesis Report draws on a methodological framework that was developed in the context of the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, which is co-led by the Universities of Amsterdam, Sussex and Ulster, and supported by UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme. The partnership with UNICEF runs between July 2014 and June 2016, and seeks to build knowledge on the relationship between education and peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts. The consortium carried out research in four PBEA countries: Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uganda.

The research was carried out in partnership with (research and UNICEF) colleagues in each of the participating countries and seeks to contribute both to theory and practice in the field of education and peacebuilding, developing theoretically informed, policy relevant outputs[2]. The consortium works on three key thematic areas:

1. The integration of education in UN peacebuilding missions and frameworks and vice versa, the integration of peacebuilding in national education systems, policies and programmes (led by Ulster University);
2. The role of teachers in peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts (led by the University of Sussex);
3. The role of education in peacebuilding initiatives involving youth in conflict contexts (led by the University of Amsterdam).

It is this last research area 3 on 'youth' that this Synthesis Report focuses on.

We developed a youth agency specific methodology, which builds on:

- the consortium's 4Rs theoretical framework;
- the Strategic Relational Approach (SRA);
- a Cultural Political Economy (CPE) approach;
- and insights from literature on youth agency in conflict-affected settings (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015).

Below, we briefly develop our methodological rationale for the combination of these approaches. Consequently, we present the main definitions we apply for this research area and the research questions that guided the data collection and analysis. From here, we move to explain the specific methods that were employed during the data collection and we briefly illustrate the selection criteria for the choice of selected initiatives that guided the sampling in each country study. Appendix 3 includes an operationalization table that connects the methods with the respective research questions while breaking those down into 'researchable' indicators or questions. It is important to note that for each specific research context, and the make-up of each specific international-local research team, the operationalization and choice of methods was adapted to suit the local context and research needs/possibilities.

[2] See Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding (2014) Research Briefing 1: Introducing the research. Available at http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

Redistribution, Recognition, Representation and Reconciliation: The 4Rs Analytical Framework

"The 4 Rs Analytical Framework provides the overarching framework for all the research themes addressed by this study."

The 4 Rs Analytical Framework (see also Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith, 2015)[3] provides the overarching framework for all the research themes addressed by this study. This framework combines social and transitional justice thinking to develop a normative framework for the study of education and peacebuilding, which recognises the multiple dimensions of inequality and injustice that often underpin contemporary conflicts and the need to address the legacies of these conflicts in and through education. The framework is in line with broader and well-established peacebuilding thinking (c.f Galtung 1976; Lederach 1995, 1997) of the need to address both negative peace (the cessation of violence) and positive peace (the underlying structural and symbolic violence that often underpins the outbreak of conflict – the drivers of conflict). It also recognises the importance of addressing and redressing the 'legacies of conflict' in tandem with addressing the 'drivers of conflict'.

"Recent quantitative research drawing on two international education inequality and conflict datasets (FHI 360, 2015) demonstrates a robust and consistent statistical relationship, across five decades, between higher levels of inequality in educational attainment between ethnic and religious groups, and the likelihood that a country will experience violent conflict."

Within conflict studies, there has been a long and heated debate on the relationship between inequality, injustice and conflict. The debate is often framed in terms of "greed versus grievance" explanations, with the former suggesting that wars are driven less by justified "grievances" and more by personal and collective "greed" (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). Humans are viewed as engaged in conflict as "economic agents" making cost-benefit calculations and trying to maximize returns on engagement in violent conflict. For these thinkers, the route to peace and security is not through addressing injustice, inequality and structural exclusion, but through increasing the cost of access to resources for violent actors. A negative critique of this work argues that horizontal inequalities (between groups) are important indicators for conflict outbreak (Stewart, 2005; 2010), arguments supported by strong econometric evidence (Cederman et al., 2011). Horizontal inequalities, which often relate to ethnicity, tribe, or religion, involve a range of dimensions: economic (access to land, income, and employment), political (access to political power and representation), social (access to public services), and cultural (respect for difference and identity, language rights, etc.). In armed conflicts, real or perceived horizontal inequalities can provide a catalyst for group mobilisation and uprisings. There is limited research on the relationship between education and inequality in the outbreak of armed conflict. However, recent quantitative research drawing on two international education inequality and conflict datasets (FHI 360, 2015) demonstrates a robust and consistent statistical relationship, across five decades, between higher levels of inequality in educational attainment between ethnic and religious groups, and the likelihood that a country will experience violent conflict. However, this research is less able to identify causal mechanisms, or explain the complexities of understanding those. Therefore, as the authors note in their conclusions, there is a need to explore the multiple dimensions of inequality beyond just educational outcomes, as well as the different ways in which the education system might contribute to or alleviate conflict.

The 4Rs framework builds on this thinking, developing a normative approach that seeks to capture the multiple economic, cultural, political, and social dimensions of inequality in education and the ways in which these might relate to conflict and peace (see Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, & Smith, 2015). The framework combines dimensions of recognition, redistribution, representation, and reconciliation, linking Fraser's (1995, 2005) work on social justice with the peacebuilding and reconciliation work of Galtung (1976), Lederach (1995, 1997), and others, to explore what sustainable peacebuilding

[3] See for a short overview also the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding (2014) Research Briefing 2: Theoretical and Analytical Framework. Available at http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

might look like in post-conflict environments. The examination of inequalities within the education system seeks to capture the interconnected dimensions of the "4Rs" that work towards sustainable peacebuilding and social cohesion:

- **Redistribution** concerns equity and non-discrimination in education access, resources, and outcomes for different groups in society, particularly marginalised and disadvantaged groups.
- **Recognition** concerns respect for and affirmation of diversity and identities in education structures, processes, and content, in terms of gender, language, politics, religion, ethnicity, culture, and ability.
- **Representation** concerns participation, at all levels of the education system, in governance and decision-making related to the allocation, use, and distribution of human and material resources.
- **Reconciliation** involves dealing with past events, injustices, and material and psychosocial effects of conflict, as well as developing relationships of trust.

The framework provides a useful tool to analyse the extent to which education is/can support cross-sectorial programming for conflict transformation in terms of redistribution, recognition, representation, and reconciliation and as an analytical tool within the education sector, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Working Within the Education Sector - Analysing Education Systems Using the 4Rs

Analysing Education Systems Using the 4Rs: Potential 'Indicators'	
Redistribution (addressing inequalities)	• Vertical and horizontal inequalities in education inputs, resources, and outcomes (quantitative data); • Redistribution in macro education reforms or policies (e.g. impact of decentralisation and privatisation on different groups and conflict dynamics).
Recognition (respecting difference)	• Policies on language of instruction; • Recognition of cultural diversity and religious identity in curriculum; • Citizenship and civic education as a means of state-building.
Representation (encouraging participation)	• Participation (local, national, global) in education policy and reforms; • Political control and representation through education administration; • School-based management and decision-making (teachers, parents, students); • Support for fundamental freedoms in the education system.
Reconciliation (dealing with injustices and the legacies of conflict)	• Addressing historical and contemporary injustices linked to conflict; • Integration and segregation in education systems (e.g. common institutions); • Teaching about the past and its relevance to the present and future; • Vertical trust in schools and education system, and horizontal trust between identity-based groups.

From the 4Rs Meta-Theoretical Framework to a Youth Agency Specific Methodology

The youth agency specific methodology builds on the above discussed meta-theoretical 4Rs framework (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith, 2015). In order to analyze education's potential to influence (+/-) the agency of youth situated in conflict-affected contexts, this framework combines three other areas of inspiration:

1. a Cultural Political Economy approach, as developed by Sum and Jessop (2013) and Robertson and Dale (2014);
2. combined with the Strategic Relational Approach, first developed by Jessop (2005) and Hay (2002), and adapted to the field of education (Lopes Cardozo, 2009, 2011; Lopes Cardozo and Hoeks, 2014; Shah and Lopes Cardozo, 2014);and
3. adding to this, specific conceptualisations of youth agency in conflict-affected settings as specified in the Literature Review: Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education, conducted in the context of this research consortium (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015).

A Cultural Political Economy Analysis of Education

Our theoretical framework aims to unravel the complexities of education's role, and the roles of those (youth, teachers and other stakeholders) engaged in and beyond the educational space, in processes of peacebuilding and transformation. In a *Cultural* Political Economy (CPE) approach, as a particular way to understand the complex world we live in, there is a recognition that "orthodox *political economy* tends to offer impoverished accounts of how subjects and subjectivities are formed" (Jessop, 2004:3, emphasis added) and therefore brings the role of culture into equal footing with political and economic structures and institutions, as a contingent factor in the actions of actors. We build on these premises to inspire our analysis of education in relation to youth agency and peacebuilding. A Cultural Political Economy perspective on education helps us to see "education as part of societies; it does not sit outside of it" – by not simply 'adding' education to CPE, but by critically viewing education as being both constituted by and connected to cultural, economic and political dynamics and processes (Robertson 2012:4).

"Our theoretical framework aims to unravel the complexities of education's role, and the roles of those (youth, teachers and other stakeholders) engaged in and beyond the educational space, in processes of peacebuilding and transformation."

Analyzing Youth Agency

Moving from this CPE approach as a particular way to understand the underlying (often invisible, yet influential) mechanisms and power relations that influence events and actions we can empirically observe, we now turn to introduce our interpretation of the Strategic Relational Approach (SRA). The space for manoeuvre that is available – or the agency - of young people living in times of conflict in many cases is restricted. The SRA (Hay, 2002b, 2002a; Jessop, 2005) as a methodological tool helps us to view how the strategically-selective context within which actors (including youth) maneuver is based on structural and institutional conditions. In this approach, structures/contexts and agents are treated analytically as separate entities, but are seen to simultaneously have a contingent and dialectal relationship (Hay 2002b; Jessop 2005). Specifically, structures are seen as strategically selective. They can reinforce the motivations, actions or strategies of particular individuals/groups, and work against others—thus creating both opportunities and constraints for specific courses of action for specific

(youth) constituencies. All actors have tendencies, or preferences for action, but the structural spaces they operate within may allow only certain tendencies to be realized (Hay, 2002). Different individuals and groups may have varying opportunities and constraints due to their levels of access to particular strategic resources and information (social, political, cultural, economic capital). Youth may be differentially motivated in their desire to alter their environments, acting in ways that consciously and unconsciously serve to reproduce/transform existing conditions. Even if driven by a desire for transformation, youth (and other education-relevant actors) often lack perfect information of their context. Imperfect information leads to false assumptions and actions that may appear unintentional, but are responding to a set of perceived structural constraints, which may not be perceived correctly (Hay, 2002: 381–383). The SRA can support us in our understandings of how and why possibilities and limitations to young people's agency as peacebuilders are shaped, and are both time and place-bound. The SRA contends that it might be assumed that, over time, actors would come to better understand and respond in kind to their context through the routine monitoring of the consequences of their actions. Yet, very rarely do the conflict-affected environments in which youth live, learn and work remain static, making the strategic learning process anything but a linear and straightforward process.

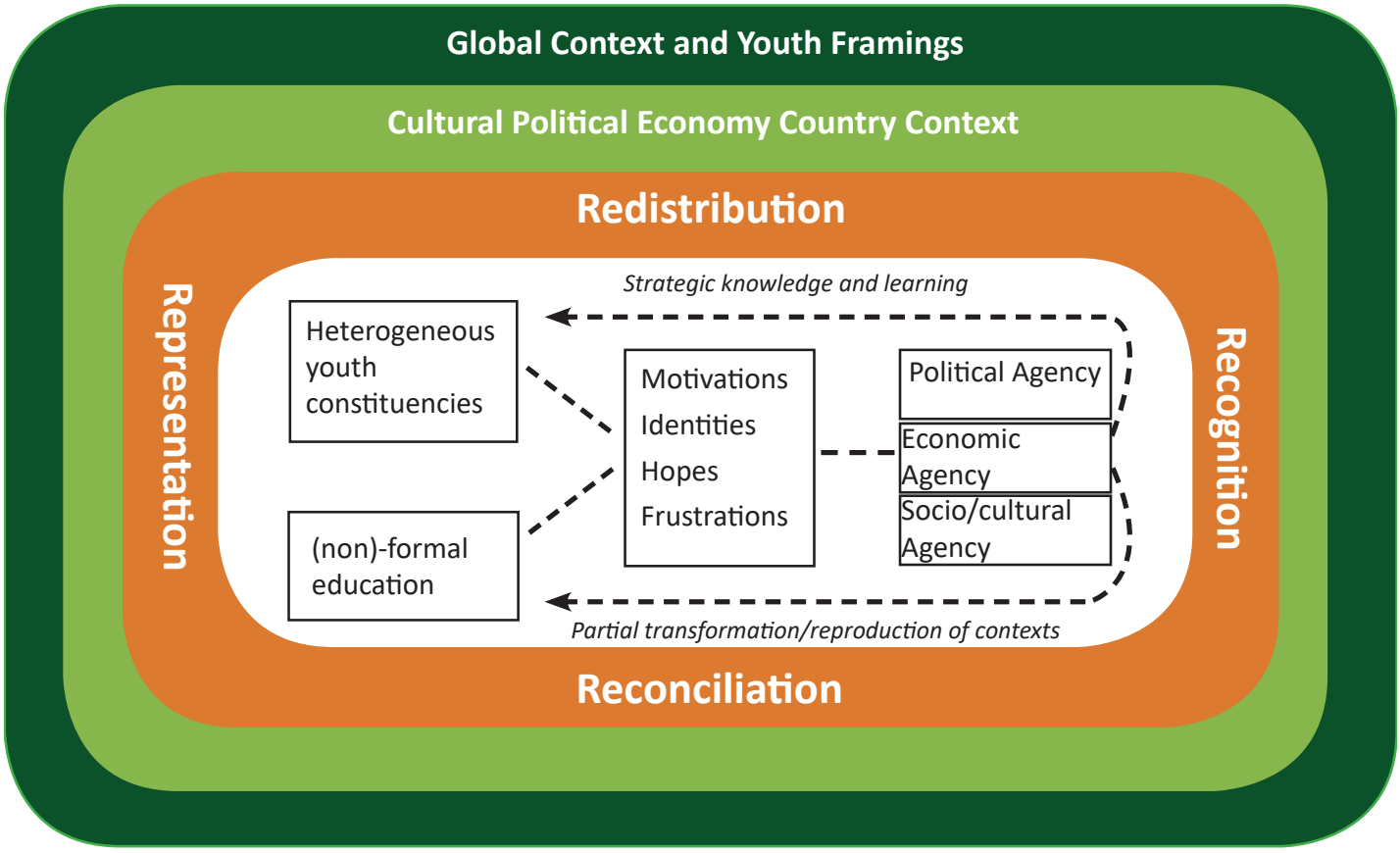
"Even if driven by a desire for transformation, youth (and other education-relevant actors) often lack perfect information of their context. Imperfect information leads to false assumptions and actions that may appear unintentional, but are responding to a set of perceived structural constraints, which may not be perceived correctly (Hay, 2002: 381–383)."

In seeking to understand the complex dynamics of youth agency in relation to peacebuilding, our methodology can fruitfully draw on the orientation to the cultural within recent formulations of cultural political economy as described above (Jessop, 2004; Robertson, 2012). Given this project's interest in developing a rich understanding of the youth potential as peacebuilders, Robertson calls for a "generous" deployment of the cultural as a means to understand the "business of making selves….how worlds, meanings and consciousness are formed" is particularly relevant (Robertson, 2012). Moreover, in aiming to highlight and to do justice to the everyday realities of youth in conflict affected contexts, the approach taken builds on social theorists including De Certeau who have drawn attention to the frequently underestimated importance of this dimension of human agency (de Certeau, 1984).

The visual below illustrates our adapted interpretation of how SRA can be applied to study the role of (non-)formal education in supporting or hindering the (+/-) agency of youth for peacebuilding. This analysis is both embedded within a broader strategically selective context of the way the 4Rs play out in youth's lives, and hence form the broader Cultural Political Economy Context in each of the four countries (the square panels at the outer edges of the visual). Youth agency – or their space for manoeuvre – is influenced by youth's (individual and collective, conscious and unconscious) motivations, identities, hopes and frustrations. Following from our analysis of the data, we identify interconnected, yet distinct socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions of youth agency, as is further explored in the findings chapter. Finally, the dotted lines represent feedback-loops, and illustrate how youth agency is a dynamic process, dialectically related to a dynamic strategic selective context. These feedback loops show the (absence/potential power of) strategic knowledge and learning (of youth, but also of other stakeholders including educators, programme designers and policy-makers) and partial transformation/reproduction of contexts through formal and non-formal education.

"Youth agency – or their space for manoeuvre – is influenced by youth's (individual and collective, conscious and unconscious) motivations, identities, hopes and frustrations."

Figure 1: Conceptual Model: Analysing the Role of (non)Formal Education for Youth Agency"



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"The visual illustrates our adapted interpretation of how SRA can be applied to study the role of (non-)formal education in supporting or hindering the (+/-) agency of youth for peacebuilding. This analysis is both embedded within a broader strategically selective context of the way the 4Rs play out in youth's lives, and hence form the broader Cultural Political Economy Context in each of the four countries."

Literature Review: Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education

Now what do these insights from the CCPEE combined with comprehensions derived and adapted from SRA tell us for our analysis and understanding of 1) policies and education initiatives in four countries that focus on/are led by youth, and 2) how such policies and formal or non-formal educational initiatives influence the agency of youth as potential actors in processes of social transformation and peacebuilding? This is where we need to bring these insights into connection with thinking on youth agency, as developed in our Literature Review on Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015, see Appendix 2 for an overview of the main conclusions). In this review, we argue that we need a more comprehensive understanding of youth agency for peacebuilding, by moving away from a victim-perpetrators binary to an understanding of heterogeneous constituencies embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict and peace. The literature review investigated the existing and potential approaches to young people's agency through an exploration of the economic, political and social conceptualisations and programmatic approaches that are reflected in a wide body of (academic and practitioner) literature. The review recognised that all too often the multiple dimensions of youth contributions to both conflict and peacebuilding are treated in isolation (either discursively, or through programmatic responses) and therefore attempts are made to highlight the ways in which these dimensions, connected to the 4 R's, intersect within varying contexts. Hence, the reduction of youth to either victims or perpetrators of violence in conflict does not reflect the multiple ways in which young people are affected by conflict, nor their potential contribution to peacebuilding.

Building on the insights from the literature review, we developed three main working definitions:

Table 2: Definitions on Youth, Formal and Non-Formal Education and Youth Agency

Definitions on Youth, Formal and Non-formal Education and Youth Agency	
Defining Youth	There is a lack of consensus within the international community over the precise chronological definition of youth (see UNICEF, 2009:11). The UN (2007) and World Bank (2007) define youth as those between 15-25, while the African Union (2006) and many African nations define youth as those aged between 15 and 35 (UNICEF, 2009: 11). Meanwhile, UNICEF defines adolescents as children between 10 and 19 years (UNICEF, 2009:11). For the purpose of this research project, we have broadly defined youth as those within the second and third decade of life. We recognise that this is a culturally and contextually specific category of the population that needs an adapted working definition in each specific research location.
Formal and Non-Formal 'Education Initiatives'	We follow a broad understanding of education initiatives, which includes formal (government-led, formal curricula following) schooling, parallel (non-)governmental systems of schooling and (I)NGO or CBO led learning activities.
(Youth) Agency (for Peacebuilding)	Building on the notion of 'agency' as set out above in relation to teachers, the concept of 'youth agency' is also key in this research consortium. In moving beyond narrow perceptions of youth agency and a 'youth bulge' as mere threats to peace, and inspired by work of Jessop (2005) and Hay (2002), for this research project youth agency is defined as the space for manoeuvre available to young people (in their 2nd and 3rd decade of life) in developing conscious or unconscious strategies that either support or hinder peacebuilding in relation to the broader cultural political economy context.

A Qualitative Research Approach

Our complete set of research questions is included in appendix 1, while the relevant questions will be introduced at the start of each findings section. Considering the gap in knowledge and research identified in the key findings of the desk-based Literate Review presented above, and some focused areas in need for further exploration, this research develops a rather exploratory approach, while it aims to move beyond being 'just descriptive'. Following from this rationale, the research methods employed are qualitative in nature. Engaging with a critical theoretical approach, as set out in the 4Rs framework and above, we explored why (specific groups of) youth are/aren't behaving in certain ways in relation to reproducing or transforming inequalities in their respective contexts, and how they see their beliefs and strategies in relation to the education initiatives that are available to them. While recognizing the relatively short time frame that was available to conduct the fieldwork (roughly a period of 2-4 months), we aimed to draw from, but not fully do justice to critical ethnographic research approaches and critical discourse analysis (of 'raw' collected data/texts/ photographic material as well as transcriptions).

"For the analysis of the selected formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on youth (agency), all country teams followed certain criteria to support our comparative analysis presented in this report."

Ungar and Liebenberg (2009), from a children's and youth psychological perspective, present a range of useful and important methodological orientations for studying (resilience and) agency among youth – including: 1) the need to deal with unequal power relations between researcher and young respondents; 2) avoiding oppressive methods that fail to enhance trust; 3) cultural sensitivity rather than voyeuristically studying indigenous societies; 4) and genuine participation and inclusion of youth voices in (action) research. Bringing these suggestions together with the key messages from our literature review, our research questions (presented below), we applied the following methods:

- **semi-structured interviews;**
- **participatory methods (including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), using creative assignments (drawings, mapping, drama) and facilitated group discussions);**
- **document analysis; and**
- **mapping techniques to inform a Relational Stakeholder Analysis.**

For the analysis of the selected formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on youth (agency), all country teams followed certain criteria to support our comparative analysis presented in this report (see Appendix 4). With regards to the data analysis applied, the vast majority of the data were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants and transcribed fully. Where languages other than English were used, they were translated into English. Researchers analysed qualitative data, including interview transcripts and notes, and coded them. Reflections emerging from the data in each

country were discussed in cross-country Consortium meetings, which enabled a refinement of the emerging findings. The findings have been reviewed in a series of validation events with stakeholders in each country.

These methods were used to reach out to a range of stakeholders and research participants: importantly the youth themselves (including representatives from different youth constituencies, as well as 'elite' and 'marginalised' youth groups from urban and rural areas), providers of youth educational initiatives (staff, teachers, facilitators etc.), development partners and NGOs supporting youth programming, government officials (covering context-specific range of youth-related policies) and academics or other relevant experts (see also Appendix 3, operationalization). We have held inception and validation events in each of the countries, presented interim findings at national and international conferences and will continue to disseminate the work widely through a broad and strategic dissemination process. This is central to our approach and seeks to provide theoretically informed but policy relevant research that will hopefully contribute to the better application and promotion of education as a contribution to sustainable peacebuilding.

Country Case Studies: Background

Country Case Studies: Background

In this section we provide a methodological justification for the country selection and a brief and broad conflict context and research location summary for each case-study to better illuminate the findings that are presented in the subsequent sections.[4]

Comparative Insights and Rationale

"The four country case studies were selected with the intention of providing the maximum variety of contrast relating to the relationship between education and peacebuilding, in terms of geographical diversity, the nature and temporality of the conflict contexts explored and the drivers and root causes that underpin them."

The four country case studies were selected with the intention of providing the maximum variety of contrast relating to the relationship between education and peacebuilding, in terms of geographical diversity, the nature and temporality of the conflict contexts explored and the drivers and root causes that underpin them. They also offer us rich and nuanced understanding of the capacity and commitment of different states to effect durable peace and social cohesion in and through education.

South Africa provides us with a rich resource to reflect more historically on the challenges and possibilities for the education system to contribute to promoting sustainable peacebuilding.

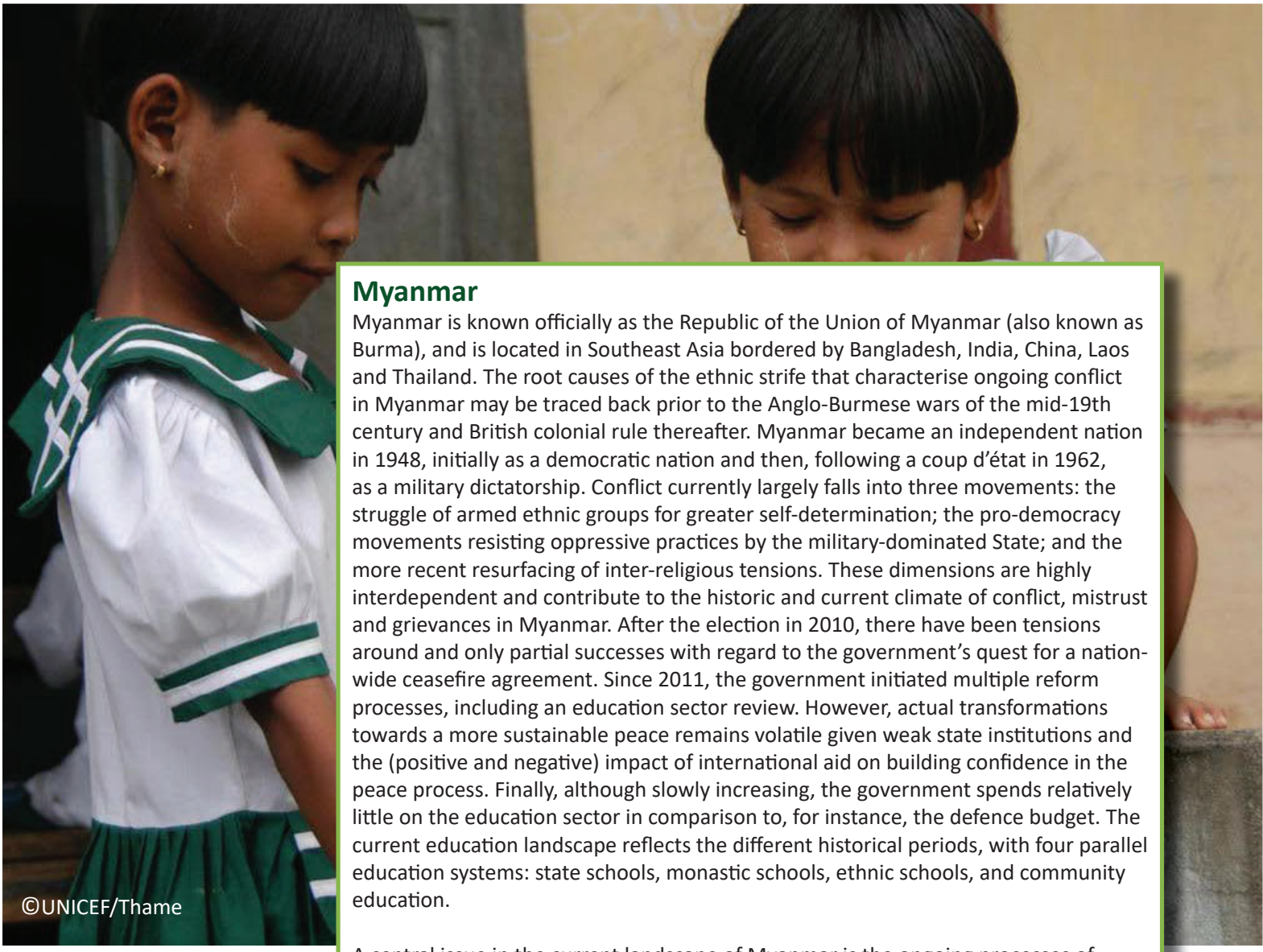
Uganda, another country in Africa, remains divided between a peaceful South and Central Region and a Northern region that has suffered a series of punctuated armed conflicts for almost three decades.

Pakistan, in South Asia, is a huge country that has suffered from a series of conflicts in recent years, linked to instability in Afghanistan, the global 'war on terror', regional tensions with its neighbour India and violent internal political unrest.

Finally, Myanmar, presents us with a case study from South East Asia, of a country on the brink of entering a post-conflict period after decades of authoritarian rule, challenged by a range of armed and non-armed ethnic and political movements.

The rich diversity of research sites emphasises the need for conflict sensitive, contextually coherent approaches to enhancing the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes in each context, while serving to enrich globally relevant insights and reflections on the differing challenges, possibilities and potentials of education, as a key social sector, in the promotion of sustainable peace-promoting societies.

[4] For more detailed information on the country cases, selection of initiatives, or findings discussed in relation to these country contexts, please see the full country reports of the Research Consortium Education and Peacebuilding: http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/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Myanmar

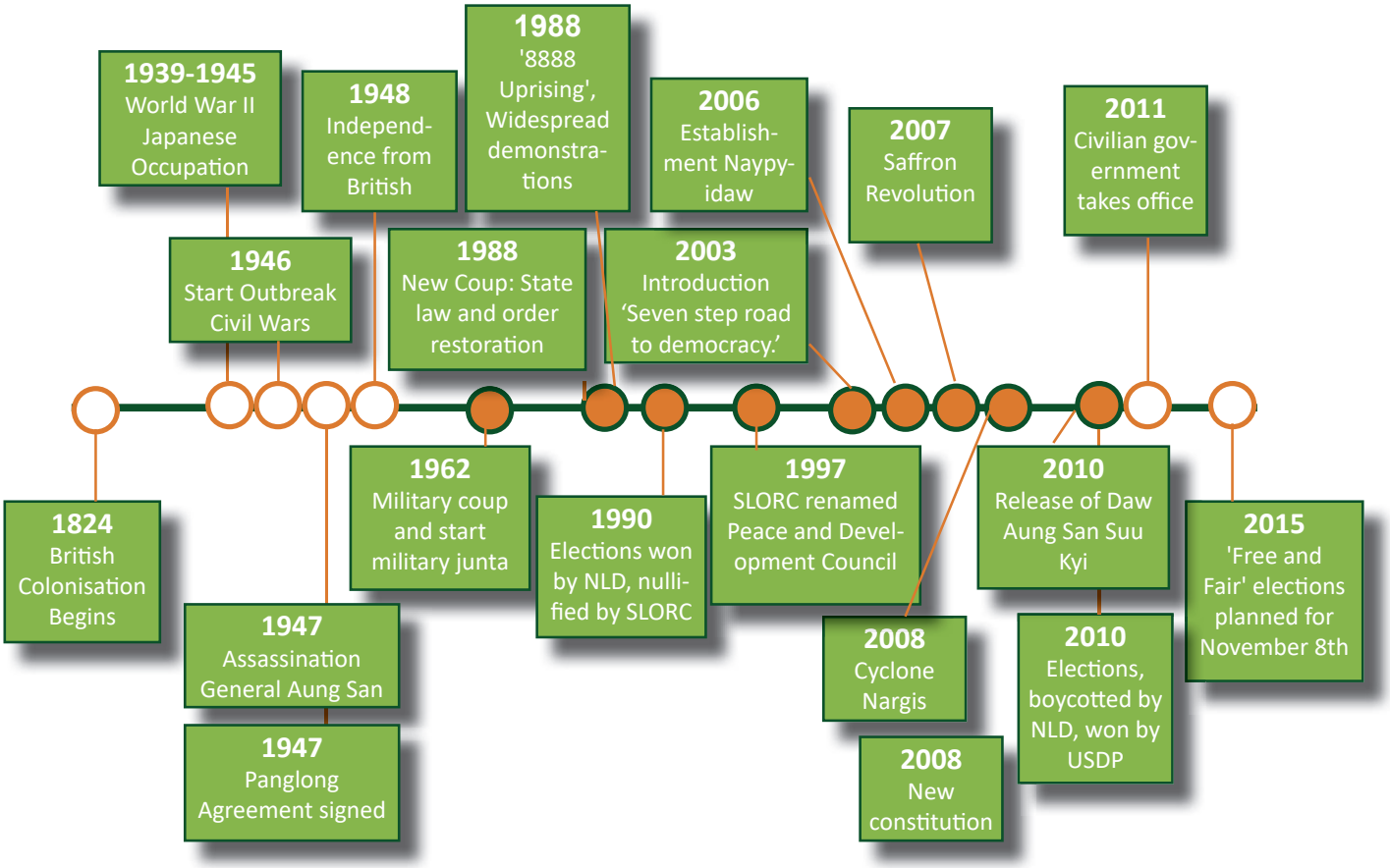
Myanmar is known officially as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (also known as Burma), and is located in Southeast Asia bordered by Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand. The root causes of the ethnic strife that characterise ongoing conflict in Myanmar may be traced back prior to the Anglo-Burmese wars of the mid-19th century and British colonial rule thereafter. Myanmar became an independent nation in 1948, initially as a democratic nation and then, following a coup d'état in 1962, as a military dictatorship. Conflict currently largely falls into three movements: the struggle of armed ethnic groups for greater self-determination; the pro-democracy movements resisting oppressive practices by the military-dominated State; and the more recent resurfacing of inter-religious tensions. These dimensions are highly interdependent and contribute to the historic and current climate of conflict, mistrust and grievances in Myanmar. After the election in 2010, there have been tensions around and only partial successes with regard to the government's quest for a nation-wide ceasefire agreement. Since 2011, the government initiated multiple reform processes, including an education sector review. However, actual transformations towards a more sustainable peace remains volatile given weak state institutions and the (positive and negative) impact of international aid on building confidence in the peace process. Finally, although slowly increasing, the government spends relatively little on the education sector in comparison to, for instance, the defence budget. The current education landscape reflects the different historical periods, with four parallel education systems: state schools, monastic schools, ethnic schools, and community education.

A central issue in the current landscape of Myanmar is the ongoing processes of peace negotiations between the government and multiple ethnic armed groups (EAGs), which are as yet unresolved after six decades of fighting. Education is not an explicit component of the National Ceasefire Agreements (NCA), but is seen as an important aspect of the peace dialogue, as it is recognised that education has and continues to be a key grievance for many of the armed ethnic groups, civil society, and minority groups. Current education reform is deemed as vital to securing peace dividends through improved service delivery and a renewed focus on inclusion and equality of provision. Key education challenges include:

- Access to education: disparities in participation rates in primary and secondary education, most acute amongst populations who are marginalized because of living in remote or border areas, having a lower socio-economic background, are refugees/IDPs, or living under the threat/consequence of conflict and/or natural disaster.
- Funding and underinvestment in education;
- (History) Curriculum: dominance of majority (Bamar) cultural/military history and religious identity;
- Language of Instruction: lack of acknowledgement/support for mother-tongue instruction;
- Costs of education: despite commitments to free primary education, many families are still required to pay fees or purchase texts/uniforms to send their children to school.

Fieldwork was carried out in two regions, including the wider Yangon area and in Mon state. Hence, the data presented reflects a particular period and geographical focus and does not claim to be representative of Myanmar.

Figure 2: Timeline With a Selection of Important Political Events in the History of Myanmar



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"The current education landscape in Myanmar reflects the different historical periods, with four parallel education systems: state schools, monastic schools, ethnic schools, and community education."

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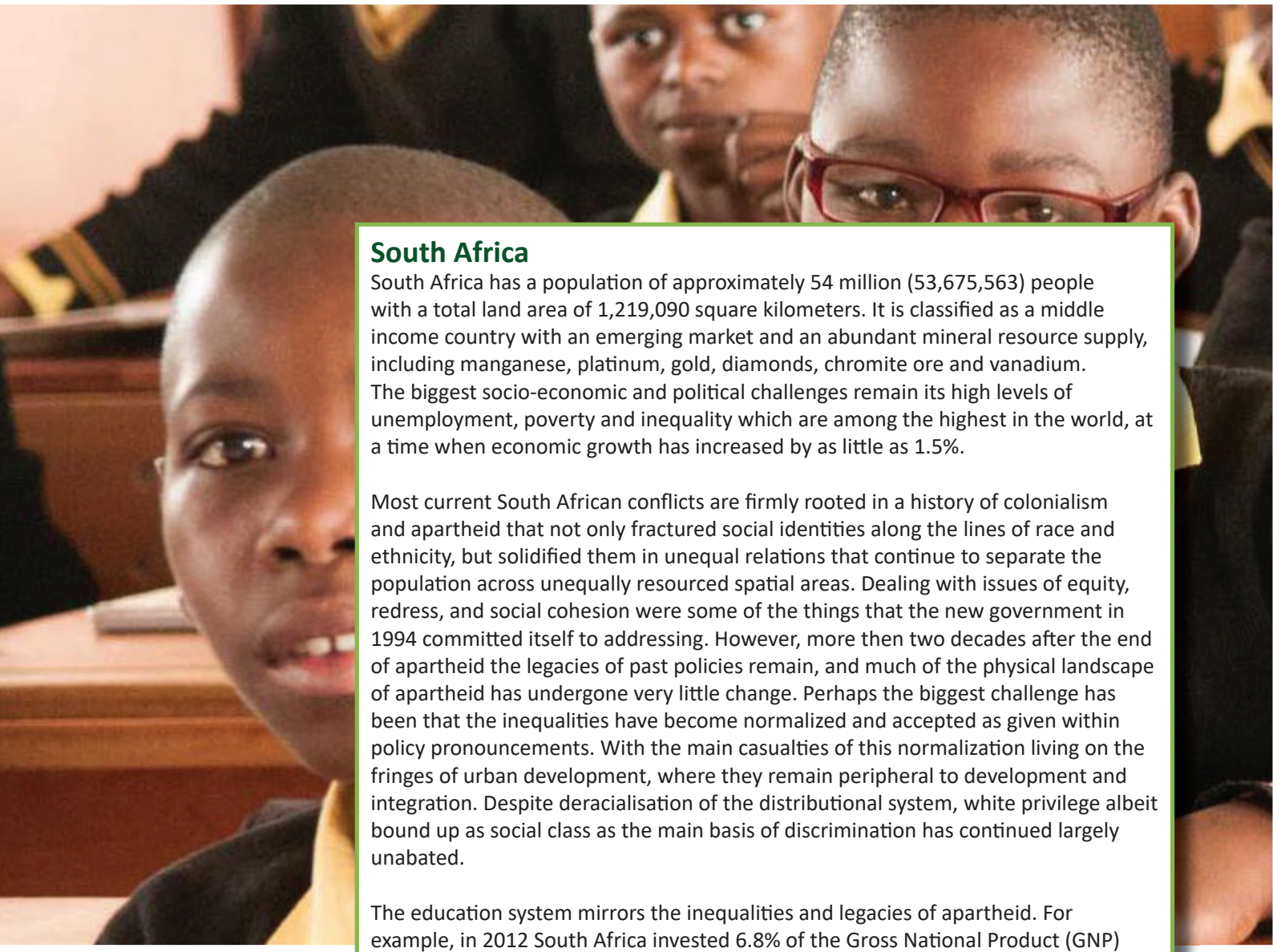
Pakistan

Pakistan emerged as a country in 1947 as a result of the partition of British India. It is located in the north-west of the South Asian subcontinent. Pakistan is administratively divided into four provinces, Punjab (largest in population and most developed), Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan (smallest population-wise and least developed). Additionally, it has a capital territory Islamabad, two autonomous territories – Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan — and a group of Federally Administered Tribal Areas. An overwhelming majority (96%) of Pakistan's estimated 189 million citizens follow the Islamic faith. The small religious minority includes Christians, Hindus, Parsis (Zoroastrians), and the Ahmadi community, who were declared non-Muslims by the state in 1974. Pakistani Muslims are divided into two sects, the majority Sunni and the minority Shi'a. Additionally, both sects are internally differentiated. Ethnicity is another marker of difference, with each ethnic group primarily concentrated in its home province, that is Punjabis (55%) in Punjab, Pakhtuns (15%) in KP, Sindhis (14%) in Sindh, Balochs (4%) in Balochistan, with most Mohajir (8%) residing in urban Sindh. However, Punjabis and Pakhtuns live across Pakistan. Pakistan is a lower-middle income country and is placed in low human development, ranking 146 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index.

Major conflict drivers in Pakistan include religiously motivated violence and terrorism fuelled by the 'War on Terror' with its epicentre in KP, ethnic insurgency and sectarian violence in Balochistan and ethnic/political and sectarian violence in Karachi.The entaglement of Islam with Pakistani identity and a history of conflicts with India work to construct idealised gendered roles and masculinised identities for Paksitanis. This restircts the possibilities of female citizens and make them vulnerable to verbal, physical and sexual violence. Additionally, socio-econmic inequity, unequal access to resources and power, and a lack of political participation also contribute to conflict. The education system mirrors these inequities, with household income being the strongest determinant of educational opportunities, followed by rural and urban disparities, inequities across the different regions/provinces and gender gaps between females and males. These inequities are exasperated by the three systems of education—public, private and the madrassa/religious sector and language of instruction. The two provinces most-affected by conflict—Balochistan and KP—are also the ones with poorer educational indicators. Nevertheless, literature indicates a high proportion of educated youth from the prosperous Punjab province are engaged in conflict but outside their home-province.

The study is conducted in Urban (Karachi) and interior Sindh, KP (Peshawar) and Islamabad. Sindh province is the major research site, with RA2 focusing on urban and interior Sindh and RA3 focusing on Karachi. RA1 is covered in all research sites. Sindh was selected because significant inequities on the basis of uneven socio-economic development between rural and urban areas exist. The ethnic and language mix is also an issue for social cohesion especially as the large Sindhi speaking population in rural Sindh feels that Sindhi is marginalized due to the positioning of Urdu as a national language. Karachi with its large population has a wide range in the social class, ethnic and religious mix. Importantly, Karachi reflects key conflict-drivers—ethnic/political and sectarian violence and both Karachi and interior Sindh exhibits structural violence. Peshawar was selected because it is the capital city of KP, the province most-affected by the 'War on Terror' and religious conflict. Islamabad, being the capital city was included because of the presence of international development community and federal policy-makers.

"Socio-econmic inequity, unequal access to resources and power, and a lack of political participation also contribute to conflict. The education system mirrors these inequities, with household income being the strongest determinant of educational opportunities, followed by rural and urban disparities, inequities across the different regions/provinces and gender gaps between females and males."



South Africa

South Africa has a population of approximately 54 million (53,675,563) people with a total land area of 1,219,090 square kilometers. It is classified as a middle income country with an emerging market and an abundant mineral resource supply, including manganese, platinum, gold, diamonds, chromite ore and vanadium. The biggest socio-economic and political challenges remain its high levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality which are among the highest in the world, at a time when economic growth has increased by as little as 1.5%.

Most current South African conflicts are firmly rooted in a history of colonialism and apartheid that not only fractured social identities along the lines of race and ethnicity, but solidified them in unequal relations that continue to separate the population across unequally resourced spatial areas. Dealing with issues of equity, redress, and social cohesion were some of the things that the new government in 1994 committed itself to addressing. However, more then two decades after the end of apartheid the legacies of past policies remain, and much of the physical landscape of apartheid has undergone very little change. Perhaps the biggest challenge has been that the inequalities have become normalized and accepted as given within policy pronouncements. With the main casualties of this normalization living on the fringes of urban development, where they remain peripheral to development and integration. Despite deracialisation of the distributional system, white privilege albeit bound up as social class as the main basis of discrimination has continued largely unabated.

The education system mirrors the inequalities and legacies of apartheid. For example, in 2012 South Africa invested 6.8% of the Gross National Product (GNP) and 20.6% of total government expenditure in education (which is much higher than the world average), yet children from more privileged backgrounds continue to be given a higher chance of reaching matric by the age of 19 or 20 than children from poorer backgrounds. Statistics show that 88% of privileged students reach matric compared to only 17% of those from poorer backgrounds (SAHRC and UNICEF 2014). Learner repetition is also quite high in South Africa compared to other developing countries, with geography, language and race having a huge influence on who repeats a grade and who does not. It's not as much an issue of inefficiency and wasted resources as about an impoverished population being further disadvantaged by a system that does not treat their needs fairly. Furthermore, the scars of a racially segregated school system under apartheid continues to retain their hold over current schools, with a small number of well-resourced schools located in urban areas and accessed by the privileged minority while poorly-resourced schools mainly cater for black learners (all those disadvantaged under apartheid). Differential learning experiences generate disparate academic outcomes with consequences for learner opportunity, and which construct different learner identities. These have serious implications for social cohesion, and for realizing sustainable peace in South Africa.

The ANC government after 1994 attempted to redress many of these inequalities and to bring about effective and meaningful structural changes. In so doing it reorganized the system according to key debates related to decentralization, values, languages of instruction, learner safety, minimum norms and standards for public school infrastructure, and affirming the rights of all learners. The ANC government recognised the need to both engage with inequalities and social fragmentation inherited from apartheid and to identity emerging needs. It further recognised

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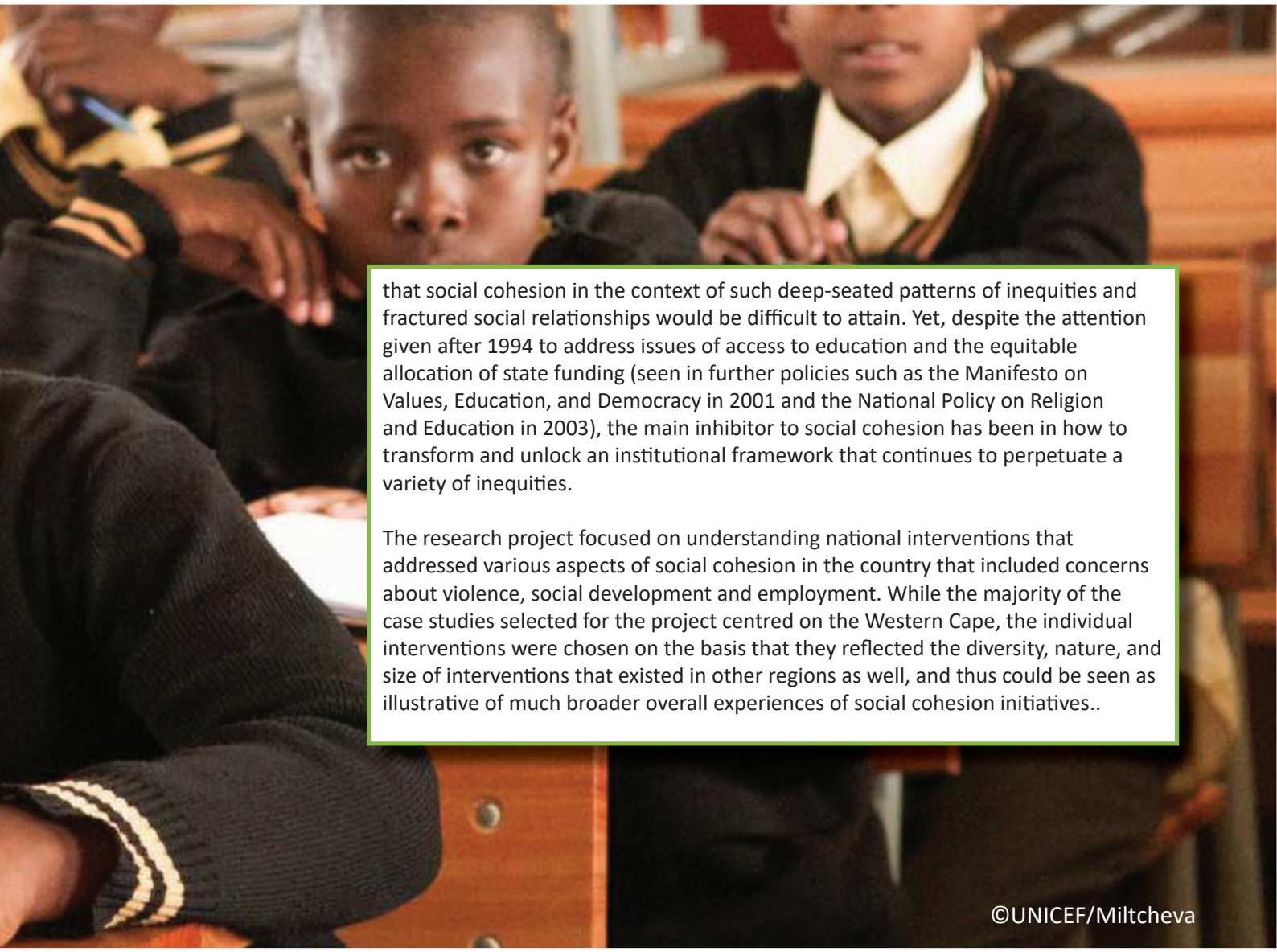

that social cohesion in the context of such deep-seated patterns of inequities and fractured social relationships would be difficult to attain. Yet, despite the attention given after 1994 to address issues of access to education and the equitable allocation of state funding (seen in further policies such as the Manifesto on Values, Education, and Democracy in 2001 and the National Policy on Religion and Education in 2003), the main inhibitor to social cohesion has been in how to transform and unlock an institutional framework that continues to perpetuate a variety of inequities.

The research project focused on understanding national interventions that addressed various aspects of social cohesion in the country that included concerns about violence, social development and employment. While the majority of the case studies selected for the project centred on the Western Cape, the individual interventions were chosen on the basis that they reflected the diversity, nature, and size of interventions that existed in other regions as well, and thus could be seen as illustrative of much broader overall experiences of social cohesion initiatives..

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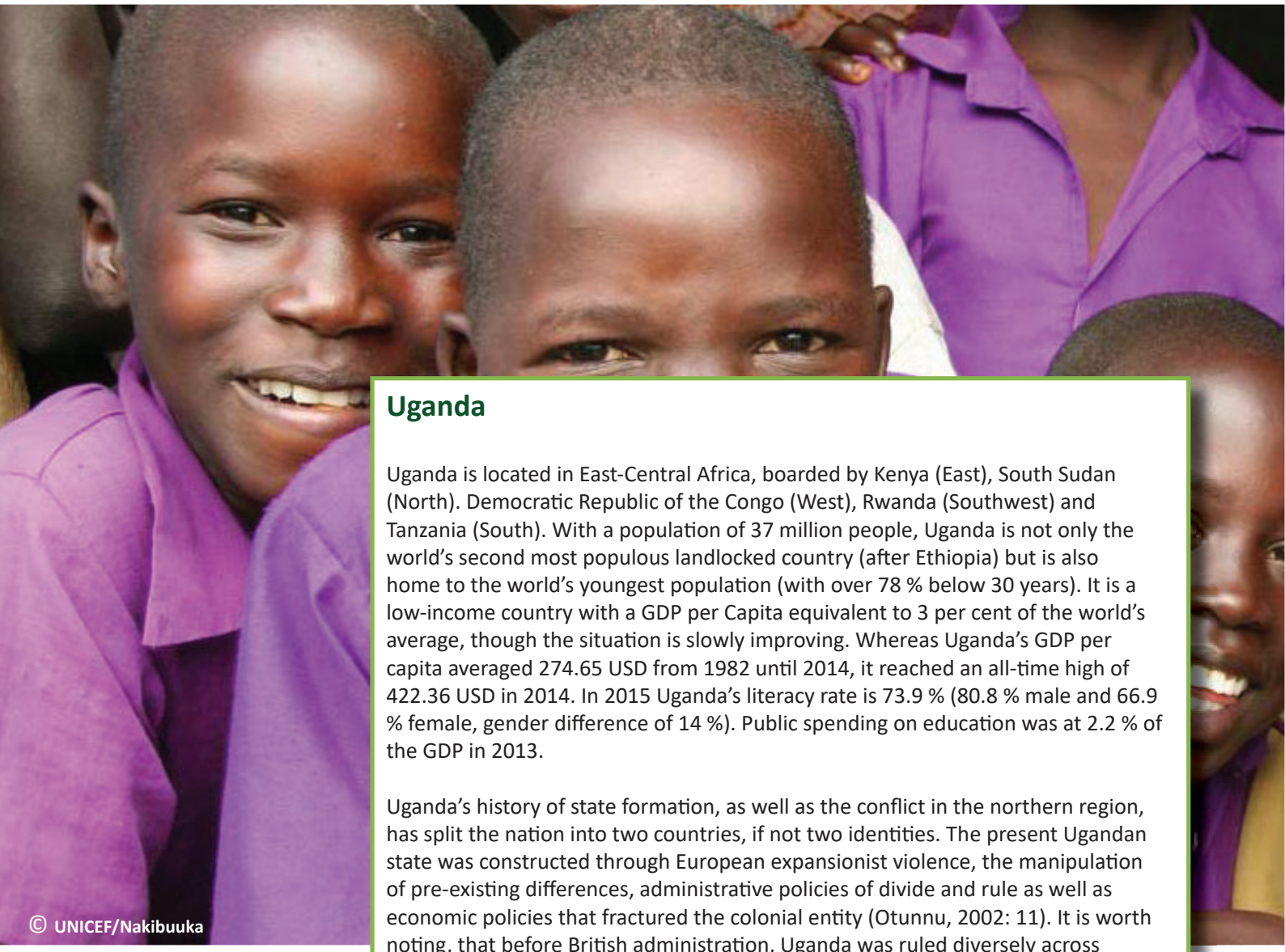

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Uganda

Uganda is located in East-Central Africa, boarded by Kenya (East), South Sudan (North). Democratic Republic of the Congo (West), Rwanda (Southwest) and Tanzania (South). With a population of 37 million people, Uganda is not only the world's second most populous landlocked country (after Ethiopia) but is also home to the world's youngest population (with over 78 % below 30 years). It is a low-income country with a GDP per Capita equivalent to 3 per cent of the world's average, though the situation is slowly improving. Whereas Uganda's GDP per capita averaged 274.65 USD from 1982 until 2014, it reached an all-time high of 422.36 USD in 2014. In 2015 Uganda's literacy rate is 73.9 % (80.8 % male and 66.9 % female, gender difference of 14 %). Public spending on education was at 2.2 % of the GDP in 2013.

Uganda's history of state formation, as well as the conflict in the northern region, has split the nation into two countries, if not two identities. The present Ugandan state was constructed through European expansionist violence, the manipulation of pre-existing differences, administrative policies of divide and rule as well as economic policies that fractured the colonial entity (Otunnu, 2002: 11). It is worth noting, that before British administration, Uganda was ruled diversely across many stratified and non-stratified kingdoms and societies. Uganda was ruled diversely across many stratified and non-stratified kingdoms and societies. In particular Bantu-speaking agriculturists (such as the Baganda) multiplied over the centuries, evolving a form of government by clan chiefs. Uganda's history of British administration had its first roots in 1877 with the arrival of the British Missionary Society in the traditional kingdom Buganda, which would later become the centre of the Protectorate. Ongoing ethnic, regional and religious divisions worsened further since independence. Both of Uganda's first two rulers, Milton Obote and Idi Amin, were seen to exercise ethnic biases towards their native regions in the North, Langi and Kakwa, respectively.

Since 1986, the year that Museveni became Uganda's president, Uganda has experienced at least seven civil wars, located mostly in the northern regions. More than 20 militant groups have thus far attempted to displace President Museveni's government both within and beyond the Ugandan borders. External diplomatic incidents and/or armed incursions occurred with Rwanda, (South) Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Somalia (Insight on Conflict 2014). Probably the most prominently debated conflict in the media, but also in scholarship and policy practice, is the civil war in the north against Joseph Kony's LRA (Lord Resistance Army) since the 1990s. Between 1987 - 2007 Uganda resembled a "war with peace" model, suggesting that the government in power embraced the antagonisms of conflict (in the north) alongside peaceful coexistence and development (in the south), in one country at the same time (Shaw & Mbabazi

"Uganda's history of state formation, as well as the conflict in the northern region, has split the nation into two countries, if not two identities. The present Ugandan state was constructed through European expansionist violence, the manipulation of pre-existing differences, administrative policies of divide and rule as well as economic policies that fractured the colonial entity."

2007). Whereas southern Uganda emerged as a showpiece for Western donors to highlight remarkable successes in combating HIV/AIDS rates or fostering economic growth and development, conversely, northern Uganda's developmental progress has been challenged by two decades of war (ibid.). In 2015, Uganda still ranks 23rd amongst the world's most fragile states. Regional instability within the country persists, driven by factors such as: economic disparities and unequal distribution of wealth, resource competition, land-disputes, cattle riding, poor governance and democratic deficits, human rights abuses and erosion of civil liberties, lack of truth, reconciliation and transitional justice, the politicisation of ethnic identity, north-south fault line, corruption and personal greed as well as tensions between cultural institutions and the government (ACCS 2013, Knutzen and Smith 2012).

As in many other conflict-affected countries, education in Uganda was initially seen as an essential ingredient for economic and social development. Only recently have policies been drafted to address the integration of peacebuilding into the education sector even to some extent. Remarkable achievements in addressing the EFA agenda and issues of inequality in education notwithstanding, the role of education in peacebuilding continues to be challenged by slow and weak policy implementation in areas such as: teacher training and capacities, infrastructure, socio-psychological support for both teachers and students, and education and livelihood generation for youth. In addition, ineffective decentralization processes and the emergence of low versus high quality schools (or privatisation), as well as corruption, challenge equality and social cohesion within and through education. Within the curriculum peacebuilding is approached and used as a pedagogical tool towards conflict prevention but not as a means to coming to terms with a conflict-shattered past.

This report is based on fieldwork we conducted in Uganda between January and April 2015 working with local researchers from Makerere University in the capital Kampala, and Gulu University in the north of the country across all three research areas. Research was undertaken at a variety of sites in the country, comprising rural and urban environments and diverse geographical regions of the country, namely Kampala, Gulu, Adjumani and Karamoja. Two senior local research assistants from Gulu University were employed, alongside 5 junior local research assistants in Kampala, Karamoja, Gulu and Adjumani. To date 60 interviews with a variety of stakeholders have taken place (some on more than one research area) alongside 13 Focus Groups Discussions (FGD) and 259 student teacher questionnaires were completed. For each research area (RA1, RA2 and RA3) we interviewed government officials, education planners, teacher education providers, teaching professionals, student teachers, local and international NGOs, and local communities.

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Synthesis of Main Findings: Youth Related Framings, Policies, Interventions and Agency

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Positioning Youth Within the Four Country Contexts

Youth in Myanmar

First of all, the absence of data about (the situations and aspirations of) youth in Myanmar is striking and a concern to many participants in this research – including the staff of international aid agencies as well as government ministries. This consequently has repercussions on effective policymaking tailored to the specific needs and concerns of youth across the country.

"Myanmar has been in political transition over the last few years, and youth informants from both urban and rural backgrounds recognised, albeit with a degree of caution, the potential positive impacts on their lives of the tentative opening up of political and social freedoms."

Myanmar has been in political transition over the last few years, and youth informants from both urban and rural backgrounds recognised, albeit with a degree of caution, the potential positive impacts on their lives of the tentative opening up of political and social freedoms. In particular, informants expressed appreciation for the expansion since 2011 of the number of civil society organisations and NGOs that were concerned with youth issues and how these have started to provide meaningful spaces for their participation and support. However, at the same time there is a legacy of inadequate education systems to prepare young people to participate in politics. This first of all limits youth's genuine political influence. Secondly, fear of repercussions from police and military that accompany political action have strong influences on participation. From an economic perspective, while the nation's large youth constituency is perceived as an asset in relation to prospects for economic growth, youth informants in Myanmar emphasised their current experience (and despair) of exclusion from labour market opportunities. This often results in youth migration to urban or foreign destinations.

In close association with Myanmar's current political and economic transitions, youth experience socio-cultural changes as well. Most notably this relates to changing inter-generational relationships, partly due to migration. Youth may feel alienated from their communities, and families or communities themselves might view youth as 'a mystery', not knowing or being able to relate to their daily realities (see Higgins et al., 2016). In addition, the very recent opening up of access to online communication and mobile phones has meant an important transformation in the lives of many youth. Finally, the use of drugs among youth was mentioned as a particular concern related to the social, political and economic challenges for youth (Higgins et al, 2015).

Youth in Pakistan

Pakistan's youth population is large and growing, with nearly 64% of the country's population aged under 29 (Government of Pakistan, 2014). Youth in Pakistan is defined as persons between 15 and 29 years old (Ministry of Youth Affairs (MYA), 2008). By 2030, their proportion (15-29) is expected to reach 63.27% of the total population (Government of Pakistan, 2014). A significant majority of youth is rural at 66.27% compared with the urban 33.73% (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), 2013).

"Interview data from the Pakistan country study and existing critique of education (e.g. Hoodbhoy & Nayyar, 1985; Mattu & Hussain, 2003) show that formal education promotes violence, a gendered notion of citizenship, and symbolic violence against the non-Muslim minorities."

With regards to youth's political engagement in Pakistan, it is first of all ironic that while student unions played vital role in revolution and creation of current Pakistan, yet nowadays youth's political activity is highly restricted, with political activity being banned for students. Secondly, Pakistan's democratic institutional apparatus does not have the internal structures and outreach mechanisms required to engage youth in a meaningful way (JI, 2013, in Durrani et al., 2016). Currently, youth show a high level of belonging to the nation, but feel alienated from the state (Lall, 2012, I Durrani et al, 2016), reflecting an apolitical and pessimistic view of youth's political potential.
In the social context of Pakistan, youth experience inequalities based on urban/rural divides and gender inequalities. Secondly, various forms of discrimination based on caste, tribe, ethnicity, religion, province, sexual orientation, disability, and political orientation, make reconciliation, representation of diverse sub-groups of youth, and recognition of identities difficult. Interview data from the Pakistan country study and existing critique of education (e.g. Hoodbhoy & Nayyar, 1985; Mattu & Hussain, 2003) show that formal education promotes gendered notions of citizenship and symbolic violence against non-Muslim minorities. Furthermore, national unity is fostered through a focus on integration and downplaying internal diversity which may promote exclusivist tendencies.

Economically, youth experience employment challenges: youth from rural areas migrate to cities to find employment but often without success due to high migration numbers and lack of infrastructure. A mismatch between the quality and relevance of education and the skills needed for the jobs in Pakistan, with limited capacity in the public and private sectors, is a cause for highly educated youth to be more likely to be unemployed than for instance the illiterate youth labour force. In addition to employment challenges, poor youth are affected by low access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, a lack of physical infrastructure, poor agricultural conditions, shocks to the local economy, and low paid and seasonal non-farm incomes (SYAD, 2012).

Youth in South Africa

In South Africa, 50% of the total population is made up by young people under the age of 25, and those under the age of 35 years constitute about 77.6 per cent of the total population. The country has had a number and variety of youth-specific policies in place since 1994. Notably, South Africa is one of the few countries on the continent to work towards a comprehensive youth development strategy, aiming to realise the core ideal of social solidarity amongst all of its population.

"These economic dimensions of the lives of youth, and in particular high unemployment rates and poor educational outcomes, are main drivers of poverty and inequality."

Currently, main youth issues are related to the extreme and often recurring forms of violence that youth are faced with in direct and structural forms. Direct violence here relates to visible forms of violence, which can be complemented by underlying symbolic or structural (indirect) forms of violence, referring to for instance the social and institutional structures used to exclude groups from satisfying their basic needs (Galtung, 1990; 1976). Youth, male as well as female, are often victims, and sometimes also perpetrators of these various forms of violence, through for instance crime, discrimination, and victimization when sexually abused.

In addition to their experiences of violence, youth needs are first of all linked to education, unemployment and poverty. These economic dimensions of the lives of youth, and in particular high unemployment rates and poor educational outcomes, are main drivers of poverty and inequality. Secondly, particular to the context of South Africa, is the importance of health and well-being to youth. This specifically relates to SRHR, substance abuse and mental health. The severity of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country has had major impact on the lives of many youth, affecting themselves, their family or community. In South Africa, substance abuse has become a serious health problem, and limited availability of appropriate health care has negative constraints on youth health. Thirdly and related to this, is the lack of positive parenting and lack of social/community support networks. Finally, there is a low level of political and civic participation of youth in the country (Sayed et al., 2016).

Youth in Uganda

Also in Uganda, the youth population is large and growing: in 2012, 78% of the country's population were below 30 (UNFPA, 2012; in Datzberger, McCully, and Smith, 2016), and the growth rate of 3.2 per cent is one of the highest in the world posing serious challenges to the economy of the country.

Shortly after the conflict in northern Uganda, youth were identified as both a vulnerable group affected by the conflict as well as one of the groups that should be targeted to ensure that disarmament takes place. The government of Uganda's primary strategy is concerned with addressing youth unemployment. Currently, the relation between youth and peacebuilding is implicit if not absent, as there is no

explicit recognition of the importance of placing war-affected youth in community-oriented schools or education programmes (see Datzberger, McCully, and Smith, 2016). Today the situation of and for youth in Uganda is characterised by structural, indirect and repressive forms of violence ranging from poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities, low educational attainment, a rapidly growing population, inter-generational power imbalances, persisting gender inequalities and concerns around shrinking space for civil society.

"Economic constraints largely relate to unemployment, which is a major focus of youth-related policy, and at the same time a major frustration of many of Uganda's youth. The role of formal education and its relevance is questioned, and not all youth are convinced of its potential for preparation for the labour market."

Economic constraints largely relate to unemployment, which is a major focus of youth-related policy, and at the same time a major frustration of many of Uganda's youth. The role of formal education and its relevance is questioned, and not all youth are convinced of its potential for preparation for the labour market. In terms of political constraints, the delivery, access and quality of civic education and leadership trainings are a concern to youth: non-formal initiatives are inconsistent (for instance mainly active during election times), and youth are often used as tokenistic participation in stakeholder meetings, and excluded from planning of development and education programmes. Socially and culturally, youth are faced with intergenerational power imbalances, social exclusion of orphans and youth with disabilities, and persisting gender imbalances. Notable is the rise of new technologies and social media, offering new opportunities for youth to express their concerns through various initiatives. However, young radio journalists also referred to and complained about restricted freedom of speech.

Concluding Reflections

While the country context summaries above highlight the distinctive cultural political economy contexts that shape the realities, potential and possibilities of diverse youth constituencies, they also underscore the common challenges they face across conflict-affected contexts. These include:

- High levels of unemployment and lack of access to labour markets;
- Exclusion from decision-making/political processes at local and national levels
- Alienated relationships with the state;
- Disengagement and frustration with the apparent irrelevance of formal educational provision;
- Widespread experiences of direct as well as indirect violence; and
- Structural gender inequalities reinforced by education and lack of adequate policy and programmatic attention.

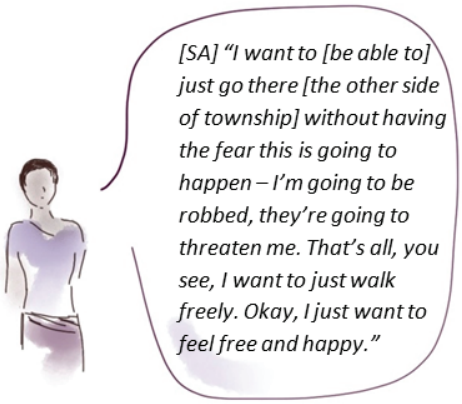
These daily realities highlight how youth agency and well-being is, in all country contexts, deeply affected, constrained and shaped by the continuing existence of drivers of economic, political and cultural drivers conflict.

Listening to Youth Voices: What do Peace and Education Mean to Youth?

This section sets the scene for the additional sections that will follow, in placing youth voice central to our analysis. Here, we address the questions of what young people's experiences and understandings of their agency for peacebuilding in a (post-)conflict environment are. We first highlight what peace means to youth and what their main daily challenges look like. Here, we include an overview of the key issues in relation to gendered inequalities and issues of violence as experienced by youth. We then turn to discuss the various framings about youth within political discourse and broader societal discourses, and specific policy framework present in the four country cases. The following section then continues to discuss all respondents' perspectives and experiences of formal and non-formal education initiatives for youth, still placing youth voice as a central part of our discussion.

What Does Peace Mean to Youth?

'Peace'[5] for youth in all four country contexts appeared to be a multi-faceted phenomenon, ranging from 'negative peace' (absence of direct violence) to 'positive peace' (reflecting equality and justice). A great range of youth perspectives concerned the absence of fear/experiences of direct and indirect violence, or alternatively, being able to trust. In South Africa, the notion of trust/absence of fear was important in relation to violence and the freedom of movement in their direct communities. In Myanmar, this freedom of movement also related to community prospects economically, namely the community's ability to farm freely and sell goods. Peace was thus related to the ability to enact their personal/community priorities.



In relation to what peace means to youth, the framings of youth roles as 'potential' or 'threat' seem crucial to their experiences and desires for peace, as well as youth agency for peacebuilding. One participant of the Youth Parliament initiative, illustrates this contradiction and emphasizes youth's potential for peacebuilding.

Finally, what is vital to youth's perceptions of and hope for peace are tangible opportunities to exercise their agency as peacebuilders. Ironically, formal education was not always one of the factors contributing to these opportunities. In fact,

[5] Focus group discussions and participatory methods were used with youth to discover what peace means to them. Building on the starting exercise to brainstorm with youth about what peace means to them, youth were then asked what their needs are and how education contributes to their agency for peacebuilding.

as one young person in Uganda expressed, the formal education system hinders development that is relevant to youth's direct communities, leading to social exclusion.

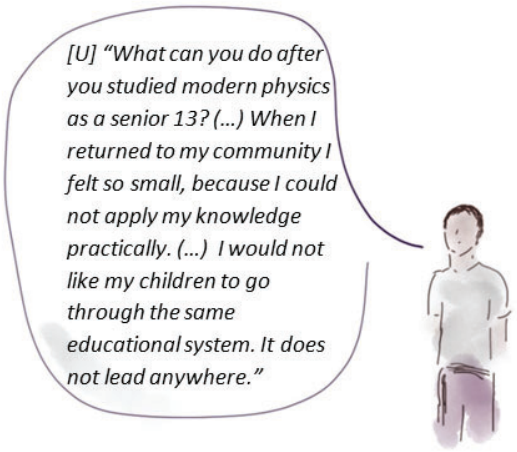
This statement thus again emphasizes the urgency of including young peoples' voices and experiences of realities to adequately carry out responsive policies and interventions for youth as potential peacebuilders. There are important implications here for both national governments, Ministries of Education and other relevant government institutions as well as international aid agencies in relation to policy making and programming. The importance of developing systematic strategies at national, community and local levels, through which to engage meaningfully with diverse youth constituencies as an integral part of policy development and programming, cannot be over-emphasised.

Pressing Issues for Youth Regarding Daily Experiences of Gender Inequalities and Violence

In collecting data, particular attention was paid to gender issues affecting young people across the four countries. Overwhelmingly, young women identified the structural constraints and patriarchal cultural norms that limit their roles and opportunities as restricting their agency to participate in peacebuilding. Across the four countries engaged in research, the lack of leadership and decision-making roles for women was highlighted as well as the resistance that young women had to overcome to engage in public spheres. Additionally, young men are also negatively affected by the expectations that are placed on their behaviour and in their exposure to masculine ideals. Formal education settings were frequently understood to be reinforcing these expectations of gender behaviour, particularly through the masculine military hero narrative that is prevalent in many curricula.

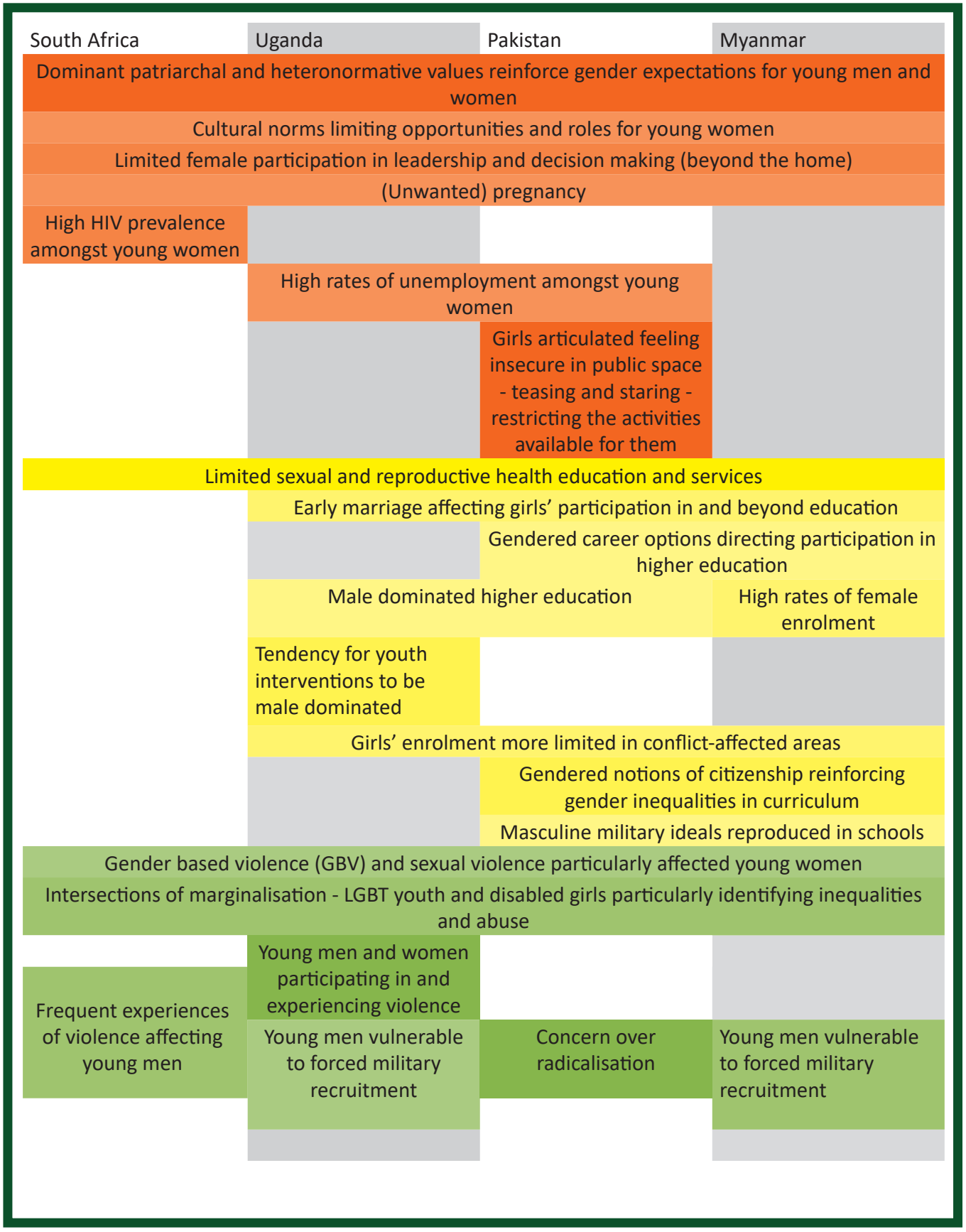
The intersection between violence and gender roles was clearly identified as having a major impact on young people's lives, both in terms of being subjected to violence

and participating in committing violent acts. This was not limited to gender binaries that associate girls/women as victims and boys/men as perpetrators of violence and which varied across contexts. For example, young women and men were found to be equal participants in committing acts of violence in conflict in Uganda, and young women in Myanmar participating in non-state ethnic armed groups. Both boys and girls were likely to be subjected to forced recruitment and abduction into fighting forces in conflicts, however boys were more frequently affected. Sexual violence and gender based violence was also a major issue identified by young people participating in the research in all four contexts. Young women consistently identified domestic abuse, early marriage, rape, and vigilante justice as features of their lives. Intersections of marginalisation also combined to result in LGBT youth and disabled young women reporting high experiences of sexual violence. The lack of sexual and reproductive health education available in all contexts researched also indicates the need to more adequately consider the sexual health needs of young people.



The chart below illustrates the gender issues that were encountered and raised by youth participants in the four research contexts. Data are based on focus group discussions and interviews with young people participating in the selected formal and non-formal education initiatives in each of the four countries (for a full review of pressing issues for youth in each specific country context, please see the full country reports). All societal (cultural, political, economic) gender issues that affected young women and men are visualized at the top of the chart (in orange). Further down (in yellow), the chart focuses on education and schooling in relation to gender concerns, given the nature of the research. Finally, at the bottom of the figure (in green), the SRHR and GBV concerns that were mentioned throughout the research are reflected, and the issues related to the cross-cutting themes of gender and violence. Gender issues affecting young women and men are indicated in orange, while gender issues also relating to violence are indicated in green. Although not comprehensive and complete, the figure 3 below aims to illustrate commonalities and differences between the key issues at stake for youth in the four countries, represented in the four columns. Yet, each specific country context has its own particular drivers of inequalities and drivers of conflict that often underlie these issues. For instance, in South Africa it should be recognised that race is a driver of conflict that influences all the different youth constituencies, and results in different experiences of these highly intersectional gender related issues for black and white male and female youth in different parts of the country.

Figure 3: Gender Issues that were Encountered and Raised by Youth Participants in the Four Research Contexts



Youth Related Framings and Policies

In this section, we aim to come to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the framings of youth within political discourse, paying particular attention to the extent to which policies are responsive to youth constituencies, and carry a potential for enhancing youth agency/empowerment. In doing so, we analyse the absence, appropriation and amplification of youth needs, and highlight how there is a rather narrow understanding and focus on both the risks (e.g. mass youth unemployment) and potential (e.g. a productive young work force) of youth economic agency.

We respond here to the following set of questions:

- To what extent do policies include a focus on youth agency for the realization of sustainable peace?
- To what extent and how are youth perceived and positioned in youth-related policies?
- To what extent do policies include both formal and non-formal education as a means to enhance youth agency (and if there, how is this related to peace)?
- In how far do such policies respond to the different youth constituencies?
- In how far are resources and finances prioritizing certain youth-related policy areas?

National Youth Policies

"Of the four countries of study, Uganda (2004) and South Africa (2000; 2009-2014) are the countries with the most active and recognizable National Youth Policy (NYP)."

The table below summarizes the main policy priorities (or absences) regarding youth in each country context. Of the four countries of study, Uganda (2004) and South Africa (2000; 2009-2014) are the countries with the most active and recognizable National Youth Policy (NYP). In Uganda, the NYP emphasizes aspects of gender inclusiveness, youth participation and empowerment. Despite its engagement with economic, political and social issues, the peacebuilding context remains unacknowledged in the Uganda NYP. However, a specific peacebuilding policy is in draft, but not yet passed, and this does make mention of youth. Interestingly, the forms of violence that are mentioned in the NYP refer to those emerging within youth groups, reflecting a framing of youth as a potentially violent social group – decontextualised from wider society. Likewise, the South Africa NYP is acknowledged for its holistic development of youth outside the social/political/economic mainstream developments, and for being responsive to various youth constituencies. However, the age range of youth as 15-30 has proven challenging, and the lack of age and gender diversification creates a skewed responsiveness of the policy to lived realities of many South African youth. As for the case of Pakistan, although a NYP was produced in 2008, after having gone through four drafts, it was dissolved in 2010 due to that year's devolution (Shahab, 2006; Durrani et al., 2016). Even if some aspects of the Pakistan NYP might be seen as (more implicitly) enhancing youth agency for social cohesion/peacebuilding, the NYP is criticised for 1) not directly connecting education to social cohesion; 2) overemphasizing the importance of income generation for youth, at the cost of social and political agency; 3) a closed interpretation of national integration, narrowed down to interregional harmony and rural-urban exchanges. Finally, there is growing recognition in Myanmar that more attention needs to be paid to youth, however this has not yet translated into a NYP. The country is currently undergoing major policy reforms though, one of them significantly being the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR), yet struggling to fully recognise and capture the country's diversity. In addition, there remains a lack of clarity within and between various Ministries of the Myanmar government about who takes responsibility for which issues that most concern youth (e.g. unemployment, quality of (higher) education, health services, problems around drug trade/abuse etc).

Table 3: Framings of Youth and Education in Policy

Country	Framings of Youth and Education in Policy
Myanmar	• Absence of National Youth Policy & absence of Youth Ministry • Slowly emerging recognition and re-evaluation of youth (needs/challenges) within national priorities and on-going reform developments • Primary focus on youth as human capital • Youth-related policy and programming is currently not being prioritised by government and many (international) aid agencies, because of contested framings of youth and many competing concerns; • Need for more recognition of variety of youth constituencies and integrated analysis of approach to respond to heterogeneity of youth • Lack of (qualitative and quantitative) evidence to inform interventions aiming to support Myanmar's youth agency for peacebuilding • The dominant perception of youth as a potential security threat leaves little space for youth to employ political, economic or socio-cultural agency for peacebuilding.
Pakistan	National Youth Policy 2008 (dissolved in 2010) • Privileges 3 cardinal principles – unity, faith and discipline • Closed interpretation of national integration around Muslim faith • Mentions gender equity, rights-based approach, rural-urban parity and youth representation, but does not offer action plan • Inequitable/inadequate attention to social, political and economic agency of youth, with priority being given to income generating activities Sindh Youth Policy • Commits to providing youth with environment of equitable opportunities • No concrete affirmative action to address historical marginalization experienced by different groups of youth
South Africa	National Youth Policy present since 2000, revisions for 2009-2014, amongst other youth-related policies (see Sayed et al., 2016, p. 282-283 for a comprehensive overview) • Youth Policies highlight needs of youth in relation to skills acquisition and employment • While youth policies point out various socio-economic, gender and age differences, little engagement with the heterogeneity of youth needs • Little recognition of rural-urban divide • Youth policies refer to the needs of youth in detention or in conflict with the law or involved in organized crime but lack of concrete plans or strategies
Uganda	• A range of national level Frameworks, Manifesto's and a National Youth Policy (2004) exist and are implemented through several (non-)governmental bodies and coalitions (see Datzberger, McCully and Smith, 2016, for a more complete overview) • A Minister for Youth and Children works as part of a lager Ministry on Gender, Labour and Social Development • Current youth policies do not explicitly recognise youth as contributors to peacebuilding processes, and do not frame youth within a 'post-conflict' character of the country • Youth portrayed as vulnerable because of high unemployment, and at the same time as "country's most valuable asset" • Policy emphasis is on youth as a tool for economic development (through education and skills training) rather than as a means to foster political participation and voice • Political aspects of agency not recognised in policy, and consequently, no recognition of the role of education in enhancing the political agency of youth

These findings illustrate there is inadequate attention to youth related issues within the government level policies of all country contexts studied, as well as the lack of coherent governmental institutional frameworks through which to address them. Our findings point to the urgent need for governments to take a proactive role in developing appropriate institutional mechanisms. This means that strategic, systematic policies need to be linked to practical implementation strategies to to address youth needs and empower them as peacebuilders.

"These findings illustrate there is inadequate attention to youth related issues within the government level policies of all country contexts studied, as well as the lack of coherent governmental institutional frameworks through which to address them."

Framings of Youth in Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa, and Uganda

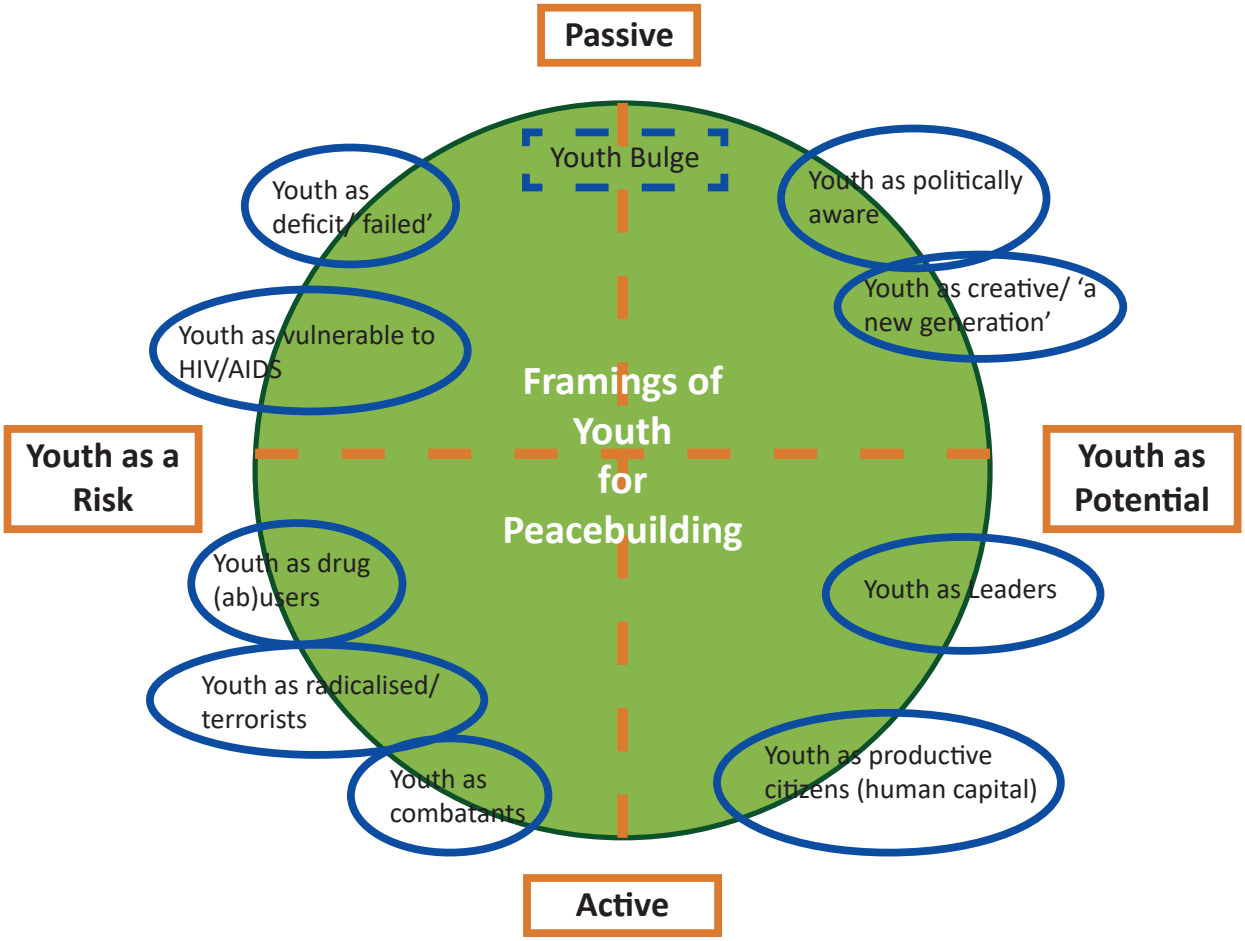
Framings, or dominant discourses in policy and/or society, generally reflect a dichotomous perception of youth as either a threat or a great potential for a country's security, stability and development, which has been articulated in a variety of literature (see e.g. Kemper, 2005; McEvoy-Levy, 2006; Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015). However, a more nuanced and contextualised understanding of this binary understanding is needed to fully comprehend youth's role in and empowerment for peacebuilding. Notably, in synthesizing findings from Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa, and Uganda, it is safe to say that generally, the large percentage of youth in population numbers was a recognised issue in all country contexts of study. This "youth bulge" on the one hand is seen a threat, as surely there are implications for youth employment and respective frustrations and grievances this might cause, and on the other hand, and on a more positive note, the large numbers of youth in (post-)conflict societies are also perceived as a potential force for economic, and social, political development. Our findings do not only point to the need for a more nuanced understanding of youth framings and constituencies, they also point to the need to recognise such nuances in policy-making and educational (or other relevant) initiatives responding to youth needs in conflict-affected settings.

"Our findings point to the urgent need for governments to take a proactive role in developing appropriate institutional mechanisms. This means that strategic, systematic policies need to be linked to practical implementation strategies to to address youth needs and empower them as peacebuilders."

In order to provide a picture of the wide variety of the ways in which youth are viewed in the four countries studied, we have developed a visual model below. The figure 4 illustrates the various societal discourses that resulted from the analysis of our data in the four country contexts. These are a combination of official policy discourses (e.g. policy or reform texts), discourse employed by policy-developers in their daily work, but also the most widely expressed discourses of youth as brought forward by (social) media. Inspired by Davies' (2005) work on passive and active responses to conflict, and the division between negative and positive conflict, the figure we present takes a slightly different angle and illustrates how youth are sometimes framed as a threat (c.f. negative conflict) – on the left side of the visual - or a potential (c.f. positive conflict) – towards the right side – that are either passively (top of circle) or actively (bottom) contributing to or hindering peacebuilding. Why this is an important step to do in our analysis? Because such discourses will inform (directly or indirectly) the ways in which policy-makers, programme-designers and broader (civil) society responds to youth. For example, seeing youth as troublemakers or even potential terrorists will probably result in

a different policy or programmatic approach then (also) viewing youth's potential as leaders for (positive) change. Finally, the figure below should not be seen as a complete visualization of how youth should be seen, bur rather as a representation of the various framings that came forward in our data sets. Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that 'youth' in these national contexts are by no means a homogenous group, and that in face discourses on their different constituencies might vary depending on for instance, location, gender, and ethnicity. These factors might in their own way relate to the (post-) conflict contexts and young people's agency for peacebuilding in different ways, which are more closely examined in the country reports or the literature review on youth agency in relation to education and peacebuilding (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015)[6].

Figure 4: Dominant Framings of Youth in Research Contexts



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[6] For an elaboration of youth constituencies in the country reports, please see: http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

Although some of these youth discourses come up in several contexts (e.g. victims of conflict; combatants/violent social group; youth as a threat/potential for economic growth; hope of the future), others seemed to be more context-specific. In Myanmar, for instance, the absence of youth within Myanmar's rural communities as a result of migration for work or education was mentioned explicitly a particular concern. This 'exodus of youth' to urban areas (mostly abroad) was seen as a danger and waste of the country's human resources, and is at the same time experienced by youth as limiting agency due to the pressure to migrate for economic reasons (Higgins et al, 2016). Due to the rapid changes in the country, youth were also perceived as a 'mystery', disconnected from other generations, and either being seen as a threat because of the historical strong presence of student movement in political resistance movements, or a rather unknown opportunity for the country's development. From a different angle, in Pakistan, youth were often seen to be positioned on a continuum of victim-perpetrator, either being harmed by current conflict, or the social group most likely to commit violence. The legacy of 9/11 and current global agendas around preventing radicalisation through education seem to be of significant influence on this framing. What is striking for both South Africa and Uganda is the influence of the global HIV/AIDS response on youth framings: the topic of health, and in particular sexual and reproductive health and rights, was recurring more often than in Pakistan and Myanmar, contexts in which this topic was not mentioned as prominently, if at all. These examples reflect how local contextual cultural, political economy challenges, together with global agendas, influence local interpretations and discourses of how youth are seen, ranging from an not limited to ideas of youth as potential threats or a great potential for country's economic and social development.

"Although some of these youth discourses come up in several contexts (e.g. victims of conflict; combatants/violent social group; youth as a threat/ potential for economic growth; hope of the future), others seemed to be more context-specific.".

"Youth as" vs "Youth for" Economic Growth

Apart from the question whether youth are seen as a victim, threat/deficit or as potential, what occurs is that youth might not only be seen 'as' a threat or potential, but in some policy rhetoric, youth are seen as a great means 'for' a particular outcome. In other words, rather than only seeing youth as a youth bulge or large group in society, a rhetoric of framing youth as a great potential or hope of the future carries a risk of instrumentalising youth for economic, political and/ or social developments, either implicitly or more explicitly. Questionable is then, whether this rhetoric of the need for youth participation and youth voice goes beyond this instrumentalisation, or whether the recognition of youth as active citizens, and especially their interest in political and social engagements, remains limited. This is in line with Giroux's critique asserting that a "war on youth" in current social policy making severely limits their space because of punitive public mechanisms, informed by neoliberal discourses (Giroux, 2004, 2010 as quoted in Sayed et al., 2016). Bringing together the insights from the four country studies, we see a clear prioritization of seeing youth for economic development and growth. In a way, this can be connected to a broader observation that in most contexts, a (globally inspired, yet locally adopted) liberal peace thesis is dominantly influencing policy and investment directions, focusing on first strengthening markets and

"Bringing together the insights from the four country studies, we see a clear prioritization of seeing youth for economic development and growth."

democratic governance, while often leaving aside (or for a later moment) substantial investments in social sectors, including education and other youth-relevant areas such as health.

The current hegemonic global neoliberal economic context dominates most of the policy discourse of national governments, not excluding those included in this report, that position youth needs as fundamentally connected to employment and skills (Sayed et al, 2016). And while livelihoods and satisfactory employment are indeed primacy concerns voiced by youth in all countries, other needs including – yet not limited to - (mental and reproductive) health (South Africa, Uganda), a sense of belonging and recognition (Pakistan, Myanmar), being able to influence decision-making (all countries) or free ways of personal and collective (creative, artistic, intellectual) expression are often unattended. Although the numbers on GDP percentages spend on education might indicate at least a partial recognition of the importance of youth-related investments, these remain relatively low compared to spending on defense, security or economic growth.

"The current hegemonic global neoliberal economic context dominates most of the policy discourse of national governments, not excluding those included in this report, that position youth needs as fundamentally connected to employment and skills."

Moreover, the limited implementation of youth participation (as will be discussed in the next paragraphs), carries a risk of exclusivity by including mostly elite youth, which are often urban, middle-class young men. By excluding the participation/ voices of a diversity of youth constituencies, a more inclusive representation of all social groups is limited. This might reinforce existing power mechanisms – including gendered forms of structural violence and marginalisation - which limits the transformative potential of these initiatives to contribute to sustainable peacebuilding. These framings have a direct bearing on the ways in which youth-related policies have been developed and are implemented, with some interesting variations between the countries as illustrated in the next section.

Role of Formal and Non-Formal Education in Youth-Relevant Policies

"Formal education as such seems to be globally instrumentalised to a means to economic growth and development, making limited reference to its potential for peacebuilding."

In line with the policy framings of youth, the role of education as it is being depicted within most of the analysed policy discourse remains mostly limited to fostering economic growth. While South Africa's policies do make reference to education as a means to social cohension, in other country contexts, policies are criticized for a lack of this connection (e.g. Pakistan NYP, Durrani et al., 2016), a 'depolitication of education' (e.g. Myanmar, see Higgins et al., 2016), or neglecting the implications and need for reconciliation in and education system in post-conflict societies (e.g. in Uganda, see Datzberger, McCully and Smith, 2016). Formal education as such seems to be globally instrumentalised to a means to economic growth and development, making limited reference to its potential for peacebuilding. While underlining the important potential of (vocational) education for economic empowerment and increased employment opportunities, of particular concern here is the detachment of political, social, and cultural aspects of education. These, together with more economic/redistributive and reconciliatory outcomes of learning, may form a more sustainable peacebuilding (4R) approach. By moving away from a more technical approach to viewing education as a primary means to support economic growth by

developing productive citizens, and applying a 4Rs perspective, it becomes clear that in order to support and sustain long-term post-conflict transformations, policy-makers need to acknowledge the potential of formal and non-formal education in relation to the empowerment of the multiple (socio-cultural, political and economic) forms of youth agency.

Cultural, Political, and Economic Framings of Youth in and Beyond Policies Discourse

"What is striking is that, when analysing youth framings and policy/ programmatic responses from a cultural political economy approach, an economic framing of youth seems to be dominant in all country contexts."

What is striking is that, when analysing youth framings and policy/programmatic responses from a cultural political economy approach, an economic framing of youth seems to be dominant in all country contexts. The rhetoric primarily evolves around classifying youth as human capital for economic growth, or, more negatively put, identifying the 'youth bulge' as a threat to economic growth. Consequently, responses such as policy and programming that see education for employability (e.g. TVET, a/o), are leading. For instance in Myanmar, the CESR reform process commits to assuring labour market responsive TVET, which is on the one hand a promising response to youth demands, but on the other hand it carries a danger of instrumentalising young people as human capital/economic resources, ignoring and/or limiting political and socio-cultural aspects of empowerment. Findings from South Africa point out that education is failing to (equitably) prepare youth for entry into the labour market, reflecting remnants of pre-1994 inequalities (Sayed et al., 2016). Questionable in such kind of responses, is thus to what extent they can contribute to sustainable peacebuilding, as by solely taking an economic or narrow 'developmentalist' approach to youth and peacebuilding activities, drivers of conflict might go unaddressed, and marginalization of e.g. minorities in such responses might exacerbate rather than mitigate conflict.

"Nuanced framings of youth are mostly absent from policy discourse (with the exception of South Africa), and are largely failing to recognise youth as politically active citizens."

Nuanced framings of youth are mostly absent from policy discourse (with the exception of South Africa), and are largely failing to recognise youth as politically active citizens. Some programmatic initiatives do intend to boost leadership skills through national youth councils (e.g. in Uganda and South Africa), a youth parliament (Pakistan) and to a lesser extent through setting up a Youth Forum (Myanmar). However, the national youth council in Uganda for instance, is criticized because of its highly politicised nature and misuse of power, lack of capacities to engage in sustainable training activities for youth empowerment, and lack of representation of a range of youth constituencies, in particular based on gender (which is part of the reason why third networks are being created by NGOs and UNICEF in collaboration with other groups, also see Datzberger, McCully and Smith, 2016). Student unions are another example reflecting the silencing of youth voice in political arenas: student political activity is banned by the Supreme Court in Pakistan in 1992, by letting students, their parents and guardians sign a statement that the student 'shall not indulge in politics' (JI, 2013, p. 12; see Durrani et al., 2016). Similarly, though perhaps not by means of legislation, but rather by means of repressive violence, in Myanmar student union activity and protests are harshly silenced by police interventions, reinforcing a culture of fear.

"Within political discourse analysed in the four country contexts, the perspectives on young people's potential contributions or challenges towards social cohesion and peacebuilding and the role of education within these processes, a rather limited picture emerges of mostly depoliticised (Myanmar) or market-oriented (Uganda) framings of youth populations."

Despite the fact that they carry great potential for *recognition, representation* and *reconciliation* processes for peacebuilding (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015), initiatives that engage more with social and ***cultural approaches*** to youth empowerment for peacebuilding, seem to be mostly absent from national policy discourses and considered to be the responsibility of NGOs. South Africa does have an Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) though, in which social aspects such as health and wellbeing, and sports, recreation and arts are mentioned as core themes. However, it is striking that the strategic goals of these themes are again to "improve the wellbeing of young people to allow them to *productively lead fulfilling socio-economic lives"* and "to ensure the promotion of sports, arts and culture and *raise awareness on the economic value* within the fraternity" (Sayed et al., 2016:188-198, emphasis added). Our further analysis below will further engage with a discussion of how formal and non-formal education follows these framings of youth presented here.

Concluding Remarks on Youth-Related Policies: Policy Rhetoric vs Lived Realities

Within political discourse analysed in the four country contexts, the perspectives on young people's potential contributions or challenges towards social cohesion and peacebuilding and the role of education within these processes, a rather limited picture emerges of mostly depoliticised (Myanmar) or market-oriented (Uganda) youth population. In this picture, youth are mainly perceived as a means to economic growth, which should in turn contribute or trickle-down to peace – a false assumption that we have challenged elsewhere (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith, 2015), but also aim to unravel in this evidence-based report. Drawing on the moment of the politics of education and a comprehensive cultural political economy perspective, we argue here that such fragmented and often narrow framings of youth informs a likewise narrow policy discourse. Youth related policies in the context studied therefore are often disconnected from the lived realities and experiences of various groups of youth, which calls for the need for amplification of youth voice, representing diversity.

"Our empirical findings confirm insights from the literature review on youth agency, education and peacebuilding (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015), in the sense that there is an absence of youth voice in policy and programming, which is problematic for ensuring adequate responses to youth needs and constituencies in post-conflict societies and education systems."

Our empirical findings confirm insights from the literature review on youth agency, education and peacebuilding (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015), in the sense that there is an absence of youth voice in policy and programming, which is problematic for ensuring adequate responses to youth needs and constituencies in post-conflict societies and education systems. Secondly, the appropriation of youth conceptualisations as "troublemakers" or "peacemakers"; "victims" or "resilient people"; "potential criminals" or their "heroic role in transformation and peacebuilding" carry the risk of serving an underlying (neoliberal) agenda (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2008; Giroux, 2004). Hence, there is a need for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the multiplicity of young peoples' identities (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015). Thirdly, our data adds to this picture that considering the growing recognition that amplification of youth perspectives is needed to ensure the genuine participation of youth in peacebuilding during and after conflict. This means that youth concerns should not only be adequately and more responsibly addressed in programming, but likewise in policy discourse, frameworks and financial commitments.

Formal and Non Formal Education Initiatives for the Promotion of Youth Agency for Sustainable Peacebuilding

Mindful of the audiences of this report, it is envisaged that the insights of this section will throw a critical and constructive light on the practical, pressing issues in relation to youth engagement as highlighted by youth, practitioners, policy-makers and academic researchers. These include the key issue of youth inclusion and access to programmes (also of non-elite and difficult to reach youth); and the need for interventions to be precisely tailored to heterogeneous youth contexts, predicaments, needs as well as their prior resourcefulness, creativity and initiative (Lopes Cardozo, et al, 2015).

We aim to respond to the overarching question 2, To what extent do selected formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on youth promote agency for the realization of sustainable peace, and in how far are issues of gender (in-)equality and violence addressed? In order to formulate an answer to this question, the sections below will address the sub questions listed below:

- What aspect of youth agency (economic, political, socio-cultural) are the formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on and through what knowledges, skills and attitudes to do they aim to empower youth?
- How far do the selected education initiatives respond to the different needs of various youth constituencies (including gender)?
- In what ways do interventions engage with youth?
- How far do interventions respond to the contextual cultural political economy factors that impact on youth agency, in conflict-affected settings?

"Drawing on our empirical findings in the four countries, we aim to contribute to ongoing practical understandings of what is meant by context-specificity, an aspiration frequently referred to in recent work on (youth-related) interventions in conflict-affected regions, but often underspecified and unclear in its implications."

Firstly, we provide a synthesized discussion of the experiences of formal education by young people in the four countries studied. Consequently, we provide a mapping of the focus and content of specific (formal and non-formal) interventions that the Research Consortium engaged with in the four conflict-affected contexts, identifying the particular knowledges, skills and attitudes through which they aim to empower youth. Thirdly, building on the analysis provided in the table, we continue to discuss how interventions work to enhance (various aspects of) youth agency, highlighting more technical as well as creative approaches using drama, sports and other youth-friendly strategies. Fourthly, together with a visual summary, this section reflects on the reach and scope of these programmes in relation the diversity of youth constituencies and the size of the youth demographic in the four countries. Fifthly, we explore the extent to which interventions are context-specific and context-responsive. Drawing on our empirical findings in the four countries, we aim to contribute to ongoing practical understandings of what is meant by context-specificity, an aspiration frequently referred to in recent work on (youth-related) interventions in conflict-affected regions, but often underspecified and unclear in

its implications. In doing so - and applying the research consortium's methodology for analysing the theory of change that underpins interventions (drawing on the work of Pawson, 2006 and others) - this section uncovers the mechanisms and rationales through which programmes are aiming to impact on (various aspects of) youth agency. Making use of the Strategic Relational Approach (SRA), here we draw attention to the interconnections between contextual factors that both enable as well as delimit youth agency, to in turn reproduce or transform such contexts.

Formal Education: High Youth Expectations of "Education" in its Broadest Sense

"Notably, youth generally held higher expectations for non-formal education as a source of empowerment, ethical values, skills and knowledges relevant to their lives, than formal education. Motivated by such concerns, youth had strong views on the need for greater investment in public education provision."

The potential relevance of education to enhancing their political, social and economic agency was underlined by youth in all country contexts. Notably, youth generally held higher expectations for non-formal education as a source of empowerment, ethical values, skills and knowledges relevant to their lives, than formal education. Motivated by such concerns, youth had strong views on the need for greater investment in public education provision. Youth activism indicates their belief in the (potential) value of formal education and willingness to exercise courage and initiative – even risk their lives – to present their case. This is exemplified by the youth/student protests in Myanmar. It is further corroborated by youth activism to improve the quality of their education, as demonstrated by Youth Manifestos in all four country contexts.

Youth Exclusion From Formal Secondary Education

"However, in striking contrast to their vision of the potential role of formal education in their lives, the evidence from all country contexts highlights low rates of participation of youth in later primary and secondary education."

However, in striking contrast to their vision of the potential role of formal education in their lives, the evidence from all country contexts highlights low rates of participation of youth in later primary and secondary education. High rates of absence and attrition in basic education led invariably to low participation rates in secondary schooling. Low rates of participation in formal education were invariably linked to:

- Poverty and financial family pressures, for youth to leave school to contribute to the family income;
- Lack of teachers and schools in rural, remote or conflict-affected areas;
- Discrimination against minorities or ethnic groups who are unable to access curricula given lack of mother tongue instruction;
- Gender inequalities in terms of access (safety, availability/proximity), relevance of curricula, reproduction of gendered norms in school/classroom;
- The hidden costs of education despite promises that it would be free;
- Security issues caused by military presence in some areas;
- Lack of parental faith in the value of education given challenges of survival in conditions of extreme precarity;
- Inability of youth to access the curriculum given lack of mother tongue instruction in state schools;
- lack of relevance of curriculum content to daily realities and needs of youth, especially in relation to getting work, increasing political participation, serving sexual health, expressing cultural identity or voicing critical thinking.

With such systemic exclusion, female youth invariably suffered more than male youth. In Uganda, for instance, non-enrolment was attributed to households with higher numbers of female children, or lack of suitable options for girls to participate in schooling in remote areas. The result of such massive lack of participation in formal secondary education is that large numbers of youth exit schools prematurely without qualifications. This often means possessing no professional or technical skills, being poorly equipped to enter into labour markets and participate in decision-making processes or attend to their mental and physical well-being. Moreover, the differential capacity of elites to access education at all levels underlines how in many conflict-affected societies, formal education systems continue to create social divisions and reproduce the hierarchies and inequalities that have been drivers of conflict and youth alienation. Attempts to rectify such inequities through the provision of state scholarships for poorer youth are often inadequate, as supported by the recent work of Sommers (2015: xi): “exclusion is structured into educational and cultural systems” in many conflict-affected contexts, producing the youth demographic as an alienated, disempowered and “outcast majority”.

Youth Experiences of Subjects Within the Formal Secondary School Curriculum: The Pakistan Studies Curriculum and Myanmar History Curriculum

As highlighted by the literature review on youth agency, peace building and education (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015) the content and pedagogical approaches used within particular areas of the formal curriculum, including social studies and history instruction, can play a leading role in supporting individual and community identity formation. As such, the teaching of history and has the potential to reinforce divisions and antagonise those who feel misrepresented through its portrayal. Metro and others have underlined how these subjects can fuel hatred and generate violence in situations of ethnic conflict (Bar Tal, 2003; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies 2004; Metro, 2012), thereby undermining the peacebuilding agency of youth in formal schooling. This section reflects on the Research Consortium's findings in relation to youth experiences of such curricula in Myanmar and Pakistan (see country reports of Higgins et al., 2016; and Durrani et al., 2016). Both societies are riven by ethnic conflict and have formal curricula that has been mobilised to support processes of nation building that largely suppress the views and experiences of ethnic minorities.

In Myanmar, a specific concern has been the use of the formal history curriculum as a mechanism for legitimating the military regime through an anti-colonial, nationalistic discourse (Salem-Gervais and Metro, 2012). Similarly, the Pakistan Studies Curriculum was introduced by the state of Pakistan for building a sense of national identity and social cohesion. The subject is compulsory and counts towards the final marks for all young people between 14 and 17. As also illustrated in the table above, its key goal is to "inculcate a sense of gratitude to Almighty Allah among students for bestowing on them an independent and sovereign state". Hence the subject assumes that the Pakistan studies subject will produce grateful Muslims who will deeply appreciate the Muslim struggle for independence (Durrani et al., 2016).

Within Myanmar's history curriculum, the dominance of Bamar culture and history represents a similar attempt to produce a homogeneous national identity, such that scholars have noted there is only a "narrow space in school history curricula for history other than that of the Burmese nation state" (McCormick, 2014: 323).

What was striking from the research consortium's engagement with youth in formal education about their experiences of such exclusionary curricula, was their capacity in some circumstances to exercise critical judgement about the counter-productive nature of its sectarian content in relation to processes of peacebuilding and social cohesion. Ethnic minority youth in Myanmar, while expressing their frustration at a curriculum that did not recognise their particular historical traditions, were aware of the need to incorporate diverse perspectives and recognised such possibilities of curricular reform as a vehicle for peacebuilding (Higgins et al., 2016). Likewise, in Pakistan it was noted that "students were not passive inhalers of national ideology: rather they actively responded to the notion of being Pakistani in the light of everyday life in Pakistan" (Durrani et al., 2016:174). It was notable that "factors such as their socio-economic status, teachers beliefs, pedagogical approach, school type and particularly the levels of conflict affecting their communities influenced their [variegated] perceptions of being Pakistani" (Durrani et al., 2015:174). While some expressed exclusivist views of the Pakistani nation, therefore mirroring the content of their textbooks, in some circumstances students challenged the existing perspectives in the curriculum, for instance drawing on the Constitution of Pakistan to construct non-Muslims with equal rights.

Such youth responses emerging from our country studies were not only linked to the nature of the content, but also to the pedagogical processes through which such subjects were taught. Myanmar ethnic minority youth emphatically called for approaches that were less teacher-led, lecture based and authoritarian and which gave them opportunities to do their own research and express and develop their own views within a more participatory approach. In Pakistan, the research team noted that "when students are able to engage in activity based learning and are exposed to alternative historical narratives they develop a relatively open and critical understanding of history" (Durrani et al., 2016: 177).

These findings draw attention to youth exercising agency – or at least showing an awareness of the need to do so in rather limiting strategically selective contexts - in relation to curricula whose narratives undermine the goals of peacebuilding and social cohesion. In navigating selectively between diverse sources and types of historical understanding - including those transmitted in their schools and within their local communities - youth's experience of history and social studies curricula in Pakistan and Myanmar demonstrates the same complexity as that shown by their peers in other conflict-affected contexts (Barton & McCully, 2005). Moreover, in their capacity to critique the exclusivity of such curricula and the authoritarian teaching methods frequently deployed in the teaching of social studies and history, these youth invite greater attention to curricula reform as a means of enhancing their peacebuilding agency. The openness to approaches to the past that transcend sectarian identities has been found to be a distinctive feature of the outlook of the youth demographic in other conflict-affected contexts (Barton & McCully, 2005), and potentially an important aspect of how education, through curricula and curricula reform, could play a role in affirming the agency of youth as peacebuilders.

Youth Voices on the Failures of Formal Curricula to Empower them as Agents of Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion

In addition to the socio-economic systemic explanations to account for low participation rates, the voices of youth who participated in the four country cases revealed their strong opinions about the largely irrelevant content and learning experiences offered within formal education. The following chart summarises their perceptions on the failures of formal education to equip them to participate in and become beneficiaries of key peacebuilding processes. Although the chart distinguishes between views on Redistributions, Recognition, Representation and Reconciliation, it has to be kept in mind that in reality these might overlap, as visualised by the dotted lines.

Table 5: Youth's Critical Views on Formal Education

Redistribution	Recognition	Representation	Reconciliation
• Inadequate provision of vocational education linked to job opportunities within uncertain/ changing economies • Inattention to employment related skills and knowledges • Inattention to career advice	• Suppression of cultures and identities of minorities within exclusionary formal curricula creates grievance/frustration • Failure to recognise needs of disabled/ ethnic minority/LGBT youth • Highly gendered curricula content marginalises experiences/needs of female students • Inattention to youth needs in relation to physical, mental and reproductive sexual health • Dominance of rote learning to meet out-dated assessment systems undermines attention to relevant skills development	• Lack of attention to developing critical thinking • Exclusion of youth from decision-making processes within (and beyond) the education sector • Lack of context-specific civic and political literacy education	• Militarised content may legitimise violence • Inattention to conflict resolution skills • Inattention to supporting youth in navigating social relationships across generational divides • Lack of mother tongue instruction perceived as discriminatory for ethnic minority youth • Inattention to the integrated nature of youth needs linking political/economic/ cultural and social dimensions

Identifying these weaknesses of provision, youth drew attention to the lack of relevance of the formal curricula to their daily realities, challenges and hopes. The potential of education to equip youth for livelihood and work, to participate in political processes, to develop constructive relationships with elders and peers, to attend to their mental and emotional health is, according to youth themselves, undermined by systemic and substantive failure of curricular content. In some contexts, they pointed out that education was a hindrance rather than a help in securing employment, with vocational education initiatives leading to joblessness and despair – and possibly new drivers of conflict as mentioned above.

Negative experiences of curriculum content were also linked to youth critiques of pedagogical practices that were perceived to undermine and suppress their agency. Many youth highlighted the dominance of rote learning methods within authoritarian instructional techniques that prevented them from asking questions and developing opinions. In addition, an exam-dominated approach to learning and relationships with teachers characterised by fear and corporal punishment, were generally perceived as alienating and frustrating.

In sum, the research teams uncovered what can only be described as a tragic paradox in relation to formal education provision in most of the conflict-affected contexts under study, few exceptional schools left aside. On the one hand, as noted above, youth have high expectations of the promise of education to impact their lives across multiple dimensions of their agency. On the other hand, the systemic exclusion of the majority of youth from secondary education, as well as serious weaknesses in curricula content and pedagogical processes undermine its potential to contribute to forms of political, economic, social and cultural empowerment that may enhance youth peacebuilding agency. Moreover, the resulting disillusion and disaffection noted by the research teams intersectionally cuts across class, gender and ethnic differences, with educated middle class male urban youth being just as likely to be dissatisfied – albeit of a different nature – with their education experience as poorer and more marginalised constituencies. In drawing attention to the alienating experience of formal education provision which does not serve the socio-cultural as well as the economic and political needs of youth, our findings confirm, for conflict-affected contexts, the insights of wider critiques of school systems in so-called "developing countries" (see Bennet, 1993; McOwan and Unterhalter, 2015).

"In sum, the research teams uncovered what can only be described as a tragic paradox in relation to formal education provision in most of the conflict-affected contexts under study, few exceptional schools left aside."

How Interventions Work to Enhance (various aspects of) Youth Agency/Empowerment

Recent research has indicated that the activities and processes through which youth are engaged can make a big difference to the impact and relevance of interventions to diverse youth needs and contexts (Dunne et al, 2014). Therefore, we now discuss how interventions listed below – providing a relevant sample of the formal and non-formal

education provisions available to various groups of youth in the four countries – address the three dimensions of youth agency.

"The following charts summarise the knowledge, skills and attitudes addressed within initiatives included in the four country studies, enabling us to tease out patterns, commonalities and differences across contexts."

The Range, Focus and Content of Formal and Non-Formal Education Initiatives Studied

The following charts summarise the knowledge, skills and attitudes addressed within initiatives included in the four country studies, enabling us to tease out patterns, commonalities and differences across contexts. While most initiatives are categorised as 'non-formal education', some of the initiatives studied are integrated within the formal education system, and thus classify as formal (see third column of the tables). The tables demonstrate a wide range of examples of how the three dimensions of youth agency – political/civic, socio-cultural and economic – are addressed by various non-formal education initiatives. While these categories are separated out for analytical purposes, some of these interventions actually do reach across these three dimensions[7]. However, and in line with existing critiques of youth interventions expressed in the literature (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015), the majority of analysed selected initiatives have a somewhat narrow focus on either of the - political/civic, socio-cultural or economic – dimensions, which is shown in the charts below. The overview of analysed interventions highlights particular issues and challenges, drawing attention to the complexity of attempts to integrate attention to youth cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal development, underscoring the perhaps underestimated challenges of the design of appropriate curricula in such settings. Hence, on the right side of the charts, a 'challenges' column starts to highlight some of the context-specific challenges, while our discussions below will further elaborate on these.

Key to Tables

[M] = Myanmar
[P] = Pakistan
[SA] = South Africa
[U] = Uganda

NF = Non-formal education
F = Formal education

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[7] While distinguishing between the socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions for the three tables below, we also identify which dimensions (redistribution, recognition, reconciliation and representation) the initiatives engage with most. Some of the initiatives have a more holistic approach, engaging with several or all of the 4R dimensions (for further reflections on these initiatives in their country contexts, see the country reports produced under the Research Consortium: http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

Formal and Non Formal Education Interventions Focused on Political and Civic Dimensions of Youth Agency

Country/ Programme	Target Group	Formal/ non Formal	Aims and Links to Conflict Drivers	Knowledge/Skills/Attitudes Developed	Challenges
[M] Mon Youth Education Association	Urban and rural youth in Mon State, Myanmar	NF	• Addressing fear and limitations of political engagement by youth • Compensation for lack of civic education and political literacy in formal schools • Representation features prominently	• Political awareness • Knowledge of voting, democratic processes, national constitution, structures of local and national governance • Communication and advocacy skills • Supporting youth to navigate new opportunities	• Limitations in addressing structural challenges that hinder youth political participation • Fear of "political" activities amongst youth participants and their families • Challenges of navigating inter-generational relationships • Making unfamiliar ideas eg democracy meaningful for participants without political knowledge
[P] Pakistan Studies Curriculum	Students in 9th and 10th grade (aged 14-17)	F	• Building a sense of national identity and social cohesion • (attempts to) revise and remove hate material since 2006 • Recognition features most prominently	• 'Inculcate a sense of gratitude towards Almighty Allah', while bestowing upon students 'an independent and sovereign nation'	• Site of intense contestation between liberal-democratic and conservative and religious groups • Critiques from academics/civil society: too exclusivist, essentialist, promoting gendered(cultural/ symbolic) violence/ inequality
[P] Youth Parliament, Sindh Province	Socio-economic privileged urban youth (aged 15-35)	NF	• Founded in 2005 to support youth participation in democratic processes, therefore addressing grievances resulting from political exclusion • Includes 1000 members across Sindh (in 2015), with 100 new members each year, who elect 11 cabinet members of the Youth Parliament • Aims to promote agency for social cohesion, including for female participants • Representation features most prominently	• Enhanced youth communication with parliamentarians • Knowledge/experience of democratic processes • Knowledge of topical issues facing Pakistan, e.g. disaster management/ inter-faith relations/ cleanliness • Enhanced ability to navigate sectarian, ethnic, inter-religious and political differences • Leadership, communication and organizational skills • Self-confidence and self-esteem; positive self-identity	• Access (urban, membership fee) • Work in an ambivalent reality, and under a governing body not know for democratic practices • Danger of reproduction of (existing) power hierarchies, with limited participation of marginalized voices

[SA] South African Youth Leaders Network (SALYN)	Nationwide network of 13 development organisations Working with Marginalised urban and rural youth focused on managing diversity and active citizenship education	NF	• Addressing range of community linked challenges including gang culture/violence • Addressing social divides between youth constituencies based on class, race, religion and culture thereby fostering social cohesion • Representation features most prominently	• Through conferences and events for a diverse range of youth constituencies contributes to the development of skills for active citizenship and youth leadershi • Awareness raising of social diversity and cohesion issues and strategies • Skills and attitudes for bridging social divides including trust/ empathy/mutual understanding/	• N/A

Addressing Socio-Political and Socio-Cultural Agency/Empowerment of Youth

What these tables illustrate, is that in relation to youth political agency, the focus lies on supporting awareness of democratic political processes combined with the development of skills and attitudes to enable greater participation in decision-making structures at local and national levels. Broadly speaking, within the socio-cultural and political oriented interventions, a common focus lies on the development of inter- and intra-personal skills, including conflict prevention and resolution, youth leadership, self-confidence and self-esteem. Formal (state supported) and non-formal initiatives across all four contexts addressing the political agency of youth were informed by recognition of the exclusion of youth from (democratic) political processes and representation. The Uganda Youth Network (formal), the (non-formal) Pakistan Parliament founded in Sindh Province, the (non-formal) South Africa Youth Leaders Network, as well as the (non-formal) youth-initiated Mon Youth Educational Organisation all aim to support youth participation in and knowledge of political processes. Within their respective country contexts, these interventions are informed by a recognition of the systemic exclusion of youth from decision making on issues that matter to them at different scales, and shared a concern to develop communication and leadership skills. The prospect of elections in Myanmar (2015) and Uganda (2016) has galvanized such initiatives, but also highlighted the lack of structures and channels through which the majority of youth can exercise political agency. Their logics of change suggest that by sharing knowledge of political processes, encouraging civic awareness and political participation, participants will be equipped to enter into political spaces. Some interventions focused on 'politics' as experienced on a daily basis by some youth, thus showing context-specificity by tailoring the global menu of generic concerns with democracy, human rights and civic education to address the particular situations and challenges youth faced.

For example, the focus of Mon Youth Education Organisation on informing participants about Myanmar's electoral processes, human rights, structures of national and local governance was oriented to addressing a perceived fear and lack of knowledge of engagement in political processes amongst rural youth. The intervention's orientation to the "politics of the daily" (Prasse-Freeman, 2012: 371) as experienced by youth was evident in its aim to equip youth to better understand power mechanisms at the state and local governance levels, to negotiate with key local stakeholders and older generations within villages, and to participate in the democratic processes while acknowledging continuing constraints on their possibilities for political action. Such interventions demonstrated the importance of connecting with the "everyday" activities of youth (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015:5).

Formal and Non Formal Education Interventions Focused on Socio Cultural Dimensions of Youth Agency

Country/ Programme	Target Group	Formal/Non Formal	Aims and Links to Conflict Drivers	Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Developed	Challenges
[M) Empowering Youth for Peacebuilding Programme	Rural youth	NF	• Managed by NGO starting in April 2014 • Addresses conflict drivers including high levels of youth unemployment, inter-generational tensions • All 4Rs are featured (cross-cutting)	• Range of life skills including conflict management/media and communication/ safe migration/HIV-Aids awareness/reproductive health/drug use • Project management to equip participating youth to lead community development initiatives • Peer networking • Knowledge of national peace processes • Focus on youth defined issues • skills to navigate inter-generational relationships • skills to become agents of community development	• high rates of youth economic migration from villages • resistance of elders in village communities • meeting diverse needs of different youth constituencies in diverse conflict affected contexts • isolation of youth remaining in rural villages
[M] Pa-Oh Cultural and Literacy Society	Rural ethnic minority youth	NF	• Addressing grievances due to perceived lack of cultural recognition by state and linked socio/political and economic exclusions • Recognition, and Representation feature most prominently	• Supports youth in advocating/celebrating/ preserving ethnic cultural traditions • Knowledge of language, history and traditions of ethnic group • Youth equipped with skills for role as agents of inter-generational cultural transmission	• Danger of overstating intra- rather than inter-cultural understandings, because of felt need to protect cultural traditions • Limited capacity to transform exclusive structural environment
[M] Human Drama Forum Theatre	HIV+ unemployed/ out of school youth, marginalized women	NF - Peer led	• Addresses issues affecting communities eg domestic violence/ HIV/AIDS/drug use/ human trafficking and sexual assault. • Equips youth with skills to address issues usually kept private, including reproductive health, domestic abuse, sexual assault and child rape • All 4Rs are featured (cross-cutting)	• Health awareness • Vocational skills training • Product making • Writing and production of dramas linked to community challenges • Communication skills using drama to catalyse community discussion • Supports youth in effecting behavioural and attitudinal changes in communities through inter-generational dialogue	• Sustaining and upscaling project to national level given lack of resources • Navigating inter-generational relationships • Addressing issues in a public space normally kept private

[P] UNICEF Sports Intervention	Marginalised/ conflict-affected youth from segregated ethnic communities in urban slums and fishing villages of Karachi	NF	• Addresses inter-ethnic tensions as well as drug culture and use; community violence and conflict • Focus on socio-economically marginalised girls as well as boys • Reconciliation and Recognition feature most prominently	• Health, drugs education and awareness raising (recognising relevance of context-specific content) • Awareness/prevention of GBV • Conflict resolution through mutual understanding, improved communication skills • Opportunities for inter-communal dialogue • Using sport as a catalyst for inter-ethnic socializing, trust building and dialogue • Enhancing confidence, self-esteem	• Limited implementation where security was an issue • Limited influence on structural and institutional drivers of conflict • Limited inter-group positive interaction for girls' teams, and restricted to in-doors activities
[SA] Community Action Towards a Safer Environment (CASE)	Youth in township communities with high levels of gang—related/ domestic violence: poverty/ unemployment and school drop outs	F	• Addressing pervasive community violence linked to gang culture/substance use/domestic abuse and neglect/crime • All 4Rs are featured (cross-cutting)	• Equipping youth to be community leaders and to contribute to community development through mentoring/counselling/ project management/ literacy skills • Personal development and life skills – self-esteem/ confidence • Psychosocial support	• Creating an integrated and effective plan of action due to the "multi-system" nature of gang culture
[SA] Quaker Peace Centre (Addressing Violence in Schools Programme)	School based youth in low income communities with poor access to social services and affected by violence; also targets teachers/ parents principals/ education district officials	F	• Addresses youth involvement in violence • Addresses underpinning grievances • Peace and conflict as non-binary terms • All 4Rs are featured (cross-cutting)	• Inter-personal communication skills • Awareness raising of GBV • Enhance youth capacity to participate in decision making/problem solving on community related issues affecting them • Increased sense of self-worth	• N/A
[SA] Rural Development Support Programme (RDSP)	Youth in rural areas – out of school/ unemployed with high levels of gang related and domestic gender based violence/ unemployment/ poverty and poor social services	NF	• Supporting CBOs addressing range of challenges including gang related, gender-based and domestic violence/gang culture/substance abuse/sexual abuse/ youth trauma and mental health • Youth exposed to spectrum of violence associated with trauma and fear • Interaction of violence with poverty, unemployment, GBV, and trauma of being HIV+ • All 4Rs are featured (cross-cutting)	• Enhancing professional skills of youth working in rural community based organisations in rural areas e.g. planning/fund raising/leadership and management/business skills/tackling GBV/public participation • Representation/leadership skills • Supporting staff well-being and sense of self-efficacy • GBV awareness and prevention • Supporting women in starting small businesses	• Recent inactivity for the Youth development programme component of the RDSP due to global recession (needed to be streamlined) • Sustaining interventions

"In relation to socio-cultural agency, knowledges and skills are offered to equip youth to navigate an array of issues which affect them and their communities."

In relation to socio-cultural agency, knowledges and skills are offered to equip youth to navigate an array of issues which affect them and their communities, including: violence (GBV, gang and community based); health issues (drugs, HIV, sexual and reproductive mental and emotional health); inter-personal relationships between generations and within fractured communities; the formative importance of cultural traditions on youth identities; and personal well-being and self-efficacy. Few interventions sampled were underpinned by thorough analysis of the specific cultural contexts impinging on youth agency. However, one such intervention, the Pa-Oh Cultural and Literacy Society in Myanmar, engaged in educational and advocacy activities in relation to the preservation of Mon ethnic languages and cultural traditions. The group works with youth of these specific ethnic communities living in rural Mon State and is managed and supported by community elders. Underpinning the provision of activities was a sense of the centrality of culture – language, literature and traditions - to the identity and self-definition of ethnic minority youth. Such activities were also a means of self-valorisation. The sense of a culture and ethnicity under siege articulated by these youth was based on a fear and resentment at the prospect of cultural assimilation into Burman/Myanmar majority customs and language. Yet, the possible downside of such an approach is the potential overstating of intra-cultural over inter-cultural understandings, because of a felt need to protect cultural traditions, hence limiting rather than enhancing social cohesion.

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Formal and Non Formal Education Interventions Focused on Economic Dimensions of Youth Agency

Country/ Programme	Target Group	Formal/ Non Formal	Aims and Links to Conflict Drivers	Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Developed	Challenges
[M] Centre for Vocational Training (CVT)	Unemployed and out of education urban and peri-urban youth	NF	• Enhancing youth employment opportunities addresses key youth grievance • Links to supporting youth to take advantage of new economic opportunities within current transition • Provision of alternative educational pathways to compensate for lack of formal vocational education • Redistribution features most prominently	• Apprenticeship and vocational training for 5 professions, including furniture making, metal work, hotel/gastronomy and electrician • Inter-personal skills relevant for worksplaces: communication/ teamwork • Self-confidence and self-esteem	• For youth participants, balancing work and study commitment with family responsibilities • Less privileged youth faced transport/ clothing/equipment costs • Perception that majority of youth are excluded from new opportunities afforded by recent economic transition and influx of foreign capital
[P] Social Entrepreneurship Programme	Female Youth from low socio-economic backgrounds	NF	• Address marginalisation faced by young females as a result of poverty and unemployment • Offered in 1200 technical institutions/172 vocational and educational institutions/40 universities • Locally-based approach to enhance female youth engagement • Redistribution features most prominently	• Skills and knowledge linked to establishing a small-scale business, e.g. recycling projects/ computing and English language learning institute for girls • Youth offered mentoring and practical support • Enhanced self-esteem, well-being and confidence • Ability to navigate patriarchal cultural taboos and gendered stereotypes associated with entrepreneurship • Peer networking skills for empowerment	• Lack of trust/ abusive language by families/community to female entrepreneurship • Electricity crisis (limited use of computers) • Difficulties to bridge social class differences as interns

[SA] National Youth Service (NYS) Skills Development Programme	Unemployed and out of education youth	F	• Supporting youth to gain employment • Grievances linked to economic disempowerment and exclusion • Redistribution features most prominently	• Skills to access employment opportunities • Training in a range of skills linked to labour market needs • Qualifications linked to the National Qualifications Framework • Life/inter-personal skills incl: democracy, rights/responsibilities/ problem solving/ leadership/ community development/ diversity • Apprenticeship programme combining on the job learning with skills development	• Limited resources and insufficient funding • Lack of (public) recognition of added value of programme • Certification problems • Youth switching between various programmes, incentivised by stipends • Drop out (due to pregnancy/drugs) • Lack of coordination • Disappointment with youth after training when no employment found, especially for women • Quality/level of training
[U] Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET)	Students in (primary, secondary, tertiary) education	F	• Started in 1997, the government of [U] introduced entrepreneurship as a subject at all levels of formal education • Provided in 133 public institutions/600 private training service providers/17 apprenticeship programmes • Redistribution features most prominently	• Competence based curriculum for skills development • Practical knowledge and skills for youth to become 'job creators"	• Perceived as a policy success, yet studies (including our own data) confirm lack of funding, limited enrolment and weak links to labour market demands • Programme not embedded in the political economy context of the country
[U] Gulu War-affected Training Centre	War-affected youth in Northern Uganda, mostly female, including refugees from South Sudan	NF	• Started in 2005 as a home-grown initiative by a war-affected women from Gulu • Helping youth regain social and economic agency and deal with trauma/ domestic violence/high youth unemployment/post-traumatic stress/high crime rates/poor social services • Enhancing job prospects to addresses youth alienation and despair • All 4Rs are featured (cross-cutting)	• Training in tailoring, hairdressing, catering and business skills • Writing and reading classes • Psychological support to former abductees/ school drop outs/child mothers/widows/ orphans	• Lack of infrastructure and materials • Shortage of staff/ teachers • Long walking distance for participants • While representative of women, limited representation in other aspects

[U] Piggery Initiative	Unemployed youth	NF-Youth led	• Founded in 2014 by a young male teacher • Addressing social and economic grievances in Ajumani region affected by unemployment/ early marriage/petty crime and theft/high suicide rates/ substance abuse/poverty • Redistribution features most prominently	• Income generating initiative through pig farming • Provide socializing and trust building opportunities at small scale • Developing livelihood generation skills • Developing sense of inner peace and security	• Shortage of funding, and difficulties to expand reach to other youth • Exclusion of Muslim youth in community (not able to work with pigs) • At times low commitment of participants
[U] Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund (UYCVF)	(Urban) youth, aged 25-35	F	• Fund by the Government of [U] to support small and medium-sized enterprises by youth • Redistribution features most prominently	• Supporting youth business ventures/ enterprise skills • Funds distributed to youth through commercial banks	• Commercial banks failure to disburse funds to youth • Lack of access • Youth feel they lack needed skills, qualifications and guidance • No guidance during project implementation if application was successful
[U] Youth Livelihoods Programme	Poor and unemployed youth across the country	F	• Follow-up programme to the UYCVF but based on the principle to directly give the money to the youth (no longer channelled through banks) • Financed by the Government of [U] (2013-2016) with possible future funding by international donors • Support to unemployed youth to establish sustainable enterprises • Redistribution features most prominently	• Aims to provide start up resources to youth – “giving money to the poor”	• Majority of youth are not aware of programme • Youth lack education/guidance to submit proposal • Alleged corruption/ nepotism among officials

Addressing Economic Agency/Empowerment of Youth

Finally, the economic agency of youth, which has been established as a priority in the way youth are framed in most policy discourses, is most directly addressed within programmes that offer vocational training to enhance employability, support the development of knowledges and skills for establishing income generating initiatives, accessing employment opportunities and acquiring relevant communication and networking skills. Awareness of youth exclusion from economic opportunities and high levels of unemployment in all four conflict-affected contexts informs a range of interventions aiming to enhance youth economic agency. Such interventions were under-pinned by explicit recognition that "youth agency for peacebuilding cannot be uncoupled from youth's ability to make a living in an economically and socially sustainable manner" (Sayed et al., 2016).

"Finally, the economic agency of youth, which has been established as a priority in the way youth are framed in most policy discourses, is most directly addressed within programmes that offer vocational training to enhance employability, support the development of knowledges and skills for establishing income generating initiatives, accessing employment opportunities and acquiring relevant communication and networking skills."

Sometimes interventions are carefully oriented to analysis of labour market needs and emerging employment. The Centre for Vocational Training in Myanmar works in close collaboration with host companies to provide training and work opportunities for participants, in emerging sectors such as the tourist industry, hospitality, electrical engineering and international business. The intervention's development of sustained relationships with participating companies is an important feature of its careful and long-term integration into the local economic context, as it helps to facilitate the appropriate orientation of youth to take up work opportunities after their vocational training. Likewise, the vocational training offered to unemployed youth between 18 and 25 by the South Africa National Youth Service Skills Development Programme is also carefully aligned with community-based host employers, labour market possibilities, relevant public institutions such as the National Youth Agency, the Department of Public Works, and also necessary national certification processes. As a result of this strategic attention to the many dimensions of the economic context, the intervention's provision of vocational training leads to meaningful work opportunities for many participants.

"Programmes should be based on proper and realistic analyses of market dynamics, so as not to create expectations among youth that cannot be met."

While the positive aspects of these selected approaches need to be noted, we nevertheless need to consider the limited reach of such interventions, as discussed above, especially to marginalised groups. Moreover, research in all four country contexts highlighted the frustration for youth who follow vocational courses but are unable to find a job after graduation. This is a crucial finding, as we have earlier noted how the failure to manage expectations of young people dealing with dire living conditions and limited job opportunities, can arguably become a new driver of conflict (Lopes Cardozo, 2015). Rather, programmes should be based on proper and realistic analyses of market dynamics, so as not to create expectations among youth that cannot be met: "Failing to manage expectations is arguably a bigger potential driver of conflict than the absence of jobs itself" (Batmanglich & Enria, 2014:20). This is not to deny the evidence uncovered in all country contexts of the dire impact of joblessness on the dignity, health and well being of youth and their frustrations with education provision that they perceived as irrelevant to their predicament.

The Potential and Promise of Locally-Rooted Creative, Collaborative Interventions

"The research teams found several examples of innovative and creative ways of connecting with youth (socio-cultural, political, and to some extent economic) empowerment, which galvanized their enthusiasm and commitment and were especially resonant in reaching out to youth living in contexts of socio-economic deprivation and political marginalization."

The research teams found several examples of innovative and creative ways of connecting with youth (socio-cultural, political, and to some extent economic) empowerment, which galvanized their enthusiasm and commitment and were especially resonant in reaching out to youth living in contexts of socio-economic deprivation and political marginalization. For instance, the South African Youth Leaders Network (SALYN) hosted a five-day camp as a means of trust building between diverse constituencies of youth together across social and racial divides. Youth participants articulated the transformational impact of the new opportunities for social interaction over a period of time which such events enabled, underscoring their role in catalyzing attitudinal and behavioural changes based on greater mutual respect and understanding. Youth engagement was also ensured by ensuring that activities offered opportunities for their active participation. Resources produced for youth used in some interventions encouraged participatory and experiential learning. The Active Citizenship Education manual used by the South African Youth Leaders Network provided its youth participants with "activity driven exploring, discovering, acting, experience and reflecting", in order to link some of the abstract concepts of political literacy and citizenship education with their prior experience and daily realities (Sayed et al, 2016).

"Several interventions sought to bring youth together for collective and collaborative reflection on their challenges and priorities. Drama and sport were for instance harnessed in interventions for their value as participatory and creative activities."

In the same spirit, several interventions sought to bring youth together for collective and collaborative reflection on their challenges and priorities. Drama and sport were for instance harnessed in interventions for their value as participatory and creative activities. They were seen to provide vehicles for developing knowledges, skills and attitudes in youth who may have become disaffected from traditional educational means. For instance, participants in the youth-led Human Drama Forum Theatre in Myanmar write and produce drama in order to raise awareness – their own and within their communities. These dramas deal with issues the youth are affected by, but which would ordinarily be difficult to address openly, including HIV and Aids, sexual abuse, gender-based violence and child trafficking. According to the youth trainers and participants, dramatizing issues also supports the development of self-confidence and a range of social and communication skills. UNICEF's Social Cohesion and Resilience Sports Intervention in Pakistan uses sports activities to engage boys and girls across ethnic and sectarian divides in marginalized and conflict-affected communities in Karachi. Underpinned by the ideals of the international Sports for Development and Peace (SDP) movement, the programme draws on the potential of sports activities to generate youth collaboration and friendship, enhance their health, well-being and self-esteem and address drug use and violent behaviours (Durrani et al., 2016).

Responding Holistically to the Multiple and Intersecting Nature of Youth Needs

"In the case of some interventions, a comprehensive analysis of the socio-cultural, economic and political needs of youth resulted in recognition of the intersecting nature of different dimensions of their agency and consequently a concern to achieve a holistic approach to their empowerment."

In the case of some interventions, a comprehensive analysis of the socio-cultural, economic and political needs of youth resulted in recognition of the intersecting nature of different dimensions of their agency and consequently a concern to achieve a holistic approach to their empowerment. Capturing this awareness of the multi-faceted nature of the precarity and marginalisation experienced by youth in conflict-affected contexts, one intervention designer in South African pointed out that "most of our youth are coming from a system of apartheid where people have been deprived of a lot of things" (Sayed et al, 2016). Thus, the South African National youth Service Skills Development Programme, targeting unemployed youth, not only provides vocational training but also offers life skills trainings, communication, conflict transformations skills and careers advice. In Myanmar, the Empowering Youth for Peacebuilding Programme's provision of project management skills, health/HIV awareness, conflict management, leadership and communication skills, for rural youth over a period of 12 months, reflects the project's aims to respond to their context-specific and community rooted priorities across personal, social and economic dimensions of their daily realities. Reflecting this multifaceted strategy one manager noted that "we've found that an effective programme integrates lots of different things together to offer young people" (Higgins et al, 2016).

Selected programmes identified content and approaches based on prior consultation with youth participants and their communities of their needs. For example, the Empowering Youth for Peacebuilding programme in Myanmar tailored its programme to meet the distinct and self-identified needs of youth from different ethnic groups. Such an approach was based on recognition of the need to gain context-specific "accurate knowledge" rather than homogenise its youth participants. That some participants lived in more ethnically and religiously homogeneous areas than others, and some in close proximity to peace negotiation processes than others, presented them with different peacebuilding dynamics and challenges which the programme recognised and responded to.

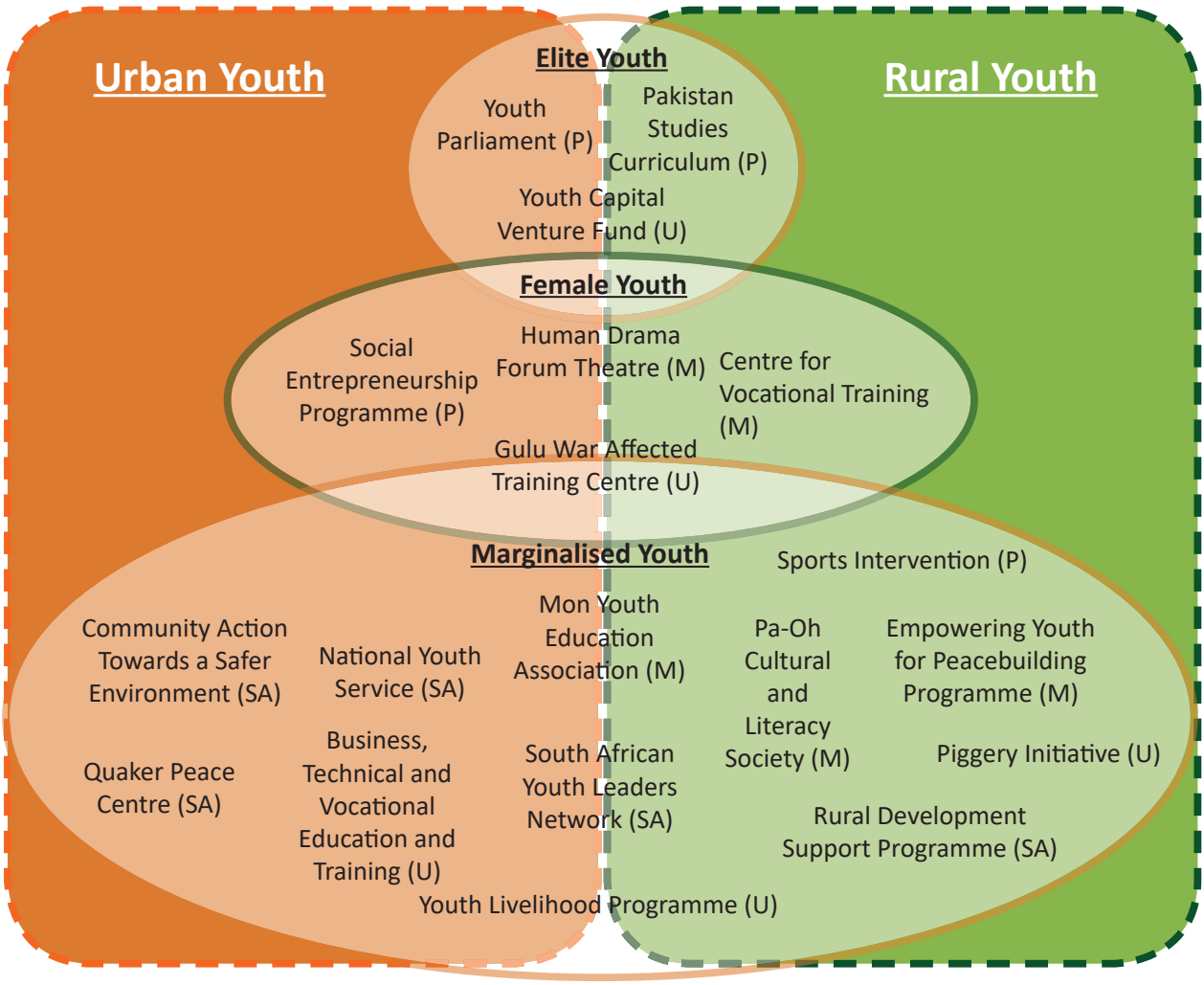
"These findings underline the relevance of the processes as well as the content of youth interventions, with the impact of the content being in part dependent on strategic and creative planning of the process."

These findings underline the relevance of the processes as well as the content of youth interventions, with the impact of the content being in part dependent on strategic and creative planning of the process. This focus on youth-friendly processes of engagement is underlined by a recognition of the need for interventions to appeal to the emotions and imaginations, as well as the priorities and daily material and semiotic/ideational realities of young people. We now turn to discuss how most (non-)formal education available to youth in the conflict-affected regions under study only reach out to a rather limited range of youth constituencies, followed by our reflections on the importance of context-responsivity.

The Limited Reach of Youth Interventions

The visual below aims to recognising the heterogeneity of the categories of youth the research team engaged with within formal and non-formal programmes, targeting diverse constituencies. The three white boxes in the visual aim to illustrate the multiple youth constituencies that were targeted by the interventions in different countries. As shown in the figure, the majority of the programmes targeted marginalized youth, of which some interventions specifically focused at young women. Besides this, there were also a few interventions who addressed elite youth, which are displayed in the white box at the top. The orange and green backgrounds show the geographic locations in which the interventions were taking place, and/or what (urban/rural) constituencies were targeted. It is however important to remark that this visual does not aim to create separate categories. Rather, by using the dotted lines we try to show that these different locations and constituencies often overlap.

Figure 5: Reach of Youth in Non Formal Education Inerventions Included in the Research



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"The limitations of funding and human resources to enable more youth to be reached was a systemic source of frustration for those involved in the design and implementation of interventions, yet also for youth unable to access interventions."

Sommers has noted that youth programming is generally available to tiny minorities of colossal youth populations (Sommers, 2015) and thus "provide islands of assistance for the fortunate few in a vast sea of need" (Moving Targets Youth Priorities and the Policy Response in War and Post-War Africa Policy Brief no. 5; 2012). While engaging with diverse youth constituencies as indicated in the charts, the research team was mindful of their limited impact and reach in all four conflict-affected contexts, given the background of the sheer size of the youth demographic and the scale of need in relation to all dimensions of youth agency. The limitations of funding and human resources to enable more youth to be reached was a systemic source of frustration for those involved in the design and implementation of interventions, yet also for youth unable to access interventions.

Given this background of structural limitations, the team found evidence of some interventions effectively strategizing to address issues of inclusion and access, especially in relation to engaging marginalized and hard to reach youth in rural communities or particular groups, including girls. For instance, the South African Youth Leaders Network drew on community-based resources to reach out to marginalised urban and rural youth with low levels of education and living in depressed socio-economic settings. The Human Drama Forum Theatre in Myanmar engaged marginalized rural and peri-urban youth, particularly women, through community based drama activities. Some interventions made practical decisions to accommodate particular needs. The Pakistan Youth Parliament, for example, ensured that activities were conducted during the week to make it easier for female members to participate. The considerate and practical approaches to ensuring inclusivity adopted by such interventions confirm the conclusion of other recent research that effective targeting of youth in contexts of poverty and social restriction is often best accomplished by ''going where youth are" and thereby working "with" rather than "for" youth (Dunne et al, 2014: 5/8).

"The selective reach of interventions was particularly apparent in those addressing the political marginalization of youth."

However, the elite and exclusive nature of many interventions was also noted. Indeed, in some contexts the research team concluded that within the priorities of both the state and the broader (inter-)national development community, some youth constituencies such as "socio-economically marginalized girls" in Pakistan were "largely ignored and excluded" (Durrani et al., 2016:182). Likewise in Uganda, it was noted that formal, macro-level and nationwide programmes aiming to enhance the economic agency of youth, including the Youth Livelihood Programme and the Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund suffered from uneven distribution affecting rural, disabled and in some regions female youth (Datzberger, McCully, and Smith, 2016).

Paradoxically, the selective reach of interventions was particularly apparent in those addressing the political marginalization of youth. For instance, the Pakistan Parliament addressed socio-economically privileged and technologically connected urban youth in Karachi, while the state-supported Ugandan Youth Council and the Uganda Youth Network (UYONET) was similarly dominated by elite participants. It was noted that many urban-based interventions, such as UYONET, lacked awareness of or strategies to reach out to less-educated rural youth. The exclusivity of such interventions works to reproduce the very inequalities of power and participation

"The exclusive and exclusionary nature of many youth interventions suggests that there needs to be much greater investment in practical, grassroots and youth-responsive strategies to ensure more inclusive access."

that have generated youth alienation in conflict-affected contexts and are thus wholly counter-productive to their apparent mission. For instance, the Ugandan National Youth Council that aims at encouraging youth participation in political processes, failed to include representatives of the ethnic groups whose exclusion from political agency was one of the primary conflict driver of the war in Northern Uganda. In some cases, well intended interventions, which were inclusive in so far as participants included a range of socio-economic backgrounds, overlooked the practical challenges of the costs of attending trainings or dressing appropriately for work placements which was experienced differently by their less privileged participants. Thus it was noted that "girls from socio-economically lower classes" who participated in the Pakistan Social Entrepreneurship Programme found it difficult to "bridge the social/class difference as interns in more privileged settings than they were used to" (Durrani et al., 2016:190). Moreover the heavy male domination of some programmes, for instance the Uganda Youth Council, indicate inattention to the agency and needs of girls. The exclusive and exclusionary nature of many youth interventions suggests that there needs to be much greater investment in practical, grassroots and youth-responsive strategies to ensure more inclusive access.

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Gender Sensitivity and Addressing Violence in Interventions

The Gender-Sensitivity of Interventions

Gender-sensitivity is frequently aimed for in interventions, but not always achieved. The research consortium found several examples of how gender-sensitivity may be concretised into gender-transformative strategies. Such strategies can strategically empower young women, by supporting them to navigate patriarchal social structures and cultural values, while supporting their physical safety and security. These are summarised in the table below.

Table 6: Selected Examples of Intervention's Strategies for Gender Sensitivity/Enhancing Agency of Young Women

Intervention	Strategies for Gender Sensitivity/Enhamcing Agency of Young Women
(M) Human Drama Forum Theatre	• The peer led intervention was particularly successful in engaging marginalised women to share issues that are traditionally kept private, for instance reproductive health, domestic abuse, sexual assault and child rape. This was achieved through dramatizing these issues for audiences dominated by community women so that an environment was created in which individual women felt more comfortable in sharing their experiences.
(P) Pakistan Sports Intervention	• Attention to the safety and security of female participants and trainers through creating networks of community support
(P) Pakistan Youth Parliament	• Encouraging girls to take initiative in relation to decision making: female participants reported an enhanced sense of agency, they were able to catalyse a transformation in her family's attitudes towards women; • Supporting girls to challenge traditional norms within their families and communities; • Conducting activities at times convenient to young women during weekdays and daytime to address their vulnerability to violence because of local security situation and gender norms.
(P) Social Entrepreneurship Programme	• Supported unemployed young women in Karachi in challenging restriction of female agency to gendered stereotypes and reductive vocational programming. Projects chosen included recycling and computing/language institute. These involved the exercise of stereotypically masculine traits in order to combat the gendered stereotypes associated with being an entrepreneur in Pakistan. • By giving girls a support system, whereby they can practice their skills, earn money and contribute to their community, the programme has the potential to transform the paradigm of females to victims into contributors to society.
(SA) Rural Support Development Programme (RDSP)	• Commissioned research to gain a more thorough and nuanced understanding of the problem of gender-based violence in rural parts of the country • Grants to women to start small businesses with the prospect that as a result of economic independence situations of domestic abuse do not have to be tolerated for want of other options.
(U) Gulu War-affected Training Centre Uganda	• Enhancement of the self-esteem, self-confidence and well-being of marginalised women through vocational skills training leading in some cases to work opportunities; support to establish economically viable enterprises.

"This overview makes clear the key potential of education to contribute to the cultivation of non-violent behaviours through offering youth various knowledges and skills – psycho-social, cultural, economic, political and civic, inter-personal and intra-personal."

Addressing Violence in Interventions

The chart below summarises the approaches taken to addressing forms of both direct and indirect violence experienced by as well as perpetrated by youth in a selection of interventions. Evidently they address cultural and political violence, pervasive violence within communities and violent behaviours linked to gangsterism, drug addiction as well as structural condition of violence including mass unemployment, poverty and political exclusion. This overview makes clear the key potential of education to contribute to the cultivation of non-violent behaviours through offering youth various knowledges and skills – psycho-social, cultural, economic, political and civic, inter-personal and intra-personal. Moreover, education can also provide opportunities for reflection on issues frequently not talked about, a process of recognition that is itself therapeutic.

It is also notable that a range of approaches to addressing violence are adopted and range from a careful analysis of its causes and dynamics, linked to community conditions in which violent behaviour and attitudes are contextually located, to more generic approaches that focus on addressing the mental health and trauma of youth participants Some interventions, attempt to bring these personal and more contextually specific approaches together, therefore operationalizing multi-faceted processes of change that impact on multiple dimensions of youth agency. However, the disconnection between these approaches is evident in many interventions, so that a wholly psycho social focus, while well intentioned and beneficial at one level, leaves youth ill equipped to address or to navigate the structural conditions of violence that frame their day to day realities. Ensuring that interventions address youth violence in an integrated, holistic way that balances attention to pscyho-social well-being as well as structural conditions of precarity that sculpt their lives continues to be a key challenge.

Table 7: Selected Examples of Intervention's Strategies and Underlying Assumptions in Dealing with Violence

Intervention	Nature of Violence Addressed	Strategies and Underlying Assumptions
(M) Pa-Oh Cultural and Literacy Society	• Experience of cultural violence due to lack of recognition of language, and cultural traditions in formal schooling	Activities aim to encourage knowledge and recuperation of cultural traditions and language perceived to be neglected: • to affirms cultural identity of youth participants • to mobilise enhanced intra-personal cultural affirmation to support development of peacebuilding attitudes of respect for other ethnicities • exercise of agency in the economic and political spheres greater awareness of intersection between the dignity and affirmation resulting from cultural recognition and prospects of exercising agency to improve economic power and political participation
(M) Human Drama Forum Theatre	• Youth and Communities affected by domestic violence, abuse, sexual assault, child rape	Uses drama to: • catalyse community and peer discussion of issues of violence within communities • to enable discussion of issues linked to which would otherwise remain private and untalked about
(M) Mon Youth Education Association	• Youth affected by political violence and resulting fear of political activity with prospect of arrest or imprisonment • Youth experience of structural violence of coercive and authoritarian modes of governance • Youth experiences of widespread poverty and unemployment	Uses civic awareness and political literacy training/human rights: • to address youth fears of the political: • to equip them with greater awareness of their rights; • to be able to navigate and protect themselves against abuses of power at state and local governance levels • to deal with police authority and potential abuse of rightsto negotiate constructive relationships with elders
(P) Pakistan Sports Intervention	• Inter-ethnic violence	• Building inter-ethnic trust through collaborative sports activities • Limited in attending to the structural and institutional drivers of violence e.g. experience of poverty, inequities in public services, and institutional justice
(SA) Community Action Towards a Safer Environment CASE	• Pervasive violence and trauma within township communities • Violence takes many different forms and occurs over generations • High crime rates and physical violence/gangsterism sexual abuse/gender based violence • Youth resort to drugs and display symptoms of drug addiction • Context of high levels of poverty/unemployment/ parental neglect/ • Appeal of gangs to unemployed and out of school youth • Gangs make youth feel wanted plus allure of material gain • Parental abuse and neglect • Gender based violence	• Analysis of violence as dysfunctional community syndrome and as legacy of South Africa's political history • Draws on critical community psychology that pays attention to the socio-political contexts of violence • Draws on social ecological model based on Bronfenbrenner using the principle of nested multiple ecologies or systems and relationships that influence the individual's development eg work/ education opportunities; family relationships; struggle of surviving in poverty • Integrated approach with multiple levels of intervention, including individuals, families, schools and neighbourhoods • Recognises key role of individuals within their communities in breaking the self-perpetuating cycle of violence: dynamic interplay between self-sorting and community sorting • Offers, personal development coaching, psycho-social counselling and literacy facilitators

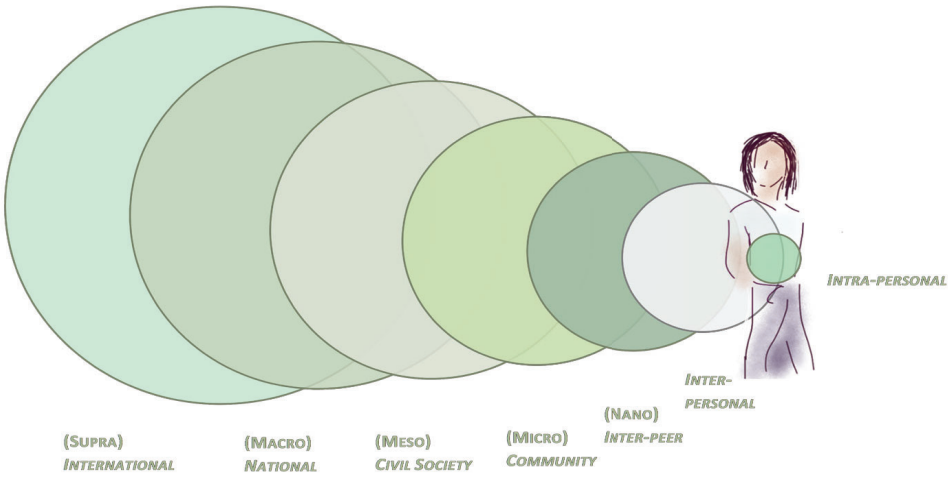
(SA) Quaker Peace Centre Violence in Schools Programme	• Violent behaviour of school pupils	• Improving communication skills in schools and between key stakeholders • Intervention envisages a society in which people are able to have confidence in their own and others ability to address issues without resorting to violence • Assumes that peace and violence are not opposites but "peace is perceived as a dynamic process involving hard work to cultivate awareness of the responsibilities that come with freedom and the need to create and maintain social cohesion"
(U) Gulu War Affected Training Centre	• Communities marked by high rates of domestic violence, sexual and gender based violence: youth • Youth unemployment and crime • Aggravated by land disputes, corruption and uneven distribution of social services • Provides support to second-generation youth affected by the conflict	Offers income generating skills training in tailoring, hairdressing catering and business skills; also weekly writing classes for school drop outs, child mothers, widows or orphans. Income generating activities create: • sentiment of inner peace and security • sense of belonging to other members of the group and value to mental and emotional health of building networks of support • enhanced economic agency leads to greater sense of well being

The Multi-Faceted Nature of "Context-Responsiveness" of Youth Interventions

Recent literature on youth-related programming has called for youth related interventions to engage more precisely with the contexts shaping the day-to-day realities of youth, as well as the distinctive needs of diverse constituencies (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015). We argued above how the research consortium found that creative, collaborative and participatory activities can be mobilized to build meaningful connections with youth participants. The argument is followed up here, by underlining that this needs a context-responsive approach and content to enhance the various (socio-economic, political and cultural) aspects of youth agency. Following the CPE analysis referred to in chapter 2, this section therefore discusses in how far the initiatives studied respond to the cultural, political economy factors (and drivers of conflict) that impact on youth agency in the four countries? In many cases, the context-responsiveness of formal and non-formal education initiatives forms part of the theory of change which explicitly and/or implicitly informs interventions, and is likewise explicitly, but more often implicitly connected to the goal of sustainable peacebuilding or social cohesion. This (lack of) attention to context is important to analyse at different levels, both in relation to micro-realities impinging on youth life in rural and urban communities, as well as broader national and structural dynamics. Our data illuminates how context-responsiveness is being achieved at different levels, in a recognition that youth agency also plays out at different levels – as is illustrated in the visual below. We now turn to discuss,

firstly, how context-specificity has enhanced the capacity of interventions to work effectively with youth needs, while secondly, we highlight disjunctions from context that undermine the sustainability and success of intervention.

Figure 6: Different Levels of Youth Agency



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Responding to (Macro) Structural Needs of Youth Constituencies

As already highlighted above, context responsiveness is achieved by some interventions through careful analysis of the needs and situations of youth in relation to their communities. For instance, the Community Action Towards a Safe Environment in South Africa (CASE) addresses the needs of urban youth living in environments characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and pervasive (gang, gender-based and drug- related) violence. Its approach to the development of programming content was based on an analysis of youth behaviour – in particular involvement in gang violence – as symptomatic of a range of structural and historical community-rooted factors, including parental neglect, unemployment and the appeal of gang cultures. This analysis informs the programme's focus on the personal growth of youth through the provision of life and social skills and training in community leadership through mentoring and counselling skills. Envisaging youth and community development as interconnected, the intervention aims to 'to break the self-perpetuating cycle of crime and violence in which young people live by equipping community members to recognise and respond appropriately to both the causes and effects of crime and violence in their communities" (Sayed et al., 2016:299). Other interventions engage with the contextual realities shaping youth by drawing on their perspectives as well as those of their communities about issues that matter to them.

A notable structural challenge in all four contexts was the fundamental lack of human and financial resources, as well as political or socio-cultural challenges to explicit attempts to empower youth. Some interventions took such constraints

into account in making strategic decisions on their mode of operation. The RSDP intervention in South Africa supports marginalised youth living in violent environments indirectly, by developing the skills and capacity of youth workers in existing rural community based organisations. It offers a range of trainings in management, leadership, policy and financial issues to the staff of over 400 organisations. This approach recognises the importance of developing the professional expertise of individuals working with youth in challenging urban and rural environments across South Africa and of valuing and building on their local practical knowledge and insights. Such priorities in the design of interventions emerged directly from a recognition and indeed frustration at the widespread neglect of youth needs and well-being. In a different, but no less formative way, the modus operandi of a non-formal youth organisation in Myanmar was informed by contextual concerns linked to fears of police and awareness of youth's longstanding disengagement from political activity amongst rural communities. While aiming to empower youth through developing their civic awareness and political knowledge, the organisation promoted its activities by highlighting its provision of opportunities for IT and English language skills development in a-political terms, a strategy believed essential to its continued existence within an uncertain and volatile context not necessarily supportive of political engagement of youth.

"Directed at a more micro-scale of intervention, several interventions paid specific attention to the social and community networks which impact on youth agency, as this is perceived to result in more sustainable impacts."

Ensuring (Micro-Level) Community Support for Interventions

Directed at a more micro-scale of intervention, several interventions paid specific attention to the social and community networks which impact on youth agency, as this is perceived to result in more sustainable impacts. Ensuring community buy-in, including the approval of elders and village leaders, was an essential prerequisite for IOM's intervention with youth in rural Mon (Myanmar). This strategy was intended to defuse possible community resistance to the project's empowerment of youth, on the grounds that it challenged village social hierarchies. Likewise, UNICEF's Pakistan Sports Intervention, which aimed to address inter-ethnic conflict with youth in communities outside Karachi, benefited from the involvement of community stakeholders including teachers, locally influential individuals and school management committees. These groups were encouraged to support youth from diverse ethnic communities in achieving the intervention's goals of developing attitudes of mutual respect linked to reconciliation processes. This interlinking of engagement with youth alongside and in parallel with other relevant social networks is also evident in a project to address school-based violence in South Africa. The Quaker Peace Centre envisages building youth communication skills as one component of a multi-faceted strategy to develop similar skills in other stakeholders, including teachers, education managers and other government officials. The project's theory of change suggests that recourse to violence of youth living in environments of socio-economic deprivation will be stemmed by improving lines of communication between them and diverse stakeholders involved in delivering social services. In harnessing the support and building the skills of the social networks which shape and condition the lives of youth, these initiatives underscore another important dimension of context-specificity: that changes in the attitudes and behaviours of youth do not occur in isolation, but are frequently implicated in processes of social renegotiation, in which youth need to be supported

and for which they need to be prepared and enskilled.

In positioning their participants as agents of community transformation, some interventions made an effort to locate youth within the changing and unchanging social dynamics of their conflict-affected environments. The South African Youth Leaders Network SALYN addresses youth as potential agents of social cohesion within marginalised communities in urban and rural settings. By equipping youth with skills and knowledges to linked to managing social diversity, civic activism and community awareness, the intervention prepares youth to contribute constructively to transforming social contexts marked by deeply embedded social, class, racial, religious and cultural divides. Likewise, the IOM project Empowering Youth for Peacebuilding in Myanmar tailors the content of trainings offered to youth to equip them to navigate inter-generational tensions, a skewed age distribution in rural villages resulting from mass youth economic migration, as well as preparing them to lead community development projects linked to infrastructural needs identified within communities.

"Addressing again a more micro, and inter- or intra-personal level of youth needs and agency – are the psycho-social approaches that focus on mental and emotional health of youth."

Responding to Multiple Psycho-Social Needs of Youth

Addressing again a more micro, and inter- or intra-personal level of youth needs and agency – are the psycho-social approaches that focus on mental and emotional health of youth. The Rural Development Support Programme (RDSP) in South Africa, for instance, aims to empower youth leaders by first focusing on the "personal baggage that the majority of prospective youth workers carry around as a result of the socio-economic conditions and personal deprivations that shaped and governed their lives" (Sayed et al., 2016:309). Here, attention to the personal trauma experienced by youth within contexts of deprivation – as parts of interventions which also address self-esteem and personal development - is deemed an essential component of youth empowerment to undertake community leadership roles. For some interventions, this meant designing reflective activities based on the recognition of the pre-existing strategies used by youth to cope with multiple challenges and their consequent mental and emotional suffering. This is the case with the afore-mentioned Human Drama Forum Theatre in Myanmar, which enabled youth to dramatize the predicaments which had affected their lives. Highlighting the importance of addressing the intra- and inter-personal mental and emotional dimensions of youth agency, such approaches complement community-level and more meso- or macro-levels at which context-specificity may be understood and addressed. A serious awareness of and engagement with adolescents' and young people's developing political beliefs and worldviews hence forms a crucial aspect of a holistic approach to education that supports peacebuilding, particularly in relation to: processes of identity-formation and building self-esteem (connected to recognition), meaningfully experienced participation (linked to representation) and reconciliation, by supporting trust (when appropriate) and supporting mechanisms to address grievances and frustrations. Following the work of Davies (2005: 366), formal and non-formal education should hence aim to support students' critical citizenship and allow for "dialogue, encounter and challenge" with regard to social injustices in their social environment, moving from "negative (violent) conflict" into

(non-violent) forms of progressive and positive conflict.

The Negative Implications of Lack of Context Specificity for the Sustainable Impact of Interventions

The research consortium also found that the impact and sustainability of interventions was frequently undermined by unacknowledged disjunctions between their priorities for youth empowerment and social, political and economic factors which impinged on their operation and implementation. In such cases, their capacity for sustainable impact on the lives and agency of youth was hugely compromised. In some instances the research team found direct contradictions between the aims and values underpinning interventions' engagement with youth and the social dynamics influential within their context of operation. While the Pakistan Youth Parliament was aiming to develop youth participation in democratic processes, it reportedly worked under the patronage of a governing body "not known for democratic practices'.

"The research consortium also found that the impact and sustainability of interventions was frequently undermined by unacknowledged disjunctions between their priorities for youth empowerment and social, political and economic factors which impinged on their operation and implementation."

Likewise, the aims of the state-supported Ugandan National Youth Council were reported to be undermined by the operation of clientilism and politicization leading to the manipulation of youth. Moreover, failure to take sufficient account of the complex processes and parameters of ethnic identification in particular contexts – and their intersection with gender issues - may reproduce ghettoization and reinforce essentialist identities in programmes which aim to do the opposite. In relation to the Pakistan Sports intervention, it was noted that failure to create adequate platforms for ethnically and religiously diverse team groupings meant that the programme "played a limited role in enhancing the agency of Baroch girls" who were "rarely exposed to an ethnically or religiously diverse community" (Durrani et al., 2016:181).

Interventions aiming to enhance the economic agency of youth through livelihood programmes were often undermined not only by inattention to labour market prospects but also by banking and business practices that discriminated against and inconvenienced some groups of youth. Frequent mismatches between low cost vocational skills education and available labour markets sabotaged their effectiveness in enhancing the economic agency of youth participants. Several initiatives set up in Northern Uganda to train girls in tailoring, hairdressing, catering and business skills, offered very few employment prospects for its participants. The researchers concluded that "tailoring was the most common form of training for war-affected women in Uganda, but only very few found opportunities to earn an income from these skills". Moreover, in Uganda rural youth found it hard to access funding to support business projects within the Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund and the Youth Livelihood programme, because of their lack of access to banks while others were unfamiliar with application procedures. Moreover, the research team found that these programmes ignored "regional characteristics that challenge livelihood project implementation e.g. land disputes or infertile soil" (Datzberger, McCully and Smith, 2016:105). Youth reported their frustration with the government led Youth Capital Venture Fund and the Youth Livelihood programme in Uganda because of their perceptions of nepotism in the selection processes for the

"Interventions aiming to enhance the economic agency of youth through livelihood programmes were often undermined not only by inattention to labour market prospects but also by banking and business practices that discriminated against and inconvenienced some groups of youth."

programmes as well as in the allocation of funding.

Such disjunctions from context sometimes resulted in well-intentioned interventions that bypassed attention to the political and socio-economic forces impinging on youth attitudes and behaviours and generating conflict. The Pakistan Sports intervention, while resulting in enhanced inter-personal relationships across ethnic divides was limited in mitigating the structural and institutional drivers of conflict. Researchers found that "the root causes of violence (poverty, inequities in public services, institutional justice) that the young people had experienced were barely mitigated, which meant that the young people's capacity to combat these causes were limited" (Durrani et al., 2016:180). The continuing violent behaviours exhibited by participants in the intervention which was rooted in tensions between rival political parties and disaffection with public authorities, draws attention to its essentially superficial impact. This finding confirms Smith and Ellison's (2015) conclusion that "social cohesion programmes make little difference to interpersonal relations when the underlying causes of conflict are institutional and systemic".

"Our research teams noted that non-formal interventions that addressed the micro and community rooted realities and priorities of youth were able to draw on greater flexibility and openness to change in their operational strategies than nationally driven macro level formal interventions."

+/- of Formal and Non-Formal Approaches to Achieving Context Specificity

Our research teams noted that non-formal interventions that addressed the micro and community rooted realities and priorities of youth were able to draw on greater flexibility and openness to change in their operational strategies than nationally driven macro level formal interventions. For instance, in South Africa it was reported that macro initiatives such as USE, YUCVF, or the YLP have been frequently critiqued for ailing to take into account the many regional and local grievances in a context specific and culturally sensitive manner (Sayed et al., 2016:295). The greater capacity of locally rooted non-formal interventions to address the personal, affective dimension of the lives of their youth participants as wells their context specific priorities was also noted in the other three contexts. Likewise, data from Myanmar, Pakistan and Uganda also shows frustrations related to young people's experiences with formal forms of education (see section 4d). Such insights are a reminder that context specificity is an on-going process throughout interventions. Nevertheless, these reflections of a mostly negative image of formal education versus a simplistic promising picture of non-formal initiatives, creates the danger of disregarding the importance and potential of a reformed/transformed public formal education, that would ideally serve all youth constituencies equally. Hence, our argument here should not be read as a rejection of formal over non-formal forms of education, but rather as a finding that shows the relative flexibility and transformability of such non-formal interventions, which can potentially operate in more direct dialectical contact with the constantly shifting nature of conflict-affected or post-conflict societies and communities. It also points to the recognition that reforming education systems is anything but an overnight exercise, and should accordingly by planned and budgeted for. Indeed, these findings underline the considerable systemic and political economy challenges of making formal education more meaningful for youth, and the greater opportunities for innovation and flexibility within non-formal programming.

Concluding Reflections, Recommendations and Ways Forward

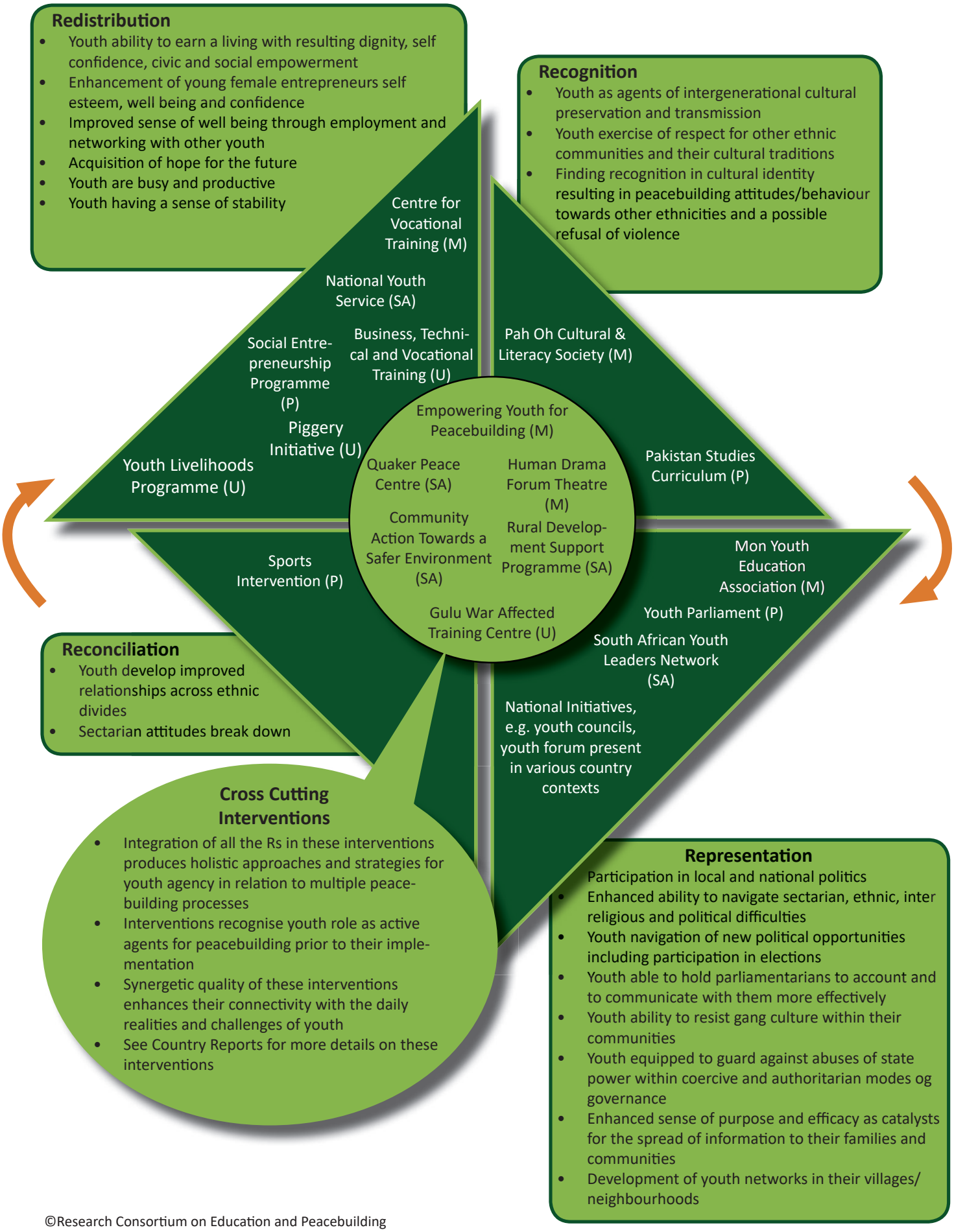
Concluding Reflections, Recommendations and Ways Forward

This section aims to provide some concluding reflections arising from the earlier discussions of how interventions in Pakistan, South Africa, Myanmar and Uganda envisage to make an impact on the actions, beliefs and behaviours of youth - their ''space for manoeuvre" - in relation to particular processes of peacebuilding. In doing so, we come back to answer the overarching and analytical question of how the interventions included in our studies contribute to (socio-cultural, political and/or economic) agency of youth in relation to peacebuilding, through addressing:

1. economic/sustainable livelihoods (redistribution);
2. socio-cultural relations/identity formation (recognition);
3. political awareness and agency (representation);
4. non-violence conflict-resolution skills/attitudes, dealing with the past and build trust (reconciliation).

The following figure 7 draws on 4Rs to understand the links between education and peacebuilding, in order to clarify how interventions included in this study aim to contribute to youth agency. The visual illustrates how redistribution, recognition, reconciliation and representation are being addressed by the interventions in different countries of research. The white boxes show in more detail the approaches we found in our data on how interventions focused on different aspects of youth agency. Those interventions that addressed multiple aspects are described in the box 'cross cutting interventions'. Figure 7 illustrates interventions' attention is more directed towards representation and redistribution, with less consideration for recognition or reconciliation.

Figure 7: Approaches by Studied Interventions to Address Youth Agency in Relation to 4Rs



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Key Concluding Messages and Recommendations

By connecting back to the issues recently highlighted in the literature review on Youth Education and Peacebuilding (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015), we now aim to connect the findings of the four-country Synthesis Report to broader debates in the fields of policy, practice and academia. We conclude this report by sharing a list of key overarching concluding reflections, while highlighting the areas for future research and steps ahead for policy and practice. For more detailed recommendations developed for each specific country, we would like to refer to the online available Country Reports.

1. More Nuanced Framings of Youth

Within policies of national governments and (international) civil society organisations alike, there is a need for more nuanced framings of youth, to acknowledge and respond to:

1. a more refined and context-specific understanding that sees youth as agents of peacebuilding, and not merely as a threat. In contrast to the frequently negative and contradictory projections of youth in mainstream views, in contrast in all four contexts, managers of interventions as well as youth participants emphasized the youth demographic as a potential agent of positive change. There were examples of youth (groups or individuals) as contributors to peacebuilding/social cohesion processes while having to survive. Typifying this response, it was noted that the Pakistan Parliament's encouragement of youth as "ambassadors of peace cannot be under-estimated in the context when a youth of Pakistan feels collectively stigmatised by the world community for terrorism" (Durrani et al., 2016:184). Likewise, programmes such as the Community Action Towards a Safe Environment (CASE) in South Africa envisaged youth as transformational community leaders with the energy and potentially the skills and resources to address the daily "self-perpetuating cycle of crime and violence" (Sayed et al., 2016). Hence, following the UN Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, policy-makers and programme designer should recognise the positive potential of youth as peacebuilders to inform their strategies; At the same time, rigorous analysis is needed to understand the root causes and underlying mechanisms that drive some youth to engage in violent conflict.

2. the complex nature of youth peacebuilding agency, including socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions of youth empowerment. Our review of the literature showed a need to "moves away from a victim-perpetrator binary to an understanding of heterogeneous youth constituencies as embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict and peace" (Lopes Cardozo, 2015: 62). The behaviours and attitudes highlighted in the tables in section 4d help to concretise what youth peacebuilding agency within peacebuilding processes might look like. Drawing on the Strategic Relational Approach inspired analytical framework, we recognise that the ways in which various youth constituencies engage with processes of transformation (the 4Rs) is far from linear and straightforward. Rather, youth peacebuilding agency can be characterized as an on-going (un-)conscious processes of collective or individual strategizing, in dialectical response to the cultural, political and economic contextual influences surrounding youth – being it enabling or restricting factors (see figure 1). In addition, we urge for a more serious engagement with gender-responsive and gender-transformative forms of analysis, design and implementation when working to enhance youth peacebuilding agency, recognizing variegated experiences and needs of female and male youth, intersected with other relevant aspects such as class, ethnicity, language, religion etc.

3. the multi-scalar nature of youth engagement and potential, acknowledging the diverse, shifting and multilevel spaces and levels in which youth may contribute to peacebuilding – ranging from the micro-contexts of their local communities to more national macro contexts of national political processes. The actors with whom youth (would like to) engage are situated at multiple levels, and range from community-level peer-networking, to building enhanced communication with family and community members (including elders), (local and national) politicians, and state officials - including the police and sometimes other ethnic and religious communities, as illustrated in visual 6. In order for youth to meaningfully act at these various scales, it is incredibly important to take into consideration and start planning, designing, researching and implementing from youth's own ideas and initiatives.

2. A Need for Coherent Youth-Focused Policy Development

Following from this more comprehensive understanding, is the need for national governments to develop more effective, coherent policy and institutional frameworks to address youth needs.

Our findings illustrate there is inadequate attention to youth related issues within government level policies, with a lack of coherent youth-policies in Myanmar and Pakistan, while South Africa and Uganda have seen more elaborate youth-focused policy developments. Still, in all contexts there is an urgent need for improved co-ordination between government ministries dealing with youth issues, including (but not limited to) education, employment, political participation as well as health and sports. Concretely, this means the need to consider (formal and non-formal) education as part of broader macro-structural processes of peacebuilding, rather than an isolated panacea for peace on its own; and the need to embed policy and interventions within relevant (micro-/community-, meso- and/or marco-) levels by engaging stakeholders – including youth representatives - within and beyond (non-)formal education, while paying specific attention to gender inequalities that happen within, and through education.

3. Implicit and Explicit Education Policy and Programming for Youth to Address Peacebuilding

Further inquiry is needed to understand how and why (formal and non-formal) education policy and programming implicitly or explicitly focus on addressing peacebuilding, and in what ways theories of change include or exclude aspects of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation.

The focus on youth in relation to peacebuilding is often implicit and indirectly formulated in policy and likewise in programmatic discourses. In some country contexts this reflected a recognition of state political sensitivities where the notion of social cohesion was deemed more appropriate. A notable finding is the frequently implicit understanding of the peace-related theories of change of both formal (government-led) as well as non-governmental education interventions. This approach is typified by the explanation given by one of the managers of Mon Youth Education Association in Mon and Kayin State, who pointed

out that "we don't talk so much peace peace peace", but rather the programme aims to do justice to the multi-faceted nature of the peacebuilding processes – economic, political, social, cultural - in which youth find themselves. One youth participant pointed out that the non-formal education programme should be called "helping youth to have the capacity to help the community" (Higgins et al., 2016). Such interpretations of the meaning(s) of an intervention for "peace" coming from managers of interventions and their participants underscore the context-specificity necessary for the generic notion of peacebuilding within the international discourse of intervention to be meaningful and relevant for interventions in conflict-affected contexts. Furthermore, further research and evaluation should highlight if and why certain dimensions of transformation towards sustainable peace might be prioritized over others, and with what (short and longer-term) effects.

4. Context-Specific, Needs-Based and Holistic Education

Youth respondents call for more context-specific, needs-based and holistic education opportunities, both within formal and non-formal education programming.

This would require:

1. **Locally-embedded needs-based analysis and approaches to overcome mismatches between intervention rhetoric and reality**. While interventions may aspire to empower youth, as already discussed, lack of context-specificity as well as broader structural factors in many cases undermines intended outcomes. This then leads to what in many instances is a large gap between the rhetoric and the reality of interventions in relation to sustainable peacebuilding. This is particularly apparent in interventions seeking to empower youth in processes of representation and redistribution where prevailing political and economic structures often work against or in conflict with the objectives of interventions. This finding confirms the broad conclusions of the recent literature review, which found that work-related programming was too frequently not leading to meaningful employment opportunities (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015:30). Similarly, programmes to enhance the political agency of youth frequently fail to attend to the particularities of the contexts in which they aspire to greater participation in decision-making. This research has found that lack of work opportunities or access to labour markets following vocational training interventions or lack of participation in decision-making processes following political awareness raising may exacerbate youth frustrations, thereby reproducing drivers of conflict and alienation. In many cases interventions appear to be undermined by state practices, including violence and suppression of youth activism, as well as inattention to structural political reforms or to economic strategies that may benefit youth. This tension confirms the need highlighted by Sommers (2012) for greater investment in forceful advocacy on such make-and-break issues with governments. Concretely, this means policy and programme design needs to start (at multiple levels) from a youth-based, gender inclusive needs assessment.

2. **Addressing discrepancies between youth priorities for peacebuilding and those of (non-formal) education interventions.** We found that a discrepancy between the priorities of interventions and the needs articulated by youth were leading to frustration as well as less successful participation in or outcomes of both formal and non-formal education. This was particularly noticeable in interventions that sought to encourage social cohesion through bringing youth from different ethnic groups together for trust building exercises, but which did not address underlying structural and systemic issues which overwhelmingly mattered to their youth participants, including: poverty, unemployment, perceived

institutional injustices and youth experience of lack of access to social services (including education). The challenge of balancing attention to psycho-social and individual youth well-being as well as addressing the location of youth within broader structural processes linked to political participation, economic empowerment and cultural recognition is relevant to all interventions.

3. **Comprehensive rather than fragmented approaches to enhancing all aspects of young people's socio-cultural, political and economic agency.** While some interventions address youth constituencies as located within different peace-related processes of the 4Rs, it is apparent that many generally privilege one dimension of youth agency. While aligning with the differentiated approach of the generic global menus of international donors and aid agencies - which focus on life skills, conflict resolution, enterprise education, human rights and civic education, as well as health and HIV/AIDS - this narrowing of focus may risk artificially compartmentalizing youth agency. Sommers (2015) has highlighted how activities and funds for youth managed by international aid agencies and donors are "funneled in sectoral "stovepipes" or "silos" (2015: xi) that determine in advance what will be done. The findings of this research illustrate a rather narrow logic that underpin the content and focus of most interventions, which may ban a more holistic approach that addresses the intersections between the various (socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions) of youth agency/empowerment. Our analysis of the various (socio-cultural, political or economic) dimensions of youth agency allows us to see that socio-cultural aspects of youth agency are most often over-looked; these relate to the affective and emotional dimension of youth peacebuilding agency - including identity building, having a sense of belonging and meaningful purpose, confidence building, and developing courage to critique attitudes and practices inimical to peacebuilding (such as sectarianism, corruption, nepotism, undemocratic processes, state violence). While issues of redistribution and recognition are most prominently addressed, socio-cultural aspects of recognition as well as dealing with legacies of violence/conflict through reconciliation receive less attention (see visual 4Rs 7 above).This also confirms the findings of the Literature Review (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015: 63) that called for a more "expansive rather than narrow" understanding of how education may connect simultaneously to the multiple dimensions of youth's exercise of agency.

Our findings indicate that holistic approaches to develop all interconnected dimensions of youth peacebuilding agency carry most promise to support youth and communities to foster complex processes of peacebuilding en social cohesion, while not loosing sight of the need to see education as embedded within larger structural mechanisms.

5. Reform of Formal Education

Considering the overall rather negative experience of youth respondents with the ways in which formal education fails to support their (socio-cultural, political and economic/ livelihoods) needs, considerable reform efforts are needed.

A systematic revision of national curriculum content needs to happen in conjunction with governments, Ministries of Education, teachers, students representatives and other local stakeholders. Particularly important areas for reform include:

1. ensuring equal resources to ensure safe and sustainable learning environments for female and male learners and teachers;
2. better connection with the labour market;
3. more diverse and critical pedagogies applied to the teaching of history;
4. more inclusive language of instruction policies that allow for diverse identities and learning needs
5. gender-responsive approaches to enhance equal educational/career opportunities for male and female students and teachers, and gender-transformative approaches to enhance relevance/ appropriateness of educational content.

6. Support for Further Research and Systematic Evaluation

Finally, the above recommendations illustrate a gap in knowledge and a dearth of systematic evaluation of both short and longer-term impact of formal and non-formal education on the lives and choices of young people in conflict-affected contexts.

Confirming the findings of the literature review on Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015), this study has found an absence of rigorous, longitudinal, evaluative data showing how educational interventions contribute to attitudes, behaviours and knowledges of young people linked to their exercise of peacebuilding within specific contexts. Many of these (formal and non-formal) educational programmatic responses are difficult to measure, and need nuanced, context-specific and youth specific qualitative indicators. At the same time, it is necessary to apply gender-responsive research and evaluative approaches that acknowledge and address the varying educational experiences and needs of young women and men in conflict-affected areas. Moreover, there is a need to gauge the sustainable impact of interventions on youth over time, while at the same time understand how interventions are connecting with the initiative and predicaments of youth prior to their experience of initiatives. Such evidential challenges underline the limitations of conventional education metrics to monitor issues such as access to education, which are deployed within global aid networks. There is an urgent need for further research and investment in developing distinctive evaluation frameworks that offer rigorous and responsive ways of understanding the potentially holistic impact interventions may make on the lives of young people. Building up such an evidence base is crucial to enable institutions and actors to advocate persuasively for the role of education as a lever of peacebuilding in relation to youth constituencies.

We would like to close with pointing – one more time – to the voices of youth themselves. The reflections of youth participants in all country contexts draws attention to their perception of the inter-connected aspects of their agency, even when commenting on interventions targeting one dimension. For instance, economic empowerment was frequently construed by youth as supporting the development of self-esteem and confidence linked to greater participation in processes of (political) decision making, extended social networking and an enhanced sense of well-being, autonomy and personal development. The insistence of diverse youth constituencies on the intersecting nature of the processes through which they believe they can be empowered highlights the currently under-realised potential to rethink and reconceptualise the priorities and curricula design of youth interventions outside of a rather silo-based and fragmented approach. As expressed by one youth respondent in Myanmar, in a way representing a much more widely shared youth concern: “we need education that fits with the reality… Education should help with solving the problems we face now” (Higgins et al., 2016).

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Appendix 1: Research Questions

Analysing (non-)Formal education Initiatives Focused on Youth Agency for Sustainable Peacebuilding

1. YOUTH-RELATED POLICY AND FRAMING

To what extent do policies include a focus on youth agency for the realization of sustainable peace?

- To what extent and how are youth perceived and positioned in youth-related policies?
- To what extent do policies include both formal and non-formal education as a means to enhance youth agency (and if there, how is this related to peace)?
- How far do such policies respond to the different youth constituencies?
- How far are resources and finances prioritizing certain youth-related policy areas?

2. FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES

To what extent do selected formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on youth promote agency for the realization of sustainable peace, and in how far are issues of gender (in)equality and violence addressed?

- [Q related to selection of initiatives]: What aspect of youth agency (economic, political, socio-cultural) are the formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on, and what specific youth groups do they focus on?
- How far do such education initiatives take into account the conflict-affected [CPE-]context, according to youth and other relevant key stakeholders?
- How far do selected education initiatives respond to the different needs of various youth constituencies (including gender)?
- According to staff and other key stakeholders, how do different forms of violence play a role and/or are addressed in the selected (formal & non-formal) education initiatives?
- According to staff and other key stakeholders, how are selected initiatives (not) addressing different (cultural, political and/or economic) aspects of youth peacebuilding agency, and why?

3. YOUTH VOICE AND AGENCY

[For youth who are in selected formal and non-formal education initiatives] what are young people's experiences and understandings of their (lack of) agency for peacebuilding in a (post-)conflict environment?

- According to youth, what are their experiences and responses to different forms of violence?
- According to youth, who and what supports/hinders their social, economic and political space for manouevre in their context?
- According to youth/participants, how do the selected (formal & non-formal) education initiatives contribute to youth's ability to exercise agency for peacebuilding and/or to deal with issues of violence?
- To what extent do the data highlight opportunities and challenges for the support of youth agency for transformations, through addressing:

1. political agency (representation);
2. economic/sustainable livelihoods (redistribution);
3. socio-cultural relations/identity formation (recognition);
4. non-violence conflict-resolution skills/attitudes for youth, meaning to deal with the past and build trust (reconciliation).

Appendix 2: Findings From Literature Review on Youth Agency, Education and Peacebuilding

Concluding Key Messages From the Literature Review on Peacebuilding, Education and Youth Agency

1. **Comprehensive understanding of youth** - This document argues for a comprehensive understanding of the multi-faceted nature of youth agency for peacebuilding. We do so by moving away from a victim-perpetrators binary to an understanding of heterogeneous youth constituencies as embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict and peace. In order to better understand the agency of youth as peacebuilding actors, we need to move beyond a binary approach that reduces the experiences of young people living with the effects of conflict to overly simplistic categorisations, which are liable to lead to equally simplistic programme responses. The acknowledgement of the needs and priorities of different youth constituencies should include gender-based analyses and approaches.
2. **Absence of evaluative and empirical data** - There is an urgent need to build up rigorous, longitudinal, evaluative data showing how educational interventions contribute to attitudes, behaviours and knowledges of young people linked to their (lack of) exercise of peacebuilding within specific contexts. A key challenge is that many of these (formal and non-formal) educational programmatic responses are difficult to measure and need nuanced, context-specific and youth specific indicators. Another challenge is the lack of attention and analysis of youth-related (education, labour, cultural) policies in the literature. In advocating for the role of education in peacebuilding, however, the absence of both policy-analysis and evaluative data of programmatic impact on youth agency needs to be urgently addressed.
3. **Context-specific, conflict-sensitive and youth-specific policy and programming** - There is frequently a disjunction between policy and programming aimed to enhance young people's agency as peacebuilders and the particular contexts and circumstances that condition and constrain this potential in conflict-affected contexts. In order to ensure that education policies and programmes are more context specific, conflict-sensitive, and youth-responsive, interventions should be carefully grounded in an analysis of the distinctive positioning of youth in relation to current drivers of conflict as well as peacebuilding dynamics operating in each conflict-affected situation. Connecting to our first point, a gender-specific lense should be applied to uncover specific needs, opportunities and challenges for particular youth constituencies.
4. **Engagement with youth's voices, identities and needs** - There is a need for both policies and interventions – at their planning and implementation stages - to respond to and connect with processes of youth identity formation, the everyday realities, voices, experiences and needs of young people and to build on their pre-existing initiatives. This may involve working with and through young people on conflict and peacebuilding analysis of their particular situation and their strategic positioning.
5. **Involvement of community and youth peer educators** - The promotion of the peacebuilding agency of youth through (non)formal education initiatives needs to involve key stakeholders in the communities, as well as young people themselves as peer educators, rather than operate in isolation from them, to ensure the sustainability and cultural appropriateness of interventions.
6. **Educational strategies for peacebuilding** - Although their potential is not realized at present the content and processes of teaching and learning may enhance young people's agency for peacebuilding, by: 1) connecting study of the past with present realities and challenges, 2) recognising the affective and context relevant dimensions of teaching and learning for/about peace; 3) providing opportunities for critical reflection of political/religious/ideological/media messages; 4) encouraging mutual understanding, respect and prejudice reduction; 5) triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes in people, e.g. inter-personal skills, changing perceptions of themselves and other people, as well as mental and emotional well-being and healing; and 6) working with youth in their own environment and spaces.
7. **Integrated programmatic responses** - In order to capitalize on education's potential to contribute to young people's capacity to be peacebuilders, an expansive rather than narrow framing is essential that connects educational processes to the political, economic, cultural and potential conciliatory (4 R's) dimensions of youth's exercise of agency and the peacebuilding processes in which they are located. The review of existing literature suggests an integrated approach might be best suited to enhance the agency of youth in relation to the 4 R's. While redistribution might need the most specific targeting, the dimensions of recognition, representation and especially reconciliation can either be targeted specifically or – perhaps more successfully - be embedded transversally in a wide variety of activities.

Appendix 3: Research Methods and Selection Criteria for Initiatives

Overview and elaboration of methods:

Semi-structured interviews (individual and small group)
Participatory methods

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with youth to compliment data from interviews, by engaging in reflective group discussions and group activities, as further explained in the Interview and FGD guide;
- to build capacity (analytical skills/reflective discussions) and conduct data collection through workshops with youth at the same time;
- to allow for comparison between the four countries, all teams aimed to ensure (context-specific) awareness and purposive grouping when organizing FGDs. As FGDs were organized in relation to the selected initiatives, attempts were made to include the widest range of participants (age, gender – although in some cases single-sex FGDs are more appropriate, and other relevant context-specific background characteristics).
- FGDs were conducted by trained and experienced facilitators, where possible in the most relevant language. Attention was paid to detailed note-taking of the FGD process, observations of group interactions, note-taking of outcomes of the exercises (assign multiple note takers in smaller groups) as well as photos of the drawings/ maps and more generally of the FGD activities (ensuring anonymity of respondents).

Document analysis of relevant youth-related policies and relevant studies/evaluations
Relational Stakeholder Analysis (mapping 'light')

- Mapping of youth-related education/creative learning initiatives (by research teams consisting of international and local researchers, and based on small number of key interviews, documents and online searches)
- Participatory mapping with youth

Analysis of 'selected initiative studies' (see below for selection criteria);

- Speaking with the youth themselves and facilitators/organisers of the initiative; and speaking to those funding/ supporting the initiative at a more strategic level to understand how the initiative (not) fits into broader government priorities.
- Programma Logic/Theory of change
- Programme intervention/implementation
- (Un)intended outcomes
- Reflect on specific gender dynamics

Selection of initiatives:

In each country study context, a number of initiatives were selected for further study. The selection criteria for these initiatives came forward from the identified focus areas in the literature review on youth, as well as from the insights from country context and conflict analysis each team generated. Identified programmatic responses in the literature review include:

- Work related interventions (TVET)
- Formal + non-formal Citizenship/Civics education
- Sexual and Reproductive Health Education
- History education or Language of Instruction policy/practice
- Music, arts, sports, inter-group contact and interfaith-related education

Important is to note that we included in these six categories both formal and non-formal initiatives, as well as youth-led, government led and NGO, CSO or IO initiatives.

Based on a country context and conflict analysis, focus areas for each fieldwork country were identified by each country team. Of the selected initiative, at least one formal education initiative and one non-formal education initiative was selected, realizing that 'formal' and 'non-formal' might be context specific definitions as well.

Furthermore, selection criteria depend on consideration of geographical location(s), i.e. were based on an explanation of why a certain area is interesting and included, or why a balance is chosen between several areas of the country. Following this line of thought, selection of initiatives aimed to find a balance between geographical representation of capital cities, urban areas and rural areas.

Moreover, varying youth constituencies (including gender, and both elite as well as marginalized youth) were taken into consideration in the selection and analysis of the initiatives. Depending on the ethical guidelines respective for each country team, ideally the selected cases covered a variety of different age-ranges in the second and third decades of life.

In sum, selection criteria for initiatives are as follows:

- Based on and reflecting a balanced range of identified themes in the literature review on youth;
- Based on and reflecting a balanced range of identified themes in the country context/conflict analysis;
- Representing a balance and rationale for choice of geographical location(s);
- Representing various youth constituencies (including both elites and marginalized youth);
- Representing at least one formal and one non-formal education initiative.

The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), University of Amsterdam

The AISSR Programme Group Governance and Inclusive Development (http://aissr.uva.nl/programmegroups/item/governance-and-inclusive-development.html) consists of an interdisciplinary team of researchers focusing on issues relating to global and local issues of governance and development. The Research Cluster Governance of Education, Development and Social Justice focuses on multilevel politics of education and development, with a specific focus on processes of peacebuilding in relation to socio-economic, political and cultural (in)justices. The research group since 2006 has maintained a particular research focus on education, conflict and peacebuilding, as part of its co-funded 'IS Academie'research project with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Centre for International Education, University of Sussex

The Centre for International Education (CIE) (www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie) was founded in 1989 on the premise that education is a basic human right that lies at the heart of development processes aimed at social justice, equity, social and civic participation, improved wellbeing, health, economic growth and poverty reduction. It is recognised as one of the premiere research centres working on education and international development in Europe. The Centre has also secured a prestigious UK ESRC/DFID grant to carry out research on the Role of Teachers in Peacebuilding in Conflict Affected Contexts, which aligns directly with the research strategy of the PBEA programme and will form part of the broader research partnership.

UNESCO Centre at Ulster University

Established in 2002 the UNESCO Centre (www.unescocentre.ulster.ac.uk) at the University of Ulster provides specialist expertise in education, conflict and international development. It builds on a strong track record of research and policy analysis related to education and conflict in Northern Ireland. Over the past ten years the UNESCO Centre has increasingly used this expertise in international development contexts, working with DFID, GiZ, Norad, Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, providing research on education and social cohesion, the role of education in reconciliation and analysis of aid to education in fragile and conflict affected situations.

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